Collected Writings Of

John Henrik Clarke

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Web Edition

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John Henrik Clarke: Bad Boy of Academe

THE ELDER RADICAL-JOHN HENRIK CLARKE- BAD BOY OF ACADEME Interview with Ja A. Jahannes

America's most fervent radical in the 1980s and 90s was not found wearing black power symbols on tee shirts, or dreadlocks, or in the Nation of Islam. America's most fervent black radical did not spew forth racist expletives.

America's foremost black radical was John Henrik Clarke, an 80 year old gentleman from the old South who lived in Harlem. He was a professor Emeritus of Hunter College, who trained generations of freedom fighters to use their minds and history as weapons of liberation. Born in Union Springs, Alabama, January 1, 1915, John Henrik Clarke grew to young manhood in Columbus, Georgia. He moved to New York City in 1933, with the ambition of becoming a writer. He studied history and world literature at New York University. From his early years, Dr. Clarke studied the history of the world and the history of African people in particular. There was no voice in America during this period that spoke singularly and more authoritatively on the plight of African American people than Dr. Clarke. There were few voices that spoke as powerfully of African world history.

Professor Clarke's articles and keynote addresses on African and African-American history, politics and culture have been published in leading journals throughout the world. Professor Clarke has written or edited twenty-two books. The best known are: American Negro Short Stories, 1966,

William Styron's Nat Turner: Ten Black Writers Respond, 1968, Malcolm X: The Man and His Times, 1969, Harlem, U.S.A., 1971, Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa, 1973, and African World Revolution: Africa At The Crossroads, 1991. He was a galvanizing speaker with few equals. His credits for founding organization that deal with the protection of African and African American life alone would have been enough to enshrine him in African

American history. Yet, he reached young folks and seasoned scholars alike as he traveled throughout the world enlightening people about the heritage of African peoples. Teacher, philosopher, scholar, lecturer, social activist, Dr. John Henrik Clarke was without peer in America history.

I was privileged to serve as Chair of the Pan African Movement USA (PAMUSA) with Dr. Clarke as Co-chair, and took the opportunity on August 23, 1995 to interview him. Knowing his advanced age and sometimes failing health, I wanted future generations to hear from him on a number of topics related to the African American and Pan African experience. Though Dr. Clarke was legally blind, he saw with an appareled clarity the issues that confronted African Americans, Africans and their relationship to the world. Below is that interview, unedited.

JAHANNES: What are the central problems in American society today?

CLARKE: The search for definition, direction and political orientation.

JAHANNES: What kinds of leaders do we need for today in America? In the Black community?

CLARKE: We need leaders who will give us a new vision of ourselves and our future in relation to the search for our definition of self and our political orientation.

JAHANNES: You are in demand as a lecturer around the globe. What are the topics most requested of you to address as a public speaker?

CLARKE: African history, in general, followed by the African family, both at home and abroad, and the African Resistance Movements in the 19th and 20th centuries.

JAHANNES: Since the early days of Black Studies, which you helped pioneer, how far have they come?

CLARKE: Black Studies has made a few steps forward but these have not been giant steps. My personal disappointment is how researchers overlook the very rich and available material on the African people in world history, in Africa, the Caribbean Island, the United States and the impact of the African on Asia, Europe and the Americas.

JAHANNES: What is your view of the current wave called "multiculturalism?"

CLARKE: I think it is a lot of educational fakery which has as its mission the mixing of African history with the history of other cultures to the point where the history of African people will no longer be outstanding.

JAHANNES: What is the impact of Africentrism, in your view?

CLARKE: The whole concept of Africentrism is overestimated. It should have been called "African Consciousness" because without African Consciousness we will have no understanding of our history and its significance to world history.

JAHANNES: Has the Black power revolution of the 1960's been betrayed?

CLARKE: The Black power revolution was betrayed from the beginning by its creators. It was further betrayed by those that inherited it.

JAHANNES: What is the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement?

CLARKE: Frustration, disappointment, broken hopes, broken dreams. '

JAHANNES: I will mention some of the issues that invariably characterize any discussion of African American life, whether rightly or wrongly, and ask you to comment on them. Welfare.

CLARKE: Where Black people are concerned welfare is a sham because most of the people in this nation one way or another are on some form of welfare.

JAHANNES: Drugs in inner cities.

CLARKE: Drugs are not controlled by the victims. The victims have no way of controlling the entry of drugs into this country. The small seller of drugs are the victims in the final analysis.

JAHANNES: Unwed mothers in the African American community.

CLARKE: Numerically there are just as many unwed mothers outside of the African American community. We need to put more emphasis on this statistic.

JAHANNES: What is your opinion of historically Black colleges and universities?

CLARKE: I believe profoundly in the existence of Black colleges and universities because people rise and fall within the context of these institutions. Some of these institutions are stillborn children who never developed into manhood or womanhood and not a single one of them is fully dedicated to teaching students about Africa from an African point of view.

JAHANNES: Recently you gave some of your papers and books to Clark Atlanta University. Why did you make this gift to Clark Atlanta University and what was included in the collection?

CLARKE: My personal library of relevant books on African and African American history will go to the Robert Woodruff Library at Clark Atlanta University. My personal papers will be deposited at the Schomburg Center for the Study of Black Culture in Harlem. The significance of my gift to Clark Atlanta is that I was born in Alabama, grew up in Georgia and wanted to make this donation to one of the states that nurtured me. Clark Atlanta has the best facilities for maintaining a library of this size.

JAHANNES: The library at Cornell University is named in your honor. What is the significance of this honor to you?

CLARKE: The significance of this honor to me is that the Africana Center at Cornell, like the Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies is one of my two academic homes. In my three years as Distinguished Visiting Professor at Cornell, I not only did some of my best teaching, I learned to be a better teacher by becoming a better human being.

JAHANNES: Can African Americans get a decent education in predominantly white colleges and universities?

CLARKE: African Americans can get a decent "Western Education" in predominantly white universities that they can adapt to their own needs if they have the insight and intellectual industry to do so.

JAHANNES: What do you view as essential to the Black man who would presume to be educated?

CLARKE: Simply, a knowledge of his own people and how they relate to the people of the world.

JAHANNES: You have been critical of Islam as a religion, and Arabs as despoilers of Africa? Why do you hold these views?

CLARKE: I hold these views because they are true. The Arabs like all invaders of Africa did Africa more harm than good. They have used Islam to subjugate people instead of enhancing them spiritually. Islam has and has always been the handmaiden of Arab design. The Arabs were in the slave trade before Islam and to some extent they are still in the slave trade today.

JAHANNES: What is your definition of racism?

CLARKE: Race is a myth because nature created no races. Racism is a derogatory manifestation of this myth and the concept that people by virtue of race are better than other people.

JAHANNES: DuBois said the problem of the 20th century was the problem of race? Is there the potential for man to overcome racism in the 21 century?

CLARKE: DuBois actually said the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line. I extend his comment by saying that the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the culture line and the political line. We can overcome the problem of race by becoming enough to ignore racists or isolate them.

JAHANNES: As a writer of fiction, you have published over fifty short stories that have been distributed in this country and abroad, including your best known short story, "The Boy Who Painted Christ Black," which been translated into more than a dozen languages. Why have never written a novel?

CLARKE: I have written several novels. None of them have been published. My main novel, Journey to the Fair, deals with a young kid who hoboes across country on his way to the Chicago World's Fair. It is somewhat autobiographical and it is some of the best writing I have ever done. For over 20 years I have been trying to get back to it.

JAHANNES: Of your many published works, short stories, poems, essays, histories, etc. which of them are you most proud of and why?

CLARKE: Africans At The Crossroads: Notes For An African World Revolution. This is the book I have always wanted to write.

JAHANNES: Some critics, like historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Pulitzer Prize winning historian, in his new book The Disuniting Of America: Reflections On A Multicultural Society, sees the African American intellectual discovery of self as a hustle by misguided and miseducated Black social scientists. Schlesinger has scoffed at your view of history and implied that it is less than accurate. How do you respond?

CLARKE: The accuracy of my view of history is what frightens Professor Schlesinger. It is the truth of it that he cannot live with. The truth is that a bunch of frightened people came out of Europe

to colonize the truth about the world. The truth of my history exposes the lie of their history.

JAHANNES: You have visited every country in Africa except South Africa. Have you deliberately avoided South Africa?

CLARKE: Yes. I have deliberately avoided South Africa because some of the political activists have asked me to do so. They believe some whites would misinterpret my visit to their detriment. I have not visited South Africa out of respect for their wishes.

JAHANNES: What are the prospects for peace and democracy in South Africa?

CLARKE: There are no prospects for peace and democracy in South Africa as long as the power is held by whites and white-approved blacks. After the revolution, which must come, and it is a revolution that Africans must win, I hope you will ask me the same question again.

JAHANNES: You have been called "radical" often. What is your view of a radical in America? When people call you a radical what do you think they mean by it?

CLARKE: I think they mean a person that dares to disagree with the norm, when the norm does not serve the best interests of the people. I believe a radical is one who dares to search for the truth, expose it, live with it, even if it is against him or herself.

JAHANNES: It is reputed that although you are 85% blind, you read about ten books each week?

CLARKE: In fact I have less than 2% vision which makes me 98% blind. I read by either having books read to me or I read them on my reading machine for the blind or from cassettes sent by the Lighthouse For the Blind.

JAHANNES: What books would you recommend as essential to read for a sound grounding in African history and African American survival issues?

CLARKE: For a good grounding in African history and African America survival, I recommend some simplified works first. Lerone Bennett's' Before the Mayflower is well written and is good reading. They should also read John Hope Franklin's From Slavery to Freedom. I would recommend for a good overview of slavery they should read John Blassingame's The Slave Community, and the books by Carter G. Woodson should not be ignored. Especially his works, The Negro in Our History, and The Miseducation of The Negro. In African history, a few books would serve as an overview. John G. Jackson's Introduction to African Civilizations, Joseph Harris' African People and Their History. The heavy weights in the fields, Chancellor William's Destruction of Black Civilizations, and his neglected work, The Birth of African Civilization. Another heavy weight is Cheikh Anta Diop: definitely read his African Origins of Civilization: Myth or Reality and his the last work he completed before his death, Civilization or Barbarism. For an understanding of Caribbean history, definitely read Eric Williams, The Caribbean from Columbus to Castro, and his work, Capitalism to Slavery: Documents in West Indian History. For the importance of the African in world history, they should read three special issues of the Journal of African Civilizations, edited by Ivan Van Sertima read Africa in Early America, Africa in Early Asia, and Africa in Early Europe. Reading these books will eventually lead to other books. Reading books should be like an addiction. It should take over your life and you should never let it go. Reading is the only positive addiction I know.

JAHANNES: What is your view of what is needed to get the masses of African Americans out of this self-destructive abyss they seem to be in?

CLARKE: First, we would have to understand that war has been declared on the African American family and this war shows no mercy. If we are to stop the war or slow it down, we might have to break some TVs or burn some Bibles. Religion, which should be our spiritual, physical, and our financial liberation, is so large in our lives we are imprisoned by it. No people will prosper without a knowledge of their history that they can respect. This is where you start to use history to tell your time of day, wherever you are.

JAHANNES: What is the quality of African American leadership, today?

CLARKE: As a people, we have more leaders and less leadership than other people. A lot of people we accept as leaders are showmen, some good, some bad.

JAHANNES: Some names seem synonymous with leadership of African American people. Please comment on a few of them.

JAHANNES: Marcus Garvey.

CLARKE: Marcus Garvey was the finest leader to emerge in the African world in the 20th century.

JAHANNES: W. E. B. DuBois.

CLARKE: DuBois was an intellectual leader, emphasis on intellectual, and the finest leader of this caliber we produced outside of Africa.

JAHANNES: Martin Luther King Jr.

CLARKE: King was a great spiritual leader and one of America's greatest theologians, black or white.

JAHANNES: Farrakhan.

CLARKE: I consider Farrakhan part leader, part showman, part faker.

JAHANNES: Jesse Jackson.

CLARKE: I am not too clear where Jesse Jackson is leading us or if he is worthy of being called a leader. Of all the black men of the 20th century, he had the finest opportunity of becoming a leader. He sacrificed this potential to the altar of his ego.

JAHANNES: Is violence ever necessary in the African American struggle for equality and freedom in America?

CLARKE: Among all people in their struggle for freedom there is a time for violence. It cannot be avoided. Violence at the right time is right, at the wrong time, it is wrong.

JAHANNES: Why haven't African Americans and Africans on the continent come together for economic and political self help?

CLARKE: Africans and African Americans have not come together because both of them are still listening to the voices of their former slave masters and their former colonial master. You cannot help yourself until you know yourself. You cannot change the world until you change yourself.

JAHANNES: Why does the Caribbean, with its heavy African descendant populations, continue to be exploited by white America and European economic interests?

CLARKE: Caribbean people have a color fascination different from other people living outside of Africa and too many of them believe white is right.

JAHANNES: What is the real threat of Cuba to the U.S.?

CLARKE: The real threat of Cuba, as it is conceived, is that the Cubans might develop a type of government that is viable without it being capitalist. People have a right to develop a form of government that suits their needs but America considers this a threat in the western hemisphere.

JAHANNES: Why has Haiti suffered so profoundly and so long? How do we end Haiti's suffering?

CLARKE: Haiti still suffers because the U. S. and Europe do not want the example of a former slave state to be successful anywhere in the world.

JAHANNES: You have said that you believe white men do not like women. What do you mean by that?

CLARKE: Their treatment of women manifest a desire to either dominate or avoid them. They

consider women a threat to their manhood. Because they have a question with their manhood, they created a situation that would not have existed if they were secure.

JAHANNES: In your book African World Revolution: Africans At The Crossroads you ask the question "Can African People Save Themselves?" Can they? What will it take?

CLARKE: No people will save themselves until they know themselves and are willing to make sacrifices on behalf of themselves.

JAHANNES: Why is it that little is known of African peoples in Asia, in Europe, in the Polynesian and Melanesian islands?

CLARKE: Little is known of Africans throughout the world because we live in a Eurocentric intellectual universe. The rulers of this universe intent to project the concept that the world waited in darkness for Europeans to bring the light. The exact opposite is true.

JAHANNES: Is there still a crisis among African American intellectuals?

CLARKE: If ignorance is a crisis then the answer is "yes." I am not a believer in Harold Cruse's (author of The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual) imagined crisis among black intellectuals, his crisis is more about Harold Cruse's personal intellectual crisis.

JAHANNES: Who are the scholars you most respect?

CLARKE: The present day scholars I most respect are Jacob Carruthers and his new work on Egypt and the Caribbean Islands, especially Haiti. Sterling Stuckey, his new approach to slave cultures and the ideology of Black Nationalism. Anderson Thompson's new approach to the politics of the civil rights movement. Joseph Harris, of Howard University, and his approach to African world history. Among the African historians that I have great respect for are Theophile Obenga, protégé of Cheikh Anta Diop; Father Mbane, a neglected Jesuit priests who writes more history than he teaches; and Joseph Gazebo, who is only second to Cheikh Anta Diop in a new approach to African history.

JAHANNES: Who have been some of your protégés?

CLARKE: Both Jacob Carruthers and Iva Carruthers of Chicago. Frank Scruggs, a young lawyer in Florida. Professor William Drake of Virginia Commonwealth University, and Professor Ralph Crowder of Purdue University, Professor Dona Richards of Hunter College, and many others.

JAHANNES: Do African American writers have any obligation to the African American experience?

CLARKE: Yes, as much obligation as all other writers and the same obligation as other African Americans.

JAHANNES: What would you want your legacy to be?

CLARKE: That I used my life to make a positive statement about the right of African people to be sovereign rulers of that piece of geography called Africa and to walk this earth with peace and dignity, giving the same respect to others that they would ask for themselves. c. 1995 by Ja A. Jahannes

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Dr. Ja A. Jahannes is a psychologist, educator, writer, and a social critic. He is a frequent columnist for numerous publications. His work has appeared in such diverse publications as the Journal of Ethnic Studies, Vital Speeches, the Journal of the National Medical Association, Ebony, the Black Scholar, Encore, Class, Black Issues in Higher Education and the Saturday Review. He was national chair of the Pan African Movement U.S. A. (PAMUSA) with Dr. John Henrik Clarke as co-chair in 1992 and 1993. Dr. Jahannes has lectured throughout the U. S., in Africa, Asia, South America and the Middle East.

I.

A Search For Identity

BY John Henrik Clarke (May 1970)

My own search for an identity began—as I think it begins for all young people—a long time ago when I looked at the world around me and tried to understand what it was all about. My first teacher was my great grandmother whom we called "Mom Mary." She had been a slave first in Georgia and later in Alabama where I was born in Union Springs. It was her who told us the stories about our family and about how it had resisted slavery. More than anything else, she repeatedly told us the story of Buck, her first husband, and how he had been sold to a man who owned a stud farm in Virginia. Stud farms are an aspect of slavery that has been omitted from the record and about which we do not talk any more. We should remember, however, that there were times in this country when owners used slaves to breed stronger slaves in the same way that a special breed of horse is used to breed other horses.

My great grandmother had three children with Buck—my grandfather Jonah, my grandaunt Liza, who was a midwife, and another child. With Buck, Mom Mary had as close to a marriage as a slave can have—marriage with the permission of the respective masters. Mom Mary had a lifelong love affair with Buck, and years later after the emancipation she went to Virginia and searched for him for three years. She never found him, and she came back to Alabama where she spent the last years of her life.

My Family

Mom Mary was the historian of our family. Years later when I went to Africa and listened to oral historians, I knew that my great grandmother was not very different from the old men and women who sit around in front of their houses and tell the young children the stories of their people—how they came from one place to another, how they searched for safety, and how they tried to resist when the Europeans came to their lands.

This great grandmother was so dear to me that I have deified her in almost the same way that many Africans deify their old people. I think that my search for identity, my search for what the world was about, and my relationship to the world began when I listened to the stories of that old woman. I remember that she always ended the stories in the same way that she said "Good-bye" or "Good morning" to people. It was always with the reminder, "Run the race, and run it by faith." She was a deeply religious woman in a highly practical sense. She did not rule out resistance as a form of obedience to God. She thought that the human being should not permit himself to be dehumanized. And her concept of God was so pure and so practical that she could see that resistance to slavery was a form of obedience to God. She did not think that any of us children should be enslaved, and she thought that anyone who had enslaved any one of God's children had violated the very will of God.

I think Buck's pride in his manhood was the major force that always made her revere her relationship with him. He was a proud man and he resisted. One of the main reasons for selling him to a man to use on a stud farm was that he could breed strong slaves whose wills the master would then break. This dehumanizing process was a recurring aspect of slavery.

Growing up in Alabama, my father was a brooding, landless sharecropper, always wanting to own

his own land; but on my father's side of the family there had been no ownership of land at all. One day after a storm had damaged our farm and literally blown the roof off our house, he decided to take his family to a mill city—Columbus, Georgia. He had hoped that one day he would make enough money to return to Alabama as an independent farmer. He pursued this dream the rest of his life. Ultimately the pursuit of this dream killed him. Now he has a piece of land, six feet deep and the length of his body; that is as close as he ever came to being an independent owner of land.

In Columbus I went to county schools, and I was the first member of the family of nine children to learn to read. I did so by picking up signs, grocery handbills, and many other things that people threw away into the street, and by studying the signboards. I knew more about the different brands of cigarettes and what they contained than I knew about the history of the country. I would read the labels on tin cans to see where the products were made, and these scattered things were my first books. I remember one day picking up a leaflet advertising that the Ku Klux Klan was riding again.

Because I had learned to read early, great things were expected of me. I was a Sunday school teacher of the junior class before I was ten years old, and I was the one person who would stop at the different homes in the community to read the Bible to the old ladies. In spite of growing up in such abject poverty, I grew up in a very rich cultural environment that had its oral history and with people who not only cared for me but also pampered me in many ways. I know that his kind of upbringing negates all the modern sociological explanations of black people that assume that everybody who was poor was without love. I had love aplenty and appreciation aplenty, all of which gave me a sense of self-worth that many young black children never develop.

I began my search for my people first in the Bible. I wondered why all the characters—even those who, like Moses, were born in Africa—were white. Reading the description of Christ as swarthy and with hair like sheep's wool, I wondered why the church depicted him as blond and blue-eyed. Where was the hair like sheep's wool? Where was the swarthy complexion? I looked at the map of Africa and I knew Moses had been born in Africa. How did Moses become so white? If he went down to Ethiopia to marry Zeporah, why was Zeporah so white? Who painted the world white? Then I began to search for the definition of myself and my people in relationship to world history, and I began to wonder how we had become lost from the commentary of world history.

My Teachers

In my first years in city schools in Columbus, Georgia, my favorite teacher and the one I best remember was Evelena Taylor, who first taught me to believe in myself. She took my face between her two hands and looking at me straight in the eyes, said, "I believe in you." It meant something for her to tell me that she believed in me, that the color of my skin was not supposed to be a barrier to my aspirations, what education is, and what it is supposed to do for me.

These were lonely years for me. These were the years after the death of my mother—a beautiful woman, a washerwoman—who had been saving fifty cents a week for my education, hoping that eventually she would be able to send her oldest son to college. Her hopes did not materialize; she died long before I was ten. I did, however, go to school earlier than some of the other children. We lived just outside of the city limits. Children living beyond the city limits were supposed to go to county schools because the city schools charged county residents $3.75 each semester for the use of books. This was a monumental sum of money for us because my father made from $10.00 to $14.00 a week as a combination farmer and fire tender at brickyards.

In order to get the $3.75 required each semester, my father made a contribution and my various uncles made contributions. It was a collective thing to raise what was for us a large some of money not only to send a child to a city school instead of to a county school but also to make certain that the one child in the family attending the city school had slightly better clothing that the other

children. So I had a coat that was fairly warm and a pair of shoes that was supposed to be warm but really was not. As I think about the shoes, my feet sometimes get cold even now, but I did not tell my benefactors that the shoes were not keeping me warm.

I grew up in a religious environment after we came to Columbus, Georgia, and after the passing of my mother. The local church became my community center and the place where most of the community activities occurred. It was here that I wondered about my place in history and why I could not find any of my people in any of the books that I read, and my concern began to change to irritation. Where were we in history? Did we just spring as a people from nothing? What were our old roots?

As I approached the end of my last year in grammar school, Evelena Taylor told me that she would not let me use the color of my skin as an excuse for not preparing lessons or an excuse for not aspiring to be true to myself and my greatest potential. She taught me that I must always prepare.

I think my value to the whole field of teaching history is that I have prepared during my lifetime, and I have prepared in the years when no one was thinking anything about black studies, but I kept on preparing until ultimately the door opened. I had to search, however, for some definitions of myself, and during that last year in grammar school, I began to receive some of the privileges in the school that generally went to the light-complected youngsters whom we called "The Light Brigade." They were sons and daughters of the professional blacks—the doctors and the teachers who were usually of light complexion. I was the leader of the group called "The Dark Brigade," the poorest of the children who came from the other side of the railroad tracks. I received that privilege in the school, not just as the leader of the contingent of young people who came form my neighborhood, but because for once the teachers could nominate the best student to ring the bell. Mrs. Taylor, who played no favorites, nominated me.

This privilege gave me my first sense of power—the feeling that I could stand in a window and ring a bell and five hundred children would march out, or I could ring it earlier or later, but they were simply immobile until I rang that bell. After handling my responsibility a little recklessly for a few days by ringing the bell a little early or a little late just to prove my prerogative to do it, I realized that I was not living up to my best potential as Mrs. Taylor meant it. Then I began to exercise this responsibility in the exact manner in which it was supposed do be exercised: to ring the bell for the first recess at exactly 10:15 A.M., to ring the bell for the second recess at noon, to ring for the return of the children into the school at exactly 12:45 P.M., and to ring for dismissal at exactly 3:00 P.M. Thereby, I learned something about the proper use of authority and responsibility.

I wanted to advance the status of my particular little group, the poorest students in the school. They were not the poorest in the way they learned their lessons because they could readily compete with students who came from homes where they had books and some degree of comfort and who wore shoes even in the summertime (which was unthinkable to us because generally we had one pair of shoes and that pair had to last the entire year). I wanted, however, to do something to make my group look exceptionally good. I had been the leader of the current events forum in my school, and because I worked before and after school mostly for white people who had good libraries and children who never read the books, I began to borrow books from their libraries and bring them home. In Columbus, Georgia, where they had Jim Crow libraries and black people could not use the public library, I began to forge the names of well-known white people on notes that instructed the librarian to give me a certain book. I accumulated a great many books that way. This illegitimate book borrowing went on for quite some time until one day the white person whose name I had forged appeared in the library at the same time I did. That put an end to my illegitimate use of the public library of Columbus.

One Friday evening when the teachers let us do whatever we wanted to do, I planned to do something extraordinary in the leadership of the current events forum. My group had always done a

few exceptional things because I would take the magazines and newspapers from the homes of the whites, and, rather than throw them into the garbage can, I would distribute them among our group. I also brought copies of the World Almanac once a year. My group, therefore, always had news from Atlanta, news about the Japanese navy, and news about many different things. When they spoke in school about current events, they were able to speak with authority about international news because they had authoritative sources.

I have always had a phenomenal memory. When I was a youngster, I could quote verbatim much of what I had read in almanacs and in small encyclopedias. In trying literally to outdo "The Light Brigade," I decided to prepare something on the role of the black man in ancient history. I went to a lawyer for whom I worked. He was a kind man whose library I had used quite extensively. I asked him for a book on the role that black people had played in ancient history. In a kindly was he told me that I came from a people who had no history but, that if I persevered and obeyed the laws, my people might one day make history. Then he paid me the highest complement that a white man could pay a black man in the period when I was growing up. He told me that one day I might grow up to be a great Negro like Booker T. Washington.

At that time white people considered that the greatest achievement to which a black man could aspire was to reach the status of the great educator, Booker T. Washington. He *had been* a great educator and he *did* build up Tuskegee Institute, but he consistently cautioned his people to be patient with the Jim Crow system and to learn to be good servants and artisans. He said it was more important to earn a dollar a day (at the turn of the century that was considered good pay for a black man) than to hope or work to sit next to white people in the opera. He was actually telling his people never to seek social equality, and later on he was challenged by W.E.B. DuBois, who created a whole new school of thought based on the belief that blacks should aspire to anything they wanted, be it street cleaner or president

At the time of my conversation with the lawyer I had nothing for or against Booker T. Washington. I really didn't know much about the lawyer, and his philosophy of racial equality didn't mean a great deal to me. What insulted every part of me to the very depth of my being was his assumption that I came from a people without any history. At that point of my life I began a systematic search for my people's role in history.

Other Influences

During my first year in high school I was doing chores and, because the new high school did not even have a cloakroom, I had to hold the books and papers of a guest lecturer. The speaker had a copy of a book called *The New Negro*. Fortunately I turned to an essay written by a Puerto Rican of African descent with a German-sounding name. It was called "The Negro Digs Up His Past," by Arthur A. Schomburg (edited by Alan Locke. New York: Albert and Charles Bone, 1925, pp. 231–37). I knew then that I came from a people with a history older even than that of Europe. It was a most profound and overwhelming feeling—this great discovery that my people did have a place in history and that, indeed, their history is older than that of their oppressors.

The essay, "The Negro Digs Up His Past," was my introduction to the ancient history of the black people. Years later when I came to New York, I started to search for Arthur A. Schomburg. Finally, one day I went to the 135th Street library and asked a short-tempered clerk to give me a letter to Arthur A. Schomburg. In an abrupt manner she said, "You will have to walk up three flights." I did so, and there I saw Arthur Schomburg taking charge of the office containing the Schomburg collection of books relating to African people the world over, while the other staff members were out to lunch. I told him impatiently that I wanted to know the history of my people, and I wanted to know it right now and in the quickest possible way. His patience more than matched my impatience.

He said, "Sit down, son. What you are calling African history and Negro history is nothing but the missing pages of world history. You will have to know general history to understand these specific aspects of history." He continued patiently, "You have to study your oppressor. That's where your history got lost." Then I began to think that at last I will find out how an entire people—my people—disappeared from the respected commentary of human history.

It took time for me to learn that there is no easy way to study history. (There is in fact, no easy way to study anything.) It is necessary to understand all the components of history in order to recognize its totality. It is similar to knowing where the tributaries of a river are in order to understand the nature of what made the river so big. Mr. Schomburg, therefore, told me to study general history. He said repeatedly, "Study the history of your oppressor."

I began to study the general history of Europe, and I discovered that the first rise of Europe—the Greco-Roman period—was a period when Europe "borrowed" very heavily from Africa. This early civilization depended for its very existence on what was taken from African civilization. At that time I studied Europe more that I studied Africa because I was following Mr. Schomburg's advice, and I found out how and why the slave trade started.

When I returned to Mr. Schomburg, I was ready to start a systematic study of the history of Africa. It was he who is really responsible for what I am and what value I have for the field of African history and the history of black people the world over.

I grew up in Harlem during the depression, having come to New York at the age of seventeen. I was a young depression radical—always studying, always reading, taking advantage of the fact that in New York City I could go into a public library and take out books, read them, bring them back, get some more, and even renew them after six weeks if I hadn't finished them. It was a joyous experience to be exposed to books. Actually, I went through a period of adjustment because my illegitimate borrowing of books from the Jim Crow library of Columbus, Georgia, had not prepared me to walk freely out of a library with a book without feeling like a thief. It took several years before I really felt that I had every right to go there.

During my period of growing up in Harlem, many black teachers were begging for black students, but they did not have to beg me. Men like Willis N. Huggins, Charles C. Serfait, and Mr. Schomburg literally trained me not only to study African history and black people the world over but to teach this history.

My Teaching

All the training I received from my teachers was really set in motion by my great grandmother telling me the stories of my family and my early attempts to search first for my identity as a person, then for the definition of my family, and finally for the role of my people in the in the whole flow of human history.

One thing that I learned very early was that knowing history and teaching it are two different things, and the first does not necessarily prepare one for the second. At first I was an exceptionally poor teacher because I crowded too many of my facts together and they were poorly organized. I was nervous, overanxious, and impatient with my students. I began my teaching career in community centers in Harlem. However, I learned that before I could become an effective teacher, I had to gain better control of myself as a human being. I had to acquire patience with young people who giggled when they were told about African kings. I had to understand that these young people had been so brainwashed by our society that they could see themselves only as depressed beings. I had to realized that they had in many ways adjusted to their oppression and that I needed considerable patience, many teaching skills, and great love for them in order to change their attitudes. I had to

learn to be a more patient and understand human being. I had to take command of myself and understand why I was blaming people for not being so well versed in history. In effect, I was saying to them, "How dare you not know this?"

After learning what I would have to do with myself and my subject matter in order to make it more understandable to people with no prior knowledge, I began to become an effective teacher. I learned that teaching history requires not only patience and love but also the ability to make history interesting to the students. I learned that the good teacher is partly an entertainer, and if he lost the attention of his class, he has lost his lesson. A good teacher, like a good entertainer, first must hold his audience's attention. Then he can teach his lesson.

I taught African history in community centers in the Harlem neighborhood for over twenty years before I had any regular school assignment. My first regular assignment was as director of the Heritage Teaching Program at Haryou-Act, an antipoverty agency in Harlem. Here I had the opportunity after school to train young black persons in how to approach history and how to use history as an instrument of personal liberation. I taught them that taking away a people's history is a way to enslave them. I taught them that history is a two-edged sword to be used for oppression or liberation. The major point that I tried, sometimes successfully, to get across to them is that history is supposed to make one self-assured but not arrogant. It is not supposed to give one any privileges over other people, but it should make one see oneself in a new way in relation to other people.

After five years in the Haryou-Act project, I accepted my first regular assignment at the college at which I still teach. I serve also as visiting professor at another university and as an instructor in black heritage during the summer program conducted for teachers by the history department of a third major university. I also travel to the extent that my classes will permit, training teachers how to teach about black heritage. The black power explosion and the black studies explosion have pushed men like me to the forefront in developing approaches to creative and well-documented black curricula. Forced to be in the center of this arena, I have had to take another inventory of myself and my responsibilities. I have found young black students eager for this history and have found many of them having doubts about whether they really had a history in spite of the fact that they had demanded it. I have had to learn patience all over again with young people on another lever.

On the college level I have encountered another kind of young black student—much older than those who giggle—the kind who does not believe in himself, does not believe in history, and who consequently is in revolt. This student says in effect, "Man, you're turning me on. You know that we didn't rule ancient Egypt." I have had to learn patience all over again as I learned to teach on a level where students come from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

In all my teaching, I have used as my guide the following definition of heritage, and I would like to conclude with it.

Heritage, in essence, is the means by which people have used their talents to create a history that gives them memories they can respect and that they can use to command the respect of other people. The ultimate purpose of heritage and heritage teaching is to use people's talents to develop awareness and pride in themselves so that they themselves can achieve good relationships with other people.

Portrait of a Liberation Scholar

BY John Henrik Clarke

Almost from the beginning as a child I started to raise essential questions inside myself about the things I observed, and about the things people declared "true" and literally dared me to question. These who would impose the "truth" on me had no control over me when I was alone. I would question their truth and keep my conclusions to myself. I did not argue with them about what I thought or felt because I never told them. I lived inside myself seemingly forever and hoped for the day when I could speak my mind.

Essential Questioning

The earliest and most persistent question that came to my mind while growing up in a strict Baptist household and a very religious family was why do we use God to excuse so many man-made things, so much man-made misery? People in my family, community and race attribute to God a lot of things which are ungodly, and then claim that God will straighten them out in the by-and-by. We seem not to want to understand that God did not mess things up in the first place. We have made a folklore out of this limited view of God and out of God-dependency as a spiritual necessity when we gave up on ourselves or others. We say that we have done all you can for them and then leave them alone. God will fix it by-and-by. Why must God fix something that God did not initiate and did not cause? What kind of God is this, or, more precisely, what kind of faith is this?

I believe that if God was merciful enough to give you a brain, two functioning hands, and two legs where you put one in front of the other, then God has given you the facility to take care of yourself, to be responsible for your actions and for what happens to you. This is as self-evident to me as abilities to taste and to distinguish between a flower and an ear of corn. We use God as an excuse for not taking responsibility for our lives. This was not an anti-God argument. We have drawn the wrong conclusions from religion. Instead of being a source of liberation, our religions have become psychological traps. It is ironic that people have to leave religion as it was (and still is) practiced in order to understand and appreciate its meaning and to enjoy its benefits.

While in Baptist Sunday school, I began to look at the images they presented of God—that God was all loving, and that God was universal. If these claims are true, why do some people work very little and have so much, and why do others work so hard and have so little? If he is merciful, show me the mercy in this case? As a child, I could not ask these questions externally because I would be slapped down and it was impolite. I would be called "child of the devil."

Something grew in me early that I would have to grow to adulthood to understand. I am as religious as any person on earth and I had something that was above religion—spirituality! I was spiritual and that spirituality is the big umbrella under which religions function and out of which religions came. To be truly spiritual makes you a part of all religions without having to adhere to the mythology in any of them. But while growing up I had to brood and keep these impressions to myself. I had not worked out the images of all those white angels, a white God and white saints. I could not understand how of all the people who died down through the years, why not a single black or brown person got into heaven? Heaven was snow-white and even the devil was red.

What I grew up brooding over and confused by were the millions of impressions, ideas, and beliefs

that see myself and my people outside the context of history. It appeared that we had no place in history, no place in religion, had contributed nothing to civilization and, therefore, could not exist or be acknowledge as of value as human beings in the present. This is what drove me to study history seriously and at an early age in my life. After reading the Bible my curiosity led me to encyclopedias, almanacs, and out of town newspapers. I used to even read movie magazines. Since I had good memory, I could remember the names of all of the movie stars, as well as the names of the stars' wives. This was pure nonsense and rubbish of no meaning to black people or to anyone else. Devoting my mind to nonsense occurred in school as well. Because I was a good student, I had to memorize all of the state capitals. I had to ask essential questions inside myself amidst a clutter of irrelevant information that those around seemed to think important.

When it became apparent to me that I wanted to do more serious reading, I left "Jim Crow" Columbus, Georgia, when I was eighteen. There was very little to hold me since my mother had died in 1922 when I was about seven. She was from the Mays family out of which came the famous baseball player, Willie Mays. My father's income was not enough for us to survive on. So she earned extra money as a washerwoman taking in white people's laundry. She did whole bundles from one white family for one dollar—wash and iron. Sometimes they would throw in the soap. Now, these same white people would call us "lazy people" on welfare. Yet for 300 years during our slavery and during "Jim Crow," white people were on welfare, and we paid for it.

After my mother nearly worked herself to death, I will never forget seeing her in that racially segregated hospital. The hospital was totally inadequate and it stank, literally stank. No one deserved to be put in such a place. But there she was, a beautiful woman, dying needlessly because whites denied us access to adequate hospital facilities. She died from pellagra, a disease caused by insufficient diet. It was bad enough being poor, but it was far worse being regarded as so utterly worthless as not even to deserve to be alive.

My mother was a beautiful quiet woman, who loved all of her children and tried to keep it a secret that I was her personal favorite. She told me so on her last day in the hospital. I knew that she would never come home. I hate hospitals to this day. Despite our short time together, she and two other women helped me to form a positive concept of myself. Besides my mother, there was my great grandmother who witnessed the last slaves bought over from Africa, and finally there was my fifth grade teacher who taught me to believe in myself. I feel the presence of those three women even today.

My mother's death was not the only event that prompted me to leave the South. There was my own circumstance. After my mother died. My father went back to Union Springs, Alabama, chose another wife, and returned to Columbus, Georgia. I finished grammar school, and then I had to work because my family needed my financial support. Our poverty did not care that I was a good student. My jobs were to haul wood and take breakfast to my father and his co-workers. He worked in a brickyard where the men had to go to work very early. I would go to their houses, take their breakfasts to the men, and then go to school. There were six men. At the end of the week, I would get five cents from each. So I made 30 cents a week.

I was fortunate to be able to go to school at all. Only one child in each family living outside the city limits could go to the city school because you had to pay $3.75 for a book fee. My father only made $12 to $15 per week and we needed every penny of it. So I was the one chosen from my family. All of my brothers and sisters believe to this day that they should have been chosen to go to school. For example, the last time I saw my brother, Alvin, in Detroit, we were eating together and I answered a question for his wife. He said smugly, "my brother went to the city school"—meaning that I had a terrible advantage over him.

I read as much as I could by picking up books from the white people I worked for and by borrowing books. Most of these white people had books for decoration and had not read them. I would go to

the public library as if I was on an errand for a white person. Blacks could not use the library at the time. I would forge their name to take books out. My experience just calls to mind that the story has yet to be told of what black people in the South did in order to survive. We lived in an atmosphere tantamount to Nazism right here in the U.S. I swore that I would get out of the South when I could. Eighteen years was long enough.

Being "Taken In"

Miss Roselee took me in. She was a maid and cook in one of the white homes that I did chores in. I went to Miss Roselee and stayed there for four years. She had an old boarding-house that was an undeclared house of prostitution. That did not faze me because the ladies were nice to me and gave me school, lunch and church money. "Taking in" was a custom and substitute for adoption among blacks in the South. "Taking in" a young person was part of our humanity that we then took for granted and has now passed from us unnoticed. This was part of our extended family practices. But now extended families can no longer afford to do this for economic reasons.

We have not discussed "taking in" and other indigenous customs as part of how we survived. How is it that people would just take in a child with no paperwork and raise that child as their own straight up into manhood or womanhood, ask no questions, and not be compensated in any way? The people who explain blacks to white people have ignored our customs, and the things we did to survive and, in doing so, have done black people a great disservice. Clearly, I was better off "taken in" at a house of prostitution than I was at home because of our poverty. While "taken in" I was able to go to school where I completed the eighth grade.

I traveled by boxcar to Chicago in an unsuccessful attempt to get into the World's Fair in 1932. If you did not know anyone in Chicago to stay with and had no money, the police would not let you enter the city. I found myself back on a freight-train and on my way to Jersey City—a nickel ferry ride from New York City. I have lived in New York for over 50 years. What attracted me initially was the opportunity to go to WPA school at night. It did not matter then whether or not I graduated from high school. What was important to me was that I could read anything I wanted and as much as I could and could question anyone. My readings and associations led me to further questioning.

Radical Associations

I was immediately drawn to radical elements. They were the only ones who acknowledge our plight and attempted to do anything about it. I became active in the Young Communist League. I was never a member of the Communist Party, contrary to what many believed. As a matter of principle, if I had been a member of the Communist Party, I would have said so unashamedly. I was active with radicals who were committed to doing something. This is where those who claimed that I was a communist got mixed up. There were communist-sponsored activities where non-communists like myself were more effective and more active. For example, I was active in the Scottsboro and Angelo Herndon cases as a young street speaker and fundraiser. I was at the rallies and did things automatically.

My first act with the Young Communist League was to prevent Henry Winston and family from being evicted from their Lower East Side apartment. The law was written in such a way that if you are evicted and someone put your things back in the house, the marshal had to wait another thirty days to give you another eviction notice. In three days you could find another place to stay. So I was head of a group of young Turks who put their furniture back in the house. Henry and I remained friends, though we had some strong disagreements about Marxism.

When Henry wrote his book, *Strategy for a Black Agenda*, I was the only one to raise the question

of whose black agenda? I had arrived at an important position in the 1930s—a position that has been verified by events in the communist world today. Communism and socialism were not monoliths to be applied in the same way in all nations. Each country will have to approach socialism based on its own needs and character. Poland is a good example. No matter how communist Poland becomes, they are going to remain Catholic. You can say religion is the opiate of the people and I might agree with you, but that will not change anything. Poles are going to remain Catholic. You can declare that Russia is an atheist nation all you want, but there are going to continue to be millions of religious people in Russia, including 30 million Moslems. I told Henry and other communists that they had to work from reality, not their ideological declarations. So if black people become socialist, we become Baptist socialists, Methodist socialists, holy-roller socialists, Father Divine socialists, and Moslem socialists. That is reality.

But a more telling critique of the left is in the study of African tribal societies—a study that Karl Marx missed. It is very clear that African tribal societies have successfully functioned for their people far longer than any nation devised by European thinkers. These tribal societies in their structure and administration were fundamentally socialist. They were socialist not only before Karl Marx was born, but before Europe was born. They did not wait for someone to ordain them "socialist" and say that they were "socialist." They never said once that they were socialist—they did not have to. Examine African tribal societies before they were interfered with by foreigners. There is nothing in socialism that they did not have. Africans had the purest form of socialism that ever existed on this earth.

So I have no problem with socialism if you take it from its African universal base. But if you take it solely from its European base, then I have an extreme problem with it. Then it is still based on the assumption of European dominance of the world. What European ideologies of the left and right do not understand is that they assume continued European dominance. They believe that, if the world is to be socialist, it will be socialist under European dominance. If it is to be capitalist, it is to be capitalist under European dominance. I have problems with both assumptions. In contrast, if Africa had built its own enduring socialist societies all over the continent, it would be evident by no network of jails, no psychiatrists, no orphanages, and no old people's homes.

All of the social services we in the West have built outside the family would exist inside the family if the West had any kind of humanity. African tribal societies were far beyond where we in the West are right now and beyond where we say we hope to go. So it is time to examine what Africans had as a basis that we still need. Clearly we need to stop calling African societies "primitive." If they were primitive, why is it that their social order came before and has outlived every form of government and social order that this alleged Western civilization has ever devised? The key to all of our salvations as a people here, in Africa, and in Europe may be in the social wisdom of African tribal peoples.

Harlem Street Speakers

When I came to New York I first learned of the Harlem "street speakers." I do not know of any other place in the country where there was this tradition. The "street speakers" were men who stood on street corners expounding on the topics of the day. They had to be knowledgeable, relevant, good speakers, and able to hold their own, because their audiences were not passive. People would speak up from the crowd, and boo them away if they were outdone. The speakers on Lenox Avenue were considered to be the junior or "undergraduate" speakers. The Speakers on Seventh Avenue were the senior graduate speakers—the elite. You had to speak first on Lenox Ave. And could do so for years before you could get to Seventh Ave.

On Lenox Ave. there was Ras DeKiller, who I believe became the role model for the street speaker

in Ralph Ellison's book, *Invisible Man*. On Seventh Ave., Arthur Reed was king and trained a young man named Ira Kemp. He sold dresses made by his family from door to door. Ira Kemp became the king of street speakers. Also on Seventh Ave. there was a young Dominican named Carlos Cook—arrogant as hell and a good speaker. Unknown to the audience, Cook's people owned brownstone houses in Harlem and were slum landlords. I coined the phrase "Carlos Cook is a crook." When he saw me in his audience, he would start blasting away, "we got to get rid of the traitors in our midst." When I would say something, he would turn towards me and say that "this man is a disgrace to the skin he wears." I was the only one to say that Carlos Cook was a hustler. Nonetheless, he was a very effective speaker and had a segment of the Garvey Movement in his following. Unfortunately, Cook and his Garveyite following misinterpreted Garvey. Carlos Cook passed on about 10 years ago.

The Harlem History Club

My formal introduction to history began in Harlem in the 1930s. I was active in the Harlem history club at the Harlem YMCA under Willis N. Huggins. I was fortunate enough to have met Arthur Schomburg and remembered reading his famous essay "The Negro Digs up His Past" while I was still in Georgia. I can say that it was Arthur Schomburg who taught me the interrelation of African history to world history. Willis N. Huggins taught me the political meaning of history. I would go to the lectures of William Leo Hansberry on the philosophical meaning of black history. The Harlem History Club was literally a graduate level history department with some of the most important figures in black history right there in the middle of Harlem. I learned all that I could.

Some of the club's publications would include John G. Jackson's and Willis Huggins', "A Guide to the Study of African History." In this work, the references on Africa alone made it an important contribution. Besides his essay "The Negro Digs up His Past," Schomburg wrote a book entitled *The New Negro*. Huggins and Jackson later wrote an *Introduction to African Civilization*. I was being introduced to material and books I had never seen or heard of before. This would lead me to read more deeply. It might surprise you that H.G. Wells' *Outline of History*, despite its white supremacist views, is a good outline of history. It led me to read other works in history like Spingler's *Decline of the West* and the early works of Will Durant—the seven-volume *Story of Philosophy*.

John G. Jackson's works still have a great influence on me and this is evident in my inquiry into the role of religion as a force in history and the African origins of the legend of the Garden of Eden. He was one of the earliest scholars who attempted to separate myth from truth in biblical history. See his book Pagan Origins of the Christ Myth as well as his pamphlet *Christianity Before Christ*—later made into a book. His writing indicates that in some cases biblical stories were not true and were not meant to be true. The bible was meant to provide fables and myth to illustrate the truth. If you understand the truth from the illustrations, the bible has done what it was meant to do. For example, the story of the Exodus is told to illustrate that, at a given hour, God will come to the rescue of his people. It is a story on the ultimate goodness of God to rescue his people in their most desperate time. If you have real faith in yourself and God, the story is nothing more than that and has served its purpose.

Of particular value to me were William Hansberry's "Sources for the Study of Ethiopian History" and the writings of Charles Seiford, especially his unpublished "Who Are the Ethiopians?" In addition to the historic readings, I enjoyed a lot of good general writings such as the early fiction of Richard Wright. In fact, my writing style has been influenced by the white writers such as Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, and other great writers who tried to take their writing into other dimensions that otherwise would not have been.

Dedication

I appreciate people with insight, white or black, who have looked for the fifth side of a four-sided square. This is what I have learned from writers who write well and thinkers who think well. Many young people, and older ones as well, have not developed the sense of challenge to seek out and find other people who do things well. We can all benefit from being exposed to the masters and respect the fact that what they do is something well done. Unfortunately, many scholars and writers today do not see the standard that they have to move up to. I am clearly partial to the works, writings, and thinking of our people's freedom movement, but I have no hesitation in going outside the movement to get any truth, idea, or theory that I think will add to what I have learned from my own people.

The writers and scholars in the Harlem history club were good writers and scholars, who were dedicated to their people and to history. They had little comfort or financial advantage. Being scholars meant that they had to pursue their work and live with economic uncertainty. There was uncertainty in their personal relations as well. They were expected to be ordinary men with ordinary interests when they were in fact extraordinary in who they were and what they did. They were not masochistic, yet many of them suffered at the hands of their wives, children and friends. Despite lack of support and misunderstanding from those closest to them, they stuck to what they set out to do as men of dedication.

The necessity for dedication was expressed some years ago by an Englishman named Edmund O'Brian. He said "thinking is at its best when you make a priesthood out of duty." A writer could not do his best work before he understood the priesthood of his endeavor. You cannot express ideas well externally until you have made sense of them internally. All of the external material measures of success do not motivate or really reward the dedicated scholar. I know O'Brian's point well. My deepest disappointment has not been financial or for the years that I could not get a teaching position. My disappointment was in the lack of support from the two women I married.

Teaching

For years I could not get a regular teaching job. I taught in high schools, in the community, and in odd-ball places in the Depression years and after I came out of the Army in 1945. I did odd jobs for almost 20 years to support myself, my family, and my historical studies and research. Finally, in 1949, the administrator at the New School for Social Research had to fund an African Studies Center and I was allowed to give courses in the community. Later, I became head of the heritage teaching programme for Haryou Act, the first anti-poverty programme in Harlem. Then I was training head-start teachers at New York University.

All of these positions were on soft money lines. When the grant ran out, the job ran out. I could get those kind of jobs. I became known for my radical approach to teaching and as a teacher who documented things and proved my points. Sometimes I would work in the bank at night to supplement my income. Then James Turner expressed an interest in me coming to Cornell University and the black and Puerto Rican students at Hunter College wanted me to develop their curriculum as well. I was making a little money then as a consultant for CBS and was not ready to teach yet. So I told the Dean at Hunter College that I would do two courses for $15,000 thinking they would tell me to go to hell. They accepted. To my Surprise I was hired at Hunted College and, for the first time in my life. I was paid $15,000 per year to teach two courses. The students told them to hire me and this was not a time when administrations ignored their students' wishes.

Research Topics

If I were able to direct a new generation of students in historical studies, I would have them do a number of studies that are not being done. We need to see general studies as well as detailed specializations on the peoples and cultures of the world. The work on Africa, Asia and Europe, that European scholars initiated in the nineteenth century, needs to be carefully reviewed. We will undoubtedly find much to re-do without the assumptions and bias of European supremacy. We need to see students trained in the different periods of African history, doing studies of European peoples in the same periods. What they would look to study are the connections and interactions between Africans and Europeans.

New European Studies

In particular, there is a need for Africanists to study the emergence of Europe from 1400 to 1600 AD. This period was a critical turning point in the history of the world. We need studies of the 700 years before 1400 AD when Islamic Africans, Arabs, and Berbers had isolated Europe, controlling commerce in the Mediterranean. Europe was hemmed in and struggling with its own internal conflicts. The Crusades gave Europe an external reason for certain ideas and certain people to dominate. In the process, a lot of pressure was taken off the Catholic Church to reform and Europe was forced to look at the world beyond itself.

Europeans looked at the world beyond Europe and realized that they could not conquer it, not until they learned maritime skill. This maritime knowledge, primarily from China, was translated at the University of Salamanca in Spain by Arab, African and Berber scholars. The acquisition of this knowledge by Europeans in the 1400s is an essential turning point in world history. Europeans would now punish the world for what it had suffered at its own hands and because of its own failures during the period between the decline of the Roman Empire and the second rise of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Within this 200-year rise, they would turn to Christianity to justify their criminal assault on the rest of the world. With religious justification and at best the church's indifference, they created and expanded the slave trade and the expansion of European people in settler nations beyond Europe. This period needs to be studied specifically with attention to the impact it had on African and Asian peoples.

Consider two small points. First, Europe is really not a continent. It is a part of Asia. Europe does not qualify as a continent by the dictionary definition of a continent. Second, Europeans are multiracial. These two points have major implications for how we view European cultures and the European identity. We need more work which looks at the ways that European scholars used to argue that Egypt was not a part of Africa. We need to study the relationship of Egypt to the rest of Africa, especially before the European distortion of their own and Egyptian history.

For students to understand the twenty-first century, they must understand the centuries of disruption that led us to where we are today. We really have to study the last 500 years of world history and the last 500 years of disruption in favor of Europe and the downgrading of other peoples. Once things are placed in their proper historical perspective, they might have a better idea of where the world can go tomorrow.

South America and the Caribbean

We need to study South America were the majority of the population is neither black nor white and could go either way in whom they identify with, depending on the future flow of world power. South Americans, in particular Brazilians, claim white or European preferences because they assume that blacks and African peoples will not come to power in the world community. We need to

study the formation of nations in South America and the slow destruction of Indian cultures in Mexico and in Canada. There needs to be in-depth studies of the destruction of indigenous cultures in both South and North America. There have been no in-depth studies of how these people came to America since they are supposed to be of Asian descent. The Asian ancestors of North and South American Indians could have come due to curiosity, or overcrowding. They could have been cattle-raising people who needed space. By studying the Asian migration patterns I have not been able to identify a disruptive period in Asian history that would have made that many people want to leave Asia.

What happened to the indigenous people of the Caribbean? They have disappeared. We need to study the Caribbean mentality after 1850 because the Caribbeans had a rebellious mentality up until the middle of that century. They identified themselves specifically with Africa, but they lost this after 1850 and became imitation-English, imitation-Dutch, imitation-Spanish, and now they have a color complex indicative of a confused racial identity. At what point did they lose their revolutionary attitude, and start to refer to their heritage from the viewpoint of their colonial masters?

Historic Africa

Africa as a place of history, migrations, cultures and influences on the world is older than Europe and is rich and diverse in all human experiences. Yet we still know so little about Africa as a pace with people central to world history and to the future. We need studies of the migration patterns of the peoples of Africa and the impact those migrations have had on present cultures. This would mean looking at the infusion of one African culture into another, creating still another culture that had vitality. The Ashanti and the Fante social order and world systems are examples. These people of the Upper Niger migrated and blended cultures.

We need to study cultural retentions where Africans have held on to their culture through centuries of wars and all sorts of other difficulties. They have held on to their concept of nation and concept of self. A good example is the Zulu. The Zulu nation is not South African in origin. They have East African origins and were called "Inguana." They migrated to central Africa and then down to South Africa. We need to study the marital and courtship habits of some Africans, such as the Herro who pledge to bring virginity to their wedding bed, in contrast with the Mandi who have trial marriages. Among the Mandi the couple live together and have two or three children before they are married later with a big ceremony. In cases where they do not marry, the children belong to the family of the wife because their lineage is matrilineal. Whoever later marries her becomes the guardian of the children she had by the previous man. This is a very civilized custom.

We need to study Africa since 1957 with the beginning of the independence explosion when African states started to receive their so-called independence. What happened? Africa may have gone down the wrong road to freedom because we did not first have stable African states. There was no African state methodology, and we did not observe African political traditionalisms. What we adopted were European parliamentary forms. Africa should have adopted some form of African traditionalism in government. As a result, I see where so-called independence has done more harm than good. The methods and directions towards independence we took should be an issue with in critical studies of neo-colonialism. It would have made a great difference if there had been one African state in existence with stability and vitality. It would have been a role model for other African states. But the former colonial powers do not intend any one state to be such a role model.

The USA

We need to study the period between 1619 and 1776 in America history. Very little is said about what happened between the arrival in Jamestown, Virginia, and the American Revolution. Very little has been said about the contradictions of the American Revolution. In fact, the American Revolution and its proclamation of liberty and democracy was a contradiction because it was clearly not meant for African Americans—we had not been accepted as citizens. Northerners and Southerners had no difficulty in classifying us as three-fifths of a person.

Southerners voted according to our presence in their political constituency. A white man could cast votes for us without our consent as though we were cattle. Liberty and justice for all did not include people of African descent. We need to study the small number of freedmen in the South who were stripped to the point of not being free—who were they, why did they stay, what did they think, and how did they maintain their free status? Many of them were craftsmen, barbers, builders and blacksmiths. They were restricted in where they could go, and what they could do. When they went into a new town, they had to give notice. They were watched, and had to carry papers on them at all times. This was humiliating. I challenge the idea that they were free. They just had a little more ability to move about a little more than bondsmen. We know even less about the status and experiences of New England freedmen.

Asia

We need to investigate the large historic African presence in Asia, especially in India where there are 100 million people of partly African descent. We need to investigate the African presence in the pacific islands. There are entire nations made up of people of African extraction. We need to investigate Australia before the British destroyed its black inhabitants. Tasmania was black before the British destroyed every man, woman and child on the island.

The Future

African Americans will play a key role in the new and second political awakening of African peoples. Despite our subordinate domestic status, African Americans are already the most politically active Africans outside Africa. The first political awakening was with Nkrumah in the independence of Ghana. The second will have to be based on the various nationalisms, Pan-Africanisms, and other forms of African unity that go across all religious and political lines. We can no longer discuss who is Baptist, who is Protestant, etc. If you are African, even if you are a Moslem, being African will have to take precedence over what else you are.

By asserting that there will be new a African awakening does not mean that I am ignoring the declining African American domestic plight. The destruction of black communities in the U.S. is very deliberate and the power and responsibility for this destruction rests squarely on the shoulders of government and economic leaders. They know that, if we succeed in building sound communities after all that we have been put through, we can build and run a nation. Successful communities are small role models for a successful nation. It is from the community that you get the ideas and impetus to build a nation. Those who do not want us to come to power are intent on keeping our communities so disrupted that we will never build a sound community. And these people behind this destruction are not black (no black men or women have that kind of power), do not live in our community, and cannot succeed forever.

Conclusion

We have a lot of scholars, writers and politicians doing more talking than writing and more talking than acting. We have enough actors. We have enough people to talk about us and to beg. We now need people who understand what real liberation is all about and who will act to make positive change for black people happen.

Our people and scholars are focusing on their "blackness" as an historic and cultural value. They struggle and are confused about whiteness, which is everywhere, and everything good and of value in this culture. But this does not always mean that self-appreciation is lacking. What is lacking is a proper value on blackness. I think a lot of black scholars are misleading us with statistics and charts and examples that do not make sense. They are explaining us to whites and their explanations make no sense to black people. Their unwillingness to come before black people and explain their explanations suggests that they do not believe their own explanations. Once we solve the internal problem of who we are, we can solve the external problem of what we will be.

It is understandable why I would grow up to fight Jim Crow and racial prejudice and the separation of races. I have literally risked my life fighting these things because I knew racial hatred and ignorance was so damned unnecessary. I also knew one other thing: if there is a superior race in the world, it damned well is not white people. I have always been clear on this point from early in my life.

No people can do to other people what they have done to the world. European culture has produced people who are terribly insecure and frightened. No one on this earth should tremble at the sight of them. I would fear because a coward has the upper hand and not because he is brave. He is not brave. That is something I will never get out of my mind.

If I ever have any influence over a state, the first thing I would build is a decent hospital—some place to care for children and old people. A civilization has to be measured by how it takes care of its old and its very young.

From SBA to SIA: A Great And Mighty Walk

BY John Henrik Clarke (July 1998)

On January 1, 1915 when I was born in Union Springs, Alabama, little black Alabama boys were not fully licensed to imagine themselves as conduits of social and political change. I remember when I was about three years old, I fell off something. I do not know what it was but I remember Uncle Henry putting some water on my head and I really do think that instead of the "fall" knocking something *out* of me, it knocked something *into* me. In fact, they called me "Bubba" and because I had the mind to do so, I decided to add the "e" to the family name "Clark" and changed the spelling of "Henry" to "Henrik," after the Scandinavian rebel playwright, Henrik Ibsen. I liked his spunk and the social issues he addressed in *"A Doll's House."* I understood that my family was rich in love but would probably never own the land my father, John, dreamed of owning. My mother, Willie Ella Mays Clarke, was a washerwoman for poor white folks in the area of Columbus, Georgia where the writer Carson McCullers once lived. My mother would go to the houses of these "folks" and pick up her laundry bundles and, pull them back home in a little red wagon, with me sitting on top. At the end of the week, she would collect her pay of about $3.00. My siblings are based in the varied ordering and descriptives that characterize traditional African diasporic families. They are Eddie Mary Clarke Hobbs, Walter Clarke, Hugo Oscar Clarke, Earline Clarke, Flossie Clarke (deceased), and Nathaniel Clarke (deceased). Together, in varied times and forms, we have known love. My loving sister Mary has always shared the pain and pleasure of my heartbeat in a unique and special way. We have sung our sad and warm songs together. But, we have all felt the warm rains of Spring, and felt the crispness of the fallen leaves in Fall together. As the eldest son of an Alabama sharecropper family, I was constantly troubled by a collage of North American southern behaviors and notions in reference to the inhumanity of my people. There were questions that I did not know how to ask but could, in my young, unsophisticated way, articulate a series of answers. My daddy wanted me to be a farmer; feel the smoothness of Alabama clay and become one of the first blacks in my town to own land. But, I was worried about my history being caked with that southern clay and I subscribed to a different kind of teaching and learning in my bones and in spirit.

I am a Nationalist, and a Pan-Africanist, first and foremost. I was well grounded in history before ever taking a history course. I did not spend much formal time in school—I *had* to work. I caddied for Dwight Eisenhower and Omar Bradley long before they became Generals or President, for that matter. Just between you and me, Bradley tipped better than Eisenhower did. When I was able to go to school in my early years, my third grade teacher, Ms Harris, convinced be that one day I would be a writer. I heard her, but I knew that I had to leave Georgia, and unlike my friend Ray Charles, I did not go around with *Georgia on My Mind.* Instead, my best friend, Roscoe Hester use to sit with me spellbound, as I detailed the history of Timbuktu. I soon took a slow moving train out of Georgia because I did not want to end up like Richard (Dick) Wright's *Black Boy.* I came to New York, via Chicago and then I enlisted in the army and earned the rank of Master Sergeant. Later, I selected Harlem as the laboratory where I would search for the true history of my people. I could not stomach the lies of world history, so I took some strategic steps in order to build a life of scholarship and activism in New York. I began to pave strong roads toward what I envisioned as a mighty walk where I would initiate, inspire and help found organizations to elevate my people. I am thinking specifically of *The Harlem's Writers Guild, Freedomways, Presence African, African Heritage Studies Association, Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, National Council of Black Studies, Association for the Study of Classical African Civilization.* I became an energetic

participant in circles like *Harlem Writer's Workshop*, studied history and world literature at New York and Columbia Universities and at the League for Professional Writers. And, much like the Egyptians taught Plato and Socrates what they eventually knew, I was privileged to sit at the feet of great warriors like Arthur Schomburg, Willis Huggins, Charles Seiffert, William Leo Hansberry, John G. Jackson and Paul Robeson. Before I go any further, let me assure you that I always made attempts at structuring a holistic life. My three children are products of that reality. My oldest daughter, who kind of grew up with me, became a warm and wonderful young woman. Unfortunately, she preceded me in her passage. Part of my life's mission has been to deliver a message of renewal, redemption and rededication for young people all over the world and I hope the walk has afforded me that claim. So, now and in my traditionally fatherly way, I appeal to my two younger children, Sonni Kojo and Nzingha Marie to appreciate my commitment to them and the rest of the world. Sonni, in forming your identity, I called upon the spirit of Sonni Ali, the great Emperor of the Sudanic Empires to anoint you; and Nzingha, my second daughter, I reached back for the spirit of the warrior Queen Nzingha to lay her hands upon you. I have always felt blessed by the many nieces and nephews who have surrounded me: John H. Clarke, Charlie Mae Rowell, Walter L. Hobbs, Lillie Kate Hobbs, Wanda D. McCaulley, Angela M. Rowell, Maurice Hobbs, Vanessa Rowell, Calvin T. Rowell, Michael J. McCaulley, Madalynn McCaulley and a host of other extended family and friends. Lillie, I have always loved and needed the special touches of our relationship; without you this walk would not have been completed—I have not left you.

When the European emerged in the world in the 15th and 16th centuries, for the second time, they not only colonized most of the world, they colonized information about the world, and they also colonized images, including the image of God, thereby putting us into a trap, for we are the only people who worship a God whose image we did not choose! I *had* to respond to this behavior. I could not live with this nonsense and contradiction and I challenged these insidious concepts and theories. While I have not finished my work and I remain worried about who will replace Dr. Ben and me, I am not displeased of my progress of 83 years. As we all would agree, the struggle is continuous. I have utilized several avenues: I wrote songs and while most of you are familiar with the *Boy Who Painted Christ Black*, I wrote some two hundred short stories. I question the political judgment of those who would have the nerve to paint Christ white with his obvious African nose, lips and wooly hair. My publications in the form of edited books, major essays, and book introductions are indeed important documents and number more than thirty, *Africa, Lost and Found* with Richard More and Keith Baird, and *African People at the Crossroads* are among the major publication used in History and African American Studies disciplines on college and university campuses. I am also honored to have edited books on Malcolm X and Marcus Garvey. Through the United Nations, I published monographs on Paul Robeson and W.E.B. DuBois; and, to clarify the historical record, I was compelled to publish a monograph on *Christopher Columbus and the African Holocaust*. One of my latest works, *Who Betrayed the African Revolution?*, was a very painful project, indeed. And, when I think of William Styron's error with Nat Turner and our response to it, I feel convinced that Nat was able to return to his rest in peace. Among the paths of my journey, I have had a chance to engage in dialogue at the major centers of higher education throughout North and South America, Africa and Europe. I am humbled by these opportunities and, I have been blessed as the recipient of a number of honorary degrees. My professorships at the Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell University (where my portrait hangs at the artistic genius of Don Miller) was very important for the young men and women I taught there, and the work that I did with African and Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College between 1965 and 1985 was highly significant. I have walked majestically with kings and queens and presidents and other heads of states. My special destiny with Africa, early on in this walk, afforded me the opportunity to mentor Kwame Nkrumah when he arrived in the United States as a student. The reciprocity of our relationship was manifested in my sojourn to post independence Ghana as a young journalist. Without question, my walk has been sweeter because I have shared the path with Kwame Nkrumah,

Betty Shabazz and Malcolm, C. Zora Neal Hurston, Jimmy Baldwin, Martin Luther King Jr., Richard Wright, Julian Mayfield, John G. Jackson, Cheikh Anta Diop, John O. Killens, Hoyt Fuller, Chancellor Williams, Drucella Dundee Houston. Well, what do you know, I am transitioning with all of these giants now and the process is much easier because all of you are here with me. This walk has been anointed by God and the list of walkers is endless, and all of you have touched me deeply. I humbly acknowledge Dorothy Calder, Diane James, Doris Lee, Adalaide Sanford, Ruby Dee and Ossie Davis, Barbara Adams, Judy Miller, Gil Noble, James Turner, Howard Dodson, Mari Evans, Haki Madhubuti, Selma White, William and Camille Cosby, Irving Burgess, Pat Williams and others too numerous to mention. As *all* of you must know, I made an early commitment to transfer my library to Black institutions in an effort to demonstrate my unlimited trust and respect to the black community. So, it is to the Atlanta University Center and to the Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture where I have donated the majority of my books and documents. I entrusted this task to members of the Institute for African Research, the Foundation which will perpetuate those objectives for which I dedicated my life. This has really been a long marathon and there have been caregivers at my dehydration stations that kept vigil and in the spirit of love and devotion, I thank you for your deeds. Ann Swanson and Barbara True, your work with me has been unconditional and I ask you now to accept my gratitude and know that my spirit will always be your protective shield. Chiri Fitzpatrick and Derrick Grubb, you are very familiar with the parameters of this run and with me; you are of long-distance caliber. Jim Dyer, Andy Thompson, Les Edmond, and Debbie Swire, I thank you for walking in step with me and bracing me with your strength. In you I observed the ingredients of African kings and queens. Iva Elaine Carruthers and Bettye Parker Smith, I know that I have raised you the right way and you must now move with winds of my spirit wings. You know my literary agenda and you are obligated to manage that knowledge. The ancestors have stretched out their arms and I see them beckoning now at a distance. And, like Langston Hughes has known rivers, I have known love and bliss. Sybil Williams Clarke, whom I have known for over fifty years and now my wife of ten months and my companion and friend eleven years, has made this journey with me and made my life complete. But, Sybil, your loving touch, notwithstanding, your arms were not long enough to box with the eminent moment. But, while I must make this physical departure, spiritually, I will not leave you and God will take care of you. When you feel a cool breeze blow across you face every now and then, just know that it comes from the deep reservoir of love that I hold for you. Oh, by the way, Christ is Black; I see him walking at a distance with Nkrumah: I think they are coming over to greet me.

My feet have felt the sands
Of many nations,
I have drunk the water
Of many springs.
I am old.
Older than the pyramids,
I am older than the race
That oppresses me,
I will live on...
I will out-live oppression.
I will out-live oppressors.

"DETERMINATION"
July 16, 1998

Clark Atlanta University

The Influence of Arthur A. Schomburg on My Concept of Africana Studies
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By JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

The Influence of Arthur A. Schomburg on My Concept of Africana Studies

THE MONTH OF MARCH, 1986, marked the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Schomburg Collection, the major repository of African world history in the United States. The collection, still housed in Harlem, now in the new building of the Schomburg Library, contains some of the rarest documents and books relative to the ancient, medieval and modern history of African people. Arthur A. Schomburg's personal collection formed the basis of the original library whose collection bears his name.

It is unfortunate that the present-day generation of Africans, African Americans and Puerto Ricans who know about the Collection know very little of Arthur Schomburg and his influence on Africana Studies. Arthur A. Schomburg, who belonged to both of them and who referred to himself as a Puerto Rican of African descent, had no problem in being of service to the African American and the Puerto Rican communities. In a calm and intelligent way he balanced himself between both groups without offending either. This is an art that is sorely needed at the present time. This and other facts relating to his life were brought to the attention of a large audience in two ceremonies, at the Schomburg Collection itself and at City College, Sunday, February 23, 1986.

I watched the audience at the reception I attended and wondered, with a touch of cynicism, if any of these well-dressed people had read any of the well-informed books contained in the Collection. Beyond the ceremony I questioned if any of them knew anything about the substance of this man's life. I could not get out of my mind what influence Arthur A. Schomburg had had on my life. He actually assisted me in laying the foundation for my career as a teacher of history as a Pan-Africanist, as a Socialist and as a person who sees no contradiction in being a Socialist, a Pan-Africanist and an African World Nationalist all at one time.

Through an understanding of my own people, their history and their relationship to the world, I have learned to understand all people and to appreciate their culture and their religion. In conversations with Arthur A. Schomburg and in listening to his lectures, I learned something about history that I would not publicly admit until a generation after his death. That beyond his statement that a people

must remake their past in order to shape their future, I learned that no people can survive as a people living under a culture and a religion and a political theory that they, in fact, did not in part create. In short, no people can borrow a destiny from another people.

As a teacher of Africana Studies that I refer to as African World History, I maintain that it is not enough to know the history of African people and their role in the world to understand African people; it is necessary to understand their relationship to all people in the world throughout history and the influence of non-African people on African people. I believe this is what led me to Arthur A. Schomburg, and the lessons that I learned from him went far beyond "Black History" and "Blackness." He has influenced my concept of Africana Studies and my appreciation of those eras of African history before slavery.

Arthur A. Schomburg was my mentor long before we met face to face, and he, more than anyone else, was responsible for my choice of a profession and lifetime commitment as a teacher of African world history. Our first meeting was within the pages of The New Negro, edited by Alain Locke, and published in 1925. My interest in him started with the reading of his essay, "The Negro Digs Up His Past." I read this essay around 1931, two years before I came to New York City. I had just passed my fifteenth birthday.

This essay had a profound effect on me in my search for the role that African people had played in history. I had begun my serious reading years before as a junior Sunday School teacher in a Baptist Church. I had searched for the image of my own people in the Bible and other religious literature without finding any image that reflected respect. I had already seen the early biblical spectacles made by Cecil B. DeMille, and I saw African people depicted only as slaves. I could not believe that I came from people whose sole history had been one of slavery. Schomburg's essay confirmed my suspicion that history had been turned around to reflect an image of African people that, in fact, was not true. After reading the essay, I knew that I came from a people who had played every role in the human drama from saint to buffoon. I knew that we had made great nations and that we had destroyed some. We had been both the masters and the slaves. Slavery was only one aspect of our history.

When I came to New York City in the summer of 1933, I assumed that Arthur A. Schomburg was a person of such high status that one would have to get several letters from important people in order to see him. I found Schomburg easier than I thought I would and much easier to talk to than I thought a man of his character would be. One day in the spring of 1934 I went to the desk of the old 135th Street

Library and asked a short-tempered clerk if she knew of anybody who would give me a letter to see Schomburg. She spoke abruptly and dismissed me. She said, "You will have to walk up three flights." When I walked the three flights to the Schomburg Collection, I found Arthur A. Schomburg, the lone member of the staff taking care of the Collection while the other members of his staff were at lunch.

When I got up enough nerve to speak to him, I told him where I had read his essay and what it meant to me. I had extracted the explanation from two lines of this essay.

> The American Negro must remake his past in order to make his future. History must restore what slavery took away.

I told him that I wanted to know the entire history of African people in the world, and I spoke as though I wanted to know this entire history within the hour.

His first words to me have reechoed encouragingly within me throughout the years. They were, "Sit down, son." Then he said, "What you are calling African history and Negro history is nothing but the missing pages of the world history. You will have to understand more about world history in order to understand who displaced our people from its pages." He leaned forward and spoke almost confidentially although we were alone. He said, "Son, go study the history of your oppressor. Once you know the history of your oppressor and why he had to oppress you, you will also learn why he had to remove you from the respectful commentary of human history."

Our relationship began that noon hour in 1934. He suggested a number of books on European history for me to read and told me to come back to him after I had read them. When I came back to him, I had a clearer understanding of world history and how the history of African people related to it. I knew one thing that the present generation of black students seem to miss, and that is how and why the slave trade came to be and how Europe set up the rationalization to justify it. I entered the serious study of African history through the study of the history of Europe. I learned that African people were older than the very existence of Europe and that they had had two Golden Ages and were in decline before Europe was a functioning entity or had appeared on the world scene.

My meeting with Arthur A. Schomburg opened many doors to me. Afterwards, I became active in the Harlem History Club headed by Willis N. Huggins, with the assistance of his protege, John G. Jackson, who is still alive today.

We were young people trying to find a definition of African people in history, literally looking on the other side of the "Slavery Curtain" to see what kind of people we were before the advent of slavery. Willis N. Huggins was a master teacher and the first political analyst I had ever met. He not only taught history in Sunday morning sessions; he taught the meaning of history especially as it relates to African people. He had a good and clear knowledge of European history and the mental notes I took in his class help me to this very day to look beyond Blackness and see Blackness more clearly. My studies led me to the reading of white European writers who wrote favorably of Africa and African people and who had lost credibility in their own countries.

As a young teenager I began to read John G. Jackson and Gerold Massey. I read *The Book of Beginnings* in two volumes and John G. Jackson's *The Pagan Origins of the Christ Myth*. In this book he traced the Christ myth over twenty-six civilizations and one thousand years and proved that versions of the Christ story existed one thousand years before he lived. In his small pamphlet, "Christianity before Christ," he traces this myth carefully. Now, fifty years later, he has expanded the pamphlet into a major work, published by the Atheist Press in Austin, Texas. Neither the book nor the pamphlet is offensive to any religious person. He was merely pointing out the similarity in Judaism and Christianity, a lesson needed then. A lesson needed now.

Willis N. Huggins continued his teachings and, during the Italian-Ethiopian war, went to Ethiopia. He returned to the United States and opened a bookstore on Seventh Avenue. It was the first fully equipped bookstore in Harlem.

A number of students from Africa came to the Harlem History Club, some of them active in the African Students Union. One of the students I remember best attended Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and spent his summers in Harlem. He was quite an introspective person; his name was Francis Kwame Nkrumah. When he spoke he spoke in thoroughness and with great care. None of us had any idea that this quiet lad would emerge as the leader of his nation, the Gold Coast, now called Ghana.

In 1938 the Harlem History Club became the Blyden Society after Edward Wilmot Blyden for his great contribution to the progress of blacks in the Nineteenth Century. He attempted to construct a "Three-way Bridge," a bridge of understanding between Africans,

African Americans and Africans of the Caribbean Islands, and he partly succeeded. It was Willis N. Huggins who called attention to Edward Wilmot Blyden's book, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race.* This book was a major influence on my understanding of the impact of African religions on the world. The social thought of Africans helped to create the three major religions of the world, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Very often I met Arthur A. Schomburg at the 8th Avenue subway station on his way to the Schomburg Collection. I walked with him the two long blocks to the Collection and in these private moments with him in conversation, times that were precious to me, he became more precious to me through the years. When I learned that he did not mind my meeting with him at the subway station, our meetings became more frequent and, generally, when the Youth Clubs and the Harlem History Club wanted him to speak they would ask me if he would. I do not remember him ever refusing or charging a lecture fee.

My initial meeting with Schomburg and his advice to me led me to my second black teacher of African world history, Willis N. Huggins, then the only black teacher of history in the Public School System of New York City. He taught at Bushwick High School in Brooklyn and was the author of two books, *Guide To The Study of African History* and *An Introduction to African History.*

I was active in most of the youth organizations in Harlem, being a leading Depression Radical. I was Corresponding Secretary for the National League of Negro Youth which was then headed by Eugene Orr. It was my responsibility to secure speakers for our weekly meetings. On my invitation, Schomburg addressed these meetings at least six times between 1935 and his death in 1938.

The Schomburg Collection was like an extension of my home; very few nights passed without at least one conversation with Arthur Schomburg. He continued to guide my readings and gave me pointers on how to understand history. I think that the finest moments that I spent with him were outside of the library, walking him to the subway after one of his speeches at the National League of Negro Youth and occasionally meeting him on the street and walking with him to the door of the 135th Street Library. On these occasions he seemed to be more relaxed The movement seemed to free him of the tension that sometimes reflected from him inside the library where there were so many people to see, too many questions to answer and so many books to read. Through him I had the opportunity of reading a large number of unpublished manuscripts that he had collected, especially some of

the diaries and letters of nineteenth century and twentieth century black writers. In retrospect, I think that Arthur A. Schomburg was the antecedent of the Black Studies Revolution and one of the ideological fathers of this generation. He often said, near the end of his lectures, in speaking of the lack of protest in oppressed people: "The baby that cries the most gets the most attention."

I like to think that I learned from him, among other things, when to cry and when to shout and how to do it creatively and effectively. That is one of the things which he seems to have passed on to me, and being a professor of African history, that is one thing that I try to pass on to my students, whomever they may be

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II.

Why Africana History?

BY John Henrik Clarke (January 1987)

Africa and its people are the most written about and the least understood of all of the world's people. This condition started in the 15th and the 16th centuries with the beginning of the slave trade and the colonialism system. The Europeans not only colonialized most of the world, they began to colonialize information about the world and its people. In order to do this, they had to forget, or pretend to forget, all they had previously known about the Africans. They were not meeting them for the first tine; there had been another meeting during Greek and Roman times. At that time they complemented each other.

The African, Clitus Niger, King of Bactria, was also a Cavalry Commander for Alexander the Great. Most of the Greeks' thinking was influenced by this contact with the Africans. The people and the cultures of what is known as Africa are older than the word "Africa." According to most records, old and new, Africans are the oldest people on the face of the earth. The people now called Africans not only influenced the Greeks and the Romans, they influenced the early world before there was a place called Europe.

When the early Europeans first met Africans, at the crossroads of history, it was a respectful meeting and the Africans were not slaves. Their nations were old before Europe was born. In this period of history, what was to be later known as "Africa" was an unknown place to the people who would someday be called, "Europeans." Only the people of some of the Mediterranean Islands and a few states of what would become the Greek and Roman states knew of parts of North Africa, and that was a land of mystery. After the rise and decline of Greek civilization and the Roman destruction of the City of Carthage, they made the conquered territories into a province which they called Africa, a word derived from "afri," and the name of a group of people about whom little is known. At first the word applied only to the Roman colonies in North Africa. There was a time when all dark-skinned people were called Ethiopians, for the Greeks referred to Africa as, "The Land of the Burnt-Face People."

If Africa, in general, is a man-made mystery, Egypt, in particular, is a bigger one. There has long been an attempt on the part of some European "scholars" to deny that Egypt was a part of Africa. To do this they had to ignore the great masterpieces on Egyptian history written by European writers such, *Ancient Egypt, Light of the World, Vols. I & II*, and a whole school of European thought that placed Egypt in proper focus in relationship to the rest of Africa.

The distorters of African history also had to ignore the fact that the people of the ancient land which would later be called Egypt, never called their country by that name. It was called, TA-MERRY or KAMPT and sometimes KEMET or SAIS. The ancient Hebrews called it MIZRAIN. Later the Moslem Arabs used the same term but later discarded it. Both the Greeks and the Romans referred to the country as the "Pearl of the Nile." The Greeks gave it the simple name AEGYPTCUS. Thus the word we know as Egypt is of Greek origin.

Until recent times most Western scholars have been reluctant to call attention to the fact that the Nile River is 4,000 miles long. It starts in the south, in the heart of Africa, and flows to the north. It was the world's first cultural highway. Thus Egypt was a composite of many African cultures. In his article, "The Lost Pharaohs of Nubia," Professor Bruce Williams infers that the nations in the South could be older than Egypt. This information is not new. When rebel European scholars were saying

this 100 years ago, and proving it, they were not taken seriously.

It is unfortunate that so much of the history of Africa has been written by conquerors, foreigners, missionaries and adventures. The Egyptians left the best record of their history written by local writers. It was not until near the end of the 19th century when a few European scholars learned to decipher their writing that this was understood.

The Greek traveler, Herodotus, was in Africa about 450 B.C. His eyewitness account is still a revelation. He witnessed African civilization in decline and partly in ruins, after many invasions. However, he could still see the indications of the greatness that it had been. In this period in history, the Nile Valley civilization of Africa had already brought forth two "Golden Ages" of achievement and had left its mark for all the world to see.

Slavery and colonialism strained, but did not completely break, the cultural umbilical cord between the Africans in Africa and those who, by forced migration, now live in what is called the Western World. A small group of African American and Caribbean writers, teachers and preachers, collectively developed the basis of what would be an African-consciousness movement over 100 years ago. Their concern was with Africa, in general, Egypt and Ethiopia, and what we now call the Nile Valley.

In approaching this subject, I have given preference to writers of African descent who are generally neglected. I maintain that the African is the final authority on Africa. In this regard I have reconsidered the writings of W.E.B. DuBois, George Washington Williams, Drussila Dungee Houston, Carter G. Woodson, Willis N. Huggins, and his most outstanding living student, John G. Jackson (now deceased; editor). I have also reread the manuscripts of some of the unpublished books of Charles C. Seifert, especially manuscripts of his last completed book, *Who Are the Ethiopians?* Among Caribbean scholars, like Charles C. Seifert, J.A. Rogers (from Jamaica) is the best known and the most prolific. Over 50 years of his life was devoted to documenting the role of African personalities in world history. His two-volume work, *World's Great Men of Color*, is a pioneer work in the field.

Among the present-day scholars writing about African history, culture, and politics, Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan's books are the most challenging. I have drawn heavily on his research in the preparation of this article. He belongs to the main cultural branch of the African world, having been born in Ethiopia, growing to early manhood in the Caribbean Islands and having lived in the African American community of the United States for over 20 years. His major books on African history are: *Black Man of the Nile*, 1979, *Africa: Mother of Western Civilization*, 1976 and *The African Origins of Major Western Religions*, 1970.

Our own great historian, W.E.B. DuBois tells us, "Always Africa is giving us something new … On its back bosom arose one of the earliest, of self-protecting civilizations, and grew so mightily that it still furnishes superlatives to thinking and speaking men. Out of its darker and more remote forest vastness came, if we may credit many recent scientists, the first welding of iron, and we know that agriculture and trade flourished there when Europe was a wilderness.

Dr. DuBois tells us further that, "Nearly every human empire that has arisen in the world, material and spiritual, has found some of its greatest crises on this continent of Africa. It was through Africa that Christianity became the religion of the world … It was through Africa that Islam came to play its great role of conqueror and civilizer."

Egyptian and the nations of the Nile Valley were, figuratively, the beating heart of Africa and the incubator for its greatness for more than a thousand ears. Egypt gave birth to what later would become known as "Western Civilization," long before the greatness of Greece and Rome.

This is a part of the African story, and in the distance it is a part of the African American story. It is

difficult for depressed African Americans to know that they are a part of the larger story of the history of the world. The history of the modern world was made, in the main, by what was taken from African people. Europeans emerged from what they call their "middle-Ages," people poor, land poor and resources poor. They raided and raped the cultures of the world, mostly Africa, and filed their homes and museums with treasures, then they called the people primitive. The Europeans did not understand the cultures of non-Western people then; they do not understand them now.

History, I have often said, is a clock that people use to tell their political time of day. It is also a compass that people use to find themselves on the map of human geography. History tells a people where they are and what they are. Most importantly, history tells a people where they still must go and what they still must be.

There is no way to go directly to the history of African Americans without taking a broader view of African world history. In his book *Tom-Tom*, the writer John W. Vandercook makes this meaningful statement:

> *A race is like a man. Until it uses its own talents, takes pride in its own history, and loves its own memories, it can never fulfill itself completely.*

This, in essence, is what African American history and what African American History Month is about. The phrase African American or African American History Month, taken at face value and without serious thought, appears to be incongruous. Why is there a need for an African American History Month when there is no similar month for the other minority groups in the United States? The history of the United States, in total, consists of the collective history of minority groups. What we call 'American civilization' is no more than the sum of their contributions. The African Americans are the least integrated and the most neglected of these groups in the historical interpretation of the American experience. This neglect has made African American History Month a necessity.

Most of the large ethnic groups in the United States have had, and still have, their historical associations. Some of these associations predate the founding of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, (1915). Dr. Charles H. Wesley tells us that, "Historical societies were organized in the United States with the special purpose in view of preserving and maintaining the heritage of the American nation."

Within the frame work of these historical societies many ethnic groups, Black as well as white, engaged in those endeavors that would keep alive their beliefs in themselves and their past as a part of their hopes for the future. For African Americans, Carter G. Woodson led the way and used what was then called, *Negro History Week*, to call attention to his people's contribution to every aspect of world history. Dr. Woodson, then Director of The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, conceived this special week as a time when public attention should be focused on the achievements of America's citizens of African descent.

The acceptance of the facts of African American history and the African American historian as a legitimate part of the academic community did not come easily. Slavery ended and left its false images of Black people intact. In his article, "What the Historian Owes the Negro," the noted African American historian, Dr. Benjamin Quarles, says:

> *The Founding Fathers revered by historians for over a century and a half, did not conceive of the Negro as part of the body of politics. Theoretically, these men found it hard to imagine a society where Negroes were of equal status to whites. Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, who was far more liberal than the run of his contemporaries, was never the less certain that "the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government."*

I have been referring to the African origin of African American literature and history. This preface is essential to every meaningful discussion of the role of the African American in every aspect of American life, past and present. I want to make it clear that the Black race did not come to the United States culturally empty-handed.

The role and importance of ethnic history is in how well it teaches a people to use their own talents, take pride in their own history and love their own memories. In order to fulfill themselves completely, in all of their honorable endeavors it is important that the teacher of history of the Black race find a definition of the subject, and a frame of reference that can be understood by students who have no prior knowledge of the subject.

The following definition is paraphrased from a speech entitled. "The Negro Writer and His Relation To His Roots," by Saunders Redding, (1960):

> *Heritage, in essence, is how a people have used their talent to create a history that gives them memories that they can respect, and use to command the respect of other people. The ultimate purpose of history and history teaching is to use a people's talent to develop an awareness and a pride in themselves so that they can create better instruments for living together with other people. This sense of identity is the stimulation for all of a people's honest and creative efforts. A people's relationship to their heritage is the same as the relationship of a child to its mother.*
>
> *I repeat:*
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> *History is a clock that people use to tell their time of day. It is a compass that they use to find themselves on the map of human geography. It also tells them where they are, and what they are. Most importantly, an understanding of history tells a people where they still must go, and what they still must be.*

Early white American historians did not accord African people anywhere a respectful place in their commentaries on the history of man. In the closing years of the nineteenth century, African American historians began to look at their people's history from their vantage point and their point of view. Dr. Benjamin Quarles observed that "as early as 1883 this desire to bring to public attention the untapped material on the Negro prompted George Washington Williams to publish his two-volume *History of the Negro Race in America From 1619 to 1880*."

The first formally trained African American historian was W.E.B. DuBois, whose doctoral dissertation, published in 1895, *The Suppression Of The African Slave Trade To The United States, 1638–1870*, became the first title to be published in the Harvard Historical Studies.

It was with Carter G. Woodson, another Ph.D., that African world history took a great leap forward and found a defender who could document his claims. Woodson was convinced that unless something was done to rescue the Black man from history; oversight, he would become a "negligible factor in the thought of the world;" Woodson, in 1915, founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.

Woodson believed that there was no such thing as, "Negro History." He said what was called "Negro History" was only a missing segment of world history. He devoted the greater portion of his life to restoring this segment.

Africa came into the Mediterranean world mainly through Greece, which had been under African influence; and then Africa was cut off from the melting pot by the turmoil among the Europeans and the religious conquests incident to the rise of Islam. Africa, prior to these events, had developed its history and civilization, indigenous to its people and lands. Africa came back into the general picture of history through the penetration of North Africa, West Africa and the Sudan by the Arabs. European and American slave traders next ravaged the continent. The imperialist colonizers and

missionaries finally entered the scene and prevailed until the recent re-emergence of independent African nations.

Contrary to a misconception which still prevails, the Africans were familiar with literature and art for many years before their contact with the Western World. Before the breaking-up of the social structure of the West African states of Ghana, Mali and Songhay and the internal strife and chaos that made the slave trade possible, the forefathers of the Africans who eventually became slaves in the United States lived in a society where university life was fairly common and scholars were held in reverence.

To understand fully any aspect of African American life one must realize that the African American is not without a cultural past, though he was many generations removed from it before his achievements in American literature and art commanded any appreciable attention.

Africana or Black History should be taught every day, not only in the schools, but also in the home. African History Month should be every month. We need to learn about all the African people of the world, including those who live in Asia and the islands of the Pacific.

In the twenty-first century there will be over one billion African people in the world. We are tomorrow's people. But, of course, we were yesterday's people too. With an understanding of our new importance we can change the world, if first we change ourselves.

AFRICA IN EARLY WORLD HISTORY

Empire of ancient Gaden were at their peak of power in the Middle Ages. Empire of Ghana dominated for three centuries, and Mali rose to power in the 13th Century. Empire of Songhay reached its pinnacle in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Long before Rome, continent's people were scientists, scholars, builders

By John Henrik Clarke

THE distinguished Afro-American poet Countee Cullen began his famous poem "Heritage" with this question: "What is Africa to me?" In order to understand Africa and its place in world history, we must extend the question by asking "What is Africa to the Africans and what is Africa to the world?" There is a need to locate Africa and its people on the map of human geography.

One own great historian W.E.B. Dubois tells us: "Always Africa is giving us something new. . . . On its Black bosom arose one of the earliest, if not the earliest, of self-protecting civilizations, and grew so mighty that it still furnishes superlatives to thinking and speaking men. Out of its darker and more remote forest hatmosses came, if we may credit many recent scientists, the first welding of iron, and we know that agriculture and trade flourished there when Europe was a wilderness."

Dr. Dubois tells us further that "Nearly every human empire that has arisen in the world, material and spiritual, has found some of its greatest crises on this continent of Africa. It was through Africa that Christianity became the religion of the world. In Africa the last fund of Germanic invasions spent itself within hearing of the last gasp of Byzantines, and it was again through Africa that Islam came to play its great role of conquest and civilism."

It is generally conceded in most scholarly circles that mankind originated in Africa, this makes the Africans man the father and the Africans women the mother of mankind. This is where we begin our assessment of the role of Africa and its people in world history.

Early men in Africa became geniuses at surviving under hands circumstances. Present-day archaeologists have dug up and preserved the evidence of their achievement. They made hooks to catch fish, spears to hunt with, stone knives to cut with, the bolo with which to catch birds and animals, the blow-gun, the hammer and the stone ax. In his pamphlet "The African Contributions," the writer John W. Weatherwax gives us this additional evidence: Today's cannon, long-range missiles, ship propellers, automatic harvesters, gas engines, and even most cleaners and the upholstery tack hammers have the roots of their development in the early Africans use of power. Africans grew mankind the first medium, it was the fire stick. It is the making of tools that sets man apart from, and, in a sense, above, all living creatures. Africans started mankind along the tool-making path. Cannon made it possible for man to travel further and further away from his original home. They began to explore the many rivers in Africa like the Nile, the Congo and the Niger. It was in this way that the early peoples of Africa started and organized societies began. At some time, years later, Africans driven by curiosity or some force of nature began to have Africa in large numbers. They became the most widely dispersed of all people. Evidence of their presence, at some time in history, has been found in nearly every part of the world. Africa was already old when what we now call Europe was born. The Ghanaian historian Joseph R. Dasopak called attention to this fact in his introduction to the book *United West Africa for Africa at the Bar of the Family of Nations* by Ladipo Solanke (1927) when he said:

"By the time Alexander the Great was sweeping the civilized world with conquest after conquest from Chaeronia to Gaza, from Babylon to Cabul; by the time this first of the Aryan conquerors was learning the rudiments of war and government at the feet of philosophic Aristotle; and by the time Athens was laying down the foundations of modern European civilization, the earliest and greatest Ethiopian culture had already flourished and dominated the civilized world for over four and a half centuries. Imperial Ethiopia had conquered Egypt and founded the XXVIth Dynasty, and for a century and a half the central seat of civilization in the known world was held by the ancestors of the modern Negro, maintaining and defending it against the Assyrian and Persian Empires of the East. Thus, at the time when Ethiopia was leading the civilized world in culture and conquest, East was East but West was as yet to be held. Rome was nowhere to be seen on the map, and 18 centuries were to pass before Charlemagne would rule in Europe and Egbert become first king of England. Even then, history was to drag on for another 700 weary years before Roman Catholic Europe could see fit to end the Great Schism, seen to be followed by the disturbing news of the dis-

Part of history of Africa is depicted in drawing by E. Harper Johnson of Pandhy the Great, a Nubian king who ruled around Kingdom of Kush 300 years before the birth of Christ. His family and servants bid goodbye as he leaves for battle with Libyan rivals. He later conquered Egypt and ruined much of its glory.

covery of America and by the fateful rebirth of the younger of World Civilizations."

The French writer Count C. F. Volney in his book *Ruins of Empire* (1788) made a similar statement after observing the evidence of what was once a great Ethiopian Empire. This was his observation:

"A people now forgotten discovered, while others were yet barbarians, the elements of the arts and sciences. A race of men now rejected for their subtle sins and finished hate branded, on the study of the laws of nature, these civil and religious systems which still govern the universe. . . ."

The present search for the place of African people in world history and the Black Power Revolution that produced the Black and Beautiful concept are of which the Black Studies Revolution emerged, is part of a chain reaction to the absence of African people from the accepted communalities on world history. This also means that we, as an African people, reject the rejection referred to in Count Volney's observation, and we are now demanding that other people acknowledge our contribution to world history, and their indebtedness to us.

IT CAN be said with a strong degree of certainty that Africa has had three Golden Ages. The first two reached their climax and were in decline before Europe as a functioning entity in human society was born. Africa's first Golden Age began at the beginning—with the birth of man and the development of organized societies.

In his book *The Progress And Evolution Of Man In Africa*, Dr. L. S. B. Leakey states, "In every country that one visits and where one is drawn into a conversation about Africa, the question is regularly asked, by people who should know better: 'But what has Africa contributed to world progress?' The critics of Africa forget that men of colour today, with few exceptions, are satisfied that Africa was the birthplace of man himself, and that for many hundreds of centuries thereafter, Africa was in the forefront of all human progress."

In the early development of man, the family was the most important unit in existence. Through the years the importance of this unit has not changed. The first human societies were developed for reasons relating to the needs and survival of the family. The early Africans had to make implements with which to catch fish and animals for the family table. He searched for new ways of building shelter, gathering and raising food, and domesticating animals. Our use of fire today simply continues the process started by the early Africans—the control of fire.

With the discovery of metals and how to use them, all Africa took a great leap forward. Man had learned how to take iron from the ground and turn it into spears and tools. Iron cultures spread rapidly across Africa and there were very few parts of Africa that were not influenced by these iron age cultures. Iron cultures had their greatest development in the area of Africa that is now the Eastern Sudan, in the great city-state of Meroe. The use of iron accelerated every aspect of African development and introduced a new danger—the essential use of iron weapons in warfare.

The Nile River became a great cultural highway, bringing peoples and culture out of inner Africa. These migrations by river led to the establishment of one of the greatest nations in world history, Egypt. In his book *The Destruction Of Black Civilization, Great Races Of A Race From 4000 B.C. To 2000 A.D.*, the Afro-American historian Chancellor Williams refers to Egypt as "Ethiopia's oldest daughter" and calls attention to evidence to prove the southern African origin of early Egyptian people and their civilization.

Egypt first became an organized nation about 4000 B.C. Medical interest centers upon a period in the Third Dynasty (2345-2307 B.C.) when Egypt had an ambitious pharaoh named Zoser, and Zoser, in turn, had for his chief counselor and minister a brilliant commoner named Imhotep (whose name means "He who cometh in peace"). Imhotep constructed the famous step pyramid of Saklkarah, near Memphis. The building outlook used in the construction of this pyramid revolutionized the architecture of the ancient world.

Egypt gave the world some of the greatest personalities in the history of mankind. In this regard, Imhotep is singularly outstanding. In the ancient history of Egypt, no individual left a deeper impression than the commoner Imhotep. He was the world's first multo genius. He was also the real father of medicine. In his book *Evolution Of Modern Medicine* (London, 1921, p. 19), Sir William Osler refers to Imhotep as "the first figure of a physician to stand out clearly from the mists of antiquity."

The period in Egyptian history from the Third Dynasty to the first invasion of Egypt by the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, in 1700 B.C. is, in our opinion, the apex of the first Golden Age. The western Asian domination over Egypt lasted about 125 years and was ended by the rise of Egyptian nationalism during the Seventeenth Dynasty. During this period the pharaohs (or kings) at Thebes consolidated their powers and began a united campaign to rid lower Egypt of the Hyksos invaders. When the invaders from western Asia were finally driven out by the Pharaoh Ahmose I, the splendid Eighteenth Dynasty was established and Egypt's second Golden Age began. Egypt's Golden Age did not belong to Egypt alone but included other nations in Africa, mainly Kush and Ethiopia (which at certain periods in history were one and the same). These nations further to the south were the originators of the early culture of Egypt. Egypt at this juncture in history was no longer dependent on her cultural parents and was, once more, the most developed nation in the world.

Again rulers of monumental status were coming to power. Two of the best-known rulers of this period were Queen Hatshepsut and her brother Tuthmose III. Great temples were built throughout the country, and the consequent employment of hundreds of artists and craftsmen prepared the way for the artistic glories which were still to come.

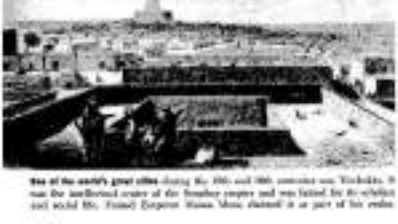
During the reign of Thothmose II, the influence of Egypt was once more extended to western Asia, now referred to as the Middle East. The age of grandeur continued. This age had a dramatic and lasting change in 1350 B.C. Around that time, Queen Tiy of Egypt gave birth to a boy who was first named Amenhotep after his father. Very little is known of his childhood except that he was sickly from birth and developed an interest in art, poetry, and religion. His closest companion was said to be Nefertiti, his beautiful little cousin. (Some archaeologists have referred to her as his sister.)

Akhenaten, often referred to as the "Heretic King," is one of history's most extraordinary monarchs. Thirteen hundred years before Christ he preached and lived a gospel of love, brotherhood, and truth. He has been called the world's first idealist, the first temporal ruler ever to lead his people toward the worship of a single God.

When Akhenaten came to the throne more than 3,000 years ago, Egypt dominated the world.

Egypt's Golden Age gradually waned and the pride and splendor that had marked the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties gave way to internal strife and confusion. Wars of conquest and colonization had drained much of her military and economic strength. In the meantime, as the nations in the south grew more powerful, they became predatory toward Egypt, which had once been their master.

The nation that is now called Ethiopia came back upon the center stage of history around 900 B.C. It was then represented by a queen who in some books is referred to as Makeda, and in others as Belkis. She is better known to the world as the Queen of Sheba. In his book *Worlds Great Men Of Color*, J. A. Rogers gives this description: "Out of the mists of three thousand years emerges this beautiful love story



One of the world's great cities during the 18th and 19th centuries was Timbuktu. It was the intellectual center of the Sudanic empire and was famed for its scholars and social life. Found Emperor Hassan Mansa, diamond is as part of his realm.

of a Black queen, who, attracted by the face of a jedoni monarch, made a long journey to see him. . . ."

IN *Ethiopia, A Cultural History*, Sylvia Pankhurst tells the story of this journey: "The history of the queen of the South, who undertook a long and arduous journey to Jerusalem, in order to learn of the wisdom of King Solomon, is deeply cherished in Ethiopia, as part of the national heritage, for she is claimed as an Ethiopian Queen, Makeda, 'a woman of splendid beauty,' who introduced the religion and culture of Israel to her own land."

By the 10th and 9th centuries B.C., Egypt had been weakened by outside attacks and by bitter disputes between its priests and the royal families. This had allowed the Kushites to the south to gain a measure of independence. They now had the confidence to move northward and conquer their former masters. In spite of the war of conquest, these Kushite (or Ethiopian) kings brought Egypt her last age of grandeur and social reform. There is a need to make a serious study of this act of internal African colonization and what it achieved at the end of the Golden Age for the two great nations of Egypt and Kush.

These Kushite kings restored the declining culture and economy of Egypt and took it to unprecedented heights of leadership in the way it cared for its people. Though a colony, Egypt was once more a world power.

The Assyrian invasion of 671 B.C. drove the Kushite forces to the south and began the hardships and attacks that destroyed the grandeur that once was Egypt. Egypt continued to decline while a young nation on the other side of the Mediterranean—Greece—began to gather its power around 500 B.C. In the year 332 B.C., Alexander the Great, a student of Aristotle, invaded Egypt. This was the first purely European invasion of Africa. The aftermath of this invasion, and the new European interest in dominating the lands of the Mediterranean world, led to the Punic Wars and the invasion by the Romans.

In Egypt a strong and shrewd young girl tried to deal with the plight of her country under the threat of Roman domination. Her name was Cleopatra.

IN THE 6th and 7th centuries A.D., Roman rule began to lose its hold on North Africa and the Middle East. African armies for state building and for bringing new societies into being was reborn in the Western Sudan (inner West Africa), where the third and last African Golden Age began.

The first of the great empires of the Western Sudan to become known to the outside world was Ghana. It began as a small settlement during the 2nd century of the Christian era. It would later develop into a state with a known history of more than a thousand years. In Europe and in the Arab countries, Ghana was known as a country rich in gold. This was a national attraction for the Arabs and later the Europeans. The country reached the height of its greatness during the reign of Tenkamenin, one of its greatest kings, who came to power in 1062 A.D. The king lived in a palace of stone and wood which was built to be defended in time of war. The empire was well organized. The political progress and social well-being of its people could be favorably compared to the best kingdoms and empires that prevailed in Europe at this time. The country had a military force of 200,000 men.

In one of a number of holy wars, or jihads, Ghana was invaded by the Almoravides under the leadership of Abu Bekr of the Sosso Empire in 1076 A.D. This conquest brought an end to Ghana's age of prosperity and cultural development. The character of the country was slow to change. Nearly 300 years later the Arab writer El Idrisi wrote of it as being "the greatest kingdom of the Blacks." In a later account, El Idrisi said, "Ghana . . . is the royal commercial of the Black countries. It is visited by rich merchants from all the surrounding countries and from the extremities of the West."

In 1087 the country regained its independence, without regaining its old strength, state organization and grandeur. The rulers of the Empire of Ghana became the Kingdom of Diara and Sosso. The provinces of Ghana became a part of the Mali Empire and were later absorbed into the Songhay Empire.

The great drama of state-building, trade and commerce, and power brokerage unfolded at Timbuktu, queen city of the Western Sudan.

Author of this article. Dr. John Henrik Clarke, is a distinguished scholar who has authored or edited a number of books, including *The Lives Of Great African Chiefs*, William Sanders' *Red Factory*, *Five Black Writers Resigned and Blue*, F.A.A. He is professor of African World History at Hunter College, New York.

Two hundred miles down the Niger from Timbuktu, the competing city of Gao stood. It was founded about the 7th century and was the capital of the large black empire of Songhay.

The famous Emperor of Mali, Mansa Musa, stopped at Timbuktu on his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. He went in regal splendor with an entourage of 50,000 persons, including 12,000 servants. Five hundred bondsmen, each of whom carried a staff of pure gold, marched in front of the Emperor. Two hundred eighty camels bore 2400 pounds of gold which this African monarch distributed as alms and gifts. Musa returned from Mecca with an architect who designed imposing buildings in Timbuktu and other parts of his realm.

To the outside world of the late medieval period, the Emperor Mansa Musa was more than an individual. He was Africa. He represented the Songhay Empire and rebuilt the University of Sankore. He figured, by name, on every map. In his lifetime he became to persons the symbol of the mystery and of the fabulous wealth of the unknown African continent. He was the most colorful of the Black kings of the 14th century. He still held his position nearly two centuries after his death.

After the death of Mansa Musa, the Empire of Mali declined in importance. Its place was taken by Songhay, whose greatest king was Askia the Great (Muhammad Toure). Askia came to power in 1493, one year after Columbus discovered America. He consolidated the territory conquered by his previous ruler, Sonni Ali, and built Songhay into the most powerful state in the Western Sudan. His realm, it is said, was larger than all Europe.

The German writer Henry Barth, in his famous work *Travels And Discoveries In North And Central Africa*, calls Askia the Great "One of the most brilliant and enlightened administrators of all times." He reorganized the army of Songhay, improved the system of banking and credit, and made the city-states of Gao, Walata, Timbuktu and Jenne into intellectual centers. Timbuktu during its reign was a city of more than 100,000 people—"People filled to the top," says a chronicler of that time, "with gold and dazzling women."

Askia encouraged scholarship and literature. Students from all over the Moslem world came to Timbuktu to study grammar, law and surgery at the University of Sankore; scholars came from North Africa and Europe to confer with learned historians and writers of this black empire. A Sudanese literature developed and many books were written. Leo Africanus, who wrote one of the best known works on the Western Sudan, says: "In Timbuktu there are numerous judges, doctors and clerics, all receiving good salaries from the king. He pays great respect to men of learning. There is a big demand for books in manuscript, imported from Barbary (North Africa). Most profit is made from the book trade than from any other line of business."

Askia has been hailed as one of the wisest monarchs of the Middle Ages. Alexander Chandenlain, in his book *The Contribution Of The Negro To Human Civilization*, says of him: "In personal character, in administrative ability, in devotion to the welfare of his subjects, in sponsorship of learning, foreign influences, and in wisdom in the

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AFRICA IN WORLD HISTORY *Continued*

adoptees of enlightened ideas and institutions from abroad. King Askia was certainly the equal of the average European monarch of the time and superior to many of them."

After the death of Askia the Great in 1538, the Songhay Empire began to lose its strength and control over its vast territory. When the Songhay Empire collapsed after the capture of Timbuktu and Gao by the Moroccans in 1591, the whole of the Western Sudan was devastated by the invading troops. The Sultan of Morocco, El-Ghanem, had sent a large army with European firearms across the Sahara to attack the once powerful empire of Songhay. The prosperous city of Timbuktu was plundered by the army of Pachachiro. A state of anarchy prevailed. The University of Sankore which had stood for over 300 years was destroyed and the faculty exiled to Morocco. The greatest Sudanese scholar of that day, Ahmed Baba, was among those exiled. Baba was a scholar of great depth and inspiration. He was the author of more than 40 books on such diverse themes as theology, astronomy, ethnography and biography. His rich library of 1800 books was lost during his expulsion from Timbuktu.

Timbuktu provides the most terrible example of the struggles of the West African states and towns as they strove to preserve what was once their Golden Age. The Songhay, Borkum and Tuareg from the north showed them no mercy. Timbuktu had previously been raided by the Tuareg as early as 1432 and they had occupied it for 30 years. Between 1696 and 1893, the Tuareg had already taken advantage of the situation to plunder Timbuktu once more. Between 1725 and 1728 the Tuareg once more occupied and looted Timbuktu. Thus Timbuktu, once the queen city of the Western Sudan, with over then 100,000 inhabitants, and the center of a powerful state, degenerated into a shadow of its former stature.

Now, West Africa entered a sad period of decline. During the Moslem conquestas, wrack and ruin became the order of the day. When the Europeans arrived in this part of Africa and saw these conditions they assumed that nothing of value and value had existed in these countries. This mistaken impression, too often repeated, has influenced the interpretation of African and Afro-American life in history for over 400 years.

Africa's time of tragedy and decline started both in Europe and in Africa itself. For more than 1,000 years Africans had been bringing into being empires after empire. The opening of Europe's era of exploration, Africa's own internal strife, and the slave trade (worst) what had been Africa's Third Golden Age into a time of troubles. The "independence explosion" that started with Ghana in 1957 was a signal to the world that Africans were breaking away from the effects of slavery and colonialism, and were determined to resume the mainstream of history.

Time of trouble: for Africa, author says, began with the opening of Europe's era of exploration of the continent. Slave trade with Europe, internal strife and trading to Asia: Africa's third and last "Golden age" had ended. Three megalopolis days ago, "Wildlife" as it is seen at the Wall, Fla., April 30, 1980.

Africa: The Passing of the Golden Ages

BY John Henrik Clarke (May 1988)

1. The early beginnings

It can be said with a strong degree of certainty that Africa has had three Golden Ages. The first two reached their climax and were in decline before Europe as a functioning entity in human society was born. Africa's first Golden Age began at the beginning—with the birth of man and the development of organized societies. It is general conceded in most scholarly circles that mankind originated in Africa; this makes the African man the father and the African woman the mother of mankind

In his book *The Progress and Evolution of Man in Africa*, Dr. L.S.B. Leakey states that:

> In every country that one visits and where one is drawn into a conversation about Africa, the question is regularly asked, by people who should know better: "But what has Africa contributed to world progress?" The critics of Africa forget that men of science today, with few exceptions, are satisfied that Africa was the birthplace of man himself, and that for many hundreds of centuries thereafter, Africa was in the forefront of all human progress.

In the early development of man, the family was the most important unit in existence. Through the years the importance of this unit has not changed. The first human societies were developed for reasons relating to the needs and survival of the family. The early African had to make hooks to catch fish, spears to hunt with, and knives. He searched for new ways of building shelter, gathering and raising food, and domesticating animals. Our use of fire today simply continues the process started by the early Africans—the control of fire. In the making of tools that sets man apart from all living creatures, Africans started man along the tool-making path.

With the discovery of metals and how to use them all Africa took a great leap forward. Man had learned how to take iron from the ground and turn it into spears and tools. Iron cultures spread rapidly across Africa and there were very few parts of Africa that were not influenced by these Iron Age cultures. Iron cultures had their greatest development in the area of Africa that is now the Eastern Sudan, in the great city-state of Meroe. The use of iron accelerated every aspect of African development and introduced a new danger—the eventual use of iron weapons in warfare.

2. The Nile Valley Civilization – The Rise

The Nile River became a great cultural highway, bringing peoples and cultures out of inner Africa. These migrations by river led to the establishment of one of the greatest nations in world history—Egypt. In his book *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.*, the Afro-American historian Chancellor Williams refers to Egypt as "Ethiopia's oldest daughter," and calls attention to the evidence to prove the southern African origin of early Egyptian people and their civilization.

Egypt first became an organized nation about 6000 B.C. Medical interest centers upon a period in the Third Dynasty (5345–5307 B.C.), when Egypt had an ambitious pharaoh named Zaser. Zaser, in turn had for his chief counselor and minister a brilliant commoner named Imhotep (whose name means "He who cometh in peace"). Imhotep constructed the famous step pyramid of Sakkarah near

Memphis. The building methods used in the construction of this pyramid revolutionized the architecture of the ancient world.

Egypt gave the world some of the greatest personalities in the history of mankind. In this regard, Imhotep is singularly outstanding. In the ancient history of Egypt, no individual left a deeper impression than the commoner Imhotep. He was the world's first multi-genius. He was also the *real* father of medicine. In his book, *Evolution of Modern Medicine* (London, 1921, 9. 10), Sir William Osler refers to Imhotep as "the first figure of a physician to stand out clearly from the mists of antiquity."

The period in Egyptian history from the Third Dynasty to the first invasion of Egypt by the Hyksas, of Shepherd Kings, in 1700 B.C. is, in my opinion, the apex of the first Golden Age. The Western Asian domination over Egypt lasted about one hundred and twenty years and was ended by the rise of Egyptian nationalism during the Seventeenth Dynasty. During this period the pharaohs (or kings) at Thebes consolidated their powers and began a united campaign to rid Lower Egypt of Hyksas invaders. When the invaders from Western Asia were finally driven out by the Pharaoh, Ahmose I, the splendid Eighteenth Dynasty was established and Egypt's second Golden Age began. Egypt's Golden Age did not belong to Egypt alone but included nations in Africa, mainly Kush and Ethiopia (which at certain periods in history were one and the same.) These nations farther to the south were the originators of the early culture of Egypt. Egypt at this juncture in history was no longer dependent on her cultural parents and was, once more, the most developed nation in the world.

3. The Nile Valley Civilization – The Glory

Again rulers of monumental status were coming to power. Two of the best known rulers of this period were Queen Hatsheput and her brother Thothmes III. Great temples were built throughout the country, and the consequent employment of hundreds of artist and craftsmen prepared the way for the artistic glories, which were still to come.

During the reign of Thothmes III, the influence of Egypt was once more extended to Western Asia, now referred to as the Middle East. The age of grandeur continued. This age had a dramatic and lasting change in 1386 B.C. Some time around 1386 B.C., Queen Tiy of Egypt gave birth to a boy who was first named Amenhates after his father. Very little is known of his childhood except that he was sickly from birth and developed an interest in art, poetry, and religion. His closest companion was said to be Nefertiti, the beautiful little cousin. (Some archaeologists have referred to her as his sister.)

When the Crown Prince was about 21, he and the lovely Nefertiti were married. Three years later, his aging father, Amenhotep III, Named him co-regent of Egypt and crowned him Amenhotep IV. After the death of his father, he came into full power in Egypt and took the name Akhenaton. He produced a profound effect on Egypt and the entire world of his day.

Akhenaton, often referred to as "The Heretic King," is one of history's most extraordinary monarchs. Thirteen hundred years before Christ he preached and lived a gospel of love, brotherhood, and truth. He has been called the world's first idealist, the first temporal ruler ever to lead his people toward the worship of a single God.

When Akhenaton came to the throne more than 3,000 years ago, Egypt dominated the world.

Egypt's Golden Age gradually waned and the pride and splendor that had marked the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties gave way to internal strife and confusion. Wars of conquest and colonization had drained much of her military and economic strength. In the meantime, as the nations to the south grew more powerful, they became predatory toward Egypt, which had once been their master.

The nation that is now called Ethiopia came back upon the center stage of history around 900 B.C. It was then represented by a queen who in some books is referred to as Makeda, and in others as Belkis. She is better known to the world as the Queen of Sheba. In his book, *World's Great Men of Color*, J.A. Rogers gives this description: "Out of the mists of three thousand years emerges this beautiful love story of a black queen, who, attracted by the fame of a Judean monarch, made a long journey to see him. ..."

In *Ethiopia, A Cultural History*, Sylvia Pankhurst tells the story of this journey:

> The history of the Queen of the South, who undertook a long and arduous journey to Jerusalem, in order to learn of the wisdom of King Solomon, is deeply cherished in Ethiopia, as part of the national heritage, for she is claimed as an Ethiopian Queen, Makeda, "a woman of splendid beauty," who introduced the religion and culture of Israel to her own land."

By the tenth and ninth centuries B.C., Egypt had been weakened by outside attacks and by bitter disputes between its priests and the royal families. This had allowed the Kushites to the south to gain a measure of independence. They now had the confidence to move northward and conquer their former masters. In spite of the war of conquest, these Kushite (or Ethiopian) kings brought Egypt her last age of grandeur and social reform. There is a need to make a serious study of this act of internal African colonialism and what it achieved at the end of the Golden Age for both Egypt and Kush.

These Kushite kings restored the declining culture and economy of Egypt and took this nation to unprecedented heights of leadership in the way it cared for its people. Though a colony, Egypt was once more a world power.

4. The Nile Valley Civilizations – The Decline

The Assyrian invasion of 871 B.C. drove the Kushite forces to the south and began the harshness and misrule that destroyed the grandeur that once was Egypt. Egypt continued to decline while a young nation on the other side of the Mediterranean—Greece—began to gather, its power around 500 B.C. In the year 332 B.C. Alexander the Great, a student of Aristotle, invaded Egypt. This was the first purely European invasion of Africa. The aftermath of this invasion, and the new European interest in dominating the trade of the Mediterranean world, led to the Punic Wars and the invasion by the Romans.

In Egypt a strong and shrewd young girl tried to deal with the plight of her country under the threat of Roman domination. Her name was Cleopatra.

More nonsense has been written about Cleopatra than about any other African queen, mainly because it has been the desire of many writers to paint her white. She was not a white woman, she was not a Greek. Let us dispose of this matter before explaining the more important aspects of her life. Until the emergence of the doctrine of white superiority, Cleopatra was generally pictured as a distinctly African woman, dark in color. Shakespeare in the opining line of "Anthony and Cleopatra" calls her "tawny." In his day, mulattos were called "tawny Moors." The word "Moor" came into the European languages meaning black or blackamoor. In the *Book of Acts*, Cleopatra describes herself as "black."

Born in 69 B.C., Cleopatra came to the throne that she shared with her brother, Ptolemy XIII, when she was 18 years old. Egypt, now a Roman protectorate, was beset with internal strife and intrigue. Cleopatra aligned herself with Julius Caesar, who reinforced her power. Their political and sexual relationship was a maneuver to save Egypt from the worst aspects of Roman domination. After Julius Caesar was murdered, Cleopatra, still in her early twenties, met Mark Anthony and a love

affair strongly motivated by politics began.

Her effect on Mark Anthony was profound. This noble Roman turned traitor to his own people when he attempted to save the country of this fascinating black queen from Roman domination. After Anthony's death, the victor, Octavius, assumed full control of Egypt, and Cleopatra, now without a protector or champion, committed suicide.

After Cleopatra's death, Egypt became a Roman colony and the harsher aspects of Roman rule settled over Egypt and the Middle East. To the south, in the lands untouched by Rome, new proud civilizations were rising. And in the centuries that followed, black women once again began to play major roles in the theatre of history.

Lights of achievement did shine in other parts of Africa, though the second Golden Age was over.

The more ruthless aspects of Roman rule made African and Middle Eastern people question old gods and search for new ones. This led to the development of Christianity and subsequently Islam. From the beginning these were religions of the oppressed.

When the oppressor, the Romans, stopped killing Christians and became "Christian" the religion was dramatically changed. Their misuse of this religion and widespread dissatisfaction in the Roman colonies of North Africa and the Middle East facilitated the rise of Islam.

5. The Civilizations of the Western Sudan – Ghana

In the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Roman rule began to lose its hold on North Africa and the Middle East. African genius for state building and for bringing new societies into being was reborn in the Western Sudan (inner West Africa), where the third and last African Golden Age began.

The first of the great empires of the Western Sudan to become known to the outside world was Ghana. It began as a small settlement during the second century of the Christian era. It would later develop into a state with a known history of more than a thousand years. In Europe and in the Arab countries, Ghana was known as a country rich in gold. This was a natural attraction for the Arabs and later the Europeans. The country reached the height of its greatness during the reign of Tenkamenin, one of its greatest kings, who came to power in 1062 A.D. The king lived in a palace of stone and wood which was built to be defended in time of war. The Empire was well organized. The political progress and social well being of its people could be favorably compared to the best kingdoms and empires that prevailed in Europe at this time. The country had a military force of 200,000 men.

In one of a number of holy wars, or Jihads, Ghana was invaded by the Almaravides under the leadership of Abu Bekr of the Sosso Empire in 1076 A.D. This conquest brought as end to Ghana's age of prosperity and cultural development. The character of the country was slow to change. Nearly a hundred years later the Arab writer, El Idrisi wrote of it as being said: "Ghana … is the most commercial of the black countries. It is visited by rich merchants from all the surrounding countries and from the extremities of the West."

In 1087 the country regained its independence, without regaining its old strength, state organization, and grandeur. The ruins of the Empire of Ghana became the Kingdoms of Diara and Sosso. The provinces of Ghana became a part of the Mali Empire and were later absorbed into the Songhai Empire.

The great drama of state building, trade and commerce, and power brokerage unfolded at Timbuctoo, the queen city of the Western Sudan.

Two hundred miles down the Niger from Timbuctoo the competing city of Gao stood. It was founded about the seventy century and was the capital of the large black empire of Songhai. Like

Timbuctoo, it was in a favorable position for the Trans-Saharan trade, in the days of the regular caravans from North Africa. Like Timbuktu, the greatest days of Gao came in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

In the years when Timbuctoo was the great intellectual nucleus of the Songhai Empire, African scholars were enjoying a renaissance that was known and respected through most of Africa and in parts of Europe. At this period in African history the University of Sankore was the educational capital of the Western Sudan. In his book, *Timbuctoo the Mysterious*, Filix DeBois gives us the following picture:

> The scholars of Timbuctoo yielded in nothing to the saints and their sojourns in the foreign universities of Fez, Tunis and Cairo. They astounded the most learned men of Islam by their erudition. That these Negroes were on a level with the Arabian savants is proved by the fact that they were installed as professors in Morocco and Egypt. In contrast to this, we find that the Arabs were not always equal to the requirements of Sankore.

6. The Civilizations of the Western Sudan – Mali

The famous Emperor of Mali, Manca Mussa, stopped at Timbuctoo on his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. He went in regal splendor with an entourage of 60,000 persons, including 12,000 servants. Five hundred bondsmen, each of whom carried a staff of pure gold, marched in front of the Emperor. Two hundred eighty camels bore 2400 pounds of gold which this African monarch distributed as alms and gifts. Mussa returned from Mecca with an architect who designed imposing buildings in Timbuctoo and other parts of his realm.

To the outside world, of the late medieval period, the Emperor Manca Mussa was more than an individual. He was Africa. He conquered the Songhai Empire and rebuilt the University of Sankore. He figured, by name, on every map. In his lifetime he became in person the symbol of the mystery and of the fabulous wealth of the unknown African continent. He was the most colorful of the black kings of the fourteenth century. He still held this position nearly two centuries after his death.

7. The Civilizations of the Western Sudan – Songhai

After the death of Manca Mussa, the Empire of Mali declined in importance. Its place was taken by Songhai, whose greatest king was Askia the Great (Mohammed Toure). Askia came to power in 1493, one year after Columbus discovered America. He consolidated the territory conquered by the previous ruler Sonni Ali and built Songhai into the most powerful state in the Western Sudan. His realm, it is said, was larger than all Europe.

The German writer, Henry Barth , in his famous work *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa*, calls Askia the Great "one of the most brilliant and enlightened administrators of all times." He reorganized the army of Songhai, improved the system of banking and credit, and made the city-states of Gao, Walta, Timbuctoo, and Jenne into intellectual centers. Timbuctoo during his reign, was a city of more than 100,000 people, "people filled to the top," says a chronicler of that time, "with gold and dazzling women."

Askia encouraged scholarship and literature. Students from all over the Moslem world came to Timbuctoo to study grammar, law, and surgery at the University of Sankore; scholars came from North Africa and Europe to confer with learned historians and writers of this black empire. A Sudanese literature developed and many books were written. Leo Africanus, who wrote one of the best known works on the Western Sudan, says: "In Timbuctoo there are numerous judges, doctors,

and clerics, all receiving good salaries from the king. He pays great respect to men of learning. There is a big demand for books in manuscript, imported from Barbary (North Africa). More profit is made from the book trade than from any other line of business."

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After the death of Askia the Great in 1538, the Songhai Empire began to lose its strength and its control over its vast territory. When the Songhai Empire collapsed after the capture of Timbuctoo and Gao by the Moroccans in 1591, the whole of the Western Sudan was devastated by the invading troops. The Sultan of Morocco, El-Mansur, had sent a large army with European firearms across the Sahara to attack the once powerful empire of Songhai. The army did not reach Timbuctoo until 1591. The prosperous city of Timbuctoo was plundered by the army of freebooters. A state of anarchy prevailed. The University of Sankore, which had stood for over five hundred years, was destroyed and the faculty exiled to Morocco. The greatest Sudanese scholar of that day, Ahmed Baba, was among those exiled. Baba was a scholar of great depth and inspiration. He was the author of more than forty books on such diverse themes as theology, astronomy, ethnography, and biography. His rich library of 1600 books was lost during his expatriation from Timbuctoo.

Timbuctoo provides the most terrible example of the struggles of the West African states and towns as they strove to preserve what was once their Golden Age. The Arabs, Berbers and Tuaregs from the north showed them no mercy. Timbuctoo had previously been sacked by the Tuaregs as early as 1433 and they had occupied it for thirty years. Between 1591 and 1593, the Tuaregs had already taken advantage of the situation to plunder Timbuctoo once more. Between 1723 and 1726 the Tuaregs once more occupied and looted Timbuctoo. Thus Timbuctoo, once the Queen City of the Western Sudan, with more than two hundred thousand inhabitants and the center of a powerful state, degenerated into a shadow of its former stature.

Now, West Africa entered a sad period of decline. During the Moorish occupation wreck and ruin became the order of the day. When the Europeans arrived in this part of Africa and saw these conditions they assumed that nothing of order and value had existed in these countries. This mistaken impression, too often repeated, has influenced the interpretation of African and Afro-American life in history for over four hundred years.

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The Search for Timbuctoo

John Henrik Clarke

Associate Editor, Freedomways, New York, N.Y.

The African writer, Abderrahman Es-Sa'di, in his great work, *Tarikh es Sudan* (History of the Sudan), says that Timbuctoo was founded at the end of the fifth century after the Hegira (Muslim calendar) which corresponds with the eleventh century of our era. It began as a camp of the Tuaregs, the strange veiled tribe of the Southern Sahara, who incidentally are still the main troublemakers in the area around present day Timbuctoo. Es-Sa'di called it "an exquisite city, pure, delicious, blessed with luxury and full of life." Furthermore, he boasts that Timbuctoo was noble in that its people had "never been soiled by the worship of idols."

"Timbuctoo," he goes on to say, "gradually developed into a trade center; its greatest days did not start until the end of the fifteenth century, when it became the meeting place for traders from Egypt, the Libyan Desert, Fezzan, Ghadames, the Oases of Tuat, Sjelmassa, Fez and the Gold Lands."

In another work on the history of the Western Sudan, *Tarikh el Fettash* (History of the Seeker) by Muhammed Kati, it is said that "Timbuctoo, at its zenith, had no equal among the cities of the Balad es Sudan (countries of the blacks). The people of Timbuctoo boast of "the solidarity of its institutions, its political liberty, the purity of its morals, public security, compassion toward the poor, clemency to foreigners, courtesy to students and men of science, and the amount of help and respect given to all schools and men of learning."

Perhaps the one reason contributing to the renown of Timbuctoo has been the odd sound of its name to European ears. The writer, Es-Sa'di, tells us that the city was named after a slave woman who was sometimes left in charge in the days when it was a Tuareg camp and that the name meant "Old Woman." Other translations of the word include "She-of-the Big-Navel." Another explanation is that the name meant the "Well of Dates."

These suppositions and conjectures eventually circulated in Europe and contributed to the advertisement of this tantalizing and legend shrouded city which Europeans were told had houses with roofs of gold and to which for so long no outside travelers could penetrate.

Two hundred miles down the Niger from Timbuctoo the competing city of Gao stood. It was founded about the seventh century and was the capital of the large black empire of Songhai. Like Timbuctoo, it was in a favorable position for the trans-Saharan trade, in the days of the regular caravans from North Africa. Like Timbuctoo, the greatest days of Gao came in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

There is now a growing willingness on the part of an increasing number of scholars to admit that the Africans are people with a respectable historical past. A few years ago, Dr. Ethel Alpenfels,

New York University anthropologist, told a high school conference on human relations. "There was a Negro University at Timbuctoo, in Africa, which exchanged professors with Moorish universities hundreds of years ago. It is believed to have flourished as early as 600 A.D."

Dr. Alpenfels was referring to the University of Sankore, at Timbuctoo. In the years when Timbuctoo was the great intellectual nucleus of the Songhai Empire, African scholars were enjoying a renaissance that was known and respected throughout most of Africa and in parts of Europe. At this period in African history the University of Sankore was the educational capital of the Western Sudan. In his book, *Timbuctoo the Mysterious*, Felix DuBois gives us the following picture:

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The German writer, Henry Barth, in his famous work, *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa*, calls Askia the Great "one of the most brilliant and enlightened administrators of all times." He reorganized the army of Songhai, improved the system of banking and credit, and made the city states of Gao, Walata, Timbuctoo and Jenne into intellectual centers. Timbuctoo during his reign, was a city of more than 100,000 people, filled to the top, says a chronicler of that time, with gold and dazzling women.

Askia encouraged scholarship and literature. Students from all over the Moslem

world came to Timbuctoo to study grammar, law and surgery at the University of Sankore: scholars came from North Africa and Europe to confer with learned historians and writers of this black empire. A Sudanese literature developed and many books were written. Leo Africanus, who wrote one of the best known works on the Western Sudan, says: "In Timbuctoo there are numerous judges, doctors and clerics, all receiving good salaries from the king. He pays great respect to men of learning. There is a big demand for books in manuscript, imported from Barbary (North Africa). More profit is made from the book trade than from any other line of business."

Askia has been hailed as one of the wisest monarchs of the Middle Ages. Alexander Chamberlain, in his book, *The Contribution of the Negro to Human Civilization*, says of him: "In personal character, in administrative ability, in devotion to the welfare of his subjects, in open-mindedness towards foreign influences, and in wisdom in the adoption of enlightened ideas and institutions from abroad, King Askia was certainly the equal of the average European monarch of the time and superior to many of them."

After the death of Askia the Great, in 1538, the Songhai Empire began to lose its strength and its control over its vast territory. When the Songhai Empire collapsed after the capture of Timbuctoo and Gao by the Moroccans in 1591, the whole of the Western Sudan was devastated by the invading troops. The Sultan of Morocco, El Mansur, had sent a large army with European fire across the Sahara to attack the once powerful empire of Songhai. The army did not reach Timbuctoo until 1591. The prosperous city of Timbuctoo was plundered by the army of freebooters. A state of anarchy prevailed. The University of Sankore which had stood for over five hundred years was destroyed and the faculty exiled to Morocco. The greatest Sudanese scholar of that day, Ahmed Baba, was among those exiled. Baba was a scholar of great depth and inspiration. He was the author of more than forty books on such diverse themes as theology, astronomy, ethnography and biography. His rich library of 1600 books was lost during his expatriation from Timbuctoo.

Timbuctoo provides the most terrible example of the struggles of the West African states and towns as they strove to preserve what was once their Golden Age. The Arabs, Berbers and Tuaregs from the north showed them no mercy. Timbuctoo had previously been sacked by the Tuaregs as early as 1433 and they had occupied it for thirty years. Between 1591 and 1593, the Tuaregs had already taken advantage of the situation to plunder Timbuctoo once more. Between 1723 and 1726 the Tuaregs once more occupied and looted Timbuctoo. Thus Timbuctoo, once the queen city of the Western Sudan, with more than two hundred thousand inhabitants and the center of a powerful state, degenerated into a shadow of its former stature.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Europeans who had been hearing exaggerated stories about Timbuctoo for nearly a thousand years, began to search for the phantom city on the Niger river. This had been the most fabled, the most exotic city in the world. Tales about its wealth, its remoteness and the beauty of its women whetted the greedy curiosity

of Europeans and stimulated the search. A Christianized Moor, Leo Africanus, in his book, *History and Description of Africa*, reintroduced the subject of Timbuctoo in Europe. He visited West Africa in 1515, while his uncle was Ambassador to the Court of Askia the Great. In his book he richly describes the City of Timbuctoo and the Songhai Empire, whose king, he said, was so glutted with wealth that he owned gold plates weighing 1300 pounds.

"Mysterious Timbuctoo" became part of the language of European adventurers. The city became a splendid but elusive prize. It was said that whoever captures Timbuctoo has the rest of Africa at his feet. Near the end of the eighteenth century the finding of Timbuctoo became the goal of European exploration. A flood of adventurers wanted to be the first to reach the fabulous city. Robert Adams, a shipwrecked American sailor, claimed he was taken captive by the Arabs in 1810 and spent six months as a slave in Timbuctoo. His story was vague and the details supposedly supporting it left much to be desired.

Finally the search for Timbuctoo was taken out of the hands of mere adventurers and summer soldiers. The Paris Geographical Society offered a prize of 10,000 francs to the first European to reach Timbuctoo and return with a factual report of its location and its mysteries.

During this period, two explorers wrote their names in history. After many hardships both of them arrived safely at Timbuctoo. One was an Englishman, Major Alexander Gordon Laing, the other was French. Only the Frenchman lived to tell the story. This Frenchman, Rene Caillie, gave Europe the first eye witness account of Timbuctoo.

The story of Rene Caillie is briefly related as follows: Rene Caillie was born on September 19, 1799, in Mauza, in the Poitou district of France. His father was a shiftless baker who took no interest in his son's education and very little interest in the rest of his family. He had little education other than the brief time he spent in a charity school. He became an avid reader of books about the lives of great explorers and was especially excited by Daniel DeFoe's story of Robinson Crusoe. Already he was obsessed with the idea of penetrating to the heart of Africa and, although he had no means of his own, and neither the French nor the English governments could be induced to give him any assistance, he clung tenaciously to his purpose and his dream of being the first European to look upon the phantom city of Timbuctoo.

In May 1825, he set out from Tripoli and presently joined a caravan headed for Timbuctoo. He had spent months among the Moors under most trying conditions. His intention was to learn how to live and act like a Mohammedan: then, pretending to be an Arab returning from captivity in Egypt to his native Mecca, he set out for Timbuctoo, depending for support on the goods he had bought with his life's savings of 2,000 francs.

To conceal his European identity Rene told everyone that he was of Egyptian parentage, but had been taken prisoner, sent to France during the occupation of Egypt by Napoleon's army. Further, he stated that he had been brought to Senegal as a slave and had since obtained his freedom.

As he moved into the interior of Africa

he and his companions made good progress until the rainy season started. He became ill with scurvy and was nursed back to health by an old African woman, the mother of one of his companions. He put down the following description of the event: "Alone in the interior of a wild country, stretched on the damp ground with no pillow but the leather bag that contained my luggage, with no medicine and no attendant but Baba's old mother."

By January 9, 1828, he was well enough to continue his journey. By March 23rd, he had reached the city of Djenne and was now close to Timbuctoo. When he, at last, reached the city he made the following entry in his journal: "At length, we arrived safely at Timbuctoo, just as the sun was touching the horizon. I now saw this capital of the Sudan, to reach which had so long been the object of my wishes. On entering this mysterious city, which is an object of curiosity and research to the civilized nations of Europe, I experienced an indescribable satisfaction. I never felt before a similar emotion and my transport was extreme. I was obligated, however, to restrain my feelings and to God alone did I confide my joy."

And thus, Rene Caillie reached Timbuctoo and became one of the greatest explorers of all times. He stayed in Timbuctoo for two weeks avidly taking notes of the city's architecture and the customs of the people.

On September 7, 1828, five hundred and six days after the start of his journey, covering roughly 3,150 miles of Africa, more than the distance from New York to San Francisco, Rene Caillie arrived in Tangier and announced to a shocked French consul: "My name is Rene Caillie. I have just come from Timbuctoo."

The French Geographical Society readily gave him the promised 10,000 francs as the first European to reach Timbuctoo and return alive to tell the story. He was also awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honor. His book about his journey, *Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo; and across The Great Desert to Morocco, Performed in the years 1824-1828*, in two volumes, is still one of the greatest stories of travel and adventure ever recorded.

For the remainder of the nineteenth century, Timbuctoo was discovered and rediscovered by a new generation of adventurers. Early in 1894, the French occupied Timbuctoo and became masters of this area of Africa by the end of the century. Timbuctoo is now a part of the Mali Republic and the city is being rebuilt. New or old, it is still a legend-shrouded city. Who can tell, it may once again become the magnet drawing attention to Africa.

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The Old Congo

BY John Henrik Clarke

The people and nations of Central Africa have no records of their ancient and medieval history like the "Tarikh es Sudan" or the "Tarikh el Fettach" of the Western Sudan (West Africa). The early travelers to these areas are mostly unknown. In spite of the forest as an obstacle to the formation of empires comparable to those of the Western Sudan, notable kingdoms did rise in this part of Africa and some of them did achieve a high degree of civilization.

The Congo Valley became the gathering place of various branches of the people we know now as Bantu. When the history of Central Africa is finally written, it will be a history of invasions and migrations. According to one account, between two and three thousand years ago a group of tribes began to move out of the region south or southwest of Lake Chad. Sometime during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the center of Africa became crowded with pastoral tribes who needed more land for their larger flocks and herds. This condition started another migration that lasted for more than a hundred years. Tribes with the prefix *Ba* to their names spread far to the west into the Congo basin and southward through the central plains. The Nechuana and Basuto were among these tribes. Tribes with the prefix *Ama*—great warriors like the Ama-Xosa and Ama-Zulu—passed down the eastern side.

In the meantime some of the more stable tribes in the Congo region were bringing notable kingdoms into being. The Kingdom of Loango extended from Cape Lopez (Libreville) to near the Congo; and the Congo Empire was mentioned by the Portuguese as early as the fourteenth century. The Chief of Loango, Mani-Congo, extended his kingdom as far as the Kasai and Upper Zambesi Rivers. This kingdom had been in existence for centuries when the Portuguese arrived in the fifteenth century. They spoke admiringly of its capital, Sette-Camo, which they called San Salvador. The Kingdom of Congo dates back to the fourteenth century. At the height of its power it extended over modern Angola, as far east as the Kasai and Upper Zambesi Rivers.

Further inland the Kingdom of Ansika was comprised of the people of the Bateke and Bayoka, whose artistic talents were very remarkable. Near the center of the Congo was the Bakuba Kingdom (or Bushongo), still noted for its unity, the excellence of its administration, its art, its craftsmanship and the beauty of its fabrics.

South of the Congo basin the whole Bechuana territory formed a vast state which actually ruled for a long time over the Basutos, the Zulus, the Hottentots and the Bushmen, including in a single empire the greater part of the black population of Southern and Central Africa. This was the era of Bushongo grandeur; the people we now know as Balubas.

Only the Bushongo culture kept its records and transmitted them almost intact to modern research. The Bakubas are an ancient people whose power and influence once extended over most of the Congo. Their history can be traced to the fifth century. For many centuries the Bakubas have had a highly organized social system, an impressive artistic tradition and a secular form of government that expressed the will of the people through a democratic political system. Today, as for many generations in the past, the court of a Bakuba chief is ruled by a protocol as rigid and complicated as that of Versailles under Louis XIV.

At the top of the Bakuba hierarchy is the royal court composed of six dignitaries responsible for cabinet-like matters such as military affairs, justice and administration. At one time there were in

the royal entourage 143 other functionaries, including a master of the hunt, a master storyteller and a keeper of oral traditions. In the sixteenth century the Bakubas ruled over a great African empire. The memory of their glorious past is recalled in the tribe with historical exactitude. They can name the reigns of their kings for the past 235 years. The loyalty of the people to these rulers is expressed in a series of royal portrait-statues dating from the reign of Shamba Bolongongo, the greatest and best known of the Bakuba kings.

In the Bakuba system of government the king was above all a symbol, rather like the Mikado in the eyes of the Japanese. His ministers, the Kolomos, paid him great respect in public, even if they were his known enemies. In private they made no pretense of subservience. If the king wanted to see his ministers he had to go to their houses or meet them on neutral ground. The ordinary members of the tribe had representatives at the court on a political and professional basis. Some of these officials represented geographical areas, trades and professions. The weavers, the blacksmiths, the boat-builders, the net-makers, the musicians and the dancers all had their representatives at court. There was even a special representative of the fathers of twins. The representative of the sculptors was held in highest esteem. The Bakuba sculptors are considered to be the finest in Africa.

Shamba Bolongongo was a peaceful sovereign. He prohibited the use of the shongo, a throwing knife, the traditional weapon of the Bushongo. This wise African king used to say: "Kill neither man, woman nor child. Are they not the children of Chembe (God), and have they not the right to live?" Shamba likewise brought to his people some of the agreeable pastimes that alleviate the tediousness of life. The reign of Shamba Bolongongo was really the "Golden Age" of the Bushongo people of the Southern Congo. After abolishing the cruder aspects of African warfare, Shamba Bolongongo introduced raffia weaving and other arts of peace. According to the legends of the Bushongo people, their history as a state goes back fifteen centuries. Legends notwithstanding, their magnificent sculpture and other artistic accomplishments are unmistakable, the embodiment of a long and fruitful social experience reflecting the life of a people who have been associated with a higher form of culture for more than a thousand years.

Early in the twentieth century when the European writer, Emil Torday, was traveling through the Congo collecting material for his book *On the Trail of the Bushongo*, he found the Bakuba elders still singing the praises of Shamba Bolongongo. They also repeated the list of their kings, a list of one hundred twenty names, going back to the godlike king who founded their nation. From these Bakuba elders, Emil Torday learned of Bo Kama Bomanchala, the great king who reigned after Shamba Bolongongo. The elders recalled the most memorable event that had occurred during his reign. On March 30, 1680, there was a total eclipse of the sun, passing exactly over Bushongo.

Jose Fernandez, one of the first European explorers to visit Central Africa, went there in 1445. Any number of subsequent expeditions were carried out by such men as Diego Borges, Vincente Annes, Rebello de Araca, Francisco Baretto and Dom Christovao da Gama. The parts of Africa visited, explored and discovered by these men included the kingdom of the Congo, Timbuktu, the East Coast of Africa, Nubia, the Kingdom of Angola, Abyssinia and the Lake Tsana region.

Much of the history and civilization of Central Africa and East Africa was revealed by the study made by the Portuguese African explorer Duarte Lopez in his book *History of the Kingdom of Congo*. Duarte Lopez went to the Congo in 1578 and stayed for many years. From his study and description of the Congo we learn that the Kingdom of the Congo included the territory formerly known as the Congo, Angola and parts of the Cameroons.

According to Lopez, the kingdom of the Congo at the time measured 1,685 miles. The King, still reliving his past glory, styled himself Dom Alvarez, King of Congo, and of Abundo, and of Natama, and of Quizama, and of Angola, and of Angri, and of Cacongo, and of the seven Kingdoms of

Congere Amolza, and of the Pangelungos, and the Lord of the River Zaire (Congo) and of the Anzigiros, and of Anziqvara, and of Doanga, etc. He also tells us that the Kingdom of Angola was at one time a vassal state of the Congo.

At the time of Lopez's twelve years stay in the country, the Kingdom of the Congo was divided into six provinces. The province of Bamba was the military stronghold of the kingdom, and was capable of putting 400,000 well-disciplined men in the field.

The rich gold mines at Sofala (now a port of Mozambique) attracted the Portuguese to the East Coast of Africa. They used intermarriage with the Africans as a means of gaining favor and pushing into the interior of Africa. In turn, the Africans gradually lost their anti-Christian hostilities and gave in to being converted to Christianity. And thus Christianity was introduced into the Congo before 1491. The Mani Sogno was the first Congo nobleman to embrace the Christian faith. The Moslems, coming into the Congo from the East Coast, prevailed upon the Africans to resist being converted to Christianity, telling them that Christianity was a subtle method used by the Portuguese to take over their country. This warning notwithstanding, Christianity continued to spread in the Congo.

In 1513, Henrique, son of Dom Affonso, then King of the Congo, was sent to Lisbon and to Rome to study theology. In 1520, Pope Leo X appointed Henrique Bishop of Utica and Vicar-apostolic of the Congo. Unfortunately, Henrique died before he could return to the Congo. He was Rome's first Central African bishop. The royal archives of Portugal still hold the records reflecting the ceremonial respect that was paid to this Christian son of an African king and queen.

In the years that followed, Portuguese evangelization of the Congo continued. The Holy See received ambassadors from and sent legates to the Congo. In 1561, Father Dom Goncalo da Silvera baptized the Emperor of the Court of Monomotapa.

The peaceful relations between the Africans and the Portuguese were eventually disrupted by the rising European lust for slaves and gold. It was from Angola and the Congo that the Portuguese New World was to derive its greatest source of slaves. In 1647, Salvador Correia of Brazil organized an expedition of fifteen ships for the purpose of reconquering Angola, which had been under Dutch rule for eight years. This event might be considered go be one of the earliest political interventions of the New World in the Affairs of the Old.

Portuguese domination founded on the dire necessities of the slave trade persisted in Angola. After a period of relative splendor, the Christian Kingdom of the Congo began to weaken and was practically destroyed by European fortune hunters, pseudo-missionaries and other kinds of free-booters. By 1688, the entire Congo region was in chaos. By the end of the seventeenth century European priests had declared open war on the non-Christian population of the Congo. They were attempting to dominate Congolese courts and had ordered the execution of Congolese ancestral priests and indigenous doctors. Now the Congolese Christians were pathetic pawns of the hands of unscrupulous European priests, soldiers, merchants and other renegade pretenders, mere parish priests from Europe were ordering Congolese kings from their thrones.

Soon treachery, robbery and executions compounded the chaos in the Congo. Violence became the order of the day as various assortments of European mercenaries vied for control of this rich area of Africa. In the ensuing struggle many of the Christian churches built by the Portuguese were destroyed. The Dutch, still feeling the humiliation of the decline of their influence in Angola, came into the Congo and systematically removed all traces of the once prevailing Portuguese power.

By 1820 Arab slave traders had penetrated the Congo from Zanzibar and through Tanganyika. Soon after their arrival their slave raids were decimating the population. The European rediscovery of the Congo and neighboring territories began in the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1858, two Englishmen, Burton and Spoke, discovered Lakes Tanganyka and Victoria, approaching them from the shores of the Indian Ocean. The Scotch Protestant missionary, Livingstone, explored the regions

of the big lakes and in 1871, Livingstone and Stanley met on the shore of Lake Tanganyika. From 1874 to 1877, Henry Morton Stanley crossed Africa from east to west and discovered the Congo River.

In the meantime, King Leopold II of Belgium focused his attention on Central Africa and in 1876 founded the Association International Africaine. In 1878, King Leopold commissioned Stanley to establish connection between the Congo River and the ocean in the non-navigable part of the river. From 1879 to 1885, a handful of Belgian officers sent by the King set up posts along the Congo River. They were followed by Catholic and Protestant missionaries.

King Leopold's undertakings gave rise to competition and greed. Other European nations had designs on the Congo. The King's diplomatic successes at the Berlin Conference of 1884 settled this matter. The members of the Conference marked out spheres of influence in Africa and determined boundaries that are still in existence. The Congo Free State came into being. The Belgian parliament agreed that Leopold should have "exclusive" personal ownership of the Congo. The United States was the first power to ratify the arrangement, largely through the efforts of General Henry S. Stanford, who was American minister to Brussels at the time.

And thus began the tragedy of Belgian rule in the Congo.

The Black Woman In History

ILLUSTRATION

BY JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

"[Cheikh Anta Diop's] book on the domains of patriarchal and matriarchal societies in classical antiquity . . . furnishes the basis for an honest re-examination of the relationships between men and women in societies in general and African civilization in particular"

IN 1959, when Cheikh Anta Diop's second book, *The Cultural Unity of Negro Africa*, was published in Paris by *Présence Africaine*, the Black Studies Revolution had not started in America. The African Independence Explosion was only two years old, having begun in 1957 with the independence of the Gold Coast in West Africa (now Ghana). This book was a continuation of the investigation into African History and culture that began with his first book, *Nations Nègres et Culture*, published in 1955. *The Cultural Unity of Negro Africa* was the second of the three major works that Cheikh Anta Diop had to complete before one was accepted (*L'Afrique Noire Précoloniale*), as suitable evidence that he was entitled to receive the degree, Doctor of Letters. To the best of my knowledge, no student of history has ever written more or worked harder for a Ph.D.

The books of Dr. Diop upset white scholars the world over and started a rage against him that has not abated. He challenged their interpretation of African history and backed his challenge with scholarship that they could not dismiss. Among the African writers using the French language, he launched the Afrocentric approach to history.

Early in his work Dr. Diop states his intent when he says: "I have tried to bring out the profound cultural unity still alive beneath the deceptive appearance of cultural heterogeneity . . . From this point of view, this work represents an effort of rationalization . . . It is clear that an African researcher is in a more privileged position than others and consequently there is no particular merit in his attempt to unearth the sociological laws which seem to be the foundation of the social reality in which he lives."

In other words, the role of the African researcher is to proclaim the values of his society and not necessarily defend those values. This is precisely what Cheikh Anta Diop has done in this book. In his first chapter, "An Historical Account of Matriarchy," he examines the theories of J. J. Bachofen, Lewis M. Morgan and Frederick Engels on the historical basis of the family.

When these researchers look at non-European societies they find them to be mainly matrilineal, de-

sended from the woman's side of the family or through the female line. Dr. Diop extends the explanation in this way: "The line of descent," he says, "is matrilineal and it is the man who brings the dowry to the woman. The latter does not leave her family group and can turn out her husband (who accordingly belongs to a different gens) if he fails to provide enough food for the common provender. Whatever may be the reason for any separation, the children remain entirely in the mother's gens."

This proves, if proof is needed, that the women in these old societies had respected rights. Most of these societies developed before Europe was born. Dr. Diop is of the opinion that the matriarchal system, "in its most highly developed form is thus handed down to us by the pairing family."

Early in the book, Dr. Diop deals with how some of the misconceptions about the African family became widespread in Europe. The left-liberals in Europe generally looked at the African family through the pages of Frederick Engel's book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State.*[1] This book was very informative in what it has to say about the European family of Frederick Engel's day but was in error in most of what it said about the family structure of African people. Dr. Diop observes that this difference of opinion is in no way an attack on Marxism. "It is intended," he says, "to show that a Marxist has made use, in a theoretical work, of material the soundness of which had not been proved." As a Marxist, Engels was interested in demonstrating the historicity, the temporary nature of all forms of political and social organization. Further, he was attempting to show that the traditional *bourgeois* monogamous family, far from being a permanent form, will be stricken by the same decay as previous institutions.

The struggle between the matriarchy and the patriarchy, in other societies, especially in Europe, meant something different in Africa where there was less of a struggle. I think Frederick Engels in his theories on the matriarchy missed this important point.

In Chapter Two of his book devoted to "Criticism of the Classical Theory of a Universal Matriarchy," Dr. Diop calls attention to societies, such as the so-called aborigines of Australia, where the two social systems, the matriarchy and the patriarchy, peacefully merged. When these societies in Africa and in the South Seas are compared with early Europe, we find that the European women have no basic rights. Dr. Diop observed, "The husband was able to sell his wife or select an eventual husband for her, in anticipation of his own death . . . . Eunuchs were made to watch over the women." By contrast, the women of ancient Ethiopia had rights equal

1. *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, by Frederick Engels (International Publishers, 1941), p. 23.

to that of men, and equal power. Ethiopia was the first country in the world to have been ruled by a queen. Although Makeda, known as the Queen of Sheba, is the more remembered by historians, mainly because of her romance with King Solomon, she was not the greatest queen of ancient Ethiopia. The line of queens who took the name Candace were some of the most able female rulers of all time.[2] The value of this book and of Dr. Diop's study of "The Domains of Patriarchy and of Matriarchy in Classical Antiquity" is that it is also the study in success of the African woman in power and of how that power developed.

It is generally conceded, in most scholarly circles, that mankind originated in Africa. This makes the African man the father and the African woman the mother of mankind. In the first African societies, the woman played a major role without demeaning the man or making his role less important. The first accomplishment of the African woman, in partnership with the man, was the creation of a functioning family unit. This major step in human development laid the foundation for the organization of all subsequent societies and institutions.

In Africa the woman's "place" was not only with her family; she often ruled nations with unquestionable authority. Many African women were great militarists, and on occasion led their armies in battle. The Africans had produced a civilization where men were secure enough to let women advance as far as their talent, royal lineage and prerogatives would take them.

During the rise of the great dynasties in Egypt, Kush, and Ethiopia, the African women made impressive strides; some became heads of state. The appearance of Queen Hatshepsut, about 1500 years before the birth of Christ, launched the beginning of their historical prominence in the affairs of state. Hatshepsut's reign was one of the brightest in Egyptian history, proving that a woman can be a strong and effective ruler. She was, according to the Egyptologist James Henry Breasted, "the first great woman in history of whom we are informed."

Dr. Diop writes that during the entire history of Egypt of Pharaohs, African women enjoyed complete freedom, as opposed to the condition of the segregated Indo-European woman of the classical periods, whether she was Greek or Roman. He further informs us that "no evidence can be found either in literature or in historical records—Egyptian or otherwise—relating to the systematic ill-treatment of Egyptian women by their men. They were respected and went about freely and unveiled, unlike certain Asian women. Affection for one's mother and especially the respect with which it was necessary

2. "The Black Woman: A Figure in World History," by John Henrik Clarke, Ebonics Magazine (May 1971), p. 29.

to surround her were the most sacred of duties."

About 1800 B.C. people from Western Asia, called the Middle East, began to come into Africa, first as migrants, later as invaders. These people were no strangers to the Africans. Egypt had formerly been their colonial master. These people were of a lower culture and, like all invaders, contributed nothing to Africa but trouble.[3] A thousand years after their arrival some of them were still nomads, confused by the higher cultures developed in Africa before their arrival. Egypt played host to most of these migrants until they began to form hostile coalitions directed against Egypt. The African people's traditional hospitality to strangers was being abused. This abuse lasted for more than three thousand years and continues to this very day.

In a recent book, *The Destruction of Black Civilization, Great Issues of a Race From 4500 to 2000 A.D.*,[4] the Afro-American historian, Dr. Chancellor Williams of Howard University, has dealt searchingly with the impact of invaders on Africa. He also deals with the evidence that tends to show the Southern African origins of Egypt, a subject mainly distorted or neglected by white historians who are overly preoccupied with the Hamitic Hypothesis, that attempts to prove that all the high cultures of Africa were brought in from the outside, and that the ancient Egyptians were white people. Nothing is further from the truth.[5] In Chapter Two of Dr. Williams' book, "Ethiopia's Oldest Daughter: Egypt," the nonsense about "white" Egypt is put to rest.

In dealing with the invaders of Africa, Dr. Williams explains: "The techniques of penetration and dominance were varied. Some came as peaceful traders and, doubtless, trade was all that was intended by many. Africans were always eager traders. The main attraction of foreign traders was they brought in many new kinds of commodities. These traders had little or no trouble in gaining coastal footholds as trading posts. The land was not sold, but leased. However, the Blacks had what the world wanted most: Gold, diamonds, ivory, copper, iron, ore, and themselves.

After many of these traders settled along the coast of Africa, they turned their trading posts into fortifications and enslaved some of the Africans who had invited them there. They began a war on African customs, religion and cultures. In

3. *When Egypt Ruled The East*, by George Steindorf and Keith C. Seele (A Phoenix Book, University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 24-29.
4. *The Destruction of Black Civilization, Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.*, by Chancellor Williams, (Third World Press, Chicago, Ill., 1974), pp. 17-61.
5. "Rape of African History: The Hamitic Hypothesis," by Edith R. Sanders, Liberator Magazine, April 1970, pp. 4-11. Also see "The 'Nurse' Negro in Origin and Evil Use," by Richard B. Moore, Afro-American Publishers, New York, 1960.

most cases the first custom they outlawed was the matriarchy, attitudes which increased after the Muslim invasion of Africa.

What the invaders forgot, if indeed they knew, is that the matriarchy could be as old as organized societies in Africa. Chances are that the matriarchy in other parts of the world could have spread from Africa. What is needed is an Afrocentric view of the African woman in power.

Some time around 1350 B.C., Queen Tiy of Egypt gave birth to a boy who was first named Amenhotep after his father. While growing up, his closest companion was said to be Nefertiti, his beautiful little cousin. When the Crown Prince was about 21, he and the lovely Nefertiti were married. After the death of his father, Amenhotep came to full power in Egypt and took the name Akhenaton; often referred to as "The Heretic King," he was one of the most extraordinary monarchs in history. His queen was equally extraordinary. Akhenaton and Nefertiti transmitted the Egyptian monarchy. After his death, Nefertiti almost singlehandedly tried to keep alive the new religion that he had founded.

Egypt's golden Age gradually waned, and the pride and splendor that had marked the 18th and 19th Dynasties gave way to internal strife and confusion. Wars of conquest and colonization had drained much of her military and economic strength. In the meantime, as the nations to the south grew more powerful, they came predatory toward Egypt, which had once been their master.

The nation that is now called Ethiopia came back upon the center stage of history around 960 B.C. It was then represented by a queen who in some books is referred to as Makeda, and in others as Bilkis. She is better known to the world as the Queen of Sheba. In his book, *World's Great Men of Color*,[5] J. A. Rogers gives this description: "Out of the mists of 3,000 years emerges this beautiful love story of a Black queen, who, attracted by the fame of a Judean monarch, made a long journey to see him . . ."

In *Ethiopia, A Cultural History*, Sylvia Pankhurst tells the story of this journey: "The history of the Queen of the South, who undertook a long and arduous journey to Jerusalem, in order to learn of the wisdom of King Solomon, is deeply cherished in Ethiopia, as part of the national heritage, for she is claimed as an Ethiopian Queen, Makeda, 'a woman of splendid beauty,' who introduced the religion and culture of Israel to her own land."[7]

The story of King Solomon and

5. *World's Great Men of Color*, by J. A. Rogers (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1972). This edition edited with an introduction, commentary and new bibliographical notes by John Henrik Clarke.
7. *Ethiopia, A Cultural History*, by Sylvia Pankhurst (Lalibela House, London, 1955).

the Queen of Sheba is quite well-known. Dr. Post Wheeler, in his book, *Golden Legend of Ethiopia*, maintains that the Queen of the South was called the Queen of Sheba and Azum, and that she reigned over Sheba and Arabia, as well as Ethiopia. Another valuable old Ethiopian work, *The Book of Aksum*, states that when Queen Makeda came to the throne, she built the capital in the Ethiopian district of Aizeba. The *Kebar Nagast*, an ancient Ethiopian chronology, tells us that the Queen of Sheba's capital was Debra Makeda (or Mount Makeda) which the Queen built and named for herself. Debra Makeda later became a meeting place for the early Christians of Ethiopia.

In Ethiopia's church of Aksum, there is a copy of what is said to be one of the Tables of Law that Solomon gave to Menelik, his son by the Queen of Sheba. (Menelik had gone from Ethiopia to visit his father in Judea. This African queen is mentioned in two holy books, the Bible and the Koran. The Greeks spoke of her as "The Black Minerva" and "The Ethiopian Diana."

More nonsense has been written about Cleopatra than about any other African queen, mainly because it has been the desire of many writers to paint her white. She was not a white woman; she was not a Greek. Let us dispose of this matter before explaining the more important aspects of her life. Until the emergence of the doctrine of white superiority, Cleopatra was generally pictured as a distinctly African woman, dark in color. Shakespeare in the opening line of "Anthony and Cleopatra" calls her "tawny." In his day, mulattos were called "tawny Moors." The word "Moor" came into the European languages meaning "black" or "blackamoor." In the Book of Acts, Cleopatra describes herself as "black."

Born in 69 B.C., Cleopatra came to the throne that she shared with a brother, Ptolemy XIII, when she was 18. Egypt, now a Roman protectorate, was beset with internal strife and intrigue. Cleopatra aligned herself with Julius Caesar, who reinforced her power. Their political and sexual relationship was a maneuver to save Egypt from the worst aspects of Roman domination. After Julius Caesar was murdered, Cleopatra, still in her early twenties, met Mark Anthony and a love affair strongly motivated by politics began. Her effect on Mark Anthony was profound. This noble Roman turned traitor to his own people when he attempted to save the country of this fascinating Black queen from Roman domination. After Anthony's death, the victor, Octavius, assumed full control of Egypt, and Cleopatra, now without a protector or champion, committed suicide.

After Cleopatra's death, Egypt became a Roman colony and the harsher aspects of Roman rule settled over Egypt and the Middle East. To the south, in the lands untouched by Rome, new proud civilizations were rising. And in the

centuries that followed, Black women once again began to play major roles in the theater of history.

Christianity was born and developed, largely, on the soil of Africa, and, from its inception, was a religion of the oppressed. This religion, which enjoyed a relatively peaceful existence during its formative years in North Africa and the Middle East, held as one of its best known icons a Black woman nursing her child. Christianity arose when Imperial Rome ruled most of North Africa and the Middle East, at a time when men were questioning old gods and searching for new ones.

The idea of a virgin mother and child had appeared in many ancient civilizations—among them Babylonia and Egypt. Isis was the name of the North African goddess who gave virgin birth to the child Horus. As the Black Virgin, Isis was worshipped in hundreds of temples in Africa, Spain, Italy, and France. The spread of Christianity throughout Europe, and the evolution of European nationalism resulted in the gradual replacement of the Black Madonna by the later white Madonna and child. But many European churches have retained their Black Madonnas and the Great Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris is built on the site of an earlier shrine of the Black Madonna.

It was only after the Council of Ephesus in 431 that the Virgin Mary and Child became the symbols of the Christian religion. After this time, Madonnas began to appear in Europe in large numbers, most of the early ones being Black. For example, Italy has one in the shrine at Loretto and others can be seen at Genoa, Genoa, Pisa and Padua. Switzerland has one at Einsiedeln. Several Madonnas in France are referred to as "Vierges Noires."

The Bible itself tells us more about the role of Black women and their relationship to the Christian story. Genesis 46:20 tells us about Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, whose mother was Asenath, daughter of an African priest. Moses, who was born in Africa and spent most of his life there, journeyed to Ethiopia to marry Zipporah, daughter of Hobab the Midianite. They had two sons, Gershom and Eliezer (Exodus 18:6). Many of the Hebrews in Egypt married African women who were natives of countries to the south. Many scholars of history today believe that the ancient Hebrew people, like the ancient Egyptians, were dark-skinned.

Inquiries into the ethnic identity of Jesus Christ have been common for years and these inquiries ultimately lead to a related question, "Who was the Mother of Mary?" In 1914, W. E. B. Du Bois, then editor of The Crisis magazine, noted in an editorial entitled, "The Color of the Lord:" "Several persons have written us objecting to the intimation in our advertising columns that Jesus Christ was not a white man. We confess to a ter-

tain lack of interest in the subject, but are forced in self-defense to publish this note from the Cambridge Encyclopedia Company concerning their coin collection. 'Among other rare pieces, our collection contains a gold solidus of Justinian II (circ. A.D. 705), which was purchased from Lincoln & Co., the well-known numismatists of Oxford Street, London, after having been verified as genuine by the coin department of the British Museum. The obverse is stamped with the full-face bust of Justinian, with tube nave and cross; legend: Justinianus, Serve. Christi (Justinian, Servant of Christ). Reverse, full-face bust of Jesus Christ with woolly hair. Behind him, the cross. Legend: D.M. IES CHS, RES REGNANTIUM (Dominus Noster, Jesu Christo, King of Kings). Whatever the fact, this coin places beyond dispute the belief that Jesus Christ was a Negro. The coin is otherwise of great historical interest, for it was the cause of a war between Justinian and Abdula Malik, 60th caliph of the Omniads, the former demanding tribute to be paid in these same coins, and the latter refusing.'[4]

From this evidence, it is easy to arrive at the conclusion that the Mother Mary was Black. Her son, Jesus Christ, is described as having hair like lamb's wool and being swarthy in complexion. In looking at the Black woman as a figure in world history, it should be remembered that the universal symbol of womanhood and purity was originally considered by many early Christians to be a Black woman.

African women played a major role in the formative development of Christianity. One of the most noted of these was Hypatia, who appeared in history at the time when European opposition to Christianity was waving and many people were becoming Christians. In the book, *Introduction to African Civilization*, by John G. Jackson, the following is stated about Hypatia and her time.[5]

In the early part of the fifth century of the Christian era, Hypatia, the daughter of Theon, the mathematician, conducted an academy in Alexandria. This talented lady gave lectures on the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, and instructed her students on the works of Apollonius and other geometers. Bishop Cyril decided that such knowledge must be suppressed, and he proceeded to take the necessary steps to achieve that objective. The great tragedy that befell Hypatia is best described by an eminent historian of science, who informs us: "Each day before her academy stood a long train of chariots; her lecture rooms were crowded with the wealth and fashion of Alexandria. They came to listen to her discourses on those questions which man in all ages has asked, but which never yet have been answered: What am I? Where am I? What can I know? Hypatia and

4. *Introduction to African Civilization* by John G. Jackson (Citadel Press, 120 Enterprise Avenue, Secaucus, New Jersey), pp. 258-259.

Cyril Philosophy and bigotry. They cannot exist together. So Cyril felt, and on that feeling he acted. As Hypatia repaired to her academy, she was assaulted by Cyril's mob—a mob of many monks. Stripped naked in the street, she was dragged into a church, and there killed by the club of Peter the Reader. The corpse was cut to pieces, the flesh was scraped from the bones with shells, and the remains cast into a fire. For this frightful crime Cyril was never called to account . . . Henceforth there was to be no freedom for human thought. Everyone must think as the ecclesiastical authority ordered him. A.D. 414. In Athens itself philosophy awaited its doom. Justinian at length prohibited its teaching, and caused all its schools in that city to be closed."*

The politicalization of the Christian church, and the growing dissatisfaction with Roman rule in North Africa and in the Middle East, helped to facilitate the rise of Islam. While some North Africans welcomed this new religion, others resisted it. Resistance was put up by Kusila, a general in Mauritania, and his relative, Queen Dahia-al Kahina. Many North Africans rallied under the banner of Kusila and were defeated in 682. He continued to rule Mauritania for five years, but in 688 was defeated and killed by a new contingent of Arab troops. His position as leader of African resistance was assumed by Queen Dahia-al Kahina. Under her leadership the Africans fought back fiercely and drove the Arab army northward into Tripolitania. These furious counter-attacks made some of the Arab governors doubt that Africa could be conquered.[8]

After the Arab general, Hassan-ben-Numan, captured Carthage in 698, his victory proved to be short-lived. Queen Kahina soon rallied her forces and drove him from her capital. When Kahina's position became desperate she ordered that the fertile districts be laid waste so that the lack of food and shelter would discourage the Arabs from returning. The ruinous effect on the soil of southern Tunisia can be seen to this day.

Queen Kahina was of the Hebrew faith and she never abandoned her religion. Her opposition, then, was purely nationalistic, since she favored neither the Christians nor the Muslims. She was finally defeated and slain by Hassan-ben-Numan in 705. Her death ended one of the most valiant attempts to save Africa for the Africans. She stood astride the path of Islam and prevented its southward spread into

*History of The Conflict Between Religion and Science, pp. 55-56, by Professor John William Draper.

8. African Glory: The Story of Vanished Negro Civilizations, by J. C. Arthur Johnson (Walker and Company).

the Western Sudan. After her death the Arabs began to change their strategy in advancing their faith and their power in Africa.

A partnership arose between the Africans and the Arabs that would last 300 years. The most important consequence of this alliance was the Muslim conquest of Spain in the year 711. Most history books record this event as a joint African-Arab venture, but militarily it was chiefly an achievement of Black Africans under the leadership of an African General, Gebel Tarik.

While the power and influence of Africans was rising in Spain, great states began to emerge in other parts of Africa, principally in West Africa. The best-known of these states were Ghana, Mali and Songhay. In these states, women not only played major roles but sometimes rose to be heads of state. The great Arab traveler, Ibn Batuta, a Muslim, was appalled at the freedom that women enjoyed in West Africa when he visited Mali in 1352.

The European slave trade originated during the 15th century at a time when the once powerful West African states were suffering internal disputes, after more than a thousand years of grandeur. The decline of these states produced the weakness in West Africa that frustrated any resistance to exposition of the slave trade. And thus the long night of tragedy began for Africa. The carefully built African family structure was, in many cases, destroyed. African bravery was no match for a new force that had been introduced into the world. This force was gun powder.

In the 16th century, the Portuguese stake in the slave trade was threatened by England and France. This caused the Portuguese to transfer their slave-trading activities southward to the Congo and South West Africa. Their most stubborn opposition, as they entered the final phase of the conquest of Angola, came from a queen who was a great head of state and a military leader with few peers in her time. The important facts about her life are delineated in the forthcoming book, *Queen Nzingha and the Mbundu Resistance to the Portuguese Slave Trade*, by Professor Roy A. Glasgow, of Bowie State College, Bowie, Maryland. In the book, he writes:

"Her extraordinary story begins in 1583, the year of her birth. She is known as Jinga, or Ginga, but more often as Nzingha, and she was the sister of the then-reigning King of Ndongo, Ngola Bbondi, whose country was later called Angola. Nzingha belonged to an ethnic group called the Jagas. The Jagas were an extremely militant group who formed a human shield against the Portuguese conquest of her country and was always on the military offensive. As part of her resistance strategy against the invaders, she formed an alliance with the Dutch, whom she intended to use to defeat the Portuguese slave traders. At her request, she was given a body of Dutch soldiers; the offi-

ter commanding his detachment in 1646 said this of her: 'A cunning and prudent virago, so much addicted to arms that she hardly uses other exercises and artful so generously valiant that she never hurt a Portuguese after quarter was given and commanded all her servants and soldiers alike.'[7]

She believed that, after defeating the Portuguese, it would be easy to surprise the Dutch and expel them from her country. Consequently, she continued to maintain an amicable relationship with them and patiently waited for the appropriate time to turn against them. Her ultimate ambitions extended beyond the aim of freeing her country from European control. In addition to retaining personal control of Ndongo, she hoped to expand her domain from Matamba in the east to the Atlantic Ocean. To this end she made herself an astute agitator-propagandist who could easily convince large groups of her fellow countrymen to listen to her. In convincing her people of the pernicious influence of the Portuguese, she would single out slaves and "slave-soldiers" who were under Portuguese control and direct intensive political and patriotic messages their way, appealing to their pride in being Africans. She offered them land and freedom. This resulted in the desertion of thousands of these "slave-soldiers" who joined her forces, forming a serious security problem for the Portuguese. A visionary political leader, competent, self-sacrificing, and devoted to the resistance movement, Nzingha attempted to attract to her cause as many kings and heads of families as possible so that through the allegiance of their people, she could gain new recruits for the defense of her country against the occupation of the Portuguese.

In 1623, at the age of 41, Nzingha became Queen of Ndongo, and she began at once to strengthen her position of power. She forbade her subjects to call her queen. She preferred to be called King and, when leading her army in battle, dressed in men's clothing. Her most enduring weapon was her personality. She was astute and successful in consolidating power. She was particularly good at self-keeping her position by ruthlessly dealing with her foes and generously rewarding her friends. She possessed both masculine hardness and feminine charm, which she readily used, depending on the need and the occasion. Because of these attributes, her leadership was never seriously challenged.

The Portuguese began to have second thoughts about her. Their priests were disappointed because they had seemingly lost the battle to convert her to Catholicism. In point of fact, this was not the case. She would later choose her own time and reason to join their church and to use this liaison for her own purposes.

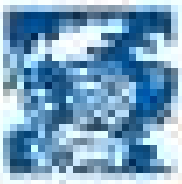
In 1645, and again in 1646, she suffered a series of setbacks in her campaign to drive the Portuguese out of Angola. Her sister, Fungi,

was taken as a prisoner of war. The Portuguese beheaded her and threw her body in a river. Nzingha began to weigh the merits of her own god, Tem-Bon-Dumba, as compared to the god of the Portuguese. Was it possible, she asked, that the Catholic god was stronger? She had heard the Jesuits maintain that the Christian god was just and an enemy of all suffering. Why, then, did he assist the invaders of her country? Why were the Portuguese building forts in her country without her consent? With her questions still unresolved, she decided to join their religion and to test its strength in her favor. And for the remainder of her life she used this religion as a political tool, when it suited her.

In 1659, she signed a treaty with the Portuguese that brought her no feeling of triumph. Now more than 75 years old, she had resisted the Portuguese for most of her adult life. Some of her faithful assistants and followers had died or given up the long fight. On December 17, 1663, this great African woman died. With her death, the Portuguese occupation of the interior of Southwest Africa began. The massive expansion of the Portuguese slave trade followed this event.

In the concluding chapter of his book about Nzingha's life and struggles Professor Roy A. Glasgow has this to say: "Queen Nzingha symbolized the quintessence of early Mbundu resistance. She was from 1620 until her death in 1663 . . . the most important personality in Angola. Nzingha failed in her mission to expel the Portuguese and become Queen of Ethiopia, embracing Matamba (eastern Ndongo) and Ndongo. However, her historic importance transcends this failure as she awakened and encouraged the first known stirring of nationalism in West Central Africa by organizing the national and international (the Mont-Kongo) resistance in her total opposition to European domination."

In the resistance to the slave trade and the colonial system that followed the death of the queen, African women, along with their men, helped to mount offenses all over Africa. Among the most outstanding were: Madame Tinubu of Nigeria; Nandi, the mother of the great Zulu warrior Chaka; Kaipkire of the Herero people of South West Africa; and the female army that followed the great Dahomean King, Behanzin Bowelle.



Islam had a shattering effect on the matriarchy in Africa, without destroying it. The social organization of the Bantu-speaking people of Central Africa continued to be governed by the matriarchy. The greatest impact of Islam was along the East Coast of Africa and in the Western Sudan. Cheikh Anta Diop has given us a historical accounting of this impact.

In spite of the slave trade and the colonial system that followed

it, African women continued to be important factors in the physical struggles against European domination. Their participation continued throughout the 19th and well into the 20th century in the country south of Angola-Namibia that the Europeans developed. During this time the country was plunged into a prolonged struggle against one of the strongest colonial powers of that time. German soldiers were mobilized with all modern armaments against the Herero people of South West Africa. The Herero women, despite their lack of modern equipment, took on responsibilities equal to their men and waged a war against the Germans that resulted in a stalemate.

Near the end of the 19th century (1896), the British, in their attempt to take over the hinterlands of the Gold Coast (present day Ghana), exiled King Prempeh. In 1900, still not having succeeded in gaining control of this part of Ghana, the British sent a governor to Kumasi, the capital of Ashanti, to demand the Golden Stool, the Ark of the Covenant and the supreme symbol of the sovereignty and independence of the Ashantis—a fierce and warlike people who inhabit the dense rain forests of what is now the central portion of Ghana.

On March 28, 1900, the Governor, Lord Hodgson, called a meeting of all the kings in and around the city of Kumasi. He informed the people that their exiled King Prempeh would not be permitted to return because the indemnity the British had demanded before the exile of King Prempeh had not been paid. Further, he demanded that the Ashanti surrender the Golden Stool. The demand was a terrible blunder and an insult to the Ashanti people who were still angry with the British for exiling the king. The governor in no way understood the sacred significance of the Stool, which according to tradition, contained the soul of the Ashanti.

The Ashanti heard the governor's speech and showed no reaction except silence. The meeting broke up quietly and the men went home to prepare for war. The inspiring force behind the Ashanti people at this time was Yaa Asantewa, the Queen Mother of Ejisu. The war that followed bears her name—the Yaa Asantewa War.[11] The story of Yaa Asantewa is woven throughout the history of modern Ghana. The following story of the Great Queen and her war is taken from the book, *Ghana, A History for Primary Schools*, by E. A. Addy: "In the evening the chiefs held a secret meeting at Kumasi. Yaa Asantewa, the Queen Mother of Ejisu, was at the meeting. The chiefs were discussing how they should make war on the white men

11 *Ghana History For Primary Schools*, by E. A. Addy, Book Two, (Longmans, London, 1968, pp. 54-55. Also see *Ashanti Rivals*, by K. O. Boaten Kyeremeh (Oxford University Press, London, 1964, pp. 10-11, and *The Golden Stool*, *Ashanti* 1900, by Frederick Myatt (William Kimber Publishers, London, 1966), pp. 10-130.

and force them to bring back the Asantehene. Yaa Asantewa saw that some of the chiefs were afraid. Some said that there should be no war. They should rather go to beg the Governor to bring back the Asantehene, King Prempeh. Then suddenly Yaa Asantewa stood up and spoke. This was what she said: 'Now I have seen that some of you fear to go forward to fight for our King. If it were in the brave days of old, the days of Osei Tutu, Okomfo Anokye, and Opoku Ware, chiefs would not sit down to see their King taken away without firing a shot. No white man could have dared to speak to chiefs of the Ashanti in the way the Governor spoke to you chiefs this morning. Is it true that the bravery of Ashanti is no more? I cannot believe it. Yes, it cannot be! I must say this: If you the men of Ashanti will not go forward, then we will. We the women will. I shall call upon my fellow women. We will fight the white men. We will fight till the last of us falls in the battlefields!'"

The speech stirred up the chiefs, and at once the meeting swore the great oath of Ashanti to fight the white men until they released the Asantehene. Yaa Asantewa was the leader in this war. Then the Ashantis cut telegraph wires and surrounded Kumasi. The Governor and his party kept themselves in the fort, where they suffered from disease and hunger. For many months, the Ashantis, led by Yaa Asantewa, fought very bravely and kept the white men in the fort. "Then an officer, Colonel Willcocks, was sent with 1400 soldiers to Kumasi. He brought very big guns. Yaa Asantewa and the other Ashanti leaders were captured. They were deported and the war came to an end. Yaa Asantewa's name and her bravery are always remembered."

After this war, Yaa Asantewa and some of the other leaders were sent into exile. The Ashanti wars against the British had started in 1805 and had lasted for nearly a hundred years, but with the end of this last war the British gained control over the hinterland of Ghana. And Yaa Asantewa's War was the last of the major wars in Africa led by a woman.

But Yaa Asantewa only added to that long line of African warrior queens that began with Hatshepsut 1500 years before the birth of Christ. Because her agitation for the return of Prempeh was converted into the stirring demands for independence, it is safe to say that she helped to create the theoretical basis for the political emergence of modern Africa.

In his book on the domains of patriarchal and matriarchal societies in classical antiquity, Cheikh Anta Diop has arrived at some conclusions that are as topical as they are historical. His book furnishes the basis for an honest re-examination of the relationships between men and women in society in general and in African society in particular.

Muhammad Ahmad
"The Mahdi"

African History Revisited

BY JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

A recent movie based on the encounter between the British General Charles Gordon and the Sudanese patriot Muhammad Ahmad presented a picture of history which is challenged here

SINCE July of 1966 millions of movie-goers in this country and throughout the world have seen the spectacular motion picture, *Khartoum*—in Cinerama, Ultra-Panavision and Technicolor. Some movie critics have hailed this picture as "Nothing less than Superb!" and "The Most Realistic Battle Action in Movie History!" Others have said that this is historical truth brought to the screen. This is where the appraisers have erred. The truth about the battle for the Sudan in the 1880's has been distorted to suit the minds and prejudices of the Hollywood movie czars and their subjects, who are mainly white.

The picture stars Charlton Heston as General Charles Gordon, the enigmatic British mystic who was sent to the Sudan, in Central Africa, to rescue an Egyptian army and thousands of British civilians besieged in Khartoum by the nationalist uprising of Muhammad Ahmad, the Mahdi, and his devoted followers. In the picture, and in the extensive advertisements about it, the Mahdi is depicted as an Arab religious

fanatic. He was both religious and a fanatical African nationalist, but he was not an Arab. He was a Moslem.

Very often, when it suits the anti-African propaganda purpose of most white writers and nearly all white motion picture makers, Africans who are Moslems, and heroes, are called Arabs. This infers that they are white men. By this not so subtle method, people of African descent all over the world are robbed of heroes that rightfully belong to them. The motion picture *Khartoum* is a case in point.

The black writer must now examine, and sometimes challenge, all interpretations of the history of his people and their heroes that have been made by other people. For an examination of the life and times of Mohammad Ahmad, known as the Mahdi, a few questions are in order:

Who was this man and what is the significance of his fight to free the Sudan from British and Egyptian rule?

What is the importance of his country and his people?

What indeed is the real "Mahdi" story?

The Sudan is an old African country, and it has not always been called the Sudan. It was once a part of the biblical land of Kush and has also been known as Nubia or Bilad al-Nuba. The Arabs called the country Bilad al-Sudan, meaning, "the Land of the Blacks." From the early part of the sixteenth century to the latter part of the nineteenth century the Sudan was dominated by a series of invaders who ruled recklessly and taxed the people without mercy or any consideration for

The Mahdi's tomb at Omdurman in the Sudan. The original tomb was bombarded by Lord Kitchener who had The Mahdi's bones thrown into the Nile

their well being. Corruption and injustice went unopposed for 60 years until, in 1881, a great leader appeared to unite the Sudanese people against their oppressors. His name was Muhammad Ahmad-ibn-Seyyid-Abdullah. His career is synonymous with the title "Mahdi," meaning "one who is divinely directed."

When Muhammad Ahmad assumed the Mahdiship in 1881, he was under 40. He was born in August 1843 on an island in the Nile River called Labab in the province of Dongala. His family claimed to be descendants of the Prophet Mahomet, though they were humble boat builders. While Muhammad Ahmad's brothers followed their father's trade, he displayed an aptitude for religious studies. Muhammad Ahmad, the youngest of his parent's four sons, was sent to a Khalwa (school) to learn reading and writing and to commit the Koran to memory. His interest and enthusiasm inspired his teachers to send him to a second school in Khartoum and a third one in the Gezira where he completed his studies of the Koran and then studied Muslim laws and traditions. Later he journeyed to the city of Berber to pursue religious studies at the hands of the Sheikh Mahed El Kheir, the renowned religious leader of the time. The most notable of his many teachers was Sheikh Muhammad Sharif.

By 1881, Muhammad Ahmad had acquired a large following and was proclaimed the Mahdi—the future savior of the Sudan. The Mahdi, having challenged the authority of the government, had no option but to prepare for the jihad, or holy war, in defense of Islam and for the freedom of the Sudan. He started to train his followers and to prepare his flags on which he inscribed: "There is no God but God. Muhammad is his prophet and the Mahdi is his Caliph."

The government detachments landed in Aba in the middle of a dark night in the rainy season. The soldiers felt their way towards the village amongst grass and bush and lagoons. All of a sudden, the Mahdists fell on them, using swords and spears and giving them no time to use their firearms. The majority of the soldiers lost their lives, and the small number that escaped the disaster fled to Khartoum in their steamers. The Mahdists rejoiced in their first triumph and in the spoils of arms and ammunition left behind which they could use in days to come.

That was on August 12, 1881. The Mahdist revolution against the Turko-Egyptian régime had started.

The Mahdi and his followers automatically became rebels after the

incident at Aba. As their island was within easy reach of the government, and as they were still in a minority, they deemed it wise to migrate west, far way from the government, and to unite with their allies and associates in Kordofan and the Nuba Mountains.

The Mahdi and his small group of followers crossed the White Nile from Aba on their way westward. They were continually joined by followers until they reached Taqali. In Taqali, King Adam Umm Dabbalu gave them a hearty reception and promised them his protection.

The Mahdi and his followers then moved to Jabal Qadir. The attempts of the governor of Kordofan to intercept their progress failed, and the Mahdists reached Jabal Qadir in safety. There they were joined by the inhabitants of the surrounding mountains, who flocked to join the Mahdist cause. Others from the different parts of the Sudan then journeyed in large numbers to join the Mahdi and to take part in the new mission and in the struggle against the government.

All internal attempts to nip the Mahdist revolution in the bud failed. It then became imperative for Egypt, assisted by Great Britain, to face the situation. A large army was conscripted out of the disrupted Egyptian Nationalist army of Urabi Pasha and others and sent to Khartoum by sea, via Suakin. As soon as preparations were complete for an expedition against the Mahdi, the army, under the command of Hicks Pasha, moved forward. The expedition first followed the White Nile southwards to al Duein. Then it struck westward into a country most hostile to it, in order to come within range of the Mahdists. The scouts of the Mahdist army lost no chance of attacking them whenever circumstances allowed, and in compliance with the orders of the Mahdists, the villages on the route of the Turko-Egyptian army were evacuated and the wells filled with earth. The country through which the army was to pass was thus left desolate of inhabitants and short of drinking water. As the situation of the army grew more pathetic every day, differences of opinion between Ala al-Din Pasha and Hicks Pasha, the leaders of the army, sharpened.

When Hicks Pasha's expedition reached al-Rahad after a long and tiring march, and then moved towards Kargail, the Mahdist hordes from El Obeid and those who joined them from the Baqqara Jima's tribe under their sheikh, Asakir Abu al-Kalam, had arrived on the scene. As Hicks' army was marching out of Kargail and entering the forest of Shaykan, the Mahdists fell on them and a fierce battle raged for a whole day. Hicks' army was annihilated almost to the last soldier in November 1883.

With the defeat of Hicks' expedition, the government lost its last disciplined army and most of its men and stores in the Sudan. What

remained of the armies of the government were distributed in small garrisons defending the remaining posts. These garrisons could not be depended upon in the government's struggle against Mahdism.

The victorious Mahdi then returned to El Obeid, to allow his armies the well-earned rest they required after their long struggle against the government, to receive more disciples and followers, and to start a new victorious era in the annals of the revolution. Soon afterwards, Slatin Bey, governor of Darfur, surrendered his province and became a prisoner of the Mahdi for a very long time. From El Obeid, the Mahdi also sent emissaries and small forces to preach Mahdism and to harass the remaining garrisons of the Turkiya.

So the west succumbed to Mahdism and the Central Sudan associated itself with it. In the Eastern Sudan, Osman Digna, the Mahdist hero, who joined Mahdism on the fall of El Obeid and who was dispatched by the Mahdi in the capacity of a Mahdist amir to preach Mahdism, was able to win the tribes of the Red Sea Hills to the Mahdist cause. They then began to harass the government headquarters in the Eastern Sudan. He captured Sinkat and laid siege to the government garrisons in Suakin and Tokar. From his headquarters near Suakin, Osman Digna continually attacked the government garrisons in Suakin and Tokar, while the Mahdists moved from one victory to the other in the west.

Now Muhammad Ahmad and General Gordon at Khartoum became rival claimants for supremacy over the minds of the Sudanese people. They were also rivals in another sense, for both of them claimed to be the "Messengers of God."

The Mahdi called himself Muhammad Ahmad el Mahdi Monatszer, that is to say, "the prophet and guide awaited by the world." His followers had already adopted the cry of, "Muhammad Ahmad rasseul Allah nili Allah" . . . roughly translated, "Muhammad the Messiah and Messenger of Allah."

Of the many rumors that were being circulated about him and his followers, one was that he intended to invade Egypt, to convert the Musselmen to the true faith from which they had strayed; and after a massacre of the Christians in Egypt, to go to Mecca, the holy city of his faith where he expected to receive the Khalifat and be ordained the Grand Cheikh of Islam.

The future battle lines had been drawn and both contestants had been pushed beyond the point where a compromise could be reached.

The Mahdi was invited to Khartoum to be examined in the Koran to see if he was really the expected Messiah. He rejected the invitation

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and sent back the message, "By the Grace of God and His Holy Prophet, I am master in the Sudan. Never shall I come to Khartoum to justify myself."

With this sort of preaching he struck the right chord in the character of the Moslem and all other Sudanese tribes. His plan was to unite all in one great faith. Wisely, for his scheme, he recognized the general state of discontent and most astutely used it as a fertile ground for his message. He was a religious leader, but he also was a shrewd politician. He based arguments on the prevailing "hard times" and traced these to the existing government. His astuteness was again shown in the way he selected, as the field of his earliest efforts, the most disturbed section of the country.

The British authorities offered a large sum for him dead or alive. This action forced the Mahdi to declare a holy war. He promised his rapidly increasing followers the majority share of the spoils he intended to take from the oppressors.

A quarrel developed between the commanders sent to seize the Mahdi. The quarrel broke into an open fight and the two separate companies of soldiers were weakened to ineffectiveness. The Mahdi and his followers fell on these troops with clubs, sharp sticks and stones. In a short while they were destroyed. Then came the Mahdi's attempt to capture El Obeid, the capital of Kordofan; and though driven back with great losses, he prevailed until, after a siege of five months, the town and garrison surrendered. Now he was hailed as the maker of miracles. Praise Allah! The Messiah had come!

The government no longer looked upon him as a holy man, zealous for religion but poor and without influence, whom they could silence easily. The government had already come to be despised by the people because of its weakness and corruption, while the prestige of Muhammad Ahmad was in the ascendency. The spirit of rebellion which prevailed in Egypt no doubt helped to augment fanaticism in the Sudan. The government again sent for Muhammad, and he again refused to go. There now followed in surprisingly rapid succession defeat after defeat for the government, and success after success for the Mahdi.

Now the personality and activity of the Mahdi stirred the whole of the Sudan—and the hopeless became hopeful and the leaderless had found a leader. From the hills and the plains, deserts and forests, the

tribes rallied to the black flag of the Mahdi and pledged allegiance to his crusade. Tens of thousands of them, The Selem, Baggara, Risega, Homer, Dinka, Bongo, Madi, and Bari, poured into the new Messiah's camp. They came on horseback and on foot, armed with rifles and lances, or with home-made spears. Some were the poorest of the poor and wore only filthy loin cloths. The British and the Egyptians braced themselves against this tide and reshuffled their plans and forces. Still, the tribes gathered thicker in the Mahdi's camp. They had but one goal in view: Freedom or Paradise.

The British, realizing that they were about to be pushed out of the Sudan, brought in their most able General, Charles George Gordon, better known as "Chinese" Gordon. He had served in this region before and already had a respected reputation there. He was known to most of the people and liked by a large number of them. Gordon was a devout Christian and, like the Mahdi, had illusions of being divinely endowed.

When Gordon arrived at Khartoum he found the situation more desperate than the force at his command could master. Knowing the country and its people better than most Englishmen, he decided to use diplomacy. After the collapse of his ill-advised attempts to bring the ex-slave trader, Zobeir Pasha, to his assistance, he finally had to deal directly with the Mahdi. Gordon offered to make the Mahdi governor-general of a large province. The mighty Mahdi interpreted this gesture as an insult and ridiculed Gordon for making it—thinking: why should he be a mere governor-general of a province when the whole of the Sudan, except one or two places, was already his. In reply, he urged Gordon to forsake his devout Christian beliefs and become a Moslem.

To Gordon, this of course, was unthinkable. Being a practical military man, he knew that he did not have the power he needed to defend Khartoum. He sent the women and children out of the city and awaited the Mahdi, who arrived soon afterward and laid siege to the city. After the siege had lasted many months, the British sent an expedition of 25,000 men under the command of Lord Wolsley to support General Gordon's army at Khartoum.

Lord Wolsley, whose victory over the Egyptians at Tel-e-Kebir in 1882 was the decisive factor in establishing British rule over Egypt, proceeded up the Nile with his expedition in 800 boats, hoping to reach General Gordon before his army was overrun by the Mahdi's dedicated adherents. At Abu Klea, he met part of the Mahdi's forces and won a victory in the battle that followed, while suffering heavy losses. The bright memory of Lord Wolsley's victory barely had time to become

rest before his second in command, General Stewart, was beaten and killed.

After weeks of hardship, part of Lord Wolsley's expedition reached Omdurman, a few miles from Khartoum. In the journey, the British ships had to sail through severe attacks by Modern Krupp guns. Lord Wolsley's success at Abu Klea and in bringing the expedition up the Nile was a commendable feat of leadership, but it did not save General Gordon; two days before his arrival, January 25, 1885, Khartoum had fallen to the Mahdi's army.

The long, 321-day siege ended when 25,000 of the Mahdi's fanatical army swarmed over the ramparts of the battle-scarred city and surrounded the palace of Governor-General Gordon. Gordon, a stalwart soldier to the end, walked calmly out on the steps, where a giant Kordofan soldier follower of the Mahdi ran him through with a spear. An officer named Nisser beheaded him with his sword. Hundreds of soldiers plunged their spears into his body. His head was sent to the Mahdi, who at least admired him as a soldier, and had hoped to make him a Moslem convert.

The story of Gordon's attempt to save the Sudan for England was all the more pathetic because his task showed every indication of failure before he set himself to it. The fall of Khartoum, and Gordon's tragic end, was a severe blow to English pride that might have been avoided. To add to this, another expedition composed of 11,000 English and Egyptian soldiers was defeated with great losses at Kassala, by the Mahdi's most able general, Osman Digna.

General Gordon had made the city of Khartoum his headquarters, then had been hemmed in on all sides until the city was cut off from the outside world, while his supplies of food, guns and ammunition were used up in a lost and hopeless cause. He had stood bravely to his post trying to inspire a hundred men to do the work of thousands. Then, being baffled and harassed by the shiftlessness and incompetency of his officers, he made promises he could not keep, until his word to an Englishman began to fall on unlistening ears. Yet, he inspired a listless population to resist for 321 days. Then came the night attack, and "the father and saviour of the Sudan" lay dead.

In the midst of this chaos, Lord Wolsley retreated to Cairo with what remained of his army. Later, bent on avenging his and England's honor, he asked for a chance to attack the Mahdi again, and was permitted to do so. He returned the same year with 12,000 white troops and was beaten back. Now, England withdrew from all of Sudan except the port of Suakin, which could be defended by warships. The Mahdi prevailed over the rest of the Sudan.

The Mahdi and his forces crossed the west bank of the White Nile and there, in the desert, laid the foundation of the capital of his new kingdom. He was now supreme master of a rich empire 1,600 miles long and 700 miles wide. His subjects had been gathered from every district and tribe. Some gave him homage willingly, some through fear.

The Mahdi's ambition was still running high. He thought of himself as another Mohammed. He planned to bring all adjoining territories under his rule; subdue the Christian part of Ethiopia, march into Egypt and convert the world to Islam.

His amazing career ended before any of these dreams were realized. On June 22, 1885, six months after the death of General Gordon, he died of typhoid fever. With his last strength he shouted the Islam creed.

His followers mourned him for months and later erected a magnificent tomb on the spot where he died.

The Mahdi was succeeded by his second in command, Khalifa Abdullahi, who ruled the country for 11 troublesome years before the British gave Lord Kitchener enough men to reconquer the Sudan.

In avenging what he thought was England's honor, Lord Kitchener showed no mercy and considered nothing to be sacred while he was accomplishing his mission. He more than earned the title, "The Butcher of Omdurman." He bombarded the tomb of the Mahdi, took his bones and threw them into the Nile. It was said that Mahdi's head was packed in a kerosene tin and later used by Kitchener as a tobacco container.

In spite of Lord Kitchener, and those who came after him, the followers of the Mahdi continued to fight the British until about 1930.

In the many books and papers written about him, the Mahdi became a romantic hero in the eyes of some of the Englishmen who had fought him. In his introduction to the book, *The Mahdi of Allah*, by Richard A. Hermann, the late Winston Churchill said: "The life of the Mahdi is a romance in miniature and wonderful as that of Mohammed himself. The rebellion of the Sudan was the last great outburst of the blood-red flower of Islam. The Mahdi and his Caliphate might well have endured to today and developed as stately a power as the Moors in Spain."

As for the unanswered question—was Mohammad Ahmad, the Mahdi, really a Messiah? Well, millions of people in the Sudan believed he was, and some still do. But let this truth suffice: the Mahdi and his successors were rightfully fighting against injustice and colonial misrule, among other reasons. The aftermath of this fight moved the British to adopt a more humane and enlightened administration in the Sudan. This policy eventually helped to make the Sudan the free and independent country we know today.

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Section D: Mohammed Ahmed, (The Mahdi) Messiah of the Sudan

John Henrik Clarke

U. S. Correspondent on African Affairs, World Mutual Exchange

The Sudan is a very old country and it has not always been called the Sudan. As early as 4,000 B.C. there appears to have been trade between Egypt and what is now the Sudan. In those days the island of Elephantine marked the southern frontier of Egypt. South of this frontier the country extended as far as the land of Punt, which was on the coast of present day Somaliland. Later it was known as Ethiopia, the Biblical land of Cush.

In 721 B.C. Piankhi, a Nubian Prince, established control over the whole of Egypt. The Kings of Cush became accepted as the Kings of Cush and Misr (Egypt).

For a thousand years the Sudan was a Christian nation, divided into two kingdoms; Makurra and Alwa. In 640 A.D. the Arabs who had conquered Egypt made their way into the Sudan. In 1517 A.D. the Sultan of Turkey conquered Egypt and invaded the northern Sudan. Because of the cruelty of their rule, henceforth the people of the Sudan referred to all oppressors as "Turks" regardless of their race or religion. The armies of Mohammed Ali invaded the Sudan in 1820 A.D.

Corruption and injustice went unopposed for sixty years until in 1881, a great leader appeared to unite the Sudanese. He rallied the people to unite in a holy war against the "Turks" and drive all foreign oppressors from the Sudan.

This great leader was Mohammed Ahmed. He belonged to the race of people known as Dongola; inhabitants of Dongola. His father was a fiki or religious teacher. He taught his son reading, writing and the meaning of the Moslem bible, the Holy Koran. Through his own resourcefulness, he learned of the countries of Egypt, India, Persia, Europe and the vast world beyond and around his country. He was exceedingly intelligent, with a force of character somewhat superior to most of his people.

Mohammed Ahmed-Ibn-Seyyid-Abdallah was the last and best known of the native conquerors of the Sudan. His career is synonymous with the title "MAHDI", meaning one who is divinely directed. The Mahdi announced to his people that he would conquer the world. He taught them to take an oath never to put on a new garment until all foreigners had been driven out of the Sudan. Though he fought Egypt, as well as the English, he, nonetheless, had many sympathizers among the Egyptians. They felt that he was responding to a feeling of nationalist pride and anger motivated by the injustice of foreign domination. The English occupation of Egypt, supposedly tentative, was especially galling to the Egyptians because of the uncertainty about its probable duration. The Prophet of Islam in the Sudan commanded more reverence from the Egyptians than the Christian English who were showing no signs of making preparations to keep their promise to withdraw from Egypt.

Mohammed Ahmed was born near the island of Argo, at Dongola in the Sudan. At his death his age was estimated to be about forty five. Therefore he must have been born sometime between 1840 and 1845. In spite of their poor and obscure background his family claimed to be "Ashraf" or descendants of the "Prophet".

During the greater portion of his youth, Mohammed Ahmed was left entirely to

his own resources. He learned the Koran by heart and received his early instruction in theology. Subsequently he went to the city of Berber and became a pupil of the well known teacher, Mohammed el Kheir who completed his education. Arriving at manhood, he went to Khartoum where he became a disciple of the then celebrated and highly respected Sheikh Mohammed Sherif, his grand uncle. With him he went to live on the island of Abba, on the white Nile near Kawa. He stayed and studied here for a number of years and later married the daughter of Mohammed Sherif.

In outward appearance Mohammed Ahmed was strangely fascinating; he was a man of strong constitution and seemingly limitless energy. Like most of the members of the Dinagla tribe his complexion was very dark. A pleasant smile was nearly always apparent on his face. Under this smile gleamed a set of singularly white teeth, and between the two upper middle ones was a V shaped space, which in the Sudan is considered a sign that the owner will be lucky. His mode of conversation, too, had by training, become exceptionally pleasant and persuasive. Later, when he and his followers proclaimed that he was a Messiah and messenger of God, he acted as though he was in direct communication with the Deity. All orders which he gave were supposed to have come to him by divine inspiration; and it became therefore a sin to refuse to obey them: disobedience to the Mahdi's orders was tantamount to resistance to the will of God.

Mohammed Ahmed's great asset in drawing people to never, his personality was his piety and deeply religious zeal, this made him a favorite with all of his teachers . . . yet at one time this pious disposition led to a conflict. Mohammed Ahmed rebuked one of his instructors for allowing singing and dancing at a feast. He held the opinion that this activity would be displeasing to God. In the quarrel and conflict that followed, Mohammed Ahmed was told in very harsh words to leave the school. This was heartbreaking for his teacher, Mohammed Sherif, because he had considered this dedicated young man to be his favorite disciple. But, this disciple had rebuked him in the presence of his elders and the leading citizens of the town. Ordering him out of the school was the only way the teacher could maintain his authority and prestige.

The news of this incident spread rapidly and drew the attention and sympathy of the masses of people to this devout student of the Koran. Now he had his first followers. He also dared to rebuke the rich in their own homes and became a hero to the poor. Soon it was being said that he was a person of divine origin—probably the long awaited Messiah who was expected to appear in the Islam year 1300 or 1881. His name and family were very similar to that of the Prophet.

As his popularity and following increased the British and Egyptian rulers of his country became alarmed over the discontent he was spreading among the people and ordered his arrest. With his first disciples he fled to an island up the Nile. Here the Mahdi religious movement was born. People from all over the Sudan made pilgrimages to the island, beseeching him for Blessing and crying for liberation from their oppressors. Much later, the inevitable came to pass. The Mahdi religious movement was made into a military force that miraculously defeated the combined Sudan armies of Egypt and England and freed his country from sixty years of slavery and cruel taxation.

From Abba Island, Mohammed Ahmed, now called the Mahdi, went to the district of Kordofan where his fame had already taken hold of the population. People flocked to him for blessings—the blessings of a holy man—one who had been bold and brave enough to rebuke a teacher for his sins and his lack of reverence for the laws of the Holy Koran.

In preaching and exhorting the people, the Mahdi had one subject and one theme: "Our religion is becoming debased and corrupted; our Prophet is insulted and every true Moslem is humiliated by the corruption of the government officials

and their utter disregard for the true faith".

Now Mohammed Ahmed and Gordon Pasha at Khartoum became rival claimants for supremacy over the minds of the Sudanese people. They were also rivals in another sense, for both of them claimed to be the "Messengers of God".

The Mahdi claimed, as the word implies, to be the "Guide or Messenger of God", and called himself Mohammed Ahmed el Mahdi Mountazer, that is to say, the prophet and guide awaited by the world. His followers had already adopted the cry of, "Mohammed Ahmed rassool Allah oili Allah" . . . roughly translated, Mohammed the Messiah and Messenger of Allah".

Of the many rumors that were being circulated about him and his followers, one was that he intended to invade Egypt, to convert the Mussulmen to the true faith from which they had strayed, and after a massacre of the Christians in Egypt, to go to Mecca, the holy city of his faith where he expected to receive the Khalifat and be ordained the Grand Cheikh of Islam.

Gordon Pasha's overtures of friendship toward him were treated with disdain. In replying to one of the Governor-General's gestures he said, "I send you back your presents. I will not accept your offer to be Emir (Governor) of Kordofan. You say you have come to make peace because you are with God. We are with God. If you are with God you are with us; on the contrary if you are against us you are against God. Be converted, then, and become a Mussulman; if not, we will inflict upon you the same punishment we have accorded to Hicks Pasha".

The future battle lines had been drawn and both contestants had been pushed beyond the point where a compromise could not be reached.

Gordon Pasha said in reply: "I go to Khartoum to make peace. We can come to an agreement, if, however, you wish for war, come on. I am ready".

The Mahdi was invited to Khartoum to be examined in the Koran to see if he was really the expected Messiah. He rejected the invitation and sent back the message, "By the grace of God and His Holy Prophet, I am master in the Sudan. Never shall I come to Khartoum to justify myself."

With this sort of preaching he struck the right cord in the character of the Moslem and all other Sudanese tribes. His plan and thought were to unite all in one great faith. Wisely for his scheme, he recognized the general state of discontent and most astutely used it as a fertile ground for his message. He was a religious leader, but he also was a shrewd politician. He based arguments of the prevailing "hard times" and traced these to the existing government. His astuteness was again shown in the way he selected, as the field of his earliest efforts, the most disturbed section of the country.

The British authorities offered a large sum for him dead or alive. This action forced the Mahdi to declare a holy war. He promised his rapidly increasing followers the majority share of the spoils he intended to take from the oppressors.

A quarrel developed between the commanders sent to seize the Mahdi. The quarrel broke into an open fight and their two separate companies of soldiers were weakened to ineffectiveness. The Mahdi and his followers fell on these troops with clubs, sharp sticks and stones. In a short while they were destroyed. More troops were sent but these too were destroyed. Then came the Mahdi's attempt to capture El-Obeid, the capital of Kordofan, and though driven back with great losses, he prevailed until after a siege of five months, the town and garrison surrendered. Now he was hailed as the maker of miracles. Praise Allah! The Messiah had come!

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ment had already come to be despised by the people because of its weakness and corruption, while the prestige of Mohammed Ahmed was in the ascendency. The spirit of rebellion which prevailed in Egypt no doubt helped to augment fanaticism in the Sudan. The government again sent for Mohammed and he again refused to go. There now followed in surprising rapid succession, defeat after defeat for the government, and success after success for the Mahdi.

Now the personality and activity of the Mahdi stirred the whole of the Sudan—the hopeless became hopeful and the leaderless had found a leader. From the hills and the plains, deserts and forests, the tribes rallied to the black flag of the Mahdi and pledged allegiance to his crusade. Tens of thousands of them, The Selem, Baggara, Rasega, Homer, Dirrka, Bonga, Madi, and Bari, poured into the new Messiah's camp. They came on horseback and on foot armed with rifles and lances, or with home-made spears. Some were the poorest of the poor and wore only filthy loin cloths. The British and the Egyptians braced themselves against this tide and reshuffled their plans and forces. Still the tribes gathered thicker in the Mahdi's camp. All, fanatically brave, they had but one goal in view: Freedom or Paradise.

Mohammed Ahmed had all the qualities of a great revolutionary leader, the sure self-confidence of one who believed himself divinely endowed, tremendous force of character and great personal integrity. These qualities were combined to persuade great masses of people to the truth of his message. Besides he had emerged at the time the long awaited Messiah had been prophesied to appear convinced that he was indeed sent by God to help them, his adherents hailed him as the long-awaited Mahdi, el Mahdi el Muntazar. This was to be a Jihad, or a holy war, and the Mahdi reminded his followers that, according to the words of the Prophet, those who met their death in battle would be immediately received in paradise. It was the fanatical courage which this doctrine inspired that enabled the poorly armed Dervish force to defeat the British-Egyptian army in battle after battle.

Each new victory was an inspiration and added other followers to the leadership of the Mahdi, until practically the whole Sudan lay at his feet.

The Egyptians recalled Raouf Pasha and sent another Governor General with a stronger army to turn back the Mahdi's fanatical armies. Still this army of formerly misbegotten creatures swept to defeat everything before them. At Sennar, of 6,000 Egyptians only 20 escaped alive. At Djebel-Gadir in June 1882 two whole army corps were wiped out; at Seribab, July 11 of the same year the Mahdi destroyed all except twelve of an army of 6,100 men. In October he overran and defeated an Egyptian force of 10,000.

After attacking El-Obeid, a city where he had previously suffered a temporary defeat, he turned his attention and military prowess toward Khartoum, capitol city of the Sudan.

The English who previously were only concerned with the decline of their power and prestige in the Sudan now began to fear for their very lives. The Egyptian forces, first to rear up against the Mahdi's power had been crushed.

Sir William Hicks (called Hicks Pasha), a veteran leader of colonial wars, was placed in charge of 10,000 men armed with the latest weapons. With his force he crossed the Nubian Desert and proceeded up the Nile, hoping to encounter the Mahdi's army somewhere near Khartoum. Before the Mahdi met Hicks Pasha's army he had crushed the Egyptian forces at Abu Ahmed and at Bleibeh, therefore leaving no appreciable Egyptian army in the field against him.

Hicks reached Khartoum first after defeating some hostile tribes on the way. The Mahdi's followers and prestige had increased to a proportion where he was now considered an infallible military leader as well as a true Messiah. With this accelerated status, he led his main

army toward Khartoum. Hicks left 3,000 men to hold the city and set off with the rest of his army to meet the Mahdi, who in the meantime had altered his plans by withdrawing the army headed for Khartoum. He encamped at El-Obeid just long enough to entice Hicks Pasha to move his army in that direction. However when Hicks reached the city, the Mahdi had moved further into the desert. Hicks followed him into this well laid trap, as he expected him to do. On November 3, 1883, after Hicks Pasha's army had been weakened by thirst and some had died from drinking poisoned water, the Mahdi and his loyal cohorts swept down upon them. This was the Mahdi's most decisive victory so far. A mound of dead men covered the body of Hicks Pasha, also dead.

Now the anxiety of the English in the Sudan became panic. They were afraid that the Mahdi's example would spread to other colonial areas.

The force that the Mahdi had sent to Suakin under the leadership of his most able general, Osman Digna, had defeated an army commanded by the British general, Sir Samuel Baker. Later, another British general named Graham, was able to hold Osman Digna's army at bay.

More victories for the Mahdi followed. He captured Berber, Dongola, (the home of his tribe) Darfur and the rich Equatorial Provinces.

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January 25, 1885, Khartoum had fallen to the Mahdi's army.

The long 321 day siege ended when 25,000 of the Mahdi's fanatical army swarmed over the ramparts of the battle scarred city and surrounded the palace of Governor-General Gordon. Gordon, a stalwart soldier to the end, walked calmly out on the steps, where a giant Kordofan soldier follower of the Mahdi ran him through with a spear. An officer named Nisser, beheaded him with his sword. Hundreds of soldiers fell upon Gordon and plunged their spears into his body. His head was sent to the Mahdi who at least admired him as a soldier, and had hoped to make him a Moslem convert.

The story of Gordon's attempt to save the Sudan was the more pathetic because his task showed every indication of failure before he set himself to it. The fall of Khartoum and Gordon's tragic end was a severe blow to English pride that might have been avoided. To add to this, another expedition composed of 11,000 English and Egyptian soldiers was defeated with great losses at Kassala, by the Mahdi's most able general, Osman Digna.

General Gordon had made the city of Khartoum his headquarters, then had been hemmed in on all sides until the city was cut off from the outside world, while his supplies of food, guns and ammunition were used up in a lost and hopeless cause. He had stood bravely to his post trying to inspire a hundred men to do the work of thousands. Then, being baffled and harassed by the shiftlessness and incompetency of his officers he made promises he could not keep until his word as an Englishman began to fall on unlistening ears. Yet, he inspired a listless population to resist for 321 days. Then came the night attack, the mad rush to the palace, the javelin throw and he, who was said to be "the father and saviour of the Sudan" lay dead.

In the midst of this chaos, Lord Wolseley retreated to Cairo with what remained of his army. Later, bent on avenging his and England's honor, he asked for a chance to attack the Mahdi again and was permitted to do so. He returned the same year with 13,000 white troops and was beaten back. Now England withdrew from all of Sudan except the port of Suakin, which could be defended by warships. The Mahdi prevailed over the rest of the Sudan.

The Mahdi and his forces crossed the West bank of the White Nile and there, in the desert laid the foundation of the capital of his new kingdom. He was now supreme master of a rich empire 1,600 miles long and 700 miles wide. His subjects had been gathered from every district and tribe. Some gave him homage willingly, some through fear. The Sudan is peopled by many racial types with every form of physique and all of them were represented among the Mahdi's followers. There were Christians, Moslems and heathen. There were those who loved the Mahdi and his cause, and others who followed him in order to obtain protection, clothes, food and shelter.

The Mahdi's ambition was still running high. He thought of himself as another Mohammed. He planned to bring all adjoining territories under his rule; subdue the Christian part of Ethiopia, march into Egypt and convert the world to Islam.

His amazing career ended before any of these dreams were realized. On June 22, 1885, six months after the death of General Gordon, he died of typhoid fever. With his last strength he shouted the Islam creed.

His followers mourned him for months and later erected a magnificent tomb on the spot where he had died.

The Mahdi was succeeded by his second in command, Abdulla the Khalifa who ruled the country for eleven troublesome years before the British gave Lord Kitchener enough men and guns to reconquer the Sudan.

In avenging what he thought was England's honor, Lord Kitchener showed no mercy and considered nothing to be sacred while he was accomplishing his mission. He more than earned the name, "The Butcher of Omdurman". He bombarded the tomb of the Mahdi and took his bones and threw them into the Nile. It was said that the Mahdi's head was packed in a kerosene tin and later used by Kitchener as a tobacco container.

In spite of Lord Kitchener and those who came after him, the followers of the Mahdi continued to fight the British until about 1930.

As for the unanswered question—was Mohammed Ahmed, the Mahdi, really a Messiah? Well, millions of people in the Sudan believed he was and some still do. But let this truth suffice; the Mahdi and his successors were rightfully fighting against injustice and colonial misrule, among other reasons. The aftermath of this fight moved the British to adopt a more humane and enlightened administration in the Sudan. This policy eventually helped to make the Sudan the free and independent country we know today.

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Section E: Bambata: Last of the Zulu Rebel Chiefs

John Henrik Clarke

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When Cetewayo died in 1884, and the Zulu tribe was broken up into 13 sub-divisions without a central head, the Europeans in South Africa breathed easier and said: "At last the power of the Zulu is broken." They had spoken prematurely. The period of easy breathing did not last long. The 13 sub-divisions of Zulus, each with conflicting views and aspirations, created more confusion than stability. Soon the trekkers from the Transvaal into Zululand were glad to recognize Dinizulu as the paramount chief of the 13 petty chiefs who were ruling the remaining portion of Zululand haphazardly. Dinizulu was the son and rightful successor to Cetewayo.

The proclamation of Dinizulu as paramount chief was followed by a "grant" of land to the Boers who soon afterward established a new republic with Vyrheir as its capital.

Paul Kruger, the Boer leader, wanted the territory of St. Lucia Bay and an outlet to the ocean that would free the Boers from the heavy duties that the British were placing on their imports. The recurring hunger for more land brought the Boers once more into armed conflict with the Zulus. The British attempt at "peace-making" involved them in a war with Dinizulu.

After brave and stubborn resistance the Zulu chief had to surrender and was exiled to St. Helena Island, along with his uncles, Ndabuko and Shingane. In 1898, they were allowed to return and it was then that Dinizulu was appointed chief of the Usutu tribe in the Nongoma district and was recognized as the hereditary head of the Zulus.

The colony of Natal was having trouble with its East Indian subjects who, under Mahatma Ghandi's leadership, were relentlessly fighting the drastic restrictions imposed upon them by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

Farther South in the country that is now Rhodesia, another crisis had unfolded and ended in defeat and sorrow for another branch of the Zulu tribe. Lobengula, king of the Ama-Ndebele, Matabele or Abukwa-Zulu, had been overwhelmed by Cecil Rhodes' army of well-equipped mercenary soldiers. His country, Matabeleland, his people and his conquered subjects, the Moshunas, had been reduced to vassals. When Lobengula died in 1893, the Europeans in South Africa once more breathed easier and said again, "At last, the power of the Zulus is broken." Once more they had spoken prematurely.

Before the Zulu uprisings were finally brought to an end more men and issues had to be dealt with—one man in particular, Bambata, chief of the Zondi tribe.

Bambata was born in 1865 in the region called Mpanza Valley. His father was Mancinza, sometime called Sobuza. A small and not particularly distinguished branch of the Zulus, the Zondi tribe had as its chief Mancinza. The Zondis have also been referred to as the Amazondi—meaning the "haters." Bambata's mother was the daughter of Pakade, a well-known chief of the Cuou tribe.

As a boy, Bambata was headstrong and restless like most Zulu boys. He was fond of fighting and frequently neglected the cattle he was told to watch in order to engage in fights with other boys. He became an expert in the use of the assegai, the traditional tribal fighting weapon.

Bambata's father, Mancinza, died in 1883. Bambata was too young to ascend to the chieftainship of his tribe. A trustworthy uncle, Magwababa, was appointed to the chieftainship.

His relations with the Europeans in South Africa were never satisfactory. Unlike most of the Zulu chiefs, he would not accept the reduced status of his tribe, in spite of the fact that the Zondis were small in number and had only about two dozen villes between them.

The total strength of the tribe at the end of 1905 was: 90 huts in the Umvoti, 120 in New Hanover, 21 in Umbeni and 91 in Lion's River. These divisions of 1,142 in all represented a total approximate population of 5,000 men, women and children. Less than a thousand were capable of bearing arms. He had only a few oddly mixed regiments, not comparable in strength or organization to the other Zulu clans in and around Natal.

This did not keep Bambata from trying to avenge the past and present wrongs imposed on his tribe. He knew of the Zulu's greatness in victory and in defeat. He wanted to redeem and enhance the name Zulu. He was resentful of most Europeans and felt no compunctions about raiding their farms for cattle.

The Boer War lasted three years and the British colonists were heavily in debt. In spite of the fact that the native African got nothing out of the war but some promises that were never kept, the British decided that they should help pay off this debt. Accordingly, a poll tax of $5 was imposed upon every male African. This was in addition to the regular hut tax of $15 and a dog tax. Bambata decided that his small tribe of 5,500 would pay no tax at all.

Immediately Bambata started to search for allies among the other Zulu tribes. The government ordered him deposed and named Magwababa, formerly the regent of the tribe, to replace him. Bambata had ignored all the government orders and told his tribe to pay no tax. He threatened to kill the detachment of white policemen sent to arrest him. Later he fled into Zululand to see his paramount chief, Dinizulu. Other chiefs sympathized with Bambata and respected his daring while letting him know that they could not commit themselves to following his course of action. Some of them had reluctantly ordered their people to pay the tax.

Dinizulu considered his position and became cautious. He could not afford to let it be known that he sympathized with Bambata, though much of the action that followed proved he did. His most able general, Cakijana, was slyly and unofficially assigned to assist Bambata. They went secretly through Natal and Zululand recruiting followers and stirring up feelings against the tax and European rule.

Bambata found his strongest ally in Chief Signanada Sluzi of the Cube tribe. The chief had five taxable sons and could not see why they should pay tax for living on land that had been theirs for centuries. Signanada was about 95 years old at the time. In age he was the senior chief among the Zulus and a kind of elder statesman and oral historian. He had practically lived through the rise and fall of the Zulu empire and had participated in most of the important wars and events that brought the Zulus glory and defeat. He had personal knowledge of incidents during the reigns of former Zulu chiefs, Chaka, Dingaan, Panda and Cetewayo. He had been present at the death and funeral of Chaka's mother, Nanda. He had served in the Mkunulshana regiment of Chaka's half-brother and successor, Dingaan. As a member of this regiment he witnessed the massacre of Piet Retief and his party of Boer settler in 1838.

Signanda fought on the side of Cetewayo at the battle of Ndondakusuka in 1856. Later, he fled to the Graytown district where he was befriended by Mancinza, the father of Bambata. Cetewayo recalled him to Zululand in 1871 and appointed him a petty chief. Because of this background and Signanada's friendship with his late father, it was a natural turn of events for Bambata to seek refuge in and assistance among the Cube tribe on the eve of the Zulu Rebellion of 1906.

On the 9th of April a detachment of British troops under the command of Colonel Leuchars surrounded and shelled

Bambata's kraal, seemingly not knowing that Bambata and his followers had crossed the Tugela River and escaped into Zululand.

Bambata was reported to have taken refuge in Cetewayo's old stronghold in the Nkandhla Mountains, which were considered to be inaccessible, even to the Zulus. As the crisis grew more drastic, C. R. Saunders, Commissioner of Native Affairs, left Eshowe for Nkandhla. Orders were issued to the chiefs of that district to arm their people and capture Bambata. On April 14, the government offered a reward of 500 pounds for his capture. On April 17, Chief Signanada's tribe broke out in open rebellion. Dinizulu, fearing that his indirect support of Bambata would become known, sent a message to the Natal government asserting his loyalty and ordered his chief leader, Mankulumana, to seek out Signanada.

The situation had become critical and the gravest anxiety was rampant. It was feared that the rebellion would spread into Zululand. On April 20, offers of assistance were received from other South African colonies. Two companies of troops left for Eshowe and one for Ginginhlove. An irregular corps of 500 men was raised for special service. Dinizulu, the paramount chief, again offered to help the government drive out Bambata and put down the rebellion. His offer was not accepted.

There was a possibility that his part in starting the rebellion had already become known to the British. His most able general, Cakijana, was serving very boldly at Bambata's side.

On the 23rd of April the Transvaal government offered to send a completely equipped cavalry regiment of 500 men to the troubled area. The offer was accepted by the Natal government on April 26, and the first contingent left Johannesburg for Dundee.

The reward for the capture of Bambata was withdrawn after his location became known. With Chief Signanada's help, he had collected three strong rebel chiefs and was given a hospitable reception. On April 28, Colonel McKenzie was placed in command of the Zulu field forces. The rebellion was spreading.

Col. Sir Aubrey Wools-Sampson, a hero of the Boer War, was appointed chief of staff to Colonel McKenzie. The whole of the Zululand field force except those left behind to maintain order in other areas was camped in Dundee waiting for the order to march on the rebels in the Nkandhla Forest.

Trouble was also smoldering in other places. A detachment of troops had to be sent to Helpmakaar, where a powerful chief named Kula was suspected of sedition. At the same time there were disquieting reports about Chief Mehloka-Zulu in the Nquru district.

On May 3, the Zululand field force left Dundee with 20 days' supplies. There were 150 wagons with two columns. Before they arrived at Nkandhla, news was received of an encounter with the rebels in the vicinity of Cetewayo's grave. These rebels were mostly from Chief Signanada's tribe, though Bambata was seen leading them and giving instructions from a white horse.

The battle was just a little more than a skirmish, with each side testing the other's strength. The rebels fled back to the protection of the forest. More troops were brought into the area and the battle started again in the vicinity of Cetewayo's grave. Before sundown three columns arrived and took a position about a half mile from the grave, near the junction of the Nkunegana and Insuzi rivers. A heavy thunder storm broke over the camp during the night.

Colonel McKenzie led a detachment of troops into Bambata's mountain stronghold, Mome Gorge, and the final and decisive phase of the rebellion began. Over 5,000 well-equipped troops were sent against Bambata's rebel army. The ammunition for Bambata's few rifles had long been exhausted. Now his men were fighting only with ox-hide shields and spears. In spite of the inequality of weapons, Bambata achieved some success

in every encounter with the Zululand field forces.

He knew the mountainous terrain and could move his fighters skillfully over it. Most of the fighting was done from ambush. The African soldiers fighting with the Zululand field forces wore identifying arm bands of white and black cloth to distinguish them from the rebels. Bambata put similar strips on his spies and sent them among the white soldiers to learn their plans.

Twenty other chiefs had joined the rebellion. Some less confident ones doubted that he could succeed in his desperate mission and refused to commit themselves and their people.

The sacrificial bravery of Bambata's followers could not stop the latest model machine guns in the hands of well seasoned soldiers who had recently won the Boer War. The more cautious chiefs who had failed to support Bambata's rebellion were right in one case at least—Bambata did not have a chance. He and his men had fought bravely, but this was not enough.

In every engagement at Mkandhla, Otimati, Peyana, Insuzi, McCrae's Store and now at Mome Gorge, Bambata and his adherents had fought with courage befitting the best patriots of any land. The defeat, which was inevitable, gave them a strange kind of victory and a kind of martyrdom that was not strange at all.

Bambata was killed in the engagement at Mome Gorge. His rebellion collapsed soon after his death. Twenty-three hundred of his 12,000 followers had been killed and 4,700 were taken prisoner. Among the prisoners was Sigananda, the aged chief of the Cube tribe, the most remarkable Zulu alive at that time. He was bitter and defiant and treated his captors as if they were his prisoners. A few days later the old warrior died.

The rebellion had lasted nine months and had cost the Natal government five million dollars. Twenty-five of the leaders were exiled to St. Helena Island. Other insurgents were sentenced to long prison terms. Dinizulu, paramount chief of the Zulus, was accused of complicity and was sentenced to four years.

Bambata's followers refused to accept the fact that he was dead, though the government publicly exhibited his head as proof and a warning to all others who might have thoughts of rebellion. Bambata's wife, who was one of his most devout followers, did not go into mourning. Like some of his other followers, she stubbornly and wishfully thought that only the body of Bambata was dead and his spirit would soon return to lead the Zulus.

The death of Bambata and the old chief, Sigananda, represented the end of an era in South African history. The first Europeans settled in South Africa in the middle of the 17th century. The European conquest of South Africa was not completed until the end of the Zulu rebellion in Natal, April 1906.

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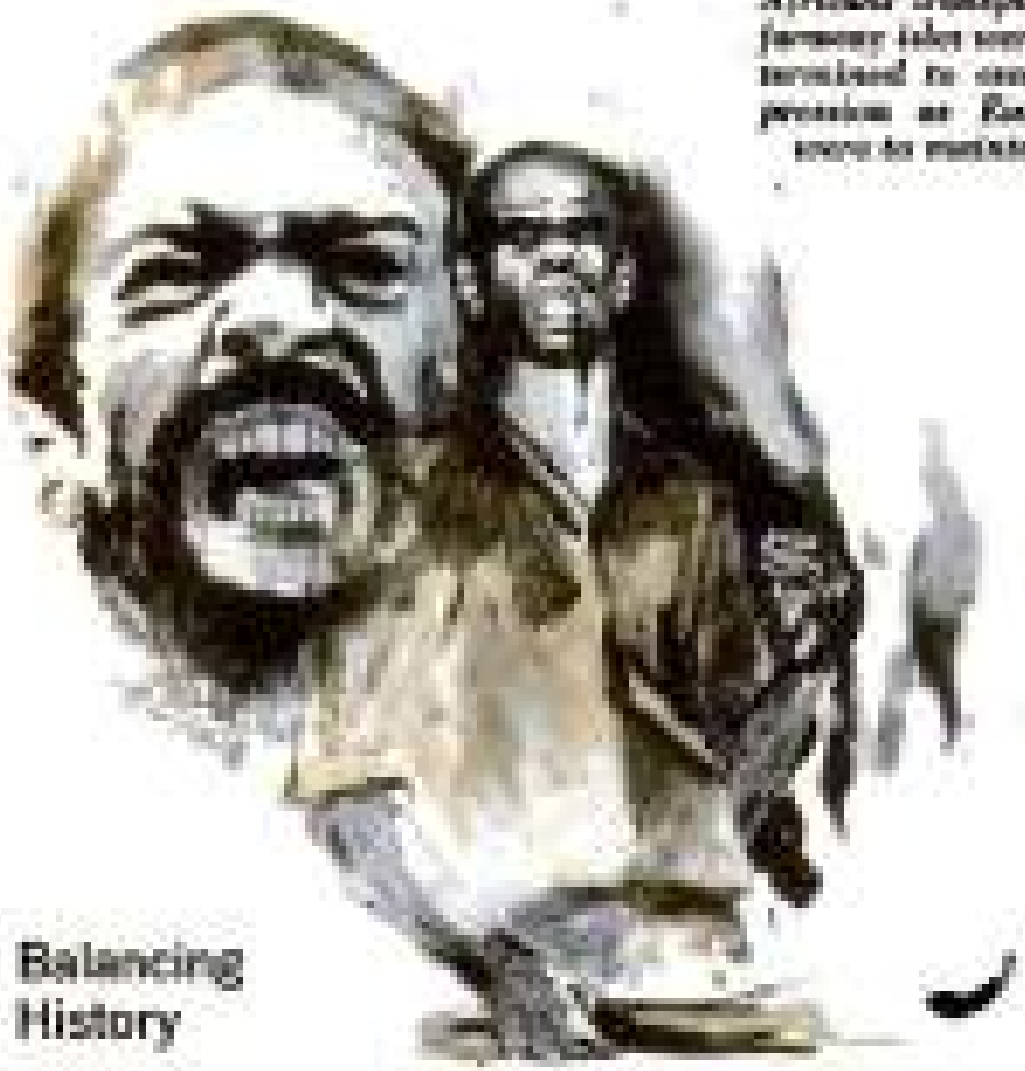

Africans transported to faraway isles were as determined to escape oppression as Europeans were to maintain it.

Balancing History

BY JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

THERE is no extensive accounting of the impact of Europeans and the slave trade on African culture. In order to rationalize the slave trade and the colonial system that followed it, European historians, in most cases, had to deny the existence of an African culture that could be compared, in age and in influence, with cultures in other parts of the world. The tendency was not only to deny the Africans' culture but, also, to deny the logical adjunct to culture—the Africans' humanity.

In spite of this denial, the Africans did maintain some of their culture. This culture was essential to the success of a large number of slave revolts in the Caribbean Islands and in Guyana. The slaves in this part of the Americas were generally bought in large numbers and kept together on one or two large plantations. Because these slaves came from the same general area in Africa, they had a related culture. Out of this culture, a communication system was developed which the slave masters could not understand. This event was played out against the background of the second rise of Europe, and the beginning of the decline of the great states along the coast of West Africa and in the Western Sudan.

The European awakening that had began with the Crusades was by this time a movement to explore and exploit large areas of the world outside of Europe. For the great states in West Africa, this was a time of tragedy and decline. Europe's era of exploration and internal strife in Africa were contributing factors to the start of the slave trade. The slave trade, in turn, was a contributing factor to the development of the philosophy of mercantilism that would dominate political and economic thought for the next 200 years.

Early in the 15th Century, Europe began to recover from the wounds of the Middle Ages and the Crusades. European skill in shipbuilding had improved and, in search of a food supply for their hungry population and for new worlds to conquer, Europeans began to venture beyond their shores. There are many reasons why the Europeans had not embarked upon world-wide exploration before this time: their ships were small and unsafe for long sea journeys; oars were sometimes used to propel these ships, and the outcome of all voyages depended largely on the wind; there were no good maps or instruments to guide sailors through unknown waters.

At that time, most Europeans were ignorant about the shape of the world, and some thought it flat. The Portuguese set out to disprove this and, about the middle of the 15th Century, they began trading with the people along the west coast of Africa, to which they gave the name "guinea" after the Sudanic Empire of Ghana. At first they traded mainly in gold, but before long, they began to take slaves also.

Social and political unrest began to develop among some of the nations of West Africa at the time Europe was regaining its strength and a degree of unity. The first Europeans to visit the west coast of Africa did not have to fight their way in—they came as guests and were treated as guests. Later, they decided to stay as conquerors and slave traders. In order to gain a position strong enough to attain these ambitions, they began to take sides in African family disputes, very often supplying the family (or tribe) they favored with arms, and

using their favorites as slave catchers. A number of African nations went into the slave trade in order to buy guns and other European-manufactured items. Others were forced to capture slaves or become slaves. (The Europeans did not come to Africa initially to find slaves. For years they had been hearing stories about the great riches of Africa. At the Battle of Ceuta against the Moslems in 1415, Prince Henry of Portugal, who later became known as Prince Henry the Navigator, heard about the prosperity of Timbuktu and the wealth of the great states along the west coast of Africa. He also heard stories about a great African Christian king named Prester John.)

Before the end of the 15th Century, the Portuguese sailors had come to know the general shape of the continent of Africa. They traded regularly with African countries from 1471 on. Ports were built along the coast of West Africa. (The most famous of these forts, still in existence, is Elmina in what is now Ghana. This fort was started in 1482 by a Portuguese captain, Don Diogo d'Azambuja.) Because of the large profits gained by the Portuguese in their trading in this country, they called it the Gold Coast. During the latter half of the 15th Century, European nationalism was reflected in the expansion of trade in both slaves and manufactured goods. The marriage of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand gave Europe the unity to drive out the Moors. Both Spain and Portugal were becoming powerful Mediterranean nations.

In 1488, Bartholomew Diaz had sailed around the southern tip of Africa. About 10 years later, another Portuguese sailor, Vasco da Gama, sailed past the point reached by Diaz. With the help of an Arab pilot, Vasco da Gama reached India in 1498. For Europe, the door to the east world of Asia was open. In order to understand the historical setting, already referred to, it is necessary to look, at least briefly, at some of the main currents of history that led to it. The rationale for the slave trade had already begun in Europe with attempts to justify the enslavement of other Europeans. This discord was a result of the religious wars that prevailed in Europe for hundreds of years. Inside most of the European countries, peace was unknown. Kings ruled like tyrants. The farmers were without land and had to work most of their lives on the farms of rich landlords who had private armies to put down all unrest. Education was not available to the common people. Very few could read and speak up for their rights. People regarded as witches predicted the future and claimed to have magical powers; children believed in fairies and were told cruel stories as a form of punishment.

During the religious wars, many Roman Catholic Kings would burn their Protestant subjects to death.

Then Protestant kings would return the cruel compliment and burn their Roman Catholic subjects. Europeans were skilled in all kinds of torture. These internal disputes within Europe were only partly settled when they, using their new maritime skills, began to explore the broader world of Africa, Asia and the Americas, North and South.

The story of the African slave trade is essentially the story of the consequences of the second rise of Europe. In the years between the passing of the Roman Empire in the 8th Century, and the partial unification of Europe through the framework of the Catholic church in the 13th Century, Europeans were engaged mainly in internal matters. With the opening of the "New World" and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain during the latter part of the 15th Century, the Europeans started to expand beyond their homeland into the broader world. They were searching for new markets, new materials, new manpower, and new land to exploit. The African slave trade was created to accommodate this expansion. (The basis for the European industrial revolution had already been established. They had already created embryo technology, including the gun. In the years that followed, they also used other advantages, mainly a large fleet of ships and rabble soldiers and sailors with no sentimental attachment to non-European people, to take over most of the world. In so doing, they destroyed a large number of nations and civilizations that were older than any in Europe.)

The main problem with the African, in dealing with the Europeans during this early period, was the African's tragic naivete. He had never dealt extensively with this kind of people. He came out of a society where nature was kind; nature furnished food, adequate land, enough of the basic things needed to live a pretty good life. These old African societies were governed by honor and obligation. Land could neither be bought nor sold; there were no fights over the ownership of land. The land belonged to everyone. The European, coming from a society where nature was rather stingy and where he had to compete with his brother for his breakfast, his land, and his woman, had acquired a competitive nature that the African could not deal with. In order to justify the destruction of these African societies, a monster that still haunts our lives was created. This monster was racism. The slave trade, and the colonial system that followed, are the parents of this catastrophe. The Europeans (mainly the Portuguese) who came to the west coast of Africa in the 15th Century did not have to fight their way into the

continent; they came as guests, and were treated as guests. Then they grew strong, decided to be conquerors, and turned on their hosts.

In the meantime, Portugal and Spain, having broken part of the Moorish power in the Mediterranean, began to vie for spheres of influence. As good Catholic nations, they went to the Pope to settle a dispute; and the Pope told them, in essence, you take the East, and you take the West. Spain began to gravitate toward the West, and Portugal toward the East. Using maps made by Jews who dealt in gold in northern and western Africa, a Portuguese prince called Henry the Navigator, who, incidentally, never went to sea, began to send Portuguese expeditions down the coast of West Africa, first for trade, then to establish Portuguese holdings in that area.

When the Moors were expelled from Spain, they returned to Morocco, where the emperor El Mansur arranged with them to invade Equatorial Africa, the old empire of Songhai. This invasion broke up the structure of the last great empire in Western Africa. And the chaos that followed, set up Africa for the future European slave trade. The slave trade prospered, and Africans were herded into the New World. Figures on the subject vary, but it has been established that during the years of the African slave trade, Africa lost from 60 to 100 million people. This was the greatest single crime ever committed against a people in world history. It was also the most tragic act of protracted genocide.

The first Africans who came to the New World were not in bondage, contrary to popular belief. Africans participated in some of the early expeditions, mainly with Spanish explorers. The best-known of these African explorers was Estevanico, sometimes known as Little Steve, who accompanied the De Vaca expedition during six years of wandering from Florida to Mexico. The remarkable thing about Estevanico, who came to America in 1527, is that he was an accomplished linguist. He learned the language of the Indians in a matter of weeks. Because of his knowledge of herbs and medicines, he was accepted as a deity by some Indian tribes. In 1539, Estevanico set out from Mexico in a party with Fray Marcos de Niza in search of the fabulous Seven Cities of Cibola. When most of the expedition, including Fray Marcos, became ill, Estevanico went on alone and opened up what is now known as New Mexico and Arizona.

The greatest destroyer of African culture, and the greatest exploiter of the African, was the plantation system of the New World. The African was transformed into something called a Negro. He was dehumanized. This is the thing that is uniquely tragic about the African slave system. Of all the slave systems in the world, no other dehumanized the slave more than that initiated by the Europeans in the 15th Century. Using the Chris-

tian religion as a rationale, they began to set up myths that nearly always read the African out of human history, beginning with the classification of the African as a lesser being. The Catholic Church's justification for slavery was that the African was being brought under the guidance of Christendom, and that he would eventually receive its blessings.

There were several competing slave systems in the New World. In order to understand the effects of these various systems on the personality of the Africans, we have to look at each one individually. In Cuba and Haiti, often the Africans were a majority in the population. This is also true of certain portions of Brazil. The system operated differently in these areas; although it was still slavery, the African had some cultural mobility. In South America and in the West Indies, the slave master did not outlaw the African drum, African ornamentations, African religion, or other cultural manifestations dear to the African. This permitted a form of cultural continuity among the slaves in the West Indies, Cuba, and South America that did not exist in the United States. In the Portuguese areas, in the West Indies, and often in South America, the plantation owner would buy a shipload or part of a shipload of slaves. These slaves usually came from the same areas in Africa, and they naturally spoke the same language and had the same basic culture. Families, in the main, were kept together. If a slave on an island was sold to a plantation owner at the other end of the island, he could still walk to see his relatives. This made for a form of cultural continuity among the slaves that later made their revolts more successful than revolts in the United States. It can be said, with almost absolute justification, that these revolts, and the personalities involved, were the Caribbean antecedents of Marcus Garvey. It is against this historical background that he can best be understood.

In an article, "A Birth of Freedom,"[1] Guyanese writer Sidney King (Eusi Kwayana) makes this point graphically, when he reminds us that, "The Caribbean tradition, taken as a whole, is a revolutionary tradition. It is the stage on which acted Cudgoe, and Cuffy, Accabreh and Accra, Toussaint, Quamina, and Damon, Adoe and Araby (all leaders of slave revolts). Blows delivered against the European system in 1750, or in 1850, served to shake that system, sometimes to its foundations and to cause it to make democratic concessions as a price of recovery. It was never the same again; and although financial exploitation became more intense and complicated, a constitutional superstructure was raised for dealing with human anger and for side-tracking revolution into peaceful awe-inspiring chambers." The revolts referred to

[1] (Special Guyana Independence Issue, New World Magazine, May, 1966.)

here were epitomized by the Berbice Revolution of 1763. This revolt, Mr. King observes, "struck the first blow for Guyanese independence. It was a blow that the theoreticians of human subjugation will never forget. It was part and parcel of the Caribbean Movement, begun by the Caribs against European penetration and domination." While deploring the fact that this revolution has received scant treatment in the bulk of West Indian Literature, Mr. King states that the purpose of his essay is to restore the Berbice Revolution to its proper context, not only in West Indian and Caribbean History, but in World History. He further maintains that, "It will be found that many of the initiatives for human freedom, credit for which has been claimed by the well-publicized and advertised revolutions, which were not without great merit, were in fact foreshadowed in Berbice."

The essence of the Berbice Slave Rebellion and how it started is this: From time to time, the Africans not only escaped their cruel masters, but they killed them before doing so. These killings are spoken of as rebellions and some of them are recorded. But the Berbice Slave Rebellion was one rebellion that was more than a mere attempt to throw off the yoke of slavery, for it had in it the germ of a revolution. Cuffy, the leader of the Rebellion was a house-slave who had been brought to the colony very young and, because of his intelligence, had been taught conversing by his master. When the rebellion started in February 1763, at Plantation Magdalenenberg on Canje, Cuffy was there from the start, but he was angry at it. He had hoped to secure better conditions for the slaves without having to resort to war. But, this was not to be so. Ironically, while the slaves were rebelling, the Governor of Berbice was putting a plea for them to the Directors of the Association. When he heard news of the rising, he did not hesitate to steal what help he could to the planters on the Canje.[1] By the beginning of March, the Rebellion had spread to the Berbice River, where the first plantations to be attacked were those of certain private planters who had been extremely cruel to their slaves. Plantation after plantation was overrun and the whites captured and killed.

Meanwhile, the whites had rushed for all the places of safety. They took refuge in a brick house at Peerbooms. The whites had turned the house into a virtual fortress, each window being defended and the approaches strewn with broken glass. But this did not deter the Africans who bombarded the building with bob-nails bound-up round with burning cotton. Soon the roof was afire, but it was

quickly extinguished. Cosiah, the leader of the attack, told the whites that the Africans were determined to take the estate. The whites held a hasty council. They knew that the Governor of Berbice had planned sending a recently arrived slave ship to cover with its guns their retreat to the river. But the ship was nowhere in sight, and provisions and water were running out. The manager of one of the estates spoke to the Africans. He asked why they were treating the Christians in that manner. Cosiah's reply was virtually a declaration of independence. He said that the Christians were too cruel, and that they had decided that they would not tolerate any more Christians or whites in their country; further, that they intended to be masters of Berbice since all the plantations belonged to them.

For a summary of the significance of the Berbice Slave Rebellion and its place in world history, I go back to the article by Sidney King. He says: "The Berbice Slave Rebellion, as it is mistakenly called, was an episode, in the 18th century, of world-wide historic significance. To be of world-wide historic significance an episode needs only to present new historical aspects that are at the same time qualitatively important. West Indian activities cannot afford to pay obeisance to humanity; and so we are best fitted to redefine historical magnitude. Numbers, then, are not of first importance. It is sufficient that there is new historical precedent. A small number of human agents in a human drama can conceivably do something that has not taken place before, something astonishing to informed observers. This was the case with 1763.

"The rising of 1763 took place before the revolt of the American colonies in North America, known to history as the original type of colonial revolution and the forerunner of modern republicanism. It took place before the Haitian revolution which fulfilled some of the aims of Berbice. It happened a hundred years before the Paris Commune, a hundred and fifty years before the October Socialist Revolution in Bourgeois Russia, and nearly two hundred and fifty years before the launching of the Cuban perpetual revolution. It contains, in embryo, features of all these revolutions and it foreshadowed, as so many other things have done, some of Lenin's revolutionary principles. On the other hand it came after the Jamaican Maroon and the Surinam Bush Negro movements and aimed at carrying these to their logical conclusion.

"The closeness in time of the Berbice rising to the Bush Negroes' Movement in Surinam, and Jamaica to the revolutions in Haiti and North America, reminds us that it took place in a period of world convulsions, when the established order stood in jeopardy every hour—apparently to remain so eternally. The spirit of mass

after the refinement of the Renaissance, and the nationalism and heresy of the Reformation, had been made extremely vigilant by the self-centered individualism of the *bourgeoisie*. Now it was in quest of liberation. So it was too in the West Indies, a mainspring of the industrial revolution."

The War of the Maroons of Jamaica predated the Haitian Rebellion and is better known in history. The word Maroons once spread terror along the skirts of the blue mountains of Jamaica. There were times when they swept down, unsuspectedly, upon the outlying European plantations, routed the Assembly from its order, and according to an official statement of that day, endangered public credit, civil rights and the prosperity, if not the very existence, of the island colony of Jamaica. The Maroons have been compared to the European rebels called the Circassians. The difference is that while the white mountaineers numbered 400,000 and only defied Czar Nicholas of Russia, the black mountaineers numbered less than 2,000 and defied Cromwell of England. The Circassians, after years of revolt, were finally subdued. The Maroons, on the other hand, whose revolt started in 1655, were never completely conquered.

The events that led to the Maroon Rebellion are only briefly outlined here. The African slaves in Jamaica, under the leadership of a man named Cudjoe, who is better known in history as Captain Cudjoe, had withdrawn from a fortified citadel manned by the Europeans and had begun to harass the people in this fortress with sporadic attacks. This first Maroon War came about because the English had reneged on the promises previously made to the Maroons, and were now encroaching on their territory. The English had made concessions to the Maroons as a reward for their alliance against the Spanish. In the protracted wars that followed, the Maroons distinguished themselves as a military power, but accepted a settlement that was less than independence. The settlement, that is still being questioned by some Caribbean historians, gave the Maroons internal autonomy while making them "responsible directly to the Governor of Jamaica." Sidney King appraises the effects of this settlement and the impact of the Maroons in this way. He says: "The Maroons therefore seemed to lack a total conception of liberty which could rally all the oppressed in the island for an assault on the slave holder's power. They were willing to buy a limited freedom by pledging in advance the liberty of their fellows. We can be excused for thinking of them at this level as a little aristocracy, as a material interest. Nevertheless the Maroon

Movement was a mighty contribution to the West Indian and to world freedom, but it lacked the indepentable guarantee of national sovereignty. The Maroons were a people, a remarkable people, but not a nation; and they did not set up a State. Yet without them, Berbice could not have taken place."

What is called "The Bush Negro Movement of Surinam" (or Dutch Guiana) has a closer relationship to the Maroon Movement than to the Berbice Movement of 1763. In their cause and in the way they executed their battle strategy by withdrawing from the European-dominated plantations, they related directly to the Maroons. In fact, they are referred to as the Maroons of Surinam. Both of these movements used some of the same tactics, though the Surinam Movement was not as effective. These movements were pre-nationalist in their aim and scope. In general, they were freedom movements that, given time, would have developed into autonomous Black states. In Surinam, some of the Africans who had been brought into the country at an earlier date had escaped into the wooded hinterlands and had established independent communities. These communities became havens for other Africans who escaped from the plantations. This situation, in part, helped to set the Surinam revolt in motion. The first open outbreak occurred in 1726, when the slaves on the plantations of the Saramacca River revolted. After the government found it impossible to subdue these rebels, they tortured 11 captives to death, thinking this would frighten the other rebels into submission. However, this act of cruelty only spread the rebellion into other areas. It continued for almost another generation. One of the leaders of the rebellion, named Adoe, signed a peace treaty in 1749. In 1761, when the Surinam rebels were under the leadership of two Black generals, referred to as Captain Araby and Captain Baron, another treaty was signed.

The plantation owners did not seem to learn anything from their past experiences. They did not feel called on to honor any of the treaties they had made with the Blacks. In 1722, another leader, named Baron, led the Surinam Maroons in another uprising. Some of the planters liberated their slaves and used them against the rebels. This was only partly successful. In increasing numbers the "liberated" slaves joined the rebels. These wars lasted until 1851. The revolt of the Maroons, both in Jamaica and in Surinam, helped to create the conditions and attitude that made the Berbice revolt in Guyana possible. These revolts, collectively, helped to create the conditions and attitude that went in the making of the most successful slave revolt in history—better known as the Haitian Revolution. This revolt was brought into being by three of the most arresting personalities in Caribbean history—Toussaint L'Ouverture, Jean

Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe. The distinguishing feature of this revolution is in the fact that it achieved what the others were not able to achieve—nationhood.

The dramatic beginning of the Haitian Revolution is told in the following excerpts, taken from the book, *Great Negroes Past and Present*, by Russell L. Adams (1969).* "In 1630 the French came to the island and took control of the western side of Saint Domingue. With the sweat of the blacks they made their territory the richest European colonial possession, sending to France a steady stream of sugar, cotton, and indigo. By the end of the 17th century, some 20,000 Frenchmen, 50,000 mulattoes and 2,000,000 blacks lived there in an uneasy balance. Caste and class separated the three groups. Complicating these divisions was the presence of the Spanish rule on the eastern half of the island. High, well-nigh impassable mountains sliced Saint Domingue in two parts. While France itself, was astir with talk of the rights of man and of brotherhood, equality, and fraternity, miserable governors-general held absolute sway over thousands of slaves who produced the wealth of Saint Domingue and over discontented mulattoes who could own land, but had no political or social standing. When the Bastille fell in 1789, the island trembled as though in anticipation of some dreaded catastrophe. In this same year the mulattoes revolted. France then loosened its rule a bit and allowed the mulattoes to have seats in the new colonial assembly. But the enslavement of the blacks continued, harsh and cruel as ever. As the revolution in France gained momentum, the far away island of Saint Domingue became increasingly restless. The blacks became fired with the desire for freedom and deep in the forest at night they gathered and plotted. The tom-tom language of the Africans told the blacks of the planned uprising. On August 1, 1788, in the late night hours, Boukmann, a voodoo priest, whose name and repeated deeds struck terror in the hearts of slaves, held a meeting of leaders. Among them was Pierre Dominique Toussaint, known for his wisdom and respected for his learning. That night the conspirators plotted their revolt. Eight days later, the entire 2,000 miles of French territory reverberated to the rhythm of hundreds of drums. The whites were terrified. With a mad sweep the blacks moved from village to village, putting the torch to everything that would burn and killing every white encountered.

* The following excerpts from *Great Negroes, Past and Present*, by R. L. Adams, is reprinted by permission of the Afro-Am Publishing Co., Chicago.

For weeks the sky glowed with the flames. More than 6,000 coffee plantations and 200 sugar refineries went up in smoke. The French rallied their forces and finally routed the slaves. Boukmann, leader of the revolt, was captured at Cap François and his head was impaled on a pole to put fear in the hearts of the slaves. Toussaint succeeded Boukmann as leader of the slaves and sought an honorable peace for the blacks, who had taken refuge in the forests. At the same time, across the ocean, France had declared war on Spain and England. Thus the French and Spanish halves of Saint Domingue were at war. Following the Arab fiction that 'he who is the enemy of my enemy is my friend,' Toussaint collected his forces and joined the Spaniards to war against the French army. Second in command to Toussaint was Jacques Dessalines, a brutal African who had been brought to the island as a young slave but was virtually free because his master feared him. The Spaniards equipped the slave rebels, and they began attacking the French from the northern and eastern portion of the island. Aided by the Spanish, Toussaint drove the French forces from the area. France sent 3,000 soldiers to subdue Toussaint and his black Spartans, but they were soon overcome by the forces of Toussaint or the fever which spread throughout the island. Recognizing that it was helpless to control the revolt, France proclaimed an end to slavery. Toussaint was not satisfied with the proclamation. He abandoned his Spanish allies and fought his way through the French territory, routing the enemy in town after town. His victories won for him the nickname of 'L'Ouverture' (the Opener) and the title of 'General of Saint Domingue' for life. All of the blacks praised him and when he conquered Cap François, called him the 'deliverer.' It was here that he was joined by Henri Christophe, a slave who was born in Grenada in 1767. As a mere boy, Henri worked as a mason and later was bought by a Negro master who operated an inn where Christophe served as a waiter. In the army of L'Ouverture, Henri used his native ability to promote himself to the rank of Sergeant in short order.[7]

After conquering all of the French territory, Toussaint established himself as Governor-General of Saint Domingue. Jacques Dessalines, his comrade-in-arms, was made Governor of the Province. Henri Christophe was promoted to the rank of General and made Governor of Cap François. To the south of Cap François, there was a region that was predominantly inhabited by mulattoes. This region was ruled over by Alexander Sabes Pétion. Before Toussaint had time to pull the country together, the mulatto problem, that had been somewhat latent during the Revolution, surfaced and added new problems to Toussaint L'Ouverture's nation-

building efforts. While Toussaint was turning his attention to the arts of peace and nation-building, Emperor Napoleon, to the contrary, was planning the reconquest of Haiti. To this effect Napoleon spared nothing. He ordered 86 ships to be built to carry 22,000 fighting men. The Commander of this navy was General LeClerc. This fleet arrived in the waters of Saint Domingue in February, 1802. The main force of the fleet was directed at Cap Francois, then under the Governorship of Henri Christophe, who refused to receive LeClerc. This led to an attack by the French forces. Christophe put a torch to the city, including his fabulous palace, and fled to the hills. Relatedly, the peasants rushed to join Christophe.

General LeClerc had attempted to re-enslave the Blacks and return all plantations to their former owners. When this tactic failed, he reversed himself and declared all Blacks free forever. He offered Christophe and Dessalines generalships in the French Army. He went through the motions of retiring the aged Toussaint with honor. This was part of an overall scheme to destroy the three main leaders of Haiti. Toussaint was captured and taken to France, where he died in prison in 1803. An attempt was made to assassinate Dessalines. This act of deception by LeClerc started another revolution. Christophe and Dessalines joined forces and drove the French army into the sea. In this crisis, the mulattoes put aside their loyalty to the French and fought with the Blacks. Dessalines came to power. After his assassination in 1806, Christophe literally rebuilt Haiti and ruled it until his death on October 8, 1820.

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John Henrik Clarke's "Slave Revolt in the Caribbean" is an extension of a speech he made a year ago at the State University of New York in Binghamton. Mr. Clarke, of course, is the well-known scholar, writer and teacher of African and Black American history. Presently on the staff of Hunter College in New York City, he has authored or edited such books as *The History and Culture of Africa*, *Malcolm X: The Man and His Times*, *American Negro Short Stories*, and *William Styron's Nat Turner: Ten Black Writers Respond*.

The Land Question in Palestine and Eastern and Southern Africa

A comparative and historical study of two colonial tragedies

BY John Henrik Clarke

The land question, in general, is as old as people and nations. It is part of a world problem and must be seen in this context in order to understand the specific land question that is the subject of the present paper. The quest for land and the attempt to recover it when it is lost, is a recurring theme in the drama of human endurance and survival. Stability on a piece of land that a people can call its own is the basis for its nationhood, its culture and religion: in essence, its humanity.

In my assessment of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, I will be, figuratively, looking through several historical windows. My main focus will be the land question. I will emphasize the importance of the land question in Palestine by comparing it with the land question in Eastern and Southern Africa. My intent is to show that the method and rationale that were used by the Europeans to take the land from the Africans in the so-called White Highlands of Kenya, in Zimbabwe, then called Rhodesia, and in South Africa, where the Dutch or Boers encountered the Khoisan people whom they called Bushmen and Hottentots, were basically the same.[1]

Further, I intend to show that the pattern of land encroachment by the Europeans was part of a war against the cultures and customs of non-European people and it differed, only by degree, at different times and in different places. In her Ph.D. thesis, "The dominant modes of Western thought and behavior: an ethnological critique", Professor Donna Richards referred to this behaviour of Europeans as "the concept of the cultural other". She says:

> "It is in the nature of the Western ethos that one of the most accurate indices of Western man's self-image is his image of other ... The essential characteristics associated with this concept, within the Western world view, are control and consequently power - the theme which reverberates endlessly in the ethnological unfolding of Western culture, echoed in every Western statement of value."[2]

In another work, entitled "The ideology of European dominance", Professor Richards continues her examination of the European world view. She says:

> "It is possible to isolate certain seminal ideas which have served as organizing principles in Western scientific thought ... These themes are intimately related to the Western European attitude toward other peoples and imply a particular relationship to them, which will subsequently be referred to as 'ethos'. ... The Western European ethos appears to thrive on the perception that those who are culturally and radically different are inferior. It relates to other cultures as superior or inferior, as powerful or weak, as 'civilized' or 'primitive'. The European world view reflects these relationships. It was the Western European ethos that created 'the savage'."[3]

If we understand what Professor Richards has said, we will also understand, at least in part, that temperament and attitude of the Ashkenazi Jews who control that part of Jerusalem that is called Israel. They are more European than Jewish. They are, in fact, a European nation. Their problem, however tragic it is, was started in Europe by Europeans and should have been resolved in Europe by Europeans. In the books "Democracy in Israel", the writer Norman F. Dacey calls our attention

to the main aspect of this dilemma when he says:

> "Jews in Israel don't persecute just Arabs - they persecute each other. The discrimination which is the hallmark of the life in the Zionist State is responsible for a widening gap between Western Ashkenazi Jews and the oriental or Sephardi Jews."[4]

Discrimination against the oriental Jews continues in housing, in jobs and in education. Their plight in Israel is the plight of a subject people. These oriental Jews once lived all over Western Asia, called the Middle East. Zionist propaganda enticed them to come to Israel, when the State was created. The European Jews never accepted them as their equals, although they belong to the same religion. Oriental Jews had established communities in Baghdad in Iraq and in other Middle Eastern countries 12 centuries before Islam arrived. These Jews have not related to zionism because zionism was not created by them or for them.[5]

Zionism has a direct relationship to European colonialism. It developed out of the same political incubator at about the same time. In its racist attitudes and treatment of Arabs, oriental Jews and the small number of American blacks who have settled in Israel, zionism relates more to the Calvinist Christianity of the Boers in South Africa. The Arab communities in Israel and on the West Bank are surrounded by Jewish settlements that are armed camps, established to contain the Arabs and control the land. These Arab communities are similar to the black communities in South Africa that the Boers call bantustans. In both cases the intent is the same: to deny the Arabs and the Africans any kind of sovereign rights in their own land. Whether the system is practiced in Israel or in South Africa, it is what the Boers call "apartheid".[6]

The word apartheid was coined by the Boer intellectuals for the general election of 1948 that brought the Boers to political power. The condition of apartheid existed long before the word, and the British are more responsible for creating the condition than the Boers. The word, with the promise to keep the Africans "in their place", caught on immediately among the white racialists who saw apartheid as a means to advance themselves at the expense of the Africans. The condition of apartheid also meant that the Africans, like the Arabs in Palestine, could be made to feel alien in their own land.

The Palestinian writer and scholar, Fayez A. Sayegh, emphasized this point in his pamphlet, "Twenty Basic Facts about the Palestine Problem" when he said:[7]

> "... Israel has additionally imposed a system of apartheid upon the Arabs who stayed in their homeland ... More than 90 per cent of these Arabs live in 'security zones'; they alone live under martial law, restricting their freedom to travel from village to village or from town to town; their children are denied equal opportunities for education; and they are denied decent opportunities for work, and the right to receive 'equal pay for equal work'."

Dr. Sayegh remind us that, in spite of this fact, Israel is generally portrayed in the Western press as the "bastion of democracy" and the champion of peace in the Middle East. The propaganda in Israel's favour could not turn the facts around. This nation was established, at the expense of the Arabs, at the intersection of three continents. Geographically, Israel is located at the back door of Europe, the side door of Asia and the front door of Africa. Since its inception as a State the rules of Israel have behaved as though they were the colonial masters in this part of the world. The Arabs in Israel are treated like colonial subjects.

Dr. Sayegh explains this dilemma more precisely in his pamphlet, "Palestine, Israel and Peace", when he said:[8]

"The crux of the Palestine problem is the fate of a people and its homeland. It is the piecemeal conquest and continued seizure of the entire country by military force. It is the forcible dispossession and displacement of the bulk of the indigenous population, and the subjugation of the rest. It is also the massive importation of alien colonists - to replace the evicted, and to lord it over the conquered. And it is the colonization, by the foreign settlers, of both the expropriated private land and the seized national resources of the overpowered people. It is, indeed, the destruction of the native Palestinian society of Christian and Muslim Arabs, and its replacement by a society of transplanted Jews and a foreign body politic - which views itself as the vanguard of the 'Jewish nation', currently spread throughout the world but declared destined sometime to assemble in the seized land.

"The refusal of the Arab world to acquiesce in this fate of Palestine and its people explains both the bitterness and the persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It also underscores the essential difference in character between this conflict and ordinary international disputes. And it explains why the Arab-Israeli conflict cannot be resolved until the Palestinian problem is settled through restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people."

There is no intent on the part of the Israelis, not even the liberals or the Communists, totally to restore the rights of the Palestinian people. The liberals and Communists want an improvement in the living condition of the Palestinians. They do not want the Palestinians to come to power, nor are they willing to share power with them. What is called Israel and the West Bank is European-controlled territory. This means Ashkenazi control. The slight improvement in the living and political conditions of the oriental Jews in Israel in recent years does not mean that they will ever come to power. In an article contributed to the book *Zionism and Racism*, the writer Naseer H. Aruri explains the plight of the oriental Jews of Israel in this manner:[9]

"That Israel's oriental Jews have been subjected to social, economic and racial discrimination is no longer considered controversial. Although constituting about 60 per cent of the population, they are less than first-class citizens. Their representation in the State's social, economic and political institutions is strikingly incompatible with their numerical majority, while the European-American (Ashkenazi) communities are represented far out of proportion to their numbers. Disabilities imposed on the oriental sector are rampant in employment, education, housing, income, social welfare and political participation. Disparities between the two Jewish communities have grown worse in all these areas since the establishment of the Zionist State in Palestine; and there are no indications that the social gaps are narrowing. On the contrary, the available statistical data reveal a widening of the gaps.

"The largest share of the national income in Israel goes to the highest strata of capitalists and managers, workers and government bureaucrats are strategically situated to push for higher incomes. Jews of the oriental communities have no professional skills to speak of and, consequently, are unable to compete in their category. Their presence is most prominently observed in the lowest strata of the socio-economic pyramid, that of the manual workers in industry and agriculture, 'the only group whose share of the national income has increasingly diminished'. Poverty in Israel is closely linked with ethnic origin."

There is no need at this point to argue whether zionism is a form of racism. In the face of so much persuasive evidence, proving that it is is redundant and a waste of time. The Arabs in Israel, and to a lesser extent, that is slight, the oriental Jews, live in a condition that does not differ appreciably from the system of apartheid in South Africa. The Ashkenazi Jews of Israel have almost complete control over their lives - their land, their jobs, their housing, and their education.

The Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, Israel Shahak, states that, "Israel is about as apartheid as South Africa". He referred first to the difficulty Arabs and oriental Jews have in obtaining decent housing.[10]

His comments are:

> "This isn't the only thing. If you go any place where there are so-called twin cities, like Nazareth and New Nazareth, you will see that the old Nazareth is an open city. Anyone can come, and by buying or selling or by agreement can dwell there. But in New Nazareth, the so-called Upper Nazareth, to obtain a flat, you have to bring proof that you are a Jew.
>
> "A society in which such a thing is required for more than 90 per cent of its inhabited areas has no other name than an apartheid society. Exactly the same proof is required in Johannesburg. The only difference is that people know about Johannesburg, but not about Nazareth.
>
> "This goes for many other areas too. For example, you have now an official plan in Israel for what is called the 'Judaization' of Galilee. This means that the Government thinks there are too many Arabs in Galilee, so it has decided officially and openly to confiscate some of their land, convert it into pure Jewish land, and settle only Jews there."

What we need to consider here is that the treatment of the Arabs and the oriental Jews in Israel has no justification in Judaism or Christianity. This treatment violates the moral codes of both of these religions.

Again referring to the treatment of the Arabs and oriental Jews in Israel, Mr. Shahak says:

> "We are on a much lower level than blacks in the United States because there is no recourse. No one can even do the same sort of job that the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] does in the United States. There is no possibility of bringing any case about discrimination, even the most blatant, to any court, because in Israel there is no law forbidding discrimination against non-Jews. On the contrary, all discrimination against non-Jews is completely legal."

What we have here is the lack of recognition of the Arab people as human beings. This attitude towards the Arabs is as racist as any attitude the Nazis ever held toward the Jews. In a booklet on the subject, "Looking beyond coexistence - prospects of a binational Palestine", Alan R. Taylor recalls the official nature of this attitude.[11]

In 1967, just after the June War, a delegation from the United Kingdom representing the House of Commons, visited Jerusalem and was told by the Chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs Committee that the Palestinians "are not human beings, they are not people, they are Arabs". The same sentiment was expressed by Golda Meir two years later in a *Sunday Times* interview:

> "There was no such thing as Palestinians ... It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took their country away. They did not exist."

This inclination to dehumanize an entire people, to deny its very existence, comes out of Western racism. Israel's main difficulty in the Middle East stems from the failure to recognize the Arabs as a people with the right to live in peace, in all or part of Palestine. Before the introduction of zionism this was no problem. Jews and Arabs had met many times on the crossroads of history and most of

the time they complemented each other. Zionism introduced a conflict between the Arabs and the Jews that did not previously exist. The pogroms and persecutions that the Jews suffered in Europe had no counterpart in the Arab world. The early settlement of European Jews in Palestine, in the late nineteenth and in the early part of the twentieth century, had the goodwill and cooperation of the Arabs. The early settlers presented themselves as a simple humane people escaping from the religious and political persecution of Europe. Behind this idealistic guise the real and previously unannounced intentions of zionism were introduced. The leaders of the movement did not want a part of Palestine. They wanted all of it. Humane Zionists who respected rights of the Arabs and advocated a binational State were ignored or expelled from the Zionist movement.[12]

It became known that the leaders of the Zionist movement intended from the outset to colonize and take over Palestine and to establish there a Jewish State "as Jewish as England is English". To this end the Zionists propagated the myth that Palestine was an empty land crying out for settlers. The existence of a large population of Arabs was ignored or brushed aside.[13]

The European Jews who carved a country called Israel out of Palestine, created a country with double standards, one for the Israeli Jews and another for the Palestinian Arabs. The conflict between the Arabs and the Jews was built into the fabric of the Government. The main intention of the Zionists was to destroy every element of stable life among the Arabs and control the land.

The conveners of the twenty-third World Zionist Congress, held at Jerusalem in 1951, were very clear about what they expected of zionism. This was the first such congress after the establishment of the State of Israel. The programme that was adopted began by saying: "The task of zionism is the consolidation of the State of Israel".

The sponsors of this Congress were boldly talking about a political and not a religious action. While zionism might mean different things to different people, to the sponsors of this Congress it meant control - control over the lives of the Arab people, especially control over its land. The following information extracted from the pamphlet, "Zionism and racism - a case to answer", explains in some detail what I mean:

> "In summary, the nature and extent of racial discrimination which is built into the administrative and social framework of the Zionist State of Israel are these:
>
> "1. An Arab living under Israeli rule in Israel may be arbitrarily excluded from land which he and his forebears have owned for generations. He may have his land confiscated and handed over to Jewish settlers. He may then be prohibited from even working on that land. His whole village may be razed to the ground. (Three hundred eighty-five Arab villagers in Israel have been wiped out in this way.) He and his whole community may suffer gross discrimination in housing, municipal services, education and social welfare. He may be refused nationality and citizenship even though he was born in the territory of Israel and has lived there all his life and even though any Jewish newcomer from anywhere in the world automatically receives Israeli nationality. (Thousands of Palestinian Arabs are in this stateless condition in Israel.)
>
> "2. An Arab living under Israeli rule in the occupied territories may be arrested arbitrarily and detained without trial. He may be deported from his native land without judicial process or appeal. His home may be blown up or bulldozed on a simple order from the local military commander. His land may be confiscated for ostensibly military purposes, but in fact for the purpose of Israeli Jewish colonization. His freedom of movement may be restricted. He

cannot express political opinions or engage in political activities without risk of arrest and detention or deportation.

"3. An Arab refugee living in exile whose home is in Israel or the occupied territories and who was uprooted from it in the wars of 1948 and 1967 is prevented from returning home because he is an Arab and not a Jew - and this in spite of repeated United Nations resolutions calling on Israel to allow him to return. Meanwhile any Jew is free to enter and settle in Israel, even though he has never seen the country before in his life."[14]

The land question was at the base of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the beginning and it still is. The Camp David agreement, which I will come back to later, only accentuated the conflict and further alienated the Arabs.

This conflict has long historical roots and it was fully developed before the representatives of the Zionist movement signed Israel's Declaration of Independence on 14 May 1948. They declared that the new State would be "open to Jewish immigration and the ingathering of Jewish exiles". In the meantime nearly a million Arabs were forced into exile. The leaders of the Zionist movement, now the new rulers of Israel, had stood before the world an promised to "maintain complete equality of social and political rights for all its citizens, without distinction of creed, race or sex". Further, they had called on "the sons of the Arab people dwelling in Israel to keep the peace and play their part in building the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship". This was a hollow promise that was never meant and never kept. In his report of September 1948, United Nations Mediator for Palestine, Count Folke Bernadotte, issued this warning:

"It would be an offence against the principles of elemental justice if these victims of the conflict were denied the right to return to their homes while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine, and indeed offer at least the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries."[15]

The report laid bare the crucial essence of the Palestinian conflict. It did not move the Zionists from their position or help the Arabs at all. Israel's new Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, said, "We must do everything to ensure that they [the Arabs] never return." No influential Israelis raised their voice in defiance of Count Bernadotte's call for "elemental justice" for the Arabs now being driven from their homes. The day after completing his report, Count Bernadotte was murdered by Jewish terrorists. The Arab refugee problem became an international problem, and as the Jewish-American journalists would later remark, "the moral millstone about the neck of world Jewry".

The Defence Laws that the new State of Israel had inherited from the British Mandatary Government that had ruled Palestine between 1922 and 1948 were rewritten and made more stringent against the Arabs. Now, at last, some influential Israelis found their voices and spoke out against these laws. At a conference of the Jewish Lawyers' Association, held at Tel Aviv in February 1946, a future Justice of the Supreme Court in Israel made the following statement about these laws:

"These laws ... contradict the most fundamental principles of law, justice and jurisprudence. They give the administrative and military authorities the power to impose penalties which, even had they been ratified by a legislative body, could only be regarded as anarchical and irregular. The Defence Laws abolish the rights of the individual and grant unlimited power to the administration."[16]

The representative of the Jewish Agency, Bernard Joseph, who was later to become Israel's Minister of Justice, went even further:

"With regard to the Defence Laws themselves, the question is: Are we all to become the victims of officially licensed terrorism, or will the freedom of the individual prevail? Is the administration to be allowed to interfere in the life of each individual without any safeguards for us? there is nothing to prevent a citizen from being imprisoned all his life without trial. There is no safeguard for the rights of the individual. There is no possibility of appeal against the decision of the Military Commander, no possibility of resort to the Supreme Court and the administration has unrestricted freedom to banish any citizen at any moment."[16]

Even more emphatic was a future Attorney-General of Israel, Ya'acov Shimshon Shapiro, who later succeeded Mr. Joseph as Minister of Justice:

"The system established in Palestine since the issue of the Defence Laws is unparalleled in any civilized country; there were no such laws even in Nazi Germany ... They try to pacify us by saying that these laws are only directed against malefactors, not against honest citizens. But the Nazi Governor of occupied Oslo also announced that no harm would come to citizens who minded their own business. It is our duty to tell the whole world that the Defence Laws passed by the British Mandatary Government of Palestine destroy the very foundations of justice in this land."

The Israeli legal system is based mainly on the Defence Laws and they have used them more ruthlessly than the British who originally created them. The purpose of these laws is to continue the movements of the Arabs and control the land, by any means necessary. This hunger for the land had manifested itself among European Jewish settlers in Palestine long before the creation of the State of Israel. Unfortunately, the Arabs were not aware of the intentions of the Zionist movement. In his pamphlet, "Twenty Basic Facts about the Palestine Problem", Fayez A. Sayegh raises these questions about the progression of the land problem in Palestine:

"DO YOU KNOW:

"1. THAT, when the Palestinian problem was created by Britain in 1917, more than 90 per cent of the population of Palestine were Arabs? ... And that there were at that time no more than 56,000 Jews in Palestine?

"2. THAT more than half of the Jews living in Palestine at that time were recent immigrants, who had come to Palestine in the preceding decades in order to escape persecution in Europe? ... And that less than 5 per cent of the population were native Palestinians Jews?

"3. THAT the Arabs of Palestine at that time owned 97 1/2 per cent of the land while Jews (native Palestinians and recent immigrants together) owned only 2 1/2 per cent of the land?

"4. THAT, during 30 years of British occupation and rule, the Zionists were able to purchase only 3 1/2 per cent of the land of Palestine, in spite of the encouragement of the British Government? ... And that much of this land was transferred to Zionist bodies by the British Government directly, and was not sold by Arab owners?

"5. THAT, therefore, when Britain passed the Palestine problem to the United Nations in 1947, Zionists owned no more than 6 per cent of the total land area of Palestine?

"6. THAT, notwithstanding these facts, the General Assembly of the United Nations recommended that a 'Jewish State' be established in Palestine? ... And that the Assembly granted that proposed 'State' about 54 per cent of the total area of the country?

"7. THAT Israel immediately occupied (and still occupies) 80.48 per cent of the total land area of Palestine?

"8. THAT this territorial expansion took place, for the most part, before 15 May 1948: i.e., before the formal end of the British Mandate and the withdrawal of British forces from Palestine, before the entry of Arab armies to protect Palestinian Arabs, and before the Arab-Israeli war?

From its inception, the State of Israel and the Ashkenazi Jews, who are its rulers, were an extension of Europe. This is reflected in their temperament, in their intentions and in the arrogant, racist attitude they have towards the Arabs and the oriental Jews. Israel is the most westernized country in the Middle East. It is only geographically a part of Western Asia. The socio-culture of Israel is completely alien to the Middle East. The oriental Jews are more a part of the history and culture of the Middle East. They are an Arabized people who have lived in peace in North Africa and in Western Asia for more than a thousand years. If there are any descendants of the Jews of biblical times, the oriental Jews are most likely those descendants. I repeat, the Ashkenazi Jews are European creations.[17]

There is a need now to look at the history of the Arabs and the Jews, at least briefly, in order to see that the conflict over Palestine and who is entitled to it as a homeland, was not completely settled in ancient times and it is not settled now. Palestine is at the crossroads of the world - a meeting place for the people of three continents. Since 3500 B.C. the main population in this part of the world has been a people called Semites. They were then, as they are now, a people of many colours and cultures. In 2500 B.C. a branch of the Semite people settled in what is now Palestine. They were called Canaanites, after the first name of the country, Canaan. About 2000 B.C., the migrants from the Arabian Peninsula stabilized themselves into new State formations.

When we meet the people now called Jews for the first time in history, they are migrants from that crossroads of the world in Western Asia, now called the Middle East. Their leader is Abraham. At the time he led his people into Egypt, the civilization and the monarchy of Egypt was already old. The pyramids had been built hundreds of years before, and the origin of the sphinx was already a mystery.[18]

Egypt was invaded for the first time in 1675 B.C. by a people from Western Asia called the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings. This invasion turned Egypt's first age of greatness into a nightmare. According to tradition, and the Bible, during this time, 70 Jews, grouped in 12 patriarchal families, nomads without industry or culture, entered Egypt. These Jews left Egypt 400 years later, 600,000 strong, after acquiring from African people all of the elements of their future religion, tradition and culture, including monotheism. Whoever the Jews were when they entered Africa, when they left 400 years later, they were ethnically, culturally and religiously an African people. The people called Jews did not enter Europe in any appreciable numbers until after 70 A.D.

It is open to question whether the European Jews have any traceable ethnic and cultural ties to the Jews of the ancient world, who were the first Jews to claim Palestine as their homeland. This first

claim by the Jews of Western Asia was based on evidence that is shrouded in myth, and a question that still begs for an answer. Who said that Palestine was theirs to be taken without the consent of the people who were living there? For over a thousand years the country that the Jews would later call Palestine was populated by a people called the Canaanites. According to the traditional account of the Jewish flight from Egypt, around the year 1200 B.C., the Hebrews, led by the prophet Moses, fled from Egypt, and crossing the Sinai Peninsula settled in the area east of the Dead Sea. Under the leadership of Joshua, the Hebrews invaded the State of Canaan. Crimes of the most heinous nature were perpetrated against the inhabitants. These crimes are recorded in the Old Testament. This was an imperialist invasion, no different from many others in history. The inhabitants who were not killed were reduced to servitude, and thus the Jews took over Palestine for the first time.

They were only able to occupy parts of Palestine and the area east of the Jordan River. In the year 1020 B.C., King Saul established their first State. He was followed by King David and King Solomon who ruled until 923 B.C. Here the Jews gained their first experience in agriculture, urbanization and statecraft.

In 586 B.C. the Babylonians brought an end to the reign of the Hebrews in Palestine. During the years of their reign, the original inhabitants of Palestine remained in continuous residence. For the next 400 years, one invader after another laid claim to Palestine, the Persians in 538 B.C., the Greeks, under the leadership of Alexander the Great, in 331 B.C., and the Romans, in 64 B.C.

A great wave of Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula settled in Palestine in the year 636 A.D. This massive migration was not the first Arab population in Palestine. The Arab identity with Palestine was reaffirmed and that identity with Palestine has not been broken to this day.

From 1517 to 1917 Palestine was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. For Arab support of the Allies in the First World War, they were promised independence. This promise was not kept. Colonialism and subsequently zionism followed. This was part of a broader picture of European expansion that had started in the fifteenth century and would climax in the closing years of the nineteenth century. The Europeans were looking for new land, labour and raw materials. Jews were a part of this search, more as Europeans than as Jews.[19]

When the European age of exploration started in the fifteenth century, the Portuguese were searching for a sea route to India by way of the Cape (now Capetown, South Africa). During one of their early expeditions, they attempted to establish a refueling station along the coast of South Africa. This expedition was undertaken upon the advice of Abraham Ben Samuel Zacuto, a Jew, who was then the Royal Astronomer for the King of Portugal, Manuel II, before the edict of expulsion was issued against Spanish Jews in Spain, then the greatest institution of learning in the world.

One of the first Jews to land in South Africa was a seaman, Ferado Martins or Fernam Martinz. He was a mariner of Vasco da Gama's ship San Gabriel. He was with the Portuguese fleet that landed at St. Helana Bay in November 1497. Between 1492 and the end of the sixteenth century, nearly half a million Jews left Spain and Portugal. The Status of the Jews varied from one European country to another. In Holland, Jews participated in the formation of the Dutch East India Company. When the company's undertaking included the occupation of the Cape of Good Hope, in 1652, the Amsterdam Jewish community was part of this settlement. Holland had absorbed a large number of Jewish refugees who had spread throughout the provinces. When Jan van Riebeek and his company of servants were preparing to sail for the Cape of Good Hope, the Jews of Holland were petitioning Cromwell for readmission to England. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Jews of Holland

were the principal stockholders in the Dutch East India Company.

The Dutch East India Company established the forerunner of the South Africa of today. The Dutch were welcomed to South Africa by the Khoisan whom they later betrayed and enslaved. This small people (small only in stature and in numbers) fought the Dutch in order to hold on to its land and cattle in a series of well planned wars that the Boers or Dutch call Kaffir Wars. Finally they lost both their land and their cattle. After the great Zulu warrior Shaka was killed in 1828, the British began to push the Boers and Boers tried to move inland and establish a new republic away from British influence. This started a land war between the Zulus and the Boers. The British came to the rescue of the Boers when they were about to be defeated by the Zulus. These wars did not end until 1906. By now, because of the superior weapons of the Europeans, most of the land was lost. The continued loss of land and the plans to make Africans strangers in their own land led to the establishment of artificial African communities called bantustans.

In 1970, Dr. P. Koornhof, the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, admitted that the bantustans made Africans foreigners in their own land. He said:

> "I am afraid to say that the African males from the homelands have no rights whatsoever in South Africa. Their rights are in their own homelands, and they are in South Africa only to sell their labour."[20]

The best known of the Bantustans is Transkei, one of the first to be established. When it was declared "independent" in 1976 by the apartheid regime, three million Africans were stripped of their citizenship and they lost 13 per cent of their land area. The whites own or control 87 per cent of the land although they are only 17 per cent of the population.

Most Africans do not live in bantustans but work in mines, factories and on farms owned by whites. Under the bantustan programme, these Africans will be turned into foreign migrants and be stripped of all rights in the country where they have lived and worked for centuries.

The bantustans are completely dependent economically on the South African Government. The bantustans have been imposed on the African people against its will. They are white-controlled black communities. The ways in which the Africans are treated in these bantustans can be easily compared to the way the Arabs in Israel and on the West Bank are treated in their own land which explains, in part, the unholy alliance between Israel and South Africa.

The most tragic aspect of the alliance between Israel and South Africa is that it is a perfectly logical alliance. By the rationale and intent of Western racism and colonialism, the alliance makes sense.

Both Israel and white South Africa are artificial settler States, created by the political backwash of Europe. They are parts of Europe mentally and culturally while being removed from it geographically. This is the basis of the schizophrenia that prevails in Israel and in South Africa. These European settlers are involved in a perpetual contradiction. They are stubbornly trying to establish a nationality in nations that never belonged to them. They are doing this at the expense of the indigenous population in the countries where they have settled. In making an assessment of the relation of Israel to white South Africa, this dilemma must be taken into consideration.

In order to understand the present dilemma and what it forecasts for the future, there is a need to consider the interplay of forces in South Africa, and in the world at large, that created the State of Israel and the apartheid-dominated State of South Africa.

This dilemma has long historical roots that predate the European settlement of South Africa and parts of Palestine now called Israel. It was in or near Africa that the people now referred to as Jews entered the pages of history for the first time. Like all people who came into Africa from other countries, they took more from Africa than they gave.

Small Jewish settlements at what is now Capetown and other parts of South Africa developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On 17 September 1828, the Zulu King Shaka granted Nathanial Isaacs the use of a large tract of land for himself and the Jewish people. This was a gesture of friendship from the powerful king who was assassinated by two of his half-brothers before the end of the year.

The discovery of diamond and gold in South Africa profoundly affected the economic status of the Jews. They had a tradition of dealing in precious minerals. From the 1800s to the present time the Jews of South Africa have been closely related to the marketing of gold and diamonds.

The politics of zionism in South Africa is mainly a vintage of the twentieth century. This was for many years a quiet relationship with no appreciable international attention. The so-called six-day war in 1967 changed this picture and made a large number of people examine zionism in general, as a world-wide political force.

In the 10 years after the independence explosion starting in 1957 with Ghana, the new State of Israel had more goodwill in Africa than any other white controlled nation. By November 1973, most of this goodwill had been lost and nations of Africa like the Ivory Coast (no Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Zaire and Liberia, otherwise considered Conservative, had broken off diplomatic relations with the State of Israel. There are many factors involved and the assumption is that Arab influence is the main one. That is not true. The main reason for the break and the change of minds and hearts among African States is Israel's long relationship with the apartheid regime of South Africa. There are, of course, many other factors. The Africans seemed to have been slow to learn the fact that the Israelis in Africa were no different than other whites who wanted to control the resources of this vast continent, by any means necessary.

The land question in Zimbabwe did not disappear with the "peace" accord between the British Government and the Patriotic Front. The roots of the conflict over the land are deep. What is now Zimbabwe was once a well-run independent country. In 1870 when Lobengula became king, the Zulu wars against the British were not over and the British settlers' designs on African land were intensified after the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa. The British used a missionary, Rev. Moffatt, to get Logengula to sign a treaty which the British the right to exploit the land and establish farms and settlements. Lobengula did not know that the treaty went that far. In 1870 parts of Mashonaland, later to be called Rhodesia, was occupied by an expeditionary force of mercenaries funded by the British Africa Company. It did not take long for white settlers to evict the Shona people from their land. In this case they did not buy the land. They took it. The Africans, in large numbers, were forced off the land. Others were brought in to work the land. Many Africans were forced off the land to sea and work to pay the heavy British taxes. White political power was consolidated by the unequal tenure and the allocation of land by white control over the labour power of the blacks. White workers had a monopoly on skilled jobs and the trade unions. In her article, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe", Marion O'Callaghan states that:

> "Land became more important for the settlers as the hopes entertained by Cecil Rhodes of vast mineral wealth receded. The result was the continuing appropriation of African land from the nineteenth century on. Indeed, between 1936 and 1959, according to a Rhodesian Select Parliamentary Committee on Resettlement (1960), over 113,000 Africans were

compulsorily removed from 'white' farming areas.

> "By 1969, 250,000 whites had legal rights enshrined in the Constitution to 44.95 million acres, while 5 million Africans had the right to 44.94 million acres."[21]

The areas in Rhodesia where the Africans lived, which the Europeans called reserves, were the same as what the Boers in South Africa called bantustans. Taxes and the need for basic items of food and clothing forced the Africans to leave the reserves and work on European-owned plantations or in the cities. They pay was poor in both places. The pattern for education followed along the same lines as the division of the land. Two hundred seventy-five whites got the same appropriation as 6 million Africans. These are the conditions that led to the war for independence.

In Kenya, land hunger among the Kikuyu people led to the Mau Mau uprising and stimulated the fight for independence.[22]

My point in digressing from the land question in Palestine is that this question cannot be seen or answered in isolation. What is called Israel and the rest of Palestine is a part of an international problem created by colonialism and its handmaiden - capitalism. This is a European problem imposed on the Arabs in Palestine. The accompanying propaganda and mythology about who has a right to the land in Palestine now and who had that right in ancient times goes on in spite of a large body of scholarly writing that set the record straight years ago. Many people who are sympathetic toward Israel do not agree with the treatment of the Arabs and the settlements on land formerly considered Arab.

Dov Ronen, a research association of the Center for International Affairs at Harvard University, made the following comment on this subject in the 5 April 1980 issue of *The New York Times*:

> "I am an Israeli who does not support Jewish settlements in the West Bank, nor the opening of a yeshiva in Hebron. I personally do not claim sovereignty over Judea and Samaria on the basis of a biblical right, nor do I consider Israel's sovereignty there essential to our national security in all circumstances. Furthermore, although I would oppose any plan to redivide Jerusalem, I can envision a new administrative arrangement in the city that would address and seek to satisfy Muslim and Palestinian aspirations.
>
> "Having studied the issue of self-determination in world politics, I recognize this as a right that the Palestinians must be accorded. The Palestinians should have the right, both in principle and in practice, to control their lives and not be ruled by Israelis or anyone else. If independent statehood rather than 'mere' autonomy is what they want, I for one support their quest for statehood."

In spite of strong Jewish voices such as Moise Menuhin, Ahad Ha'am, Martin Buber, Albert Einstein, Alfred Lilienthal, Israel Shahak and I. F. Stone speaking out against the Zionist treatment of the Arabs and the settlements on Arab land, the expansion of Israel at the expense of the Arabs continued. Also continued is the attempt to justify this expansion on the basis of Bible texts.

On this point the Jewish-American writer, I. F. Stone, has this to say:

> "These contradictions now play their part in the efforts at peace in the Middle East. At one end of the spectrum the Bible preaches justice and universal brotherhood. At the other end it contains some of the most primitive and blood-thirsty ethnocentric teachings in human literature. So Menachem Begin, Israel's fundamentalist prime minister and the religious parties on which he depends for a thin and precarious parliamentary majority, claim that

they cannot give up the West Bank because God gave it to the Jews.

"This can, of course, be supported from Bible texts. Indeed, if we are to go back to a literal reading of Holy Writ for guidance in the Middle East conflict, the religious ultras of the Israeli community can find much else along the same lines, and in the same direction, though carried to lengths that would make even the most fanatical among them quail. It is, of course, true that in the final chapter of Numbers, God gave the whole of Canaan, west of the Jordan, to Israel. But if the Word of God is to be taken literally, whose who now dwell on the West Bank may tremble. For only three short chapters earlier, the Lord says, "Ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy their Holy Places and 'dispossess' them.

"Nor is that all. Numbers 33 ends with the fiercest warning of all if the children of Israel do not dispossess the inhabitants: 'I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them'. If the Jews do not drive out the Canaanites, God will drive out the Jews. This is the harsh theology of depopulating the land to make room for one's own."[23]

Palestinian leaders and organizations in the United States say Israel is trying to remove all vocal opposition to the Camp David "autonomy plan" by expelling Palestinian mayors in the occupied territories or forcing them to resign.

I will conclude this paper with I. F. Stone's warning, relative to this situation:

"Some people have been cooking up a brew that could poison the peace not only of the Middle East but of the world. It is the duty of the American Government and American-Jewish leadership to use their leverage, financial and political, to put a stop to this criminal concoction before it is too late. Begin, characteristically, chose this moment to announce 10 more settlements on the West Bank. As usual, he promises these will be the last, Israel and Palestine, says his opponents on the right would prefer a military takeover of the Israeli Government. Only recognition of the Palestinian right to self-determination can revitalize the peace talks and avert the slide to catastrophe."

Notes

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The African in the New World: Their Contribution to Science, Invention and Technology

BY John Henrik Clarke

A lecture delivered for the Minority Ethnic Unit of the Greater London Council, London, England, March 6–8, 1986. It was addressed mainly to the African community in London consisting of African people from the Caribbean and African people from Africa.

In this short talk on a subject that has many dimensions, and a long untold history, I am really talking about the impact of African people in the opening-up of the Americas and the Caribbean Islands. The appearance outside of Africa of African people in such large numbers tells us something about the greatest and most tragic forced migration of a people in human history. The exploitation of African people make what is called the New World possible, and the African's contribution to the sciences, invention and technology that made this new world possible, is part of a larger untold story. In the United States alone there is supporting literature and volumes of documents on this subject.

We need to examine the events in Africa and in Europe from 1400 through 1600 A.D. This is a pivotal turning point in world history. This was a period when Europe was awakening from the lethargy of its Middle Ages, learning again the maritime concepts of longitude and latitude and using her new skills in the handling of ships to enslave and colonize most of the world.

Europe recovered at the expense of African people. African people were soon scattered throughout the Caribbean, in several areas of South America and in the United States. A neglected drama in the history of dynamic social change had occurred in the year 711 A.D. when a combination of Africans, Arabs and Berbers conquered Spain and ruled the Iberian Peninsula for nearly eight hundred years. The aftermath of the African-Arab loss of Spain and the Arab's use of European mercenaries and equipment wreaked havoc throughout Africa and broke up the independent nations of inner Western Africa, mainly Songhay. This drama had to play itself out and the power of the Africans and the Arabs had to decline before the larger drama of the slave trade and, subsequently, colonialism could get well under way.

Africa was now suffering a second catastrophe. The first catastrophe was the Arab slave trade, which was totally unexpected, and came over six hundred years before the European slave trade. The second catastrophe was the Christian slave trade which started in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. Many Christians could not deal with what African religions were before the advent of Judaism, Christianity and Islam nor could they deal with early Christianity which was a carbon copy of African universal Spirituality. The first thing the Europeans did was to laugh at the African gods. Then they made the Africans laugh at their own gods. Europeans would go on to colonize the world. They not only colonized the world, they would also colonize information about the world, and that information is still colonized. What they would deal with was a carbon copy of Christianity as interpreted by foreigners. This was part of the catastrophe before it could recover its strength.

In the Americas and in the Caribbean Islands we find Bartholomew de las Casas, who came on Christopher Columbus' third voyage and who sanctioned the increase of the slave trade with the

pretense that this would save the Indian population. When the Pope sent commissions to inquire into what was happening with the Indians, many of the islands did not have one Indian left, they were all dead. It was at Christopher Columbus' suggestion that the slave trade was increased to include more of the Africans, again, under the pretense of saving the Indians. It was the same Christopher Columbus who says in his diary, "As man and boy I sailed up and down the Guinea coast for twenty three years. ..." What was he doing up and down the coast of West Africa for twenty-three years? The assumption is that he was part of the early Portuguese slave trade. Now is he still your hero? When you look at the Western hero and how he became a hero, when you look at all those people they called, "The Great," and find out what they were great for you will then have a new concept of history. There are a number of good books on this subject. Two of the more readable are by Eric Williams, late Prime Minister of Trinidad, formerly teacher of political science at Howard University. They are *Capitalism and Slavery*, and his last big book, *The Caribbean from Columbus to Castro.*

The subject of this talk is really "The African Inventor in the New World and His Contribution to Technology, Medicine and Science." While I may be going the long way round, I'll get to the subject. But you will have to know what happened behind the curtain of slavery and the consequences of the Africans' enslavement and to what extent Europe recovered from its lethargy and to what extent Europe exploited people outside of Europe. But the main thing that you have to understand is that the African did not come into slavery culturally empty-handed. In order to stay in luxury, Europe had to have large bodies of people to exploit outside of Europe where they could get land and labor cheap. Where they could get control of other people's resources, cheap or for nothing. This is what apartheid is really all about. It is about Western control of the mineral wealth of the African. Africa is the world's richest continent, full of poor people, people who are poor because someone else is managing their resources. Do you think that if Africans had all the gold and manganese and zinc and bauxite and uranium that comes out of Africa they would be going around begging anybody for anything, drought or no drought? Have you ever sailed down the Congo River and seen all the vast bodies of water flowing into the sea? The Nile River sustained the greatest civilization the world has ever known, and it rarely ever rains in the Nile River. Yet this one river sustained civilizations for thousands of years, because Africans, at that time, knew what to do with water, and how to direct it in the way they needed it.

Still going to my subject, my point is that the African was brought to the Western world and survived through his inventiveness, imagination and his spiritual attitude. Without these he would have not survived. The African was hit harder than the so-called Indian. Where one died the other would survive. It is not that one had spiritual attitude and the other did not, they both had spiritual attitude and they both had culture. But many of the Africans had come out of pluralistic cultures and were more accustomed to the nature of change.

Now, let's get on to the African's inventive mind. The preface to all of this is to deal with the free African craftsman in the Western world and how these craftsmen became free, that is, "free" with a question mark! In the Caribbean where Africans were brought in large numbers, once they were taken over by the British and others their condition as an enslaved people was exploited. A class of Englishmen who had earned no considerable respect in England, came to the Islands as mechanics. Because their white face was a premium and because they were given privileges and guns and land and had access to African women, they considered themselves as belonging to the exploitive class. They literally exhausted themselves. But the Englishmen did not have the skills they found were needed on the islands and they began to disappear, physically, due to death from exhaustion or return to England. The African craftsmen began to replace them. We now see the beginnings of the Africans' inventive mind in the Caribbean Islands. The same thing was happing in parts of South America. Many times the English would bring over English-made furniture and there were some termites in the Caribbean. Some of these termites are still there, and when the termites began to eat

up the soft wood in the English-made furniture, the African with his meticulous mind began to duplicate that furniture with local hard wood. This was done especially in Jamaica where they had large amounts of mahogany then. Jamaica does not have mahogany now because the mahogany forests were overcut to the point where Jamaica now has no considerable variety of mahogany. Some of the most beautiful mahogany in the world used to come from Jamaica.

As with the disappearance of the British craftsmen, when the African craftsmen began to emerge, something else began to emerge in the Caribbean Islands. A class of people whose crafts maintained plantations. The Africans say how important they had become and began to make demands. This is the origin of the Caribbean freeman. These freemen were free enough to communicate with other Africans, free enough to go back to Africa, and free enough to go to the United States. These freemen from the crafts class began to mix friendship with another group of freemen in the United States. Now, how did the freemen become free in the United States? Mostly in the New England states where the winters were so long that it was not economically feasible to support a slave all year round, when they could be used only for four or five months. Slavery would have been just as brutal as it was in the south if the weather permitted. In New England the slaves had become industrial slaves. A large number of them were employed as ship caulkers. In the era of wooden ships, every time a ship came in the caulkers would have to drill something in the holds of the ship to keep it from eroding and to keep it from leaking at sea. A large number of Africans became ship caulkers and a large number became industrial slaves and they began to learn basic industrial skills. Professor Lorenzo Green's book, *The Negro in Colonial New England* is specially good in explaining the details of this transformation during the period of slavery.

There were also slave inventors, but these slaves could not patent their own inventions. They had to patent them in the name of their masters.

Soon after the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the Africans understood that emancipation was not the reality they had hoped for, they began another resistance movement in the hope of improving their condition. They set up a communication system with all the slaves. There were no "West Indians," no "Black Americans." These were names unknown to us in Africa. We were and we saw ourselves as one people, as African people.

In the nineteenth century the Africans began the inventive period, and before the beginning of the twentieth century Africans had already invented some of the things that made life more comfortable for many in the United States. When you study a list of the numerous inventions of Africans you will find that they would invent things first and foremost to make life better for themselves. Benjamin Banneker was the first notable Black inventor. When the Africans arrived in the United States, in 1619, the year before the Mayflower people arrived, they were not chattel slaves, but indentured slaves. Indentured slaves worked so many years and then they were free. Most of the indentured slaves were whites. Many times whites and blacks did not see the difference in their lives. They were both exploited, and they both had to work so many years before they were free. Therefore, during this time, there was a period when Africans and whites saw no difference in their plight and this was before prejudice and color difference would set in. Many times they married one another and nobody cared; they were both slaves anyway. Out of these marriages came some people who helped to change the condition of the slaves in the United States. Benjamin Banneker was a product of one of these relationships. In his mother's time if a white woman had a Black lover and because of her whiteness she worked her way out of the indenture ahead of her lover, then she came and bought him out of the indenture and married him. No one took noticed.

Benjamin Banneker, literally, made the first clock in the United States. He dabbled in astronomy, he communicated with President Thomas Jefferson and he asked Jefferson to entertain the idea of having a secretary of peace as well as having a secretary of war. He was assistant to the Frenchman L'Enfant who was planning the City of Washington. For some reason L'Enfant got angry with the

Washington people, picked up his plans and went back to France. Benjamin Banneker remembered the plans and Benjamin Banneker is responsible for the designing of the City of Washington, one of the few American cities designed with streets wide enough for ten cars to pass at the same time. This was the first of many of the African American inventors that we have with good records. There will be many to follow and I am only naming a few.

James Forten became one of the first African Americans to become moderately rich. He made sails and accessories for ships. During the beginning of the winter of the American Revolution it was noticed that the tent cloth they were using for the tents was of better quality than the cloths they had in their britches. James Forten, the sail maker, was approached to use some of the same cloth to make the britches for the soldiers of the American Revolution. These britches, made by this Black man, saved them from that third and last terrible winter of the American Revolution. Now, the role of Blacks in the American Revolution is another lecture in the sense that 5000 Blacks fought against the United States on the side of England in the American Revolution, and the English had to find somewhere for them to go after the war. They sent some of them to Sierra Leone, but some of them went to Nova Scotia.

Jan Ernest Matzeliger, a young man from Guyana, now called Surinam invented the machine for the mass production of shoes; this invention revolutionized the shoe industry.

In summary, African Americans continued to create inventions. They revolutionized the American industry. For example, Granville Woods not only revolutionized the electrical concept, but he laid the basis for Westinghouse Electric Company. Elijah McCoy invented a drip coupling for lubrication that revolutionized the whole concept of lubrication. He had over fifty patents to his credit and so many whites stole from Elijah McCoy that anytime a white man took a patent of lubrication system, or anything that related to it to the patent office, he was asked, "Did you steal it directly from McCoy or did you steal it indirectly from McCoy or is it the real McCoy?" This is how the word came into the English language, "the real McCoy."

In the closing years of the nineteenth century the greatest talent was that of Lewis Latimer. He was not only a draftsman, but drew up the plans for the telephone, Alexander Graham Bell was the one who invented the telephone, but the patent that had to be drawn up, all the moving parts and all of the vital parts, was done by Lewis Latimer, a Black man. Latimer also did a few other things that don't make me to happy. He improved the Maxim gun that became the forerunner of the present day machine gun. He is also responsible for the florescent light. He wrote the first book on the incandescent light that you know as the fluorescent light. He worked with Thomas Edison. He was one of the Thomas Edison pioneers. While Thomas Edison created the principle of the electric light, his light went out in twenty minutes. But the man who created the filament made the light go on indefinitely. That was Lewis Latimer, and he deserves as much credit for the electric light as does Thomas Edison. And he and his accomplishments were completely left out of history. Only Thomas Edison's accomplishments are mentioned.

Not only did African Americans invent a lot of other things, including labor-saving devices, African Americans have played a major role in getting America into space. In space medicine the leading doctor is an African American woman. The person that designed the interior of the ship, including the disposal facility, is an African American man. When they sent some astronauts up without instructing them in his method of disposal of waste matter, a near catastrophe occurred. The space buggy that they used to walk on the moon was, basically, a Black invention and so is the camera that they used on the trip to the moon.

You might wonder that after all that the African Americans have contributed in making the United States comfortable, even to the coupling that hold all the weights together when trains are moving around the country, why are they having so much trouble, and why are they still having difficulty? Principally because we were not brought to the United States to be given democracy, to be given

Christianity. We were brought to labor and once the labor was done, we were an unwanted population in the United States. We were a nation within a nation searching for a nationality.

When we put all of us together, we are larger, in number, than all of the nations in Scandinavia put together. Their population would not be as large as the African American population in the United States alone. According to the statistics of the United Nations and the *Jewish Year Book* all the Jews in the world would come to less than one-half the number of African American population in the United States. Yet Israel gets more financial aid than all of the African nations in the world put together. Principally because we have not developed the political apparatus to put the right pressures on the leaders in the world to make it [otherwise] so.

I see no solution for African peoples, any place in this world, short of Pan-Africanism. Wherever we are on the face of this earth we are an African people. We have got to understand that any problem faced by Africans is the collective problem of all the African people in the world, and not just the problem of the Africans who live in any one part of the world. Once we put all of our skills together, and realize that between the United States, the Caribbean Islands, Brazil and other South American countries there are 150 million African people, and the population of Africa has been counted as 500 million for over fifty years, implying that the African man has been sleeping away from home, and you know that is not true.

In the twenty-first century there are going to be a billion African people on this earth. We have to ask ourselves, "Are we ready for the twenty-first century?" Do we go into the twenty-first century begging and pleading or insisting and demanding? We have to ask and answer that question and we have to decide if we are going to be the rearguard for somebody else's way of life, or do we rebuild our own way of life, or will we be the vanguard to rebuild our own nation.

We have to say to ourselves when we look at our history, the great Nile Valley civilization, the kind of civilizations we built on other rivers, the Niger, the Limpopo, the Zambezi, the kind of civilizations that gave life to the world before the first Europeans wore shoes or had houses that had windows. We need to say to ourselves, with conviction, that ,"If I did it once, I will do it again."

The American Antecedents of Marcus Garvey

BY John Henrik Clarke

It is no accident that Marcus Garvey had his greatest success in the United States among Black Americans. There is an historical logic to this occurrence that seems to have escaped most of the interpreters of Garvey's life and the mass movement that he built. For in many ways the scene was being prepared for Marcus Garvey for over one hundred years before he was born. There is no way to understand this without looking at the American antecedents of Marcus Garvey, that is the men, forces and movements that came before him.

West Indians in the Afro-American Struggle

Prior to the Civil War, West Indian contribution to the progress of Afro-American life was one of the main contributing factors in the fight for freedom and full citizenship in the northern United States. West Indians had come to the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries and the most outstanding of them saw their plight and that of the Afro-American as being one and the same.

In the 18th century America, two of the most outstanding fighters for liberty and justice were the West Indians, Prince Hall and John B. Russwurm. When Prince Hall came to the United States the nation was in turmoil. The colonies were ablaze with indignation. Britain, with a series of revenue acts, had stoked the fires of colonial discontent. In Virginia, Patrick Henry was speaking of liberty or death. The cry "No Taxation Without Representation" played on the nerve-strings of the nation. Prince Hall, then a delicate-looking teenager, often walked through the turbulent streets of Boston, an observer unobserved. A few months before these hectic scenes, he had arrived in the United States from his home in Barbados, where he had been born about 1748, the son of an Englishman and a free African woman. He was, in theory, a free man, but he knew that neither in Boston nor in Barbados were persons of African descent free in fact. At once, he questioned the sincerity of the vocal white patriots of Boston. It never seemed to have occurred to them that the announced principles motivating their action made stronger argument in favor of destroying the system of slavery. The colonists held in servitude more than a half million human beings, some of them white; yet they engaged in the contradiction of going to war to support the theory that all men were created equal.

When Prince Hall arrived in Boston that city was the center of the American slave trade. Most of the major leaders of the revolutionary movement, in fact, were slaveholders or investors in slave-supported businesses. Hall, like many other Americans, wondered: what did these men mean by freedom? The condition of the free Black men, as Prince Hall found them, was not an enviable one. Emancipation brought neither freedom nor relief from the stigma of color. They were free in name only. They were still included in slave codes with slaves, indentured servants, and Indians. Discriminatory Laws severely circumscribed their freedom of movement.

By 1765, through diligence and frugality, Hall became a property owner, thus establishing himself in the eyes of white as well as Black people. But the ownership of property was not enough. He still had to endure sneers and insults. He decided then to prepare himself for a role of leadership among his people. To this end he went to school at night and later became a Methodist preacher. His church became the forum for his people's grievances. Ten years after his arrival in Boston, Massachusetts,

he was the accepted leader of the Black community.

In 1788 Hall petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature, protesting the kidnapping of free Negroes. This was a time when American patriots were engaged in a constitutional struggle for freedom. They had proclaimed the inherent rights of all mankind to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Hall dared to remind them that the Black men in the United States were human beings, and as such were entitled to freedom and respect for their human personality.

It was racial prejudice that made Hall the father of African secret societies in the United States what is now known as the "Negro Masonry." Hall first sought initiation into the white Masonic Lodge in Boston, but was turned down because of his color. He then applied to the Army Lodge of an Irish Regiment. His petition was favorably received. On March 6, 1775, Hall and fourteen other Black Americans were initiated in Lodge Number 441. When, on March 17, the British were forced to evacuate Boston, the Army Lodge gave Prince Hall and his colleagues a license to meet and function as a Lodge. Thus, on July 3, 1776, African Lodge No. 1 came into being. This was the first Lodge in Massachusetts established in America for men of African descent. Later, in 1843, a Jamaican, Peter Ogden, organized in New York City the first Odd Fellows Lodge for Negroes.

The founding of the African Lodge was one of Prince Hall's greatest achievements. It afforded Africans in the New England area of the United States a greater sense of security and contributed to a new spirit of unity among them. Hall's interest did not end with the Lodge. He was deeply concerned with improving the lot of his people in other ways. He sought to have schools established for the children of free Africans in Massachusetts. Of prime importance is the fact that Prince Hall worked to secure respect for his people and that he played a significant role in the downfall of the Massachusetts slave trade. He helped to prepare the ground-work for those freedom fighters of the 18th and 20th centuries whose continuing efforts have brought the Black American closer to the goal of full citizenship.

In his book *Souls of Black Folk*, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois points to the role of West Indians in the Afro-American struggle. They, he says, were mainly responsible for the manhood program launched by the race in the early decades of the last century. An eminent instance of such drive and self-assurance can be seen in the achievement of John W. A. Shaw of Antigua, who, later in that century, in the early 1890's passed the Civil Service tests and became Deputy Commissioner of Taxes for the County of Queens in New York State.

In his series of articles entitled "Pioneers in Protest," Lerone Bennett, Senior Editor of *Ebony Magazine*, has written a capsule biography of John B. Russwurm, the distinguished Jamaican who was a pioneer in Afro-American journalism. As early as 1827, Russwurm, also one of the founders of Liberia, was the first colored man to graduate from an American college to publish a newspaper in the United States. The following information about Russwurm has been extracted from Bennett's article, "Founders of the Negro Press," *Ebony Magazine*, July 1964.

> Day in and day out, the Negroes of New York City were mercilessly lampooned in the white press. In the dying days of 1826, the campaign of vilification and slander reached nauseous heights. The integrity and courage of Negro men were openly questioned. Worse, editors invaded Negro homes and impugned the chastity of Negro women … This was a time of acute crisis for all Negro Americans and the New York leaders were agonizingly conscious of the forces arrayed against them … More ominous was the creeping power of the American Colonization Society which wanted to send free Negroes "back" to Africa.
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> John B Russwurm and Samuel E. Cornish, two of the youngest and most promising of the New York leaders, were assigned the task of inventing a journal that could speak forcibly to both the enemy and joint friend without and the 'brethren' within the

veil.

Samuel E. Cornish, who is virtually unknown today, was born about 1795 in Delaware and raised in the relatively free environments of Philadelphia and New York. He organized the first Black Presbyterian Church in New York City. Russwurm, was the son of an Englishman and an African woman. His father neglected to inform his white wife of "the sins of his youth"; but after his death, the widow learned of the boy's existence and financed his education at Bowdoin College where he was graduated in 1826.

Russwurm and Cornish made an excellent team, despite the proposed paper they idealistically state:

> We shall ever regard the constitution of the United States as our polar star. Pledged to no part, we shall endeavour to urge our brethren to use their rights to the elective franchise as free citizens. It shall never be our objective to court controversy though we must at all times consider ourselves as champions in defense of oppressed humanity. Daily slandered, we think that there ought to be some channel of communication between us and the public, through which a voice may be heard in defense of five hundred thousand free people of color…

On Friday, March 26, 1827, the first issue of *Freedom's Journal*, the first "Negro newspaper" in the Western World, appeared on the streets of New York City. In their ambitious first editorial, Russwurm and Cornish struck a high note of positiveness that still has something to say to the Afro-Americans in their present plight. It read in part:

> We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoke for us. Too long has the republic been deceived by misrepresentations, in things which concern us dearly, though in the estimation of some mere trifles; for though there are many in society who exercise toward us benevolent feelings; still (with sorrow we confess it) there are others who make it their business to enlarge upon the least trifle, which tends to discredit any person of color; and pronounce anathema and denounce our whole body for the misconduct of this guilty one … Our vices and our degradation are ever arrayed against us, but our virtues are passed unnoticed…

The timeliness of this editorial, written over a hundred years ago, and the dynamics of its intellectual content, are far ahead of most editorials that appear in present-day Afro-American newspapers.

During the later years of his life, John B. Russwurm moved to a position that today would be called Black nationalism. After receiving his master's degree from Bowdoin College in 1829 Russwurm went to Liberia in West Africa, where he established another newspaper, *The Liberia Herald*, and served as a superintendent of schools. After further distinguishing himself as Governor of the Maryland Colony of Cape Palmas, this pioneer editor and freedom fighter died in Liberia in 1951.

Repatriation in Historical Perspective

The back-to-Africa idea has long been a recurring theme in Afro-American life and thought. This consciousness started during the closing years of the 18th century, and was articulated by the first Afro-American writers, thinkers and abolitionists. This agitation was found mainly among groups of 'free Negroes' because of the uncertainty of their position as freed men in slave-holding society. "One can see it late into the eighteenth century," Dr. DuBois explains in his book *Dusk of Dawn*, "when the Negro Union of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1788, proposed to the Free African Society of Philadelphia a general exodus to Africa on the part of at least free Negroes."

DuBois addressed himself to the broader aspects of this situation on the occasion of the celebration

of the Second Anniversary of the Asian-Africa (Bandung) Conference and the rebirth of Ghana on April 30, 1957, when he said:

> From the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, the Africans imported to America regarded themselves as temporary settlers destined to return eventually to Africa. Their increasing revolts against the slave system, which culminated in the eighteenth century, showed a feeling of close kinship to the motherland and even well into the nineteenth century they called their organizations 'African', as witness the 'African unions' of New York and Newport and the African Churches of Philadelphia and New York. In the West Indies and South America there was even closer indication of feelings of kinship with Africa and the East.
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> The Planters' excuse for slavery was advertised as conversion of Africa to Christianity; but soon American slavery appeared based on the huge profits of the Sugar Empire and Cotton Kingdom. As plans were laid for the expansion of the slave system, the slaves themselves sought freedom by increasing revolt which culminated in the 18th century. In Haiti they won autonomy; in the United States they fled from the slave states in the South to the free states in the North and to Canada.
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> Here the Free Negroes helped form the Abolition Movement, and when that seemed to be failing, the Negroes began to plan for migration to Africa, Haiti and South America.
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> Civil War and emancipation intervened and American Negroes looked forward to becoming free and equal here with no thought of return to African or of kinship with the world's darker peoples. However, the rise of the Negro was hindered by disenfranchisement, lynching and caste legislation. There was some recurrence of the "Back to Africa" idea and increased sympathy for darker folk who suffered the same sort of caste restrictions as American Negroes.

Professor E.U. Essien-Udom of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, outlined the beginning of this consciousness and how it developed, in three lectures in the CBS Black Heritage TV Series, Summer, 1969. In the first lecture on "The Antecedents of Marcus Garvey and His Movement," Professor Essien-Udom gives this analysis:

> In the United States it may be said that Garvey's ideas or variants of his ideas, are becoming increasingly relevant for the independent African states in their struggle for real political and economic independence as well as relative cultural autonomy.
>
> A history of the freedom movements of Black Americans is the history of the aspirations for nationality and dignity. The reasons for this are not far to seek. Firstly, the Africans who were forcibly removed from their ancestral homelands to the New World were dramatically alienated from any vital human community, except the community of color, common deprivation and persecution. Because they were drawn from various and distinct African nationality groups and scattered throughout the New World, they lost many vital ingredients as a distinct nationality group, such as a common language, religion, traditions, and more important, the freedom to shape their own destiny.
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> Secondly, because they were excluded from meaningful participation in the emergent American nationality, they became not only non-citizens, but also, in a sociological sense, non-nationals of the United States throughout most of their history. Early in their history, the Africans were simply an aggregation of persons who were non-citizens and consequently possessed no civic rights in the United States. Such for a long time was their political status.

> Similarly, as a group without recognizable nationality, which derives from belonging to a definite and meaningful humane community, they could not feel a sense of human dignity. Inevitably, therefore, and from slavery to freedom, the black freedom movement has had two ambivalent objectives. The first being the aspiration for nationality, a term which I shall use interchangeably with collective identity. And secondly, the aspiration for full citizenship in the United States.
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> In the past, the history of the Black freedom movement especially in the United States, was interpreted principally in terms of integration or in terms of assimilation into the mainstreams, whatever that is, of American society.
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> If integration is understood as the enjoyment of full rights of citizenship and full participation in the live activities of the United States, then this has been one of the most important objectives of the Afro-American freedom movement. But to interpret this movement principally in terms of assimilation, is a misrepresentation of historical fact and a negation of the long and tragic history of the struggle for black identity and dignity. Assimilation necessarily entails the withering away of the distinctly Afro-American nationality which has been forged by the history of the Africans and their descendants in the United States.
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> The aspiration for black nationality or a collective identity should not be understood in the narrow political sense, although there have been manifestations of the desire for political nationality; that is, a homeland. Nevertheless, the much-abused term, "black nationalism," or its recent variant, "black power," encompasses the various expressions of the need for collective identity. The formation of collective identity has been the result of both history and the conscious activities of Afro-Americans. On occasions, this aspiration for nationality has been expressed in terms of independence from white economic, political and social control. More persistently however, this collective black identity has been expressed in the assertion of Afro-American cultural autonomy and the dignity of the black communities in America.

What Professor Essien-Udom is saying is: the Black Americans have been forced by a set of circumstances to walk down several roads simultaneously going to and from America. This seems like a contradiction and maybe it is. The greater contradiction is America itself, and its relationship to Black people. Early in the 19th century some "free" Blacks and escaped slaves began to have second thoughts about the future of African people in this country. These Blacks, in large numbers, responded to the program of the "African Colonization Movement." Superficially, the program was good, but a number of Blacks, mainly, Frederick Douglass and some of the men around him, examined the program and began to have some serious questions about it.

The stated intent of the American Colonization Society was to solve the problems of slavery by advocating the removal of freed slaves to colonies along the West Coast of Africa. The founders of the society believed this course would atone for the evil of the African slave trade, help put an end to slavery, restore the "Africans" to their divinely ordained homes, and help "civilize" Africa. By "civilize" the white supporters of the movement really meant "Christianize." Some of the most able Black men and women of the 19th century were attracted to this movement and its concept.

It is generally believed, according to Professor Essien-Udom, that Paul Cuffee set in motion the ideas that led to the founding of the American Colonization Society. Cuffee was one of the most unusual men of his time. He was rarity, being a Black ship owner in New Bedford, Massachusetts, who made a small fortune hauling cargo to different parts of the world. A free man whose father had been a slave, he founded the Friendly Society for the Emigration of Free Negroes from America. One of his early acts was to change his family name from Slocum to Cuffee (Kofi), a Ghanaian

name.

In 1811, Paul Cuffee sailed one of his ships, "The Traveller," to Sierra Leone on Africa's West Coast where he hounded "The Friendly Society from America." In 1812, he used his personal funds to take 38 Black emigrants to Sierra Leone. But the most active years of "The American Colonization" came after the death of Paul Cuffee in 1817.

A Mandingo descendant, Martin Delaney was proud of his African heritage. So much so, that, in a recent book by Dorothy Sterling, he is referred to as "the father of Black Nationalism." Delaney was a multi-talented freedom fighter who seemed to have crammed half a dozen lifetimes into one. Dentist, writer, editor, doctor, explorer, scientist, soldier and politician, he was a Renaissance man of his day. In an article in the supplement to the newspaper *Tuesday*, of November 1871, the writer Phillip St. Laurent has this to say about the present day relevance of Martin R. Delaney:

> Delaney was … an articulate advocate of ideas that today, 85 years after his death are topical. Even while the vast majority of his brothers remained in slavery, he was proud of his race and his blackness, resented his surname as a hand-me-down from a slave-holder, advocated Black people's right to self-defense, demanded equal employment opportunities, urged a self-governed state for Blacks in which they could control their own destinies and, yes argued for women's liberation.

He was one of the leaders of the great debate following the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850, and as spokesman for Black people who felt that the bitter racial climate in America had made life for them there unbearable, he advocated the establishment of a state by Black Americans in the Niger Valley of present-day Nigeria. Said he of Black Americans at the 1852 Emigration Convention, "Settle them in the land which is ours," he said, "and there lies with it inexhaustible resources. Let us go and possess it. We must establish a national position for ourselves and never may we expect to be respected as men and women until we have undertaken some fearless, bold and adventurous deeds of daring, contending against every consequence."

In 1859, he led the first and only exploratory party of American-born Africans to the land of their forefathers. In the region of the Niger River, in the area that became Nigeria, Delaney's party carried out scientific studies and made agreements with several African kings for the settlement of emigrants from America. He was accompanied on this expedition by Robert Campbell, a Jamaican, who had been Director of the Scientific Department of the Institute for Coloured Youth in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a member of the International Statistical Congress in London, England. His account of the expedition can be found in his book *A Pilgrimage to My Motherland, an account of a journey among the Egbas and Yorubas of Central African 1859–60.*

About his report, Robert Campbell has said, "After what is written in the context, if I am still asked what I think of Africa for a coloured man to live and do well in, I simply answer, that with as good prospects in America as coloured men generally, I have determined with my wife and children, to go to African to live, leaving the inquirer to interpret the reply for himself."

What needs to be remembered about this mid-19th century back-to-Africa movement, is that, to a moderate degree, it was successful. There was, of course, no mass exodus to Africa. Individual families did go to Africa at regular intervals for the next 50 years.

However, the emigration movement was not without its opposition. Frederick Douglass and several of his supporters thought that the emigration efforts would divert attention from the more important task of freeing the slaves from the plantations.

General interest in Africa continued though the pre-Civil War emigration efforts to establish an autonomous nation for Black Americans did not succeed. The Civil War and the promises of Black Americans that followed lessened some of the interest in Africa. Pat Singleton started an internal

resettlement scheme. His plan was to settle Blacks in free separate communities in the unused areas of American—mainly, at this time, the State of Kansas.

But the betrayal of the Reconstruction and the rise in lynching and other atrocities against Black Americans made a new generation of Black thinkers and freedom fighters turn to Africa again. New men and movements entered the area of struggle. The most notable of the new personalities was Bishop Henry McNeal Turner. In his book, *Black Exodus*, (Yale University Press, 1969) Edwin S. Redkey, gives this view of Bishop Turner's importance to the history of this period. He says:

> Bishop Henry McNeal Turner was, without a doubt, the most prominent and outspoken American advocate of Black emigration in the years between the Civil War and the First World War. By constant agitation he kept Afro-Americans aware of their African heritage and their disabilities in the United States. Turner possessed a dominating personality, a biting tongue, and a pungent vocabulary which gained him high office and wide audiences, first in Georgia's Reconstruction politics and later in the Africa Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church. In his bitter disappointment with the American treatment of Blacks, the Bishop has an all-consuming nationalism which demanded emigration to Africa. To understand his forceful agitation in the years following 1890, one must know Turner's background and the nature of vision of Africa.

Like most Afro-Americans who can be called Black nationalists, Turner's vision of Africa grew out of his heartbreaking discovery that his love for America was unrequited. Earlier in his life, he thought that the status of a "free" Black man should be no different from that of a white man. His awakening to reality was not long in coming. The new cause that he had found for himself and his energies during the Civil War, and the new hope that he had for the future of Black Americans was consumed in the bitter disappointments that followed the end of that war.

Like Turner, Edward Wilmot Blyden agitated during the latter part of the 19th century, calling attention to the important role that Africa could play in emerging world affairs. Blyden was born in the then Danish West Indian island of St. Thomas in 1832, but reacted against treatment of his people in the New World by migrating to Liberia in 1851. He was convinced that the only way to bring respect and dignity to his people was by building progressive new "empires" in Africa. He was of the opinion that the "New World Negro" had a great future in Africa. He saw Liberia in West Africa as the ideal placed where African-Americans could build a great new civilization by making use of the things that they had learned in the West and preserving the best of the African way of life. Because of his, and the work of many others, African consciousness was translated into useful programs of service to Africa. Afro-American institutions of higher learning joined in this service through their training of personnel for churches, as well as their support of Africans studying in their institutions.

The Pan-African Movement

The idea of uniting all Africa had its greatest development early in this century. In 1900 a West Indian lawyer, H. Sylvester Williams, called together the first Pan-African Conference in London. This meeting attracted attention and put the word "Pan-African" in the dictionaries for the first time. The 30 delegates to the Conference came mainly from England, the West Indies and the United States. The small delegation from the latter was led by W.E.B. DuBois.

From the beginning this was a movement that was brought into being by Africans in the Western World. Years would pass before it would have any deep roots in Africa itself. The first Conference was greeted by the Lord Bishop of London, and a promise was obtained from Queen Victoria through Joseph Chamberlain not to "overlook the interest and welfare of he native races." The

British were long on politeness and short on commitment.

The aims of he Conference were limited. They were obviously worded in order to appeal, without offending. The aims were:

1. To act as a forum of protest against the aggression of White colonizers.
2. To appeal to the "missionary and abolitionist traditions of the British people to protect Africans from the deprivation of Empire builders."
3. To bring people of African descent throughout the world into closer touch with each other and to establish more friendly relations between the Caucasian and African races.
4. To start a movement looking forward to the securing to all Africa races living in civilized countries, their full rights and to promote their business interests.

At this conference, there was no demand for self-government for African nations, though the thought pattern was set in motion for later development. In the book, *African and Unity: The Evolution of Pan-Africanism*, by the Nigerian writer Vencent Bakpetu Thompson (1969), this observation was made:

> As a forum of protest, the conference showed that Africa had begun jointly, through some of her sons, to make her voice heard against the excesses of western European rule—a sentiment which has been re-echoed in the second half of the twentieth century.

Thompson further observed that, "both protest and fellowship were to re-emerge in the "African Redemption" movement formed by the Afro-Jamaican, Marcus Garvey, to uplift his down-trodden brethren. Garvey said: "I know no national boundary where the Negro is concerned. The whole world is my province until Africa is free." Assessing the Conference, Thompson further says:

> First, it achieved the idea of oneness in experience and ideal. The spirit of fellowship reaffirmed at this 1900 Conference was never lost. It has reasserted itself again and again. This was demonstrated when in the post-war period, Afro-Americans and Afro-West Indians joined forces with those who clamored for the dismantling of colonialism in Africa. The spirit lives on, though today the Afro-American interest in the freedom of Africa and the success of Pan-Africanism has three main themes:

1. The continuance of he idea of fellowship which has existed since slavery first took them away from the shores of Africa.
2. Self-interest—a hope for the enhancement of the stature for the Afro-American in the United States. The success of Africa, it is believed, will hasten integration for the Afro-American in American society; whether this is so or not is another matter, but the belief was present in the "back to Africa" fervor of the mid-nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
3. A genuine interest in the study of African history and culture with a view to taking a hand in rehabilitating what they genuinely believe, through "scientific" research, to be the true picture of life in Africa in pre-imperialist days. This is seen in the formation of organizations such as "The American Society of African Culture."

A number of African-oriented cultural and historical societies were formed before and after the active ears of the American Society of African Culture (about 1957 through 1968). The long Afro-American interest in Africa is best reflected in publications of the American Society of African Culture, such as: *Africa as Seen by American Negroes* (1958), and *The American Negro Writer and His Roots*, (1959).

In the preface to *African as Seen by American Negroes*, Alioune Diop, President of the International Society of African Culture, states: "It is not without emotion that we welcome this evidence of

solidarity between Negro intellectuals of America and Africa. What links us first of all is assuredly our common origin" … Furthermore, he went on to say,

> The struggle that African people are waging for their independence and entry upon the scene of international responsibility, is followed with understandable sympathy by Negro Americans. The liberation, unification and development of African countries will be a real contribution to the success of the struggle of Black people in America for their rights as citizens."

In *The American Negro Writer and His Roots* (selected papers from the First Conference of Negro Writers), the historian, novelist and teacher, Saunders Redding, addressed himself to the role of the writer in the self-discovery and the restoration of a people's pride in themselves. He said:

> The human condition, the discovery of self, community identity—surely, this must be achieved before it can be seen that a particular identity has a relation to a common identity, commonly described as human. This is the ultimate that the honest writer seeks. He knows that the dilemmas, the perils, the likelihood of catastrophe in the human situation are real and that they have to do not only with whether men understand each other but with the quality of man himself. The writer's ultimate purpose is to use his gifts to develop man's awareness of himself so that he, man, can become a better instrument for living together with other men. This sense of identity is the root by which all honest creative effort is fed, and the writer's relation to it is the relation of the infant to the breast of the mother.

What we have here is a continuation of the search for identity, definition and direction that started among Black Americans early in the 18th Century. This search led to the founding of the first Black societies, publications and institutions in America. In the years following the betrayal of the Reconstruction (1876–1900), these Black societies and institutions were in serious trouble. Most of the white defenders of the Blacks had either died or had given up the fight. Black leadership was in transition. The great Frederick Douglass was losing his effectiveness at the end of he century. A worldwide imperialism and the acceptance of the Kipling concept of "the white man's burden" gave support to American racism. Like England, France and some other European nations, the United States had now acquired overseas colonies.

A new "leader," approved by the whites, appeared among the Blacks. His name was Booker T. Washington. Washington took no action against the rising tide of Jim-Crow, lynching and mass disenfranchisement of Black voters. He advised his people to put their energies into industry, improved farming and the craft trades. He said, "agitation of questions of social equality is the extreme 'folly' because an opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory first, now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera house."

White America, mostly editorial writers in white newspapers, responded favorably to the works of Booker T. Washington and made him the leader of Black America. These words, taken from his famous Atlanta Cotton Exposition Speech, were still re-echoing early in this century when an anti-Booker T. Washington school of thought was developed and led by W.E.B. DuBois.

In what can still be referred to as "The Booker T. Washington Era" (1895–1915), new men and movements were emerging. The Niagara Movement, under the leadership of W.E.B. DuBois and Monroe Trotter, was born in 1905. Some of the ideas of the Niagara Movement went into the making of the NAACP in 1909.

During the years leading to the eve of the First World War and those that immediately followed, the flight from the South continued. Over half a million Blacks migrated Northward in search of better-paying war-time jobs, better schools for their children and better housing. For a short while, they entertained the illusion that they had improved and that they had escaped from the oppression of the

South. The illusion was short-lived. Race riots during wartime (East St. Louis, 1917), and in the post-war period (Chicago, 1919) awakened the new urban settlers to reality. In Washington, D.C., the President, Woodrow Wilson, and the Southern Democrats who had come to power with him introduced segregation in federal facilities that had long been integrated. Booker T. Washington had died in 1915. An investigation into his last years revealed he had privately battled against disenfranchisement, and had secretly financed lawsuits against segregation, but publicly he maintained his submissive stance. With Washington gone and the influence of the "Tuskegee Machine" in decline, a new class of Black radicals came forward. For a few years, W.E.B. DuBois was at the center stage of leadership. As founder-editor of the NAACP's *Crisis Magazine*, DuBois urged in 1918, "Let us, while this war lasts, forget our special grievances and close ranks shoulder to shoulder with our fellow citizens…" The continued discrimination against Black Americans, both soldiers and civilians, soon made W.E.B. DuBois regret having made this statement. The end of the war brought no improvement to the lives of Black Americans, and the then prevailing conditions made a large number of them ripe for the militant program of Marcus Garvey.

In his book *New World A-Coming*, Roi Ottley (1943) has observed,

> Garvey leaped into the ocean of Black unhappiness at a most timely moment for a savior. He had witnessed the Negro's disillusionment mount with the progress of the World War. Negro soldiers had suffered all forms of Jim-Crow, humiliation, discrimination, slander, and even violence at the hands of a white civilian population. After the war, there was a resurgence of Ku Klux Klan influence; another decade of racial hatred and open lawlessness had set in, and Negroes again were prominent among the victims. Meantime, administration leaders were quite pointed in trying to persuade Negroes that in spite of their full participation in the war effort they could expect no changes in their traditional status in America.

This attitude helped to create the atmosphere into which a Marcus Garvey could emerge.

West Indian Partisans in the Fight for FREEDOM

By JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

"The deportation of Marcus Garvey . . . marked the end of an era when West Indians and Afro-Americans worked together and saw their plight as one and the same."

EST Indians have been coming to the United States for over a century. The part they have played in the progress of the Afro-Americans in their long march from slavery to freedom has always been an important factor. More important is the fact that the most outstanding of these Caribbean-Americans saw their plight and the plight of the Afro-Americans as being one and the same.

As early as 1827 a Jamaican, John B. Russwurm, one of the founders of Liberia, was the first colored man to be graduated from

From Prince Hall to Garvey

an American college and to publish a newspaper in this country; sixteen years later his fellow countryman, Peter Ogden, organized in New York City the first Odd-Fellows Lodge for Negroes. Prior to the Civil War, West Indian contribution to the progress of the Afro-American life was one of the main contributing factors in the fight for freedom and full citizenship in the northern part of the United States.

In his book ("Souls of Black Folk," Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois says that the West Indians were mainly responsible for the manhood program pursued by the race in the early decades of the last century. Indicative of their tendency to blaze new paths is the achievement of John W. A. Shaw of Antigua, who, in the early 90's of the last century, passed the civil service tests and became deputy commissioner of taxes for the County of Queens in New York State.

In 18th century America, two of the most outstanding fighters for liberty and justice were the West Indians—Prince Hall and John B. Russwurm. When Prince Hall came to the United States the nation was in turmoil. The colonies were ablaze with indignation. Britain, with a series of revenue acts, had stoked the fires of colonial discontent. In Virginia, Patrick Henry was speaking of liberty or death. The cry "No Taxation Without Representation" played on the nerve strings of the nation. Prince Hall, then a delicate-looking teenager, often walked through the turbulent streets of Boston, an observer unobserved.

A few months before these bloody scenes, he had arrived in the United States from his home in Barbados, where he had been born about 1748, the son of an Englishman and a free African woman. He was, in theory, a free man, but he

knew that neither in Boston nor in Barbados were persons of African descent free in fact. At once, he questioned the sincerity of the vocal white patriots of Boston. It never seemed to have occurred to them that the announced principles motivating their action was stronger argument in favor of destroying the system of slavery. The colonies held in servitude more than a half million human beings, some of them white; yet they engaged in the contradiction of going to war to support the theory that all men were created equal.

When Prince Hall arrived in Boston that city was the center of the American slave trade. Most of the major leaders of revolutionary movement, in fact, were slaveholders or investors in slave-supported businesses. Hall, like many other Americans, wondered: what did these men mean by freedom?

The condition of the free black men, as Prince Hall found them, was not an enviable one. Emancipation brought neither freedom nor relief from the stigma of color. They were free in name only. They were still included with slaves, indentured servants, and Indians in the slave codes. Discriminatory laws severely circumscribed their freedom of movement.

By 1765 Prince Hall saw little change in the condition of the blacks, and though a freeman, at least in theory, he saw his people debased as though they were slaves still in bondage. These things drove him to prepare himself for leadership among his people. So through diligence and frugality he became a property owner, thus establishing himself in the eyes of white people as well as the blacks.

But the ownership of property was not enough. He still had to endure sneers and insults. He decided then to prepare himself for a role of leadership among his people. To this end he went to school at night, and later became a Methodist preacher. His church became the forum for his people's grievances. Ten years after his arrival in Boston, Massachusetts, he was the accepted leader of the black community.

In 1765 Hall petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature, protesting the kidnapping of free Negroes. This was a time when American patriots were engaged in a constitutional struggle for freedom. They had proclaimed the inherent rights of all mankind to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Hall dared to remind them that the black men in the United States were human beings and as such were entitled to freedom and respect for their human personality.

Prejudice made Hall the father of African secret societies in the United States. He is the father of what is now known as Negro Masonry. Hall first sought initiation into the white Masonic Lodge in Boston, but was turned down because of his color. He then applied to the Army Lodge of an Irish Regiment. His petition was favorably received. On March 6, 1775,

Hall and fourteen other black Americans were initiated in Lodge Number 441. When, on March 17, the British were forced to evacuate Boston, the Army Lodge gave Prince Hall and his colleagues a license to meet and function as a Lodge. Thus, on July 3, 1775, African Lodge No. 1 came into being. This was the first Lodge in Masonry established in America for men of African descent.

The founding of the African Lodge was one of Prince Hall's greatest achievements. It afforded the Africans in the New England area of the United States a greater sense of security, and contributed to a new spirit of unity among them. Hall's interest did not end with the Lodge. He was deeply concerned with improving the lot of his people in other ways. He sought to have schools established for the children of the free Africans in Massachusetts. Of prime importance is the fact that Prince Hall worked to secure respect for the personality of his people and also played a significant role in the downfall of the Massachusetts slave trade. He helped to prepare the groundwork for the founding fathers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, whose continuing efforts have brought the black American closer to the goal of full citizenship.

In his series of articles entitled "Pioneers in Protest," Lerone Bennett, Senior Editor of Ebony Magazine, has written a capsule biography of John B. Russwurm, the distinguished West Indian who was a pioneer in Afro-American Journalism. The following information has been extracted from his article, "Founders of the Negro Press," Ebony Magazine, July 1984:

"Day in and day out, the Negroes of New York City were mercilessly lampooned in the white press. In the dying days of 1826, the campaign of vilification and slander reached unknown heights. The integrity and courage of Negro men were openly questioned. Worse, editors invaded Negro homes and impugned the chastity of Negro women. . . . This was a time of acute crisis for all Negro Americans and the New York leaders were agonizingly conscious of the forces arrayed against them . . . More ominous was the creeping power of the American Colonization Society which wanted to send free Negroes "back" to Africa.

"John B. Russwurm and Samuel E. Cornish, two of the youngest and most promising of the New York leaders, were assigned the task of inventing a journal that could speak forcibly to both the enemy and joint friend without and the 'brethren' within the veil."

Samuel E. Cornish, who is virtually unknown today, was born about 1795 in Delaware and raised in relatively free environments of Philadelphia and New York. He organized the first Negro Presbyterian Church in New York City. Russwurm, who is generally credited with being the first Negro

graduate of an American college, was a Jamaican, the son of an Englishman and an African woman. His father neglected to inform his white wife of the sin of his youth; but after his death, the widow learned of his existence and financed his education at Bowdoin College where he was graduated in 1826.

Russwurm and Cornish made an excellent team, despite the difference in their backgrounds. In the prospectus for the proposed paper they idealistically stated: "We shall ever regard the constitution of the United States as our polar star. Pledged to no party, we shall endeavor to urge our brethren to use their rights to the elective franchise as free citizens. It shall never be our objective to court controversy though we must at all times consider ourselves as champions in defense of oppressed humanity. Daily slandered, we think that there ought to be some channel of communication between us and the public, through which a single voice may be heard in defense of five hundred thousand free people of color . . ."

On Friday, March 26, 1827, the first issue of Freedom's Journal, the first Negro newspaper in the Western World, appeared on the streets of New York City. In their ambitious first editorial Russwurm and Cornish struck a high note of positiveness that still has something to say to the Afro-Americans in their present plight. It read, in part:

"We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoke for us. Too long has the republic been deceived by misrepresentations, in things which concern us dearly, though in the estimation of some more wise, for though there are many in society who entertain toward us benevolent feelings; still (with sorrow we confess it) there are others who make it their business to calumniate upon the least trifle, which tends to discredit any person of color; and pronounce anathema and denounce our whole body for the misconduct of this polly one . . . Our vices and our degradation are ever arrayed against us, but our virtues are passed unnoticed . . .

"It is our earnest wish," the first editorial of the first Negro newspaper said, "to make our Journal a medium of intercourse between our brethren in different states of this great confederacy."

The timeliness of this editorial, written over a hundred years ago, and the dynamics of its intellectual content, is far ahead of most editorials that appear in present-day Afro-American newspapers.

During the later years of his life John B. Russwurm moved to a position that today would be called black nationalism. After receiving his Master's degree from Bowdoin College in 1829 Russwurm went to Liberia in West Africa, where he established another newspaper, the Liberia Herald, and served as superintendent of schools. After further distinguishing himself as the governor of the Maryland Colony of Cape Palmas, this pioneer editor

and freedom fighter died in Liberia in 1851.

The same year John B. Russwurm died, another West Indian, Edward W. Blyden, went to Africa and established himself in Liberia. He was destined to become the greatest black intellectual of the 19th century. He concerned himself with the plight of African people the world over and eventually built a bridge of understanding between the people of African origin in the West Indies, the United States and in Africa. More than anyone else in the 19th and during the early part of the 20th century, Edward W. Blyden called upon the black man to reclaim himself and his ancient African glory. The concept now being called Negritude started with Blyden.

Blyden was born in the then Danish West Indian island of St. Thomas in 1832, but reacted against treatment of his people in the New World by emigrating to Liberia in 1851. He was convinced that the only way to bring respect and dignity to the people of African descent was by building progressive new "empires" in Africa whose civilization, while remaining basically African, would incorporate useful elements of Western culture.

It was the great Edward W. Blyden, who, with the immortal Frederick Douglass, placed before the bar of public opinion in England and other countries in Europe the case of the black man in America.

As far back as 1881, the renowned scholar and benefactor of West Africa, Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden, speaking on the occasion of his inauguration as President of Liberia College, sounded the note for the organized teaching of the culture and civilization of Africa and decried the fact that the world's image of Africa was not in keeping with Africa's true status in world history. I quote from his address on this occasion: "The people generally are not yet prepared to understand their own interests in the great work to be done for themselves and their children. We shall be obliged to work for some time to come not only without the popular sympathy we ought to have but with utterly inadequate resources.

"In all English-speaking countries the mind of the intelligent Negro child revolts against the descriptions of the Negro given in elementary books, geographies, travels, histories. . . .

"Having entwined or at least assented to these falsehoods about himself, he concludes that his only hope of rising in the scale of respectable manhood is to strive for what is most unlike himself and most alien to his peculiar tastes. And whatever his literary attainments or acquired ability, he fancies that he must grind at the mill which is provided for him, putting in material furnished to his hands,

bringing no contribution from his own field; and of course nothing comes out but what is put in."

Blyden made several trips to the United States and to his former home in the West Indies. With the Gold Coast nationalist, J. E. Casely Hayford, Blyden developed the idea of a federation of West African states. He died in 1912.

Of all the West Indians who influenced the Afro-American freedom struggle, the most colorful and the most controversial was Marcus Aurelius Garvey. Among the numerous black Messiahs who presented themselves and their grandiose programs to the people of Harlem, Marcus Garvey was singularly unique. He was born in Jamaica in 1887, the grandson of an African slave—a fact that was his greatest boast. He had grown up under a three-way color system—white, mulatto and black. Garvey's reaction to color prejudice and his search for a way to rise above it and lead his people back to Africa, spiritually, if not physically, was the all-consuming passion of his existence.

Marcus Garvey's glorious, romantic and riotous movement exhorted the black race and fixed their eyes on the bright star of a future in which they would reclaim and rebuild their African homeland and heritage. Garvey came to the United States as a disciple of Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute. Unfortunately, Booker T. Washington died before Marcus Garvey reached this country. Garvey had planned to raise funds and return to Jamaica to establish an institution similar to Tuskegee. In 1914 he had organized the Universal Negro Improvement Association in Jamaica. After the failure of this organization, he looked to the United States where he found a loyal group of followers willing to listen to his message.

Garvey succeeded in building a mass movement among American Negroes while other leaders were attempting it and doubting that it could be done. He advocated the return of Africa to the Africans and people of African descent. He organized, very ably and incompetently, the Black Star Line, a steamship company for transporting people of African descent from the United States to Africa. Garvey and his movement had a short and spectacular life span in the United States. His movement took really effective form in about 1921, and by 1926 he was in a Federal prison, charged with misusing the mails. From prison he was deported home to Jamaica. This is, briefly, the essence of the Garvey saga.

The self-proclaimed Provisional President of Africa never set foot on African soil. He spoke no African language. But Garvey managed to convey to members of the black race everywhere (and to the rest of the world) his passionate belief that Africa was the home of a civilization which had once been great and would be great again. When one takes into consideration

the slenderness of Garvey's resources and the vast material forces, social conceptions and imperial interests which automatically sought to destroy him, his achievement remains one of the great propaganda miracles of this country.

The deportation of Marcus Garvey and the decline of his movement marked the end of an era—an era when West Indians and Afro-Americans worked together and saw their plight as one and the same. In spite of the contributions that West Indians continued to make to the Afro-American freedom struggle, the relations between these two basically African people deteriorated. There are indications that the present freedom struggle in Africa, the Caribbean area and in the United States will become the basis for a new era of understanding and cooperation.

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MARCUS GARVEY: THE HARLEM YEARS

John Henrik Clarke

There is now a renaissance of interest in the life of Marcus Garvey. The African Independence Explosion, that started in 1957 when the former West African colony called the Gold Coast, became an independent country, now called Ghana, helped to set this renaissance in motion. Some of Marcus Garvey's dreams about African redemption were being realized. In his lifetime, he was a man who had a stubborn belief in the impossible, and came close to achieving it. During the uncertain years that followed the First World War, he built the largest Black mass movement that this country has ever seen. There was never a leader like him, before or since. His popularity was universal, his program for the redemption of Africa and the return of African people to their motherland, shook the foundations of three empires.

In nearly all matters relating to the resurgence of African people, in this country and abroad, there is reconsideration of this man in his program that seemed impossible in his lifetime. His prophecy has been fulfilled in the independence explosion that brought more than 30 African nations into being. The concept of Black Power that he advocated, using other terms, is now a reality in large areas of the world where the people of African origin are predominant.

Marcus Garvey's principal areas of agitation were the Afro-American struggle in the United States, his native Caribbean Islands and the universe of Black humanity everywhere. From the year of his arrival in the United States in 1916 until his deportation in 1927, the ethnic community called Harlem was his window on the world. From this vantage point he became one of the great figures of the 20th century.

It is no accident that Marcus Garvey had his greatest success in the United States among Black Americans in the community called Harlem. He came to the United States and began to build this movement at a time of great disenchantment among Afro-Americans who had pursued the "American Dream," until they had to concede that the dream was not dreamed for them. They had listened to the "American Promise," and also conceded that the promise was not made to them. Marcus Garvey gave them the vision of a new dream, a new promise, and a new land. He restored hope where hope had been lost. This is the real relevance of Marcus Garvey for today.

In the years following the end of the First World War, when America's promise to us had been betrayed, again we looked once more toward Africa and dreamed of a time and place where our essential manhood was not questioned.

A leader emerged and tried to make this dream into a reality. His name was Marcus Garvey. The personality and the movement founded by Marcus Garvey, together with the writers and artists of the Renaissance period, helped to put the community of Harlem on the map. While the literary aspect of the Renaissance was unfolding, Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro Improvement Association, using Harlem as his base of operation, built the largest mass movement among black people that this country had ever seen. This movement had international importance and was considered to be a threat to the colonial powers of Europe which were entrenched in Africa.

This magnetic and compelling personality succeeded in building a mass movement after other men had failed. This may be due to the fact that he was born and reared in an age of conflict that affected the world of African peoples everywhere.

The appearance of the Garvey movement was perfectly timed. The broken promises of the postwar period had produced widespread cynicism in the Black population which had lost some of its belief in itself as a people. Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. wrote of Garvey: "He is the only man that made Negroes not feel ashamed of their color." In his book, *Marching Blacks*, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. wrote:

> Marcus Garvey was one of the greatest mass leaders of all time. He was misunderstood and maligned, but he brought to the Negro people for the first time a sense of pride in being black.

The Garvey movement had a profound effect on the political development of Harlem and on the lives of both the Adam Clayton Powells. The fight to make Harlem a Congressional District began during the Garvey period.

In his *New World A-coming*, Roi Ottley (1943) observed that,

> Garvey leaped into the ocean of black unhappiness at a most timely moment for a savior. He had witnessed the Negro's disillusionment mount with the progress of the World War. Negro soldiers had suffered all forms of Jim-Crow, humiliation, discrimination, slander, and even violence at the hands of a white civilian population. After the war, there was a resurgence of Ku Klux Klan influence; another decade of racial hatred and open lawlessness had set in, and Negroes again were prominent among the victims. Meantime, administration leaders were quite politic in trying to persuade Negroes that in spite of their full participation in the war effort they could expect no changes in their traditional status in America.

This attitude had helped to create the atmosphere into which a Marcus Garvey could emerge. In many ways the scene was being prepared for Marcus Garvey for over one hundred years before he was born. There is no way to understand this without looking at the American antecedents of Marcus Garvey, i.e., the men, forces and movements that came before him.

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During the eighteenth century there was strong agitation among certain groups of Black people in America for a return to Africa. This agitation was found mainly among groups of 'free Negroes' because of the uncertainty of their position as freed men in a slaveholding society. "One can see it late into the eighteenth century," Dr. DuBois explains in his book *Dusk of Dawn*, "when the Negro Union of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1788, proposed to the Free African Society of Philadelphia a general exodus to Africa on the part of at least free Negroes."

The Back-to-Africa idea has been a recurring theme in Afro-American life and thought for more than a hundred years. This thought was strong during the formative years of the Colonization Society and succeeded in convincing some of the most outstanding Black men of the 18th and 19th centuries, such as: John Russwurm, the first Black college graduate (Bowdoin, 1820), and Lott Carey, the powerful Virginia preacher. Later the Society fell into severe disrepute after an argument with the Abolitionists.

Marcus Garvey was not the first West Indian to play a vital role in the Afro-American freedom struggle. West Indians have been coming to the United States for over a century. The part they have played in the progress of the Afro-American in his long march from slavery to freedom has always been an important factor. More important is the fact that the most outstanding of these Caribbean-Americans saw their plight and the plight of the Afro-American as being one and the same.

As early as 1827, a Jamaican, John B. Russwurm, one of the founders of Liberia, was the first colored man to be graduated from an American college and to publish a newspaper in this country; 16 years later his fellow countryman, Peter Ogden, organized in New York City the first Odd-Fellows Lodge for Negroes. Prior to the Civil War, West Indian contribution to the progress of Afro-American life was one of the main contributing factors in the fight for freedom and full citizenship in the northern part of the United States.

In his book *Souls of Black Folk*, Dr. W. E. B. DuBois says that the West Indians were mainly responsible for the manhood program prescribed by the race in the early decades of the last century. Indicative of their tendency to blaze new paths is the achievement of John W. A. Shaw of Antigua, who, in the early 90's of the last century passed the civil service tests and became deputy commissioner of taxes for the County of Queens in New York State.

In 18th century America, two of the most outstanding figures for liberty and justice were the West Indians—Prince Hall and John B. Russwurm. When Prince Hall came to the United States the nation was in turmoil. The colonies were ablaze with indignation. Britain, with a series of revenue acts, had stoked the fires of colonial discontent. In Virginia, Patrick Henry was speaking of liberty or death. The cry "No Taxation Without Representation" played on the nerve strings of the nation. Prince Hall, then a delicate-looking teenager, often walked through the turbulent streets of Boston, an observer unobserved.

A few months before these hectic scenes, he had arrived in the United States from his home in Barbados, where he had been born about 1748, the son of an Englishman and a free African woman. He was, in theory, a free man, but he knew that neither in Boston nor in Barbados were persons of African descent free in fact. At once, he questioned the sincerity of the vocal white patriots of Boston. It never seemed to have occurred to them that the announced principles motivating their action was stronger argument in favor of destroying the system of slavery. The colonists held in servitude more than a half million human beings, some of them white; yet they engaged in the contradiction of going to war to support the theory that all men were created equal.

More than a hundred years of struggle, agitation and disenchantment would follow this period. When Marcus Garvey began his organizational work in the United States a large number of Black Americans were willing to listen to him.

In *Philosophy and Opinions* Marcus Garvey would later ask himself: "Where is the Black man's government? Where is his king and his kingdom? Where is his president, his country and his ambassador, his army, his navy, his men of big affairs?" He could not answer the question affirmatively, so he decided to make the Black man's government, king and kingdom, president and men of big affairs. He taught his people to dream big again; he reminded them that they had once been kings and rulers of great nations and would be again. The cry "Up you mighty race, you can accomplish what you will" was a call to the Black man to reclaim his best self and re-enter the mainstream of world history. When Marcus Garvey came to the United States in 1916, World War I had already started. The migration of Black workers from the South to the new war industries in the North and eastern parts of the United States was in full swing. Dissatisfaction, discontent, and frustration among millions of Black Americans were accelerating this migration. The atmosphere and the condition was well prepared for the message and the program of Marcus Garvey.

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He came to the United States in 1916, one year after the death of Booker T. Washington. He had exchanged correspondence with Booker T. Washington with the hope

of securing some means to build, in Jamaica, a school similar to Tuskegee in Alabama. Unfortunately, Booker T. Washington had died the previous year.

Marcus Garvey's plans for the self-determination of his people are outlined in the following excerpts from "Aims and Objects of Movement for Solution of Negro Problem" issued by Marcus Garvey as President-General of Universal Negro Improvement Association, 1924.

> The Universal Negro Improvement Association is an organization among Negroes that is seeking to improve the condition of the race, with the view of establishing a Nation in Africa where Negroes will be given the opportunity to develop by themselves, without creating the hatred and animosity that now exist in countries of the white race through Negroes rivaling them for the highest and best positions in government, politics, society and industry. This organization believes in the rights of all men, yellow, white and black. To us, the white race has a right to the peaceful possession and occupation of countries of its own and in like manner the yellow and black races have their rights . . . Only by an honest and liberal consideration of such rights can the world be blessed with the peace that is sought by Christian teachers and leaders.
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> The Spiritual Brotherhood of Man. The following preamble to the Constitution of the organization speaks for itself: The Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities' League is a social, friendly, humanitarian, charitable, educational, institutional, constructive, and expansive society and is founded by persons, desiring to the utmost, to work for the general uplift of the Negro peoples of the world. And the members pledge themselves to do all in their power to conserve the rights of all mankind, believing always in the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God. The motto of the organization is: One God! One Aim! One Destiny! Therefore, let justice be done to all mankind, realizing that if the strong oppresses the weak, confusion and discontent will ever mark the path of man, but with love, faith and charity toward all, the reign of peace and plenty will be heralded into the world and the generations of men shall be called Blessed.
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> The declared Objects of the Association are: To establish a Universal Confraternity among the race; to promote the spirit of pride and love; to reclaim the fallen; to administer to and assist the needy, to assist in civilizing the backward tribes of Africa; to assist in the development of Independent Negro Nations and Communities; to establish a central nation for the race; to establish Commissionaries or Agencies in the principal countries and cities of the world for the representation of all Negroes.

The early twenties were times of change and accomplishment in the Harlem community. It was the period when Harlem was literally put on the map. Two events made this possible: a literary movement known as the Harlem Renaissance and the emergence in Harlem of the magnetic and compelling personality of Marcus Garvey. He was the most seriously considered and the most colorful of the numerous black Manassehs who presented themselves and their grandiose programs to the people of Harlem.

Marcus Garvey's reaction to color prejudice and his search for a way to rise above it and lead his people back to Africa, spiritually if not physically, was the all-consuming passion of his existence. His glorious and romantic movement exhorted the Black people of the world and fixed their eyes on the bright star of a future in which they could reclaim and rebuild their African homeland and heritage.

Garvey succeeded in building a mass movement among American Blacks while other leaders were attempting it and doubting that it could be done. He advocated the return of Africa to the Africans and people of African descent.

He organized, very boldly, the Black Star Line, a steamship company for transporting cargoes of African produce to the United States, and because of this spread rapidly throughout the Caribbean area and Central and South America, among West Indian migrant laborers. And due to the effectiveness of the American mass media of communication, it penetrated into the continent of Africa.

One year after he entered the United States, in 1917, he made a speaking tour of the principal cities, building up a national following. By 1919 he had branches well established all over the world preparing to send delegates and representatives of fraternal organizations to "the first International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World," which was held in August 1920 in New York City.

The first public mass meeting was held at Madison Square Garden -- the largest auditorium in the state, and white reporters conceded that about 25,000 assembled inside the auditorium, and there was an overflow standing in the streets.

The significance of this thirty-day convention was that for the first time representatives of African people from all over the world met in sessions to report on conditions under which they lived—socially, economically and politically—and to discuss remedial measures.

After the historic First UNIA International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in 1920, the cry, "Africa for the Africans, those at home and those abroad," became part of the folklore of the Black Americans. The most important document that came out of this convention was the Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World. Marcus Garvey had started negotiations with the President of Liberia for colonization and development of Africa by Western world Blacks. This was the beginning of the hope and heartbreak of Marcus Garvey's colonization scheme.

Between 1920 and 1925 the Garvey Movement rose to great heights and in spite of its troubles, continued to grow. This is the period in which the Movement had its greatest success and was under the severest criticism. The Convention of 1920 was a monumental achievement in Black organization. This convention came in the years after the First World War, when the promises to Black Americans had been broken, lynching was rampant, and when Blacks were still recovering from "the red summer of 1919," in which there were race riots in most of the major cities and the white unemployed took out their grievances on the Blacks, who many times were competing with them for the few available jobs. During this time, Marcus Garvey brought the Black Star Line into being and into a multiplicity of troubles. He divorced his wife and married another, and made his name and his organization household words in nearly every part of the world where Black people lived.

The trials and tribulations of the Black Star Line would read like the libretto of a comic opera, except the events were both hectic and tragic, and there were more villains than heroes involved in this attempt to restore to Black people a sense of worth and nationness.

Marcus Garvey's trouble with the courts started soon after the formation of the Black Star Line. The charges and counter-charges relating to the Black Star Line were

the basis of most of his troubles and the cause of his conviction and being sent to Atlanta Prison. This was the beginning of the end of the greatest years of the Garvey Movement.

The years of triumph and tragedy were building years, searching years and years of magnificent dreaming. Marcus Garvey's vision of Africa had lifted the spirit of Black Americans out of the Depression that followed the First World War. The UNIA's African Legions and Black Cross Nurses became familiar sights on the streets of Harlem. The UNIA grew in membership and in support of all kinds. Garvey was the beating heart of the movement. His persuasive voice and prolific writings and his effective use of pageantry struck a responsive chord throughout the Black communities of America and abroad. Branches of the Movement were established in Latin America, wherever there were large Caribbean communities. An African Orthodox Church was founded in America. Now the Black man was searching for a new God, as well as a new land.

The Garvey Movement began to take effective roots in America when millions of Blacks had begun to feel that they would never know full citizenship with dignity in this country where their ancestors had been brought against their will, and where they had contributed to the wealth and development of the country in spite of conditions of previous servitude. Against this background of broken promises and fading hope, Marcus Garvey began to build a world-wide Black movement. This, the first Black mass protest crusade in the history of the United States began to pose serious problems for white America. This movement also posed serious problems for the then existing Black leadership, especially for Dr. W. E. B. DuBois.

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In the article, "DuBois Versus Garvey: Race Propagandists at War," the writer Elliott M. Rudnick outlines the origins of the conflict between these two Black giants who looked at the world from different vantage points. Both of them were Pan-Africanists and both of them had as their objectives the freedom and redemption of African people everywhere. Yet, there was no meeting of the minds on the methods of reaching these desirable goals. In the article Rudnick says: "Unlike DuBois, Marcus Garvey was able to gain mass support and his propaganda had a tremendous emotional appeal. He established the Universal Negro Improvement Association in New York (with branches in many U.S. cities and several foreign countries). The aim of the organization was the liberation of Africa. By 1919, he set up the Black Star Line and the Negro Factories Corporation. In August, 1920, Garvey called a month-long convention of the U.N.I.A. in New York City. In the name of '400,000,000 Negroes of the World,' he declared that Africa must be free. He did not bother to display the restraint which characterized Pan-African leaders and many of his remarks were inflammatory. He warned that his race was prepared to shed its blood to remove the whites from the natives' rightful land in Africa. His convention delegates and members paraded through Harlem. Tens of thousands of Negroes were excited by the massed units of the African Legion in blue and red uniforms and the white-attired contingents of the Black Cross Nurses. Garvey's followers sang the new U.N.I.A. anthem, 'Ethiopia, Thou Land of Our Fathers' and they proudly waved the Association's flag (black for Negro skin, green for Negro hopes, and red for Negro blood). Never again was the race to have a leader who could produce such a wonderful show."

DuBois publicly ignored Garvey until December of 1920 and this tardiness of editorial recognition was probably due to the *Crisis* editor's ambivalence toward him. DuBois was profoundly impressed by "this extraordinary leader of men," and he acknowledged that Garvey was "essentially an honest and sincere man with a tremendous vision, great dynamic force, stubborn determination and unselfish desire to serve." However, the *Crisis* editor also considered him to be:

> . . . dictatorial, domineering, inordinately vain and very suspicious . . . The great difficulty with him is that he has absolutely no business sense, no flair for real organization and his general objects are so shot through with bombast and exaggeration that it is difficult to pin them down for careful examination.

The following month, after DuBois had requested (and failed to receive) a financial statement from the Jamaican on the Negro Improvement Association and the Black Star Line, the *Crisis* editor wrote: "When it comes to Mr Garvey's industrial and commercial enterprises there is more ground for doubt and misgiving than in the matter of his character."

At least once DuBois entertained the idea that his own hopes for Africa's reclamation and an international Black economy could be achieved through Garvey's mass appeal. The two men were not strangers to each other before Garvey came to the United States in 1916. In the years between their first meeting and the eve of the Second Pan-African Congress, DuBois had built a Black intellectual movement, while Garvey had built a Black mass movement.

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Garvey and his movement had a short and spectacular life span in the United States. His movement took really effective form in the United States in about 1919, and by 1926 he was in a Federal prison, charged with misusing the mails. From prison he was deported home to Jamaica. This is, briefly, the essence of the Garvey saga in America.

Marcus Garvey, who was duly elected Provisional President of Africa by his followers, was never allowed to set foot on African soil. He spoke no African language. But Garvey managed to convey to African people everywhere (and to the rest of the world) his passionate belief that Africa was the home of a civilization which had once been great and would be great again. When one takes into consideration the slenderness of Garvey's resources and the vast material forces, social conceptions and imperial interests which automatically sought to destroy him, his achievement remains one of the great propaganda miracles of this century.

Garvey's voice reverberated inside Africa itself. The King of Swaziland later told Mrs Marcus Garvey that he knew the names of only two Black men in the Western world: Jack Johnson, the boxer who defeated the white man Jim Jeffries, and Marcus Garvey. From his narrow vantage point in Harlem, Marcus Garvey became a world figure.

After years of neglect, new interest in the life and ideas of this remarkable man has created a Marcus

Garvey Renaissance. In his homeland, Jamaica, he has been proclaimed a national hero. All over the Black world he is being reconsidered with respect and reverence. His greatness lies in the fact that he was daring enough to dream of a better future for Black people, wherever they live on this earth.

The Garvey movement began to fragment and decline concurrently with the end of the Harlem Renaissance. This period had a meaning that is generally missed by most people who write about it. This movement had indigenous roots and it could have existed without the concern and interest of white people. This concern, often overstated, gave the movement a broader and more colorful base, and may have extended its life span. The movement was the natural and logical result of years of neglect, suppression, and degradation. Black Americans were projecting themselves as human beings and demanding that their profound humaneness be accepted. It was the first time a large number of Black writers, artists, and intellectuals took a unified walk into the North American sun.

The Black nationalists and freedom fighters before and after Marcus Garvey were saying, no more or less than what Garvey had said in word and deed: "Up! Up! You mighty race. You can accomplish what you will."□

The Impact of Marcus Garvey

BY John Henrik Clarke

When Marcus Garvey died in 1940 the role of the British Empire was already being challenged by India and the rising expectations of her African colonies. Marcus Garvey's avocation of African redemption and the restoration of the African state's sovereign political entity in world affairs was still a dream without fulfillment.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, the United States would enter, in a formal way, what had been up to that date strictly a European conflict. Marcus Garvey's prophesy about the European scramble to maintain dominance over the whole world was now a reality. The people of Africa and Asia had joined in this conflict but with different hopes, different dreams and many misgivings. Africans throughout the colonial world were mounting campaigns against this system which had robbed them of their nation-ness and their basic human-ness. The discovery and the reconsideration of the teachings of the honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey were being rediscovered and reconsidered by a large number of African people as this world conflict deepened.

In 1945, when World War II was drawing to a close the 5th Pan-African Congress was called in Manchester, England. Some of the conventioneers were: George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, W.E.B. Dubois, Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya. Up to this time the previous Pan-African Congresses had mainly called for improvements in the educational status of the Africans in the colonies so that they would be prepared for self-rule when independence eventually came.

The Pan-African Congress in Manchester was radically different from all of the other congresses. For the first time Africans from Africa, Africans from the Caribbean and Africans from the United States had come together and designed a program for the future independence of Africa. Those who attended the conference were of many political persuasions and different ideologies, yet the teachings of Marcus Garvey were the main ideological basis for the 5th Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England in 1945.

Some of the conveners of this congress would return to Africa in the ensuing years to eventually lead their respective nations toward independence and beyond. In 1947, a Ghanaian student who had studied ten years in the United States, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah returned to Ghana on the invitation of Joseph B. Danquah, his former schoolmaster. Nkrumah would later become Prime Minister. In his fight for the complete independence for the Gold Coast later to be known as Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah acknowledged his political indebtedness to the political teachings of Marcus Garvey.

On September 7, 1957, Ghana became a free self-governing nation, the first member of the British Commonwealth of Nations to become self-governing. Ghana would later develop a Black Star Line patterned after the maritime dreams of Marcus Garvey. My point here is that the African Independence Explosion, which started with the independence of Ghana, was symbolically and figuratively bringing the hopes of Marcus Garvey alive.

In the Caribbean Islands the concept of Federation and Political union of all the islands was now being looked upon as a realizable possibility. Some constitutional reforms and changing attitudes, born of this awareness, were improving the life of the people of these islands.

In the United States the Supreme Court's decision of 1954, outlawing segregation in school systems was greeted with mixed feelings of hope and skepticism by African-Americans. A year after this decision the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Freedom Rides and the demand for equal pay for Black teachers that subsequently became a demand for equal education for all, would become part of the central force that would set the fight for liberation in motion.

The enemies of Africans, the world over were gathering their counter-forces while a large number of them pretended to be sympathetic to the African's cause. Some of these pretenders, both Black and White, were F.B.I. and other agents of the government whose mission it was to frustrate and destroy the Civil Rights Movement. In a different way the same thing was happening in Africa. The coups and counter-coups kept most African states from developing into the strong independent and sovereign states they had hoped to become.

While the Africans had gained control over their state's apparatus, the colonialist's still controlled the economic apparatus of most African states. Africans were discovering to their amazement that a large number of the Africans, who had studied abroad were a detriment to the aims and goals of their nation. None of them had been trained to rule an African state by the use of the best of African traditional forms and strategies. As a result African states, in the main, became imitations of European states and most of their leaders could justifiably be called Europeans with black faces. They came to power without improving the lot of their people and these elitist governments continue until this day.

In most cases what went wrong was that as these leaders failed to learn the lessons of self-reliance and power preparation as advocated by Marcus Garvey and in different ways by Booker T. Washington, W.E.B Dubois, Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X. Africa became infiltrated by foreign agents. Africans had forgotten, if they knew at all, that Africa is the world's richest continent, repository of the greatest mineral wealth in the world. They had not asked themselves nor answered the most critical question. If Africa is the world's richest continent, why is it so full of poor people? Marcus Garvey advocated that Africans control the wealth of Africa. He taught that control, control of resources, control of self, control of nation, requires preparation, Garveyism was about total preparation.

There is still no unified force in Africa calling attention to the need for this kind of preparation. This preparation calls for a new kind of education if Africans are to face the reality of their survival.

Africans in the United States must remember that the slave ships brought no West Indians, no Caribbeans, no Jamaicans or Trinidadians or Barbadians to this hemisphere. The slave ships brought only African people and most of us took the semblance of nationality from the places where slave ships dropped us off. In the 500 year process of oppression the Europeans have displaced our God, our culture, and our traditions. They have violated our women to the extent that they have created a bastard race who is confused as to whether to be loyal to its mother's people or its fathers people and for the most part they remain loyal to neither. I do not think African people can succeed in the world until the hear again Marcus Garvey's call: AFRICA FOR THE AFRICANS, THOSE AT HOME AND ABROAD.

We must regain our confidence in ourselves as a people and learn again the methods and arts of

controlling nations. We must hear again Marcus Garvey calling out to us: UP! UP! YOU MIGHTY RACE! YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WILL!

The Origin and Growth of Afro-American Literature

BY John Henrik Clarke

Africans were great storytellers long before their first appearance in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. The rich and colorful history, art and folklore of West Africa, the ancestral home of most Afro-Americans, present evidence of this, and more.

Contrary to a misconception which still prevails, the Africans were familiar with literature and art for many years before their contact with the Western world. Before the breaking up of the social structure of the West African states of Ghana, Melle (Mali), and Songhay, and the internal strife and chaos that made the slave trade possible, the forefathers of the Africans who eventually became slaves in the United States lived in a society where university life was fairly common and scholars were beheld with reverence.

There were in this ancestry rulers who expanded their kingdoms into empires, great and magnificent armies whose physical dimensions dwarfed entire nations into submission, generals who advanced the technique of military science, scholars whose vision of life showed foresight and wisdom, and priests who told of gods that were strong and kind. To understand fully any aspect of Afro-American life, one must realize that the black American is not without a cultural past, though he was many generations removed from it before his achievements in American literature and art commanded any appreciable attention.

I have been referring to the African Origin of Afro-American literature and history. This preface is essential to every meaningful discussion of the role of the Afro-American in every major aspect of American life, past and present. Before getting into the main body of this talk I want to make it clear that the Black Race did not come to the United States culturally empty-handed.

I will elaborate very briefly on my statement to the effect that "the forefathers of the Africans who eventually became slaves in the United Sates once lived in a society where university life was fairly common and scholars were beheld with reverence."

During the period in West African history—from the early part of the fourteenth century to the time of the Moorish invasion in 1591—the City of Timbuktu, with the University of Sankore in the Songhay Empire, was the intellectual center of Africa. Black scholars were enjoying a renaissance that was known and respected throughout most of Africa and in parts of Europe. At this period in African history, the University of Sankore, at Timbuktu, was the educational capital of the Western Sudan. In his book *Timbuktu the Mysterious*, Felix DuBois gives us the following description of this period:

> The scholars of Timbuktu yielded in nothing, to the saints in their sojourns in the foreign universities of Fez, Tunis and Cairo. They astounded the most learned men of Islam by their erudition. That these Negroes were on a level with the Arabian Savants is proved by the fact that they were installed as professors in Morocco and Egypt. In contrast to this, we find that the Arabs were not always equal to the requirements of Sankore.

I will speak of only one of the great black scholars referred to in the book by Felix DuBois.

Ahmed Baba was the last chancellor of the University of Sankore. He was one of the greatest

African scholars of the late sixteenth century. His life is a brilliant example of the range and depth of West African intellectual activity before the colonial era. Ahmed Baba was the author of more than 40 books: nearly every one of these books had a different theme. He was in Timbuktu when it was invaded by the Moroccans in 1592, and he was one of the first citizens to protest this occupation of his beloved home town. Ahmed Baba, along with other scholars, was imprisoned and eventually exiled to Morocco. During his expatriation from Timbuktu, his collection of 1,600 books, one of the richest libraries of his day, was lost.

Now, West Africa entered a sad period of decline. During the Moorish occupation, wreck and ruin became the order of the day. When the Europeans arrived in this part of Africa and saw these conditions, they assumed that nothing of order and value had ever existed in these countries. This mistaken impression, too often repeated, has influenced the interpretation of African and Afro-American life in history for over 400 years.

Negroes played an important part in American life, history, and culture long before 1619. Our relationship to this country is as old as the country itself.

Africans first came to the new world as explorers. They participated in the exploratory expeditions of Balboa, the discoverer of the Pacific, and Cortes, the conqueror of Mexico. An African explorer helped to open up New Mexico and Arizona and prepared the way for the settlement of the Southwest, Africans also accompanied French Jesuit missionaries on their early travels through North America.

In the United States, the art and literature of the Negro people has had an economic origin. Much that is original in black American folklore, or singular in "Negro spirituals" and blues, can be traced to the economic institution of slavery and its influence upon the Negro's soul.

After the initial poetical debut of Jupiter Hammon and Phillis Wheatley, the main literary expression of the Negro was the slave narrative. One of the earliest of these narratives came from the pen of Gustavas Vassa, an African from Nigeria. This was a time of great pamphleteering in the United States. The free Africans in the North, and those who had escaped from slavery in the South, made their mark upon this time and awakened the conscience of the nation. Their lack of formal educational attainments gave their narratives a strong and rough-hewed truth, more arresting than scholarship.

Gustavas Vassa established his reputation with an autobiography, first printed in England. Vassa, born in 1745, was kidnapped by slavers when he was 11 years old and taken to America. He was placed in service on a plantation in Virginia. Eventually, he was able to purchase his freedom. He left the United States, made his home in England and became active in the British anti-slavery movement. In 1790, he presented a petition to Parliament to abolish the slave trade. His autobiography, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Gustavas Vassa*, was an immediate success and had to be published in five editions.

At the time when slave ships were still transporting Africans to the New World, two 18th century Negroes were writing and publishing works of poetry. The first of these was Jupiter Hammon, a slave in Queens Village, Long Island. In 1760, Hammon published *An Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ with Penitential Cries*. … In all probability this was the first poem published by an American Negro. His most remarkable work, "An Address to the Negroes of New York," was published in 1787. Jupiter Hammon died in 1800.

Phillis Wheatley (1753–1784), like Hammon, was influenced by the religious forces of the Wesley-Whitefield revival. Unlike Hammon, however, she was a writer of unusual talent. Though born in Africa, she acquired in an incredibly short time both the literary culture and the religion of her New England masters. Her writings reflect little of her race and much of the age in which she lived. She

was a New England poet of the third quarter of the 18th century, and her poems reflected the poetic conventions of the Boston Puritans with whom she lived. Her fame continued long after her death in 1784 and she became one of the best known poets of New England.

Another important body of literature came out of this period. It is the literature of petition, written by free black men in the North, who were free in name only. Some of the early petitioners for justice were Caribbean-Americans who saw their plight and the plight of the Afro-Americans as one and the same.

In 18th century America, two of the most outstanding fighters for liberty and justice were the West Indians—Prince Hall and John B. Russworm. When Prince Hall came to the United States, the nation was in turmoil. The colonies were ablaze with indignation. Britain, with a series of revenue acts, had stoked the fires of colonial discontent. In Virginia, Patrick Henry was speaking of liberty or death. The cry, "No Taxation Without Representation," played on the nerve strings of the nation. Prince Hall, then a delicate looking teenager, often walked through the turbulent streets of Boston, an observer unobserved.

A few months before these hectic scenes, he had arrived in the United States from his home in Barbados, where he was born about 1748, the son of an Englishman and a free African woman. He was, in theory, a free man, but he knew that neither in Boston nor in Barbados were persons of African descent free in fact. At once, he questioned the sincerity of the vocal white patriots of Boston. It never seemed to have occurred to them that the announced principles motivating their action [were] stronger argument in favor of destroying the stem of slavery. The colonists held in servitude more than a half million human beings, some of them white: yet they engaged in the contradiction of going to war to support the theory that all men were created equal.

When Prince Hall arrived in Boston, that city was the center of the American slave trade. Most of the major leaders of the revolutionary movement, in fact, were slaveholders or investors in slave-supported businesses. Hall, like many other Americans, wondered: what did these men mean by freedom?

The condition of the free black men, as Prince Hall found them, was not an enviable one. Emancipation brought neither freedom nor relief from the stigma of color. They were still included with slaves, indentured servants, and Indians in the slave codes. Discriminatory laws severely circumscribed their freedom of movement.

By 1765, Prince Hall saw little change in the condition of the blacks, and though a freeman, at least in theory, he saw his people debased as though they were slaves still in bondage. These things drove him to prepare himself for leadership among his people. So, through diligence and frugality, he became a property owner, thus establishing himself in the eyes of white people as well as the blacks.

But the ownership of property was not enough. He still had to endure sneers and insults. He went to school at night, and later became a Methodist preacher. His church became the forum for his people's grievances. The years after his arrival in Boston, he was the accepted leader of the black community.

In 1788, Hall petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature, protesting the kidnapping of free Negroes. This was a time when American patriots were engaged in a constitutional struggle for freedom. They had proclaimed the inherent rights of all mankind to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Hall dared to remind them that the black men in the United States were human beings and as such were entitled to freedom and respect for their human personality.

Prejudice made Hall the father of African secret societies in the United States. He is the father of what is now known as Negro Masonry. Hall first sought initiation into the white Masonic Lodge in

Boston, but was turned down because of his color. He then applied to the Army Lodge of an Irish Regiment. His petition was favorably received. On March 6, 1775, Hall and fourteen other black Americans were initiated in Lodge Number 441. When, on March 17, the British were forced to evacuate Boston, the Army Lodge gave Prince Hall and his colleagues a license to meet and function as a Lodge. Thus, on July 3, 1776, African Lodge No. 1 came into being. This was the first Lodge in Masonry established in America for men of African descent.

The founding of the African Lodge was one of Prince Hall's greatest achievements. It afforded the Africans in the New England area a greater sense of security, and contributed to a new spirit of unity among them. Hall's interest did not end with the Lodge. He was deeply concerned with improving the lot of his people in other ways. He sought to have schools established for the children of the free Africans in Massachusetts. Of prime importance is the fact that Prince Hall worked to secure respect for the personality of his people and also played a significant role in the downfall of the Massachusetts slave trade. He helped to prepare the groundwork for the freedom fighters of the 19th and 20th centuries, whose continuing efforts have brought the black American closer to the goal of full citizenship.

The literature of petition was continued by men like David Walker whose *Appeal*, an indictment of slavery, was published in 1829. Dynamic ministers like Samuel Ringgold Ward and Henry Highland Garnet joined the ranks of the petitioners at the time a journalist literature was being born.

Frederick Douglass, the noblest of American black men of the 19th century, was the leader of the journalist group. He established the newspaper *North Star* and, later, the magazine *Douglass Monthly*. John B. Russworm and Samuel Cornish founded the newspaper *Freedom's Journal* in 1827.

In 1829, a third poet, George Moses Horton, published his book, *The Hope of Liberty*. In his second volume, *Naked Genius* (1865), he expressed his anti-slavery convictions more clearly. George Moses Horton was the first slave poet to openly protest his status.

Throughout the early part of the 19th century, the slave narrative became a new form of American literary expression.

The best known of these slave narratives came from the pen of Frederick Douglass, the foremost Negro in the anti-slavery movement. His first book was *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845). Ten years later, an improved enlarged edition, *My Bondage and My Freedom*, was published. His third autobiography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, was published in 1881 and enlarged in 1892. Douglass fought for civil rights and against lynching and the Ku Klux Klan. No abuse of justice escaped his attention and his wrath.

It was not until 1887 that an Afro-American writer emerged who was fully a master of the short story as a literary form. This writer was Charles W. Chesnutt. Chesnutt, an Ohioan by birth, became a teacher in North Carolina while still in his middle teens. He studied the traditions and superstitions of the people that he taught and later made this material into the ingredient of his best short stories. In August 1887, his short story, "The Goophered Grapevine," appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*. This was the beginning of a series of stories which were later brought together in his first book, *The Conjure Woman* (1899). "The Wife of His Youth" also appeared in the *Atlantic* (July 1898) and gave the title to his second volume, *The Wife of His Youth and Other Stories of the Color Line* (1899). Three more stories appeared later: "Bacter's Procrustes" in the *Atlantic* (June 1904), and "The Doll" and "Mr. Taylor's Funeral" in *The Crisis* magazine (April 1912 and April-May 1915).

Chesnutt's novel did not measure up on the standards he had set with his short stories, though they were all competently written. In 1928, he was awarded the Spingarn Medal for his "pioneer work as a literary artist depicting the life and struggle of Americans of Negro descent."

Paul Laurence Dunbar, a contemporary of Charles W. Chesnutt, made his reputation as a poet before extending his talent to short stories. Both Dunbar and Chesnutt very often used the same subject matter in their stories. Chesnutt was by far the better writer, and his style and attitude differed radically from Dunbar's.

Dunbar's pleasant folk tales of tradition-bound plantation black folk were more acceptable to a large white reading audience with preconceived ideas of "Negro characteristics." In all fairness, it must be said that Dunbar did not cater to this audience in all of his stories. In such stories as "The Tragedy at Three Forks," "The Lynching of Jube Benson," and "The Ordeal of Mt. Hope," he showed a deep concern and understanding of the more serious and troublesome aspects of Afro-American life. Collections of his stories are: *Folks from Dixie* (1898), *The Strength of Gideon* (1900), *In Old Plantation Days* (1903), and *The Heart of Happy Hollow* (1904). Only one of his novels, *The Sport of the Gods* (1902), is mainly concerned with Afro-American characters.

Chesnutt and Dunbar, in their day, reached a larger general reading audience than any of the black writers who came before them. The period of the slave narratives had passed. Yet the black writer was still an oddity and a stepchild in the eyes of most critics. This attitude continued in a lessening degree throughout one of the richest and most productive periods in Afro-American writing in the United States—the period called "the Negro Renaissance." The community of Harlem was the center and spiritual godfather and midwife for this renaissance. The cultural emancipation of the Afro-American that began before the First World War was now in full force. The black writer discovered a new voice within himself and liked the sound of it. The white writers who had been interpreting our life with an air of authority and a preponderance of error looked at last to the black writer for their next cue. In short story collections like Jean Toomer's *Cane* (1923) and Langston Hughes' *The Ways of White Folks* (1934) heretofore unreal to some readers because it was new and so contrary to the stereotypes they had grown accustomed to.

In her book *Mules and Men* (1935), Zora Neale Hurston presented a collection of folk tales and sketches that showed the close relationship between humor and tragedy in Afro-American life. In doing this, she also fulfilled the first requirement of all books—to entertain and guide the reader through an interesting experience that is worth the time and attention it takes to absorb it. In other stories like *The Gilded Six Bit*, *Drenched in Light*, and *Spunk* another side of Miss Hurston's talent was shown.

In the midst of this renaissance, two strong voices from the West Indians were heard. Claude McKay, in his books *Ginger Town* (1932) and *Banana Bottom* (1933), wrote of life in his Jamaican homeland in a manner that debunked the travelogue exoticism usually attributed to Negro life in the Caribbean area. Before the publication of these books, Harlem and its inhabitants had already been the subject matter for a group of remarkable short stories by McKay and the inspiration for his book, *Home to Harlem*, still the most famous novel ever written about that community.

In 1926, Eric Walrond, a native of British Guiana, explored and presented another side of West Indian life in his book, *Tropic Death*, a near classic. In these 10 naturalistic stories, Eric Walrond concerns himself mostly with labor and living conditions in the Panama Canal Zone where a diversity of people and ways of life meet and clash, while each tries to survive at the expense of the other. Clear perception and strength of style enabled Mr. Walrond to balance form and content in such a manner that the message was never intruded upon the unfolding of the stories.

Rudolph Fisher, another bright star of the Harlem literary Renaissance, was first a brilliant young doctor. The new and light touch he brought to his stories of Afro-American life did not mar the serious aspect that was always present. The message in his comic realism was more profound because he was skillful enough to weave it into the design of his stories without destroying any of

their entertainment value. His stories "Blades of Steel," "The City of Refuge," and "The Promised Land" were published in *The Atlantic Monthly.* "*High Yaller*" appeared in *The Crisis* magazine during the hey-day of that publication, and was later reprinted in the O'Brien anthology, *Best Short Stories of 1934*. Unfortunately, he died before all of his bright promise was fulfilled.

The Harlem literary renaissance was studded with many names. Those already mentioned are only a few of the most outstanding. During the period of this literary flowering among black writers, Harlem became the Mecca, the stimulating Holy City, drawing pilgrims from all over the country and from some places abroad. Talented authors, playwrights, painters, and sculptors came forth eagerly showing their wares.

Three men, W.E.B. DuBois, James Weldon Johnson, and Alain Locke, cast a guiding influence over this movement without becoming a part of the social climbing and pseudo-intellectual aspect of it. W.E.B. DuBois, by continuously challenging the old concepts and misinterpretations of Afro-American life, gave enlightened new directions to a whole generation. As editor of *The Crisis*, he introduced many new black writers and extended his helpful and disciplined hand when it was needed. Following the death of Booker T. Washington and the decline of the Booker T. Washington school of thought, he became the spiritual father of new black intelligentsia.

James Weldon Johnson moved from Florida to New York. His diversity of talent established his reputation long before the beginning of the "New Negro literary movement." Later, as a participant in and historian of the movement, he helped to appraise and preserve the best that came out of it. In his books, *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912), *The Book of American Negro Poetry* (1922), *Black Manhattan* (1930), and *Along This Way*, an autobiography (1933). James Weldon Johnson showed clearly that Negro writers have made a distinct contribution to the literature of the United States. His own creative talent made him one of the most able of these contributors.

Alain Locke is the writer who devoted the most time to the interpretation of the "New Negro literary movement" and to Afro-American literature in general. In 1923, he expanded the special Harlem issue of the magazine *Survey Graphic* (which he edited) into the anthology, *The New Negro*. This book is a milestone and a guide to Afro-American thought, literature, and art in the middle twenties. The objective of the volume "to register the transformation of the inner and outer life of the Negro in America that had so significantly taken place in the last few preceding years," was ably achieved. For many years, Mr. Locke's annual appraisal of books by and about Negroes, published in *Opportunity* magazine, was an eagerly awaited literary event.

Early in the Harlem literary renaissance period, the black ghetto became an attraction for a varied assortment of white celebrities and just plain thrill-seeking white people lost from their moorings. Some were insipid rebels, defying the mores of their upbringing by associating with Negroes on a socially equal level. Some were too rich to work, not educated enough to teach, and not holy enough to preach. Others were searching for the mythological "noble savage"—the "exotic Negro."

These professional exotics were generally college educated Negroes who had become estranged from their families and the environment of their upbringing. They talked at length about the great books within them waiting to be written. Their white sponsors continued to subsidize them while they "developed their latent talent." Of course the "great books" of these camp followers never got written and, eventually, their white sponsors realized that they were never going to write—not even a good letter. Ironically, these sophisticates made a definite contribution to the period of the "New Negro literary renaissance." In socially inclined company, they proved that a black American could behave with as much attention to the details of social protocol as the best bred and richest white person in the country. They could balance a cocktail glass with expertness. Behind their pretense of being writers they were really actors—and rather good ones. They were generally better informed

than their white sponsors and could easily participate in a discussion of the writings of Marcel Proust in one minute, and the music of Ludwig van Beethoven the next. As social parasites, they conducted themselves with a smoothness approaching an artistic accomplishment. Unknown to them, their conduct had done much to eliminate one of the major prevailing stereotypes of Afro-American life and manners.

Concurrently with the unfolding of this mildly funny comedy, the greatest productive period in Afro-American literature continued. The more serious and talented black writers were actually writing their books and getting them published.

Opportunity magazine, then edited by Charles Johnson, and *The Crisis*, edited by W.E.B. DuBois, were the major outlets for the new black writers.

Opportunity's short story contests provided a proving ground for a number of competent black writers. Among the prizewinners were Cecil Blue, John F. Matheus, Eugene Gordon, and Marita Bonner.

Writers like Walter White, Jessie Fauset, Wallace Thurman, Nells Larsen, George S. Schuyler, Sterling A. Brown, and Arna Bontemps had already made their debut and were accepted into the circle of the matured.

The stock market collapse of 1929 marked the beginning of the depression and the end of the period known as "The Negro Renaissance." The "exotic Negro," professional and otherwise, became less exotic now that a hunger look was upon his face. The numerous white sponsors and well-wishers who had begun to flock to Harlem ten years before no longer had time or money to explore and marvel over Harlem life. Many Harlem residents lived and died in Harlem during this period without once hearing of the famous literary movement that had flourished and declined within their midst. It was not a mass movement. It was a fad, partly produced in Harlem and partly imposed on Harlem. Most of the writers associated with it would have written just as well at any other time.

In the intervening years between the end of "The Negro Renaissance" and the emergence of Richard Wright, black writers of genuine talent continued to produce books of good caliber. The lack of sponsorship and pampering had made them take serious stock of themselves and their intentions. *The Crisis*, organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and *Opportunity*, organ of the National Urban League, continued to furnish a publishing outlet for new black writers. The general magazines published stories by black writers intermittently, seemingly on a quota basis.

During this period writers like Ralph Ellison, Henry B. Jones, Marian Minus, Ted Poston, Lawrence D. Reddick, and Grace W. Thompkins published their first short stories.

In 1936 Richard Wright's first short story to receive any appreciable attention. "Big Boy Leaves Home," appeared in the anthology, *The New Caravan*. "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow: An Autobiographical Sketch" was published in *American Stuff*, anthology of the Federal Writers' Project, the next year. In 1938, when his first book, *Uncle Tom's Children*, won a $500 prize contest conducted by *Story Magazine*, his talent received national attention. With the publication of his phenomenally successful novel, *Native Son*, in 1940, a new era in Afro-American literature had begun. Here, at last, was a black writer who undeniably wrote considerably better than many of his white contemporaries. As a short story craftsman, he was the most accomplished black writer since Charles W. Chesnutt.

After the emergence of Richard Wright, the period of indulgence for Negro writers was over. Hereafter, black writers had to stand or fall by the same standards and judgments used to evaluate the work of white writers. The era of the patronized and pampered black writer had at last come to an end. The closing of this era may, in the final analysis, be the greatest contribution Richard Wright

made to the status of Negro writers and to Negro literature.

When the United States entered the Second World War, the active Negro writers, like most other writers in the country, turned their talents to some activity in relation to the war.

The first short stories of Ann Petry began to appear in *The Crisis*. *The Negro Caravan*, the best anthology of Negro literature since Alain Locke edited *The New Negro* sixteen years before, had already appeared with much new material. Chester B. Himes, a dependable writer during the depression period, managed to turn out a number of remarkable short stories while working in shipyards and war industries in California. In 1944, he received a Rosenwald Fellowship to complete his first novel, *If He Hollers Let Him Go*. In 1945, Frank Yerby won an O. Henry Memorial Award for his excellent short story, "Health Card," which had been published in *Harper's* magazine a year before.

A new crop of post-war black writers was emerging. In their stories they treated new aspects of Afro-American life or brought new insights to the old aspects. Principally, they were good storytellers, aside from any message they wanted to get across to their readers. The weepy sociological propaganda stories (so prevalent during the depression era) had had their day with the Negro writer and all others. There would still be protest stories, but the protest would now have to meet the standards of living literature.

Opportunity and *The Crisis*, once the proving ground for so many new black writers, were no longer performing that much needed service. The best of the new writers found acceptance in the general magazines. Among these are James Baldwin, Lloyd Brown, Arthur P. Davis, Owen Dodson, Lance Jeffers, John O. Killens, Robert H Lucas, Albert Murray. George E. Norford, Carl R. Offord, John H. Robinson, Jr., John Caswell Smith, Jr., and Mary E. Vroman.

With the rise of nationalism and independent states in Africa, and the rapid change of the status of the Negro in the United States, the material used by black writers and their treatment of it did, of necessity, reflect a breaking away from the old mooring.

Among black writers the period of the late 1940's was the period of Richard Wright. The period of the 1960's was the period of James Baldwin.

The now flourishing literary talent of James Baldwin had no easy birth, and he did not emerge overnight, as some of his new discoverers would have you believe. For years this talent was in incubation in the ghetto of Harlem, before he went to Europe a decade ago [1959] in an attempt to discover the United States and how he and his people relate to it. The book in which that discovery is portrayed, The Fire Ne*xt Time*, is a continuation of his search for place and definition.

Baldwin, more than any other writer of our times, has succeeded in restoring the personal essay to its place as a form of creative literature. From his narrow vantage point of personal grievance, he has opened a "window on the world." He plays the role traditionally assigned to thinkers concerned with the improvement of human conditions—that of alarmists. He calls national attention to things in the society that need to be corrected and things that need to be celebrated.

When Richard Wright died in Paris in 1960, a new generation of black writers, partly influenced by him, was beginning to explore, as Ralph Ellison said, "the full range of American Negro humanity." In the short stories and novels of such writers as Frank London Brown, William Melvin Kelly, LeRoi Jones, Paule Marshall, Rosa Guy, and Ernest J. Gaines, both a new dimension and a new direction in writing were seen. They have questioned and challenged all previous interpretations of Afro-American life. In doing this, they have created the basis for a new American literature.

The black writer and his people are now standing at the crossroads of history. This is the black writer's special vantage point, and this is what makes the task and the mission of the black writer distinctly different from that of the white writer. The black writer, concerned with creating a work

of art in a segregated society, has a double task. First: he has to explain the society to himself and create his art while opposing that society. Second: he cannot be honest with himself or his people without lending his support, at least verbally, to the making of a new society that respects the dignity of men.

The black writer must realize that his people are now entering the last phase of a transitional period between slavery and freedom: it is time for the black writer to draw upon the universal values in his people's experience, just as Sean O'Casey and Sholem Aleichem drew upon the universal values in the experiences of the Irish and the Jews. In the next phase of Afro-American writing, a literature of celebration must be created—not a celebration of oppression, but a celebration of survival in spite of it.

The New Afro-American Nationalism

By John Henrik Clarke (Fall 1961)

No people are really free until they become the instrument of their own liberation. Freedom is not a legacy that is bequeathed from one generation to another. Each generation must take and maintain its freedom with its own hands.

The February 1961, riot in the gallery of the United Nations in protest against the foul and cowardly murder of Patrice Lumumba introduced the new Afro-American Nationalism. This nationalism is only a new manifestation of old grievances with deep roots. Nationalism, and a profound interest in Africa, actually started among Afro-Americans during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Therefore, the new Afro-American nationalism is really not new.

The demonstrations in the united nations gallery interpreted the murder of Lumumba as the international lynching of a black man on the altar of colonialism and white supremacy. Suddenly, to them at least, Lumumba became Emmett Till and all of the other black victims of lynch law and the mob. The plight of the Africans still fighting to throw off the yoke of colonialism and the plight of the Afro-Americans, still waiting for a rich, strong and boastful nation to redeem the promise of freedom and citizenship became one and the same. Through their action the U.N. demonstrators announced their awareness of the fact that they were far from being free and a long flight still lay ahead of them. The short and unhappy life of Patrice Lumumba announced the same thing about Africa.

Belatedly, some American officials began to realize that the foreign policy of this country will be affected if the causes of the long brooding dissatisfaction among Afro-Americans are not dealt with effectively. Others, quick to draft unfavorable conclusions and compound misconceptions, interpreted this action as meaning there was more Afro-American interest in African affairs than in the affairs of the United States. Both interpreters seemed to have missed a vital point—the United States has never had an official policy based only the granting of complete citizenship to Afro-Americans, nor has the United States ever had an official policy based on the complete elimination of, or approving of the complete elimination, of colonialism in Africa.

Patrice Lumumba became a hero and a martyr to Afro-American nationalists because he was the symbol of the black man's humanity struggling for recognition. The life of Patrice Lumumba proved that he was a product of Belgian paternalism and misrule in the Congo. In more favorable circumstances, he might have become one of the most astute national leaders of the twentieth century. When the Congo emerged clearly in the light of modern history he was its bright star. Lumumba was a true son of Africa and was accepted as belonging to all of Africa, not just the Congo. No other personality in African history has leaped so suddenly from death to martyrdom.

This spirit was a natural choice to rekindle the flame of Afro-American nationalism.

Harlem has always been the incubator for Black Nationalism in too many organizations and too many leaders with conflicting programs. Some of these "leaders" are self-seeking money changers who have found a haven, and a bonanza in the African nationalist movement. The major nationalist groups and their programs are briefly outlined here:

Nation of Islam: A nation-wide organization, dating to 1930, led since 1933 by Elijah

Muhammad, born Elijah Poole in Georgia sixty-three years ago. Headquarters in Chicago. Temple No. 7 in New York is led by 35 year-old Minister Malcolm X. The Black Muslim movement is presently the most dynamic force for protest and change in the United States. Of all the Afro-American nationalists groups this is the one that is most feared by white people. More about them later.

Muslim Brotherhood: This group claims to be authentic Muslim and is hostile to the Nation of Islam group, whose followers are massive and growing fast. The hostility between these two groups has been overplayed by the press. Muslim Brotherhood is led by Talib Ahmed Dawud, husband of singer Dakota Staton.

United African Nationalist Movement: This group was started in 1948 by James R. Lawson, formerly an official in the Harlem Labor Union. Lawson's many enemies insist that his movement is mostly on paper. This accusation notwithstanding he continues to be one of the most active of the Harlem group of nationalists. He maintains liaison with most of the African missions at the United Nations, he says, "to exchange information, ideas and techniques and to coordinate demonstrations in the common cause."

The Universal African Nationalist Movement: This organization has been led by Benjamin Gibbons for over twenty years. This is one of the numerous groups that was formed after the breaking up of the major "Back To Africa" movement—The Universal Negro Improvement Association, after the decline of Marcus Garvey, who was the most colorful and the most effective of all African nationalists of the 20th century. This group still uses Garvey's old slogan, "African for the Africans—those at home and those abroad."

Cultural Association for Women of African Heritage: This group is important because it represents the entry of Afro-Americans from the entertainment field into the nationalist movement. Headed by a dynamic personality, singer Abby Lincoln, who participated in the demonstration at the U.N. In defense of her group, she says, "We Afro-Americans will be heard by any means you make it necessary for us to use." She is without reservations in denouncing, "crumb-crunching, cocktail-sipping Uncle Tom leadership paid by colonialist."

The African Nationalist Pioneer Movement headed by Carlos Cooks, is the most active of the splinter nationalist groups born out of the breaking up of the Garvey Movement. Other groups in this category are: The Garvey Club, United Sons and Daughters of Africa, and the First Africa Corps.

The most active of the new nationalist groups are: Liberation Committee for Africa, On Guard Committee for Freedom and the Provisional Committee For a Free Africa.

The National Memorial Book Store, operated by Lewis H. Michaux is the main gathering place for Harlem nationalists. It is called the Home of Common Sense and Proper Propaganda, Headquarters, of Black to African Movement. The backroom of the bookstore contains a collection of pictures of the great personalities in the history of Afro-Americans. The area in front of the store has been renamed "Harlem Square."

Of all the nationalist groups in the United States, the Nation of Islam, called the Black Muslims, are the most written about and the most misunderstood. The interpreters of this group have not been able to decide whether the movement is religious or political. In a recent interview with Malcolm X, he said to me : "Our religion is mainly trying to find a way for the black man to get some heaven

while he is down here on earth."

To accomplish the above-mentioned objective, the Black Muslim Movement will have to be both religious and political. It will have to be a spiritual, political and economic force.

A recent convert to the Black Muslim Movement, explaining why he joined the movement, and the basis of its appeal to an increasing number of Afro-Americans, said: "I am a man of forty years of age. I fought against people who were supposed to be this country's enemies in the Second World War, and my father fought in the First World War. I have been a patriotic citizen and I have always obeyed this country's laws. Yet, I have never been able to feel like a citizen or a man. I was a 33rd degree Mason and I have been a deacon in two different churches. I am a first class cabinetmaker and I've had my own shop for nearly ten years. In spite of all of this, white people still treated me as if I was a boy. The Muslims have taught me that I am a man—a black man—and that's something I can feel proud of."

This convert has stated the case for the Black Muslims, in capsule. The drama of this search for dignity, definition and direction is old, the cast of characters is new. To some extent the Black Muslims are a latter-day version of the Garvey Movement, with a new sounding dogma which is basically the same as Marcus Garvey's.

To the Black Muslim the American promise and the American dream have grown sour with fulfillment. They have lost faith in the United States as a democratic nation.

The Black Muslims in the United States have created what is essentially a proletarian movement. This is the largest movement of this nature to emerge among Afro-Americans since the heyday of Marcus Garvey and the collapse of his "back to Africa" dream.

In the following quote from Eric Lincoln's book, *The Black Muslims in America*, he explains why the Black Bourgeoisie "leaders" have been a complete failure with the Afro-Americans who make up the growing Black Muslim Movement.

> *"Organizations such as the NAACP and the National Urban League, for all their virtues, have not caught the imagination and adherence of the Negro masses. Their memberships tend to comprise middle and upper-class Negroes and whites, in each case the least disprivileged of their race. The Black Muslims, by contrast, are undeniably a mass movement. From their present base of more than 100,000 members, they are reaching for the support of the entire Negro lower class—and ultimately, of all other black Americans."*

With this program it can be clearly seen that the Black Muslims have flung down a challenge to all other existing Afro-American organizations. How this challenge is answered will determine the future of the people of African descent in the Western World.

Religious convictions involved

The explainers of the new Afro-American Nationalism have given most of their attention to the Black Nationalist splinter groups, heirs to the once powerful Garvey movement, and the Black Muslims. In taking this all too narrow approach, they have neglected another vital manifestation of the new Afro-American Nationalism. Afro-Americans are turning away from both Christianity and Islam. There is a growing tendency to study and adhere to religions and customs that originated and developed in Africa.

The most notable trend in this direction can be observed in the rise of Voodoo cults in Harlem and other large Afro-American communities. The name of the cult, like the cult itself is of West African origin. In Africa these cults were once predominant among the Fon people of Dahomey and the

Yoruba people of Western Nigeria. This African religion, now being reintroduced is not new to the people of African descent in the Western world. In Janheim Jahn's book *Muntu, The New African Culture*, he gives the following report of the early manifestations of Voodoo in the slaves who were brought to England, the West Indies and the United States:

> The reason why it (Voodoo) was the religious conception of Dahomey in particular that came to prevail in Haiti is apparent from a London report of 1789 which tells us that ten to twelve thousand slaves were exported yearly from the Kingdom of Dahomey. The English exported only seven to eight hundred of these, the Portuguese about three thousand and the French the remainder. In other words more than six to eight thousand a year, were shipped to the French Antilles, above all to Saint-Dominique, as the principal French colony of Haiti was then called.

Moreau de Saint-Mery, a relative of the Empress Josephine, wrote several volumes on the plantation life of the transplanted African in the West Indies. He describes, among other things a Voodoo ceremony.

> "According to the Arada Negroes Voodoo means a great supernatural being, a snake that knows the past and the present and, through the medium of the high priestess foretells the future. These two are called King and Queen, Master and Mistress or Papa and Mama." "The meeting takes place," he says, "only secretly and at night, far from profane eyes. The initiated put on sandals and wrap themselves in red clothes. … Sacrificial gifts are brought, the King and Queen receive them. The receipts are used to meet the expenses of the community and assist needy members. Then follows an oath similar to that at the opening of the meeting and 'As fearful as the first,' an oath of secrecy and obedience."

In a recent announcement to his Afro-American brothers, Ofuntola Oserjeman, the self-proclaimed Priest of the Yoruba Temple of New Oyo (Harlem's new African name) called for a return not only to African religions, but to an African way of life in its entirety. In his message he says:

> *We must Africanize everything! Our names, our hats, our clothes, our clubs, our churches, our religion, our schools, home furnishings, business, holidays, games, arts, social functions, political parties, our manners and customs, etc., etc., etc.*
>
> *Begin with yourself today. You have nothing to lose or fear. It is as natural for persons of African descent to take and maintain the customs, dress and traditions of their motherland, as it is natural for persons of European descent to continue European customs and traditions in America. It is distinctly unnatural and degrading, even ridiculous, for persons of African descent to have and keep European customs and habits forced upon them during their enslavement. Our liberation must be complete. Every technique of slavery must be wiped out. We must begin with our so-called leaders. Support Africanization! Note to men: adopt the African look: cut the brim off your hats, you will look like you should, and less like an imitation. Change!*

And thus the Afro-Americans' search for identity continues. The search is both heroic and pathetic. In growing numbers Afro-Americans are turning back to and African religions and ways of life at a time when some Africans are beginning to turn away from them. The new African-minded Afro-Americans are accepting old African religions and ways of life, literally, at a time when the Africans are accepting these religions and ways of life, selectively and with some reservations.

All African life is now going through a period of transition and modernization. An attempt is being made to preserve the best of old African ways of life. In increasing numbers, Africans with a western education and a western oriented religion, principally Christianity, are beginning to feel

spiritually unfulfilled. Now, with new insight, Africans are looking back and reevaluating the worth of old African ways of life, while concurrently looking forward to the building of modern and industrialized African states. Therefore, the direction and predicament of the African and the Afro-American is basically the same—being both progressive and regressive. Distance, years of separation and alien ways of life imposed by rulers not of their choosing, have created misunderstanding and a lack of coordination of effort between these two African people. This fact notwithstanding, the Africans and the Afro-Americans are traveling different roads to the same ultimate goal—the realization and projection of themselves as full-fledged and dignified human beings. The notion that Europe and North America represents the only accomplishment that can be called a civilization is no longer accepted and believed. The European concept of the Africans and the North American concept of the Afro-American is now being both questioned and challenged.

Among the Afro-Americans, particularly, very often the question is awkward and the challenge is ill-prepared. This is due, in part, to the fact that the new nationalist movements among Afro-Americans are led, mainly, by aroused proletarians, unlike the nationalist movements in Africa, whose leadership consist of a more articulate educated elite. The new Afro-American nationalism was born, and is growing without the encouragement of the so-called "Negro leadership class."

The new Afro-American nationalists, with all their awkwardness and inadequacy, have learned a lesson and discovered a great truth that still eludes the "Negro leadership class" referred to here. They have learned the value of history and culture as an instrument in stimulating the spiritual rebirth of a people.

The cultural heritage of a people is directly related to their history. There can be no true understanding of the people of African origin in the United States until there is a better understanding, and more respect for, their African background. The culture of a people is the fuel that feeds the fires of their ambition, pride and self-esteem. There can be no meaningful advancement without this stimulation. A people must take pride in their history and love their own memories in order to fulfill themselves. This is the lesson, I believe, the new Afro-American nationalists are trying to learn and teach.

I think I can bring the picture clearer into focus by paraphrasing a statement made by Saunders Redding at the first "American Negro Writers Conference," in March 1959.

> A people's ultimate purpose is to use their gifts to develop their awareness of themselves in order to become a better instrument for living together with other people. This sense of identity is the root by which all honest creative effort is fed. A people's relation to their culture is the same as the relation of a child to its mother's breast.

In spite of the charlatans and money changers who occasionally invade the camps of the new Afro-American nationalists, their influence continues to spread. Their numerous and conflicting programs leave much to be desired. There is a hunger among Afro-Americans for a new and more dynamic leadership. This hunger often drives them from one inadequate leader to another. The smug middle class leadership of organization like the NAACP and the National Urban League have missed (or misjudged) the new tempo of restlessness among the Afro-American newly alerted masses. They still seem to think of this group as being uneducated, unwashed and unorganized—worthy of being led but not worthy of being touched or listened to. The American dream and the American promise of full citizenship, with dignity, after being so long delayed, is now being discarded as a hope and an objective by large numbers of Afro-Americans. Africa has become the magic word and the new hope. There is now, in Harlem, an African oriented political party. This party—called the Alajo Party—recently sent out the following summons to action to its present and potential followers.

"UNITY, ACTION, POWER"

> *The re-Africanization of the black people of America has begun. Like yeast in a hot oven we are suddenly beginning to rise. Each person must do his part.*
>
> *In traditional Africa every person of 14 years of age must join a society to learn the culture, history, and political aims of his nation and his people. For 100 years blacks in America have grown old with little or no knowledge of themselves or political aims to which they should aspire. Now, for the first time the* ALAJO PARTY *has a school for the training of our people and their leaders.*
>
> *All leaders must be educated by their own people in their own aims. Our present leaders are not. That is why our power is wasted. The U.S. owes us millions of dollars in indemnity for slavery. We must have strong leadership to collect this money which is due to each family. You and your friends should join the* ALAJO PARTY *now to petition the U.S. to pay its debt to us.*

Admittedly, the chances of collecting this vast indemnity are thin indeed. That is not the important point here. The fact that this issue has been placed on the agenda of things desired by the Afro-Americans and a demand has been made for its consideration represents a new and extreme approach to the plight of the people of African origin in the western world. This approach also represents a concession. There is now a growing number of Afro-Americans who have given up all hopes of ever being completely integrated American citizens.

The Priest Rev. Ofuntola Oserjeman Adefunmi, of the Yoruba Temple, Ogboni (Keeper of Ancestral Customs) is also chief and founder of the Alajo Party. According to his literature:

> *By his initiation into the Priesthood of the Orisha-Vudu-Religion, he is the first of the blacks of America to return wholeheartedly to the culture and traditions of Africa. He is bound therefore to uphold and establish the national customs of his Ancestors. He and the members of his party, and all who join them are adding new glory to the pageantry of West African civilization, as they sacrifice, not for barren integration or separation but to restore to Africans, born in America, the foundations of their cultural genius.*

The position of Priest Rev. Adefunmi (like it or not) is clear—much clearer than the position of the moderate Black Bourgeoisie "leaders," who are not leading. The Afro-American today represents a revolutionary force in the United States. Again, I think I should emphasize, the leadership of this force is basically proletarian. By proletarian I do not mean communist. The new Afro-American nationalists, like the African nationalists, are gravitating toward a form of African Socialism. This new African Socialism will be nothing more than a rehash and an updating of the old communal Socialism that existed in Africa for more than a thousand years before the European Karl Marx was born. An increasing number of thinking Africans and Afro-Americans are now looking back at their history and culture, and within themselves, for the spiritual and philosophical stimulus for their survival and direction.

On this matter the position of the new Afro-American nationalists is extreme, and presently there is no apparent middle ground. The Yoruba Temple nationalists represent a more articulate manifestation of this extreme position. Unlike most of the other Afro-American nationalists, they have created a sizeable body of literature explaining their point of view.

"The Yoruba Temple," the Priest Rev. Adefunmi explains, "is the advance guard for the change now being felt in the minds of every awaking Afro-American. It is farther ahead in its program for the future of the Afro-American than any society of its kind. In fact it is the only society of its kind in

America. It is the only society which is the same in West Africa, Cuba, Haiti, Trinidad and Brazil, because it is African through and through.

"The soul of the black is his religion. The Yoruba Temple does not believe we can ever fully succeed by trying to act and be like Europeans (Americans). This is ridiculous when you stop to think what foolishness this is. There is only one thing we can be—Africans, because that is what we were meant to be—face it!"

Well! Let's brace ourselves and face it. So far as the greater number of Afro-American nationalists are concerned, the showdown is now. The issue is clearly joined. In spite of the diversity and contradictions in words and objectives, all of the Afro-American nationalists basically are fighting for the same thing. They feel that the Afro-American constitutes what is tantamount to an exploited colony within a sovereign nation. Their fight is for national, and personal liberation. No people are really free until they become the instrument of their own liberation. Freedom is not legacy that is bequeathed from one generation to another. Each generation must take and maintain its freedom with its own hands. In this regard the Afro-American nationalists have extended the basis of their fight to include the reclaiming of their African heritage. In identifying their fight for national liberation with the new resurgence of Pan-Africanism (actually an Afro-American creation) the Afro-American not only as an instrument for the unification of Africa, but as a broader means for the unification of all people of African descent the world over. In taking this historical step they have turned away from a leadership that was begging and pleading to a more dynamic leadership that is insisting and demanding.

The Passing of Patrice Lumumba

BY John Henrik Clarke (1961)

(John Henrik Clarke was United Nations Correspondent on African Affairs, World Mutual Exchange, and International News Features.)

The life of Patrice Lumumba proved that he was a product of the best and worst of Belgian colonial rule. In more favorable circumstances, he might have become one of the most astute national leaders of the twentieth century. He was cut down long before he had time to develop into the more stable leader that he was obviously capable of being. When the Congo emerged clearly in the light of modern history he was its bright star.

His hero was Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, and the model for his state was Ghana. "In a young state," he had said, paraphrasing a similar statement made by Dr. Nkrumah, "you must have strong and visible powers."

At the beginning of his political career he was pro-Western in his outlook. "Mistakes have been made in Africa in the past, but we are ready to work with the powers which have been in Africa to create a powerful new bloc," he said at the beginning of 1960. "If this effort fails, it will be through the fault of the West."

As a reformer he was somewhat of a republican in his approach. "Our need is to democratize all our institutions," he had said on another occasion. "We must separate the Church from the State. We must take away all power from the traditional chiefs and remove all privileges. We must adapt socialism to African realities. Amelioration of the conditions of life is the only true meaning independence can have."

His resentment of Belgian authority was unyielding in most cases. Mostly because he believed that paternalism was at the base of this authority. This by-product of colonialism never failed to stir a rage within him. On the other hand, his reaction to the Belgian Missionary attempt to enforce Christianity on the Congo was one of indifference. He had been subjected to both Catholic and Protestant mission influence, without showing any particular affection for either. His parents were devout Catholics. Being neither an atheist nor anti-Christian, he yet considered submission to a religion to be a curb to his ambitions. Rebellion was more rewarding and less wounding to his pride. During his long and lonely rise from obscurity to the Congo's first Prime Minister, he taught himself never to completely trust power in the hands of others. This attitude is reflected in the suspicion that developed between him and the UN Forces in the Congo.

His conflicts with the other Congo politicians was due mainly to his unyielding belief in the unitary state, and partly to his lack of experience in explaining, organizing and administering such a state. Nevertheless, he was the only Congolese leader with anything like a national following; a point too often overlooked. His greatest achievement in the early difficult months of Congo independence was in maintaining, with only a few defections, the solidarity of his widely disparate coalition government.

Lumumba belonged to the company of Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere in Tanganyika, Tom Mboya in Kenya, and Sékou Touré. These leaders believe that the only way to build an effective

modern state free from the shackles of narrow tribal loyalties is to create a single, strong central government. This firm stand joined the issues in the Congo and created both the supporters and the opposition to Lumumba.

He argued his case at the Round Table Conference that gave the Congo its independence in 1960. He laid it before the electorate in June 1960, and won an indecisive victory. Finally he tried to force it on his Federalist opponents when he took control of the first independent government. Most of Lumumba's critics considered this to be his greatest error. He tried to cast the Congo into the tight mould of Ghana, rather than into the larger, more accommodating mould of Nigeria. The argument is interesting though useless now.

Patrice Lumumba's body now lies smoldering in some unmarked and inglorious Congo grave…both his truth and spirit go marching on, much to the discomfort of his murderers.

No other personality in African history has leaped so suddenly from death to martyrdom. In death he might have already made a greater contribution to the liberation and understanding of Africa than he could have make had he lived. In his short lifetime the stamp of his personality was pressed firmly into the African continent. He was purely an African of the mid-twentieth century. No other place and no other set of circumstances could have charged his life and caused his death in the same unique and tragic way. In death, he cast forth a spirit that will roam the African land for many years to come.

For a long time the Congo appeared to be a peaceful island untouched by African anti-colonialism. In the twelve brief years between 1946 and 1958, the Belgians began to lose what had appeared to be an impregnable position. Some important events occurred in Africa and the rest of the world, and broke up the trinity in Belgium's alleged "perfect colony." A change of political direction in Brussels and mounting nationalist pressure coming from within Africa helped to end the illusion that all was well and would stay well in the Congo. At last the Belgians began to have some second thoughts about their policy in the Congo. The missionary-trained evolved, the supposedly emancipated, Westernized middle class had found their voices.

Certain fundamental problems formed the core of the colonial dilemma in Africa; although Belgian colonists chose to ignore this fact. The same problems existed in the Congo as elsewhere in Africa. Freedom, self-determination, hatred of racial discrimination, and white settlement without assimilation made the Congo people feel unwanted in their own country, except as servants for white people.

It was within this order of ideas that the Belgian Socialist Party attempted to change the trend of Belgium's colonial policy and devise a more humane approach to the problems of the Congo people. The accelerated economic development in the Congo during the war and after the war had changed the structure of the Congolese community. The black population of Leopoldville rose from 46,900 to 191,000 between 1940 and 1950. By 1955, the black population of Leopoldville had reached some 300,000. The mass exodus of Congolese from rural areas and their concentration in urban centers created new problems. The detribalized workers did not return to their respective villages when the city no longer afforded them employment.

It was incumbent upon the Belgium Socialist Party to define its position in relation to the Congo. As far as basic premises were concerned, the party did recognize "the primacy of native interests; and the aim of its activity will be to prepare the indigenous population gradually to take charge of its own political, economic, and social affairs, within the framework of a democratic society." Further, the Party expressed its "uncompromising opposition to any kind of racial discrimination" and advised a raise in the standard of living of the people of the Congo. Only those whites who are prepared to work for the realization of these aims and who constitute the administrative personnel of the indigenous population are to enjoy the support of the government. This preparation for self-

government presupposes the political organization of the Congo, i.e., the initiation of the native into citizenship. With this proposal the Belgian Socialist Party admitted that the Congolese were not accepted as citizens in their own country. This fact had been the cause of a broadening dissatisfaction among the Congolese since the early part of the twentieth century. With the relaxing of political restrictions this dissatisfaction began to manifest itself in a form of embryo nationalism. The future Congolese leaders had already begun to gather their first followers. All of the early political parties in the Congo were the outgrowth of regional and tribal associations. Patrice Lumumba was the only Congolese leader who, from the very beginning of his career, attempted to build a Congo-wide political organization.

During his short-lived career Patrice Lumumba was the first popularly elected Congolese Government Prime Minister. Like a few men before him, he became a near-legend in his own lifetime. The influence of this legend extended to the young militant nationalists far beyond the borders of the Congo, and it is still spreading.

Of all the leaders who suffered imprisonment at the hands of the Belgians before 1960, Lumumba had the largest number of followers among the Congolese masses, mainly because he had more of the qualities of character with which they liked to identify. As a speaker he was equally effective in French, Ki-Swahili or Lingola. The devotion of the rank and file of his party. *Movement National Congolais* (MNC) to Patrice Lumumba was not a unique phenomenon. What is more significant is the fact that he was able to attract the strongly expressed loyalties of a tribally-heterogeneous body of the Congolese. This made him the only national political leader. While other politicians tended to take advantage of their respective associations as the path to power, Lumumba took the broader and more nationalistic approach and involved himself in other movements only indirectly related to politics.

In 1951, he joined the *Association des Evolves de Stanleyville*, one of the most active and numerically important of all the clubs in Orientale Province. He was in the same year appointed Secretary-General of the *Association des Postiers de la Province Orientale*—a professional organization consisting mostly of postal workers. Two years later he became Vice-Chairman of an Alumni Association consisting of former mission students. In 1956 he founded the *Amicle Liberale de Stanleyville.*

Patrice Lumumba is a member of the Beteteta tribe, a Mongo subgroup. He was born on July 2, 1925, in Katako-Kombe in the Sunkuru district of the Kasai Province. In growing up he only received a primary education. Very early in life he learned to push himself beyond the formal limits of his education. He made frequent contributions to local newspapers such as *Stanleyvillois* and the more widely read publications, *Vois du Conlais and Croix du Congo*. Unlike the vast majority of Congolese writers of the period who placed major emphasis on the cultural heritage of their own tribes, Lumumba's early writings emphasized—within the limits of Belgian official restrictions—problems of racial, social, and economic discrimination.

On July 1, 1956, the career of Patrice Lumumba was temporarily interrupted when he was arrested on the charge of embezzling 126,000 franc ($2,200) from the post office funds. He was sentenced to serve a two-year prison term. On June13, 1957, the sentence was commuted on appeal to eighteen months, and finally to 12 months after the Wolves of Stanleyville reimbursed the sum in question. Subsequently, Lumumba left Stanleyville and found employment in Leopoldville as the sale director of the Bracongo (polar beer) Brewery.

Leopoldville became a good vantage point for Lumumba's Congo-wide activities. He had now entered into the crucial phase of his political career. In 1958, while combining the functions of vice-chairman of a liberal friendship society, the *Circle Liberal d'Etudes et d'Agreement*, with those of the president of the *Association dis Batelela*, of Leopoldville, he joined a Christian Democratic Study Group, the *Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Sociales*, created in 1955 by the Secretary

General of the *Jeunesses Ouvieres Christiennes*, Jacques Meert. Among the more prominent members of this organization were Joseph Ileo (now [early sixties] Prime Minister in the Kasavubu government) and Joseph Ngalula.

Joseph Ileo was editor-in-chief of the bi-monthly *Conscience Africaine*. He had already acquired a wide reputation among Congolese when he decided, in July of 1956, to publish a nationalist inspired manifesto which contained a daring 30-year plan of emancipation for the Congo.

Both Ileo and Ngalyla were anxious to broaden the basis of the Movement National Congolais, a moderate nationalist organization created in 1956. Patrice Lumumba, then regarded as one of the eminent spokesmen of liberal ideas, joined the MNC.

Once affiliated with this and other groups, Lumumba readily asserted himself and became the dominant figure. Shortly after proclaiming himself chairman of MNC's Central Committee, he formally announced on October 10, 1058, the foundation of a "national movement" dedicated to the goal of "national liberation." His action at this moment was prompted by two important developments affecting the Congo. One was the forthcoming visit of a parliamentary committee appointed by the former Minister of the Congo, Mr. Patillon, for the purpose of "conducting an inquiry concerning the administrative and political evolution of the country." Another was the creation of a *Movement Pour le Progres National Congolais* in late November, 1958, by the Congolese delegates to the Brussels Exposition. Lumumba moved in and around these groups and quickly projected himself into the role of a dynamic and radical nationalist leader.

A high point in his political development came in 1958, when he was permitted to attend the Pan African Conference in Accra, Ghana. Here he became a member of the Permanent Directing Committee. Patrice Lumumba had now projected himself upon a political stage of international importance. In addition to whatever personal counsel he might have received from Ghana's Prime Minister, Nkrumah, there is little doubt that the Accra Conference was an important factor in shaping Lumumba's long-range objectives and further sensitizing him to the philosophy of Pan-Africanism.

When he returned home, the emancipation of the Congo from Belgium's tutelage assumed first priority among his activities. In March, 1959, when Belgium had already announced its intention to lead the Congo "without fatal procrastination and without undue haste" toward self-government, Lumumba went to Brussels where he delivered several lectures under the auspices of *Présence Congolese*, a Belgian organization dedicated to the promotion of African culture. On this occasion, Lumumba indiscreetly turned on his host and sponsors and deplored the "bastardization and destruction of Negro-African art," and "the depersonalization of Africa." He reaffirmed his Party's determination to put an end to the "camouflaged slavery of Belgian colonization" and elect an independent government in 1961. With this act of boldness, Patrice Lumumba had set the stage for most of his future troubles and probably his future death.

After the target-date for independence had been approved by the *Movement National Congolais*, new troubles began for Lumumba and his supporters. Now that the contestants for power were close to their goal the competition between them became fiercer. Delegates to the Luluabourg Congress, in April 1959, ran against the demands of other nationalist groups anxious to put themselves forward as the standard-bearers of independence. Several of Lumumba's earlier supporters withdrew from the MNC and formed their own parties. With the date for Congo independence practically rushing upon him, Lumumba set out to rebuild the *Movement National Congolais*. He involved himself in every phase of his party's activists, organizing local sections of the MNC and recruiting new supporters.

On November 1, 1959, a few days after his wing of the MNC held its congress in Stanleyville, Lumumba was arrested for the second time and charged with having made seditious statements. He

was sentenced to six months in jail. After serving nearly three months of his sentence he was released when a delegation of officials from the MNC notified the Belgian government that they would not participate in the Brussels Roundtable Conference unless Lumumba was set free. Soon after his release, Lumumba's party was victorious in the December elections. As expected, Stanleyville proved to be the main Lumumba stronghold in the Congo. In Stanleyville his party won ninety per cent of the votes.

Lumumba's status and influence continued to rise. As a representative of Orientale Province, he was appointed to the General Executive College, an interim executive body established after the Brussels Roundtable Conference. Trouble continued to brew within the ranks of his party. Victor Nendaka, vice-chairman of the MNC, broke with Lumumba for what he termed the "extreme left wing tendencies" of the party leader. In 1960, he organized his own party. Once more Lumumba reshuffled the party personnel and strengthened his position. The MNC emerged from the next electoral struggle as the strongest in the House of Representatives, with 34 out of 137 seats. In the Provincial Assembly of Orientale, Lumumba's party held 58 out of 70 seats. In the assemblies of Kivu and Kasai Provinces, 17 out of 25 seats were secured.

Lumumba employed several techniques to mobilize his support and activate the rural masses. First there was the careful selection of party officials and propagandists at the Lodja Congress, held March 9–12, 1960. These delegates of the Bakutshu and Batetela tribes agreed that they would entrust the defense of their interests to the political party which held a dominant position in the region. Namely, that was Lumumba's party, the MNC. The party's success among the Bakutshu and Batetela tribal associations was mainly due to Lumumba's tribal origin and the anti-Belgian orientation acquired by these tribes in resisting the penetration of Western rule.

Lumumba and the MNC improved their techniques of building up functional organizations, in order to unify the political actions of the MNC. These organizational networks embraced a variety of interest groups and cut across tribal lines. Through a tactical alliance with minor parties, Lumumba tried to transform the MNC into an integrating structure where both sectional and national interests would be represented. This program received its formal sanction at the extraordinary congress of the MNC, held in Luluabourg, April 3–4, 1960. This was a major landmark in the history of Lumumba's party. Once more he had proven to be the most able of all Congolese leaders.

As the Congo crossed the threshold of independence, new troubles developed within the ranks of the MNC. Communication between Lumumba and some of the leaders of the party broke down. The Congo's most vital instrument of stability, the *Force Publique*, collapsed. The number and complexities of the issues now confronting Lumumba absorbed most of the time he formerly devoted to party activities. Now that the pomp and ceremony of the Belgian's handing over power to elected Congolese leaders was over, one struggle for Lumumba was over, but a new and bitter one was beginning.

His devotion to the idea of a united Congo was now more firm. He was one of the few Congolese politicians who had any conception of the Congo as a strong centralized state. Tshombe thought first of carving himself out a state in Katanga where he could be the boss, with Belgian help. Kasavubu cherished the dream of restoring the ancient empire of Bakongo. Other Congolese politicians were still involved in their tribal ideals and hostilities.

Lumumba was neither kind nor cautious toward the Belgians during the independence ceremony. This might have been one of his greatest mistakes. He announced too many of his future plans; which included not only the uniting of the Congo by giving assistance to the nations around him (especially Angola) who were still under European rule. Whoever made the decision to kill Lumumba probably made it this very day. He had crossed the path of the unseen power

manipulators who wanted to control the Congo economically even if they were willing to let Lumumba control it politically. Instead of saying, "Thanks very much for our independence. We appreciate [what] all you Belgians have done for our country," Lumumba said in effect, "It's about time, too! And it's a pity that in a half-century you didn't see fit to build more hospitals and schools. You could have made much better use of your time."

Lastly, when the *Force Publique* revolted in the first days of July, Lumumba tried earnestly to be equal to this and other emergencies exploding around him. He faced the risks of his high position with real courage. Frantically, he moved over his large country trying to restore order. Several times he escaped death by inches. Once he was saved by a Ghanaian officer. Once his car was stoned by a mob. This did not keep him from trying to restore order to his troubled country. In the middle of July when the structure of order in his country was deteriorating into chaos, Lumumba flew off for a grandiose tour of the United States, Canada, North, and West Africa. This was another one of his unfortunate mistakes. In his absence confusion became worse.

In his dealings with the United Nations he never knew exactly what he wanted; showing no steady policy toward the UN, he confused both his friends and enemies who grew impatient with his erratic behavior. When the disintegration within his country reached dangerous proportions he asked for military from the United Nations. Within about three days the UN troops were on the spot. When Lumumba found that the UN troops could not be used as a private army to put down his political opponents he became disenchanted with their presence in his country.

By now Lumumba had quarreled with nearly every leading politician in the Congo. His continued erratic action shook the confidence of the outside world and of many of the African leaders who had wished him well and hoped that he could restore order rapidly. A power struggle had erupted in the Congo. Concurrent with this struggle Belgians were working behind the scenes to reconquer the Congo economically; their Congolese puppets, bought and paid for in advance, were deeply engrossed in their self-seeking venture.

In the last weeks of his life, when he was being dragged around with a rope around his neck, while his captors yanked up his head for the benefit of newsreel cameras, he still carried himself with great dignity as well as courage. When he was beaten up on the plane which carried him to be handed over to his arch enemy, Tshombe, he did not cry out nor plead for mercy. When Tshombe's troops beat him again, in the Elizabethville airport, he asked no one for help or pity. He was carried off by Tshombe's troops and their Belgian officers on a journey from which he was certain never to return alive. Lumumba's conduct in the midst of these scenes will always stand to his credit in history. These traits of independence and courage in his personality went into the making of his martyrdom—a strange and dangerous martyrdom that makes Lumumba a more effective Africa nationalist in death than he was in life.

Some of the people who are now most vocal in their praise of the dead Lumumba include many who in the past criticized some of his actions and speeches most savagely while he was still alive. Patrice Lumumba was pulled from power mostly by his own people, who were being manipulated by forces of change and power alien to their understanding.

In the killing of Lumumba, white neo-colonialists and their black African puppets frustrated the southward spread of independence movements. Lumumba had pledged to give assistance to the African nations to the east and the south of the Congo who are still struggling to attain independence, particularly Angola. Lumumba was a true son of Africa, and in his short unhappy lifetime he was accepted as belonging to all of Africa, not just the Congo.

The important point in the Lumumba story, briefly related, is this: He proved that legitimacy of a postcolonial regime in Africa, relates mainly to its legal mandate; but even more, legitimacy relates to the regime's credentials as a representative of a genuine nationalism fighting against the intrigues

of new-colonialism. This is why Lumumba was and is still being extolled this "best son of Africa," this "Lincoln of the Congo," this "Black Messiah," whose struggle was made noble by his unswerving demand for centralism against all forms of Balkanization and rendered heroic by his unyielding resistance to the forces of neo-colonialism which finally killed his body, but not his spirit. This man who now emerges as a strange combination of statesman, sage, and martyr, wrote his name on the scroll of African history during his short and unhappy lifetime.

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grouping. Furthermore, it represents an attempt to mute the long-standing internal differences between the Lovestone and Reuther sproaches to international trade union activities. The success of this attempt can be attributed at least in part, to the change in tactics dictated by the particular character of the African situation. Though remnants of the Lovestone strategy persist in the AALC, there are indications that Brown is seeking different ways of operation on the African continent. Part of the difficulty in assessing AALC is due to Brown's inordinate concern with secrecy; very few public details have ever emerged about his operations anywhere and Africa is no exception. There is, however, reason to believe that the phase of AALC's program oriented to constructing local institutions concerned with transmitting technical skills is a useful one, especially considering the delicate situation of Africa's trade unions.

On the other hand, there remain several aspects of the AALC approach which could serve to limit its efectiveness in spreading and strengthening unionism more broadly on the continent. Many of the concepts of free trade unionism which are utilized as criteria to evaluate continuing assistance are totally unrealistic; for swift economic development in fact requires more collaboration between unions and government than American labor leaders would like to countenance. Moreover, gearing projects to unions with unimpeachable anti-Communist records serves to attenuate the potential impact of such projects; for any external approach to Africa, if it is to be successful, must minimize political expediency. Equipped with a number of specialists and with Irving Brown's broad range of contacts on the continent, the AALC possesses significant opportunities to develop successful programs if its perceptions of reality are not veiled by archaic ideological positions.

The American Negro's Impact

By Robert S. Browne and John Henrik Clarke

Robert Browne is a member of the Economics Dept. Fairleigh-Dickenson University. John Clarke is Associate Editor of **Freedomways**.

With something in excess of 10% of its population having its ancestral roots in Africa, is it possible for America to formulate and execute its African policy without some regard for the wishes of this sizeable black minority of her citizens? Despite the fact that ties between the displaced African community resident in America and its motherland have never been entirely severed, until recent years these ties have for the most part been scanty, unorganized, primarily sentimental and cultural rather than economic or political, and have in any case involved only a minute fraction of either the displaced or the homeland population. Indeed, the gradual decay in lines of communication between the two groups after the slave trade was ended, and perhaps even more so after the subjection of most of Africa to European colonial domination, led to virtual isolation of the two groups from one another. With encouragement by the mores of the dominant culture, an ever-widening gap in understanding and sympathy gradually developed between Africans and American blacks. During the past decade, however this gap has begun to close itself.

EARLY EXCEPTIONS

There were rare exceptions to the pattern of mutual isolation, of course, and the renowned American Negro scholar, Dr. W. E. B. Dubois, comes to mind as the foremost exponent of the importance of the retention and expansion of communications between black Americans and Africans, as well as amongst the fractionated Africans themselves. Indeed, to his concept of Pan-Africanism is due much of the impetus for the African independence movements which ultimately erased the colonial system from much of Africa. The back-to-Africa philosophy of Marcus Garvey, which attracted wide support among American Negroes in the mid-twenties, probably represents the zenith of American Negro interest in Africa prior to the present decade. In the latter 30's Paul Robeson and his wife, through their African travels, writings, and tireless educational efforts, succeeded in bringing to a limited number of middle class Negroes an awareness that Africa was inhabited by dignified and intelligent human beings, many of whom were looking toward their black brothers in America for aid in breaking them free from colonial subjection. Robeson's Council on African Affairs was, at that time, the lone U.S. voice being raised on behalf of the political and economic integrity of the black Africans. There was, however, little of substance that the black American could offer to his African counterpart, for the Negro in America was himself still virtually without power, organization, or economic resources

Although the American Negro made no significant contribution in an organized way toward the winning of independence for the African nations, he did provide the movement with considerable spiritual support. Kwame Nkrumah, a leading architect of African independence and himself a product of a Negro college in America, made reference to the role of the American Negro in a speech to the All-African People's Conference in 1958. He said; "Many of them have made no small contribution to the cause of African freedom . . . Long before many of us were even conscious of our own degradation, these men fought for Afri-

can national and racial equality. Long may the links between African and peoples of African descent continue to hold us together in fraternity."

POST WORLD WAR II

From the Negro press, which was particularly vocal in this regard, and from the growing numbers of African-American Negro contacts which developed with the influx of larger numbers of African students in the U.S. following World War II, an awareness of Africa's political and social evolvement became a part of the active consciousness of an expanding segment of the black intelligentsia. As the parallels between the restrictive measures imposed upon Africans in their homelands and the legal and extra-legal discrimination practiced against Negroes here in the U.S. become better understood, the feeling spread that the two struggles were inextricably tied together, and during the mid-fifties the Negro's indifference toward the African began rather swiftly to transform itself into sympathetic concern. With the coming into independence of much of black Africa commencing in 1957, this concern became mixed with admiration as a procession of black, eloquent statesmen began to be received at the United Nations and the White House with full diplomatic honors. For the middle-class Negro it became fashionable to boast of some identification with Africa and such attitudes were institutionalized through groups such as the American Society for African Culture, an artistic and literary association of black intellectuals which devotes itself to the exchanging of ideas and artistic endeavors between continental and New World Africans.

The growing pressures on post-war America to afford her Negro citizens a greater measure of participation and visibility in the nation's affairs had led to the unofficial designation of the Liberian ministership (later raised to the rank of Ambassador) as a "Negro" position, and as early as the later Truman era it had become rather standard policy to include a Negro in the U.S.' annual delegation to the United Nations. Quite naturally, these black delegates had unfailingly been representatives of the Negro upper class and were wedded in varying degrees to the administration in power. Despite this, however, these black diplomats had, on more than one occasion, resisted America's timid policy with respect to African freedom, though they found themselves in the uncomfortable position of being asked to serve as spokesmen for U.S. policy positions which were mere apologias for the colonial powers and which were contrary to the best interests of all black people. Thus, criticism and counsel by Negro leadership with regard to U.S. policy in Africa did have a bearing in Washington but it is unclear to what extent it had an impact because the name of Africa was not being heard in the Negro's increasingly strident demand for redress of grievances.

GROWING MILITANCY

Black American grass-roots identification with African problems burst upon the international scene during the first Congo crisis when a group of black nationalists created a disturbance in the galleries of the United Nations in protest against alleged UN connivence in the murder of Patrice Lumumba. This unprecedented public demonstration of American Negro concern with the African political scene symbolized the entry of a new factor in Washington's political calculations vis-a-vis Africa and revealed that the treatment of Africa was indeed being carefully observed by some elements in the black community, elements which were prepared to speak their minds unhampered by middle class inhibitions and hypocrisy. The principal effect which the UN demonstration had was probably felt, not in Washington, but rather in the black ghettos, where the mystique of Africa was slowly beginning to take a hold, in alliance with the developing black nationalism and self-pride which the civil rights movement had aroused.

This identification with African political affairs amongst the black masses perhaps reached a zenith with the visit to Africa of Malcolm X and his effort to enlist the suport fo the Organization of African Unity for the Negro's efforts to achieve justice in America. Malcolm's untimely assassination abruptly ended this efort and no one has yet attempted to revive it. In 1964 a team of the younger, more activist civil rights workers, mainly from the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, made a good-will trip to Africa to demonstrate their interest in that continent and their belief that the two peoples have much in common; several other prominent young activists in the civil rights movement have subsequently paid Africa a visit. Thus far these visits have not produced spectacular organizational results but they have served to further the all-important quest for clarification of the Afro-American's identity and the role for which he must prepare himself. Africa continues to be a major focus of attention amongst the brain trust of the more militant civil rights groups and this tie is likely to expand as time goes by.

The old line civil rights organizations, on the other hand, have demonstrated only nominal interest in Africa. Probably the major civil rights leader to make an extensive tour through Africa in recent times was James Farmer, former director of CORE. However, there was little follow-up to his trip nor has Farmer emerged as a vocal spokesman on African questions.

AMERICAN NEGRO LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IN AFRICA

The most notable modern effort which has been made to organize American Negroes into some sort of action group in behalf of African interests is that of the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa, a loose confederation of organizations having completely or strongly Negro memberships. The Conference is under the titular leadership of several prominent civil rights leaders: Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Whitney Young of the Urban League, Dr. Martin Luther King,

Mrs. Dorothy Height of the National Council of Negro Women, James Farmer, and A Philip Randolph. The accomplishments of the Leadership Conference have ben pretty much limited to two national conferences, in 1962 and 1964. The 1964 conference, in particular, attracted considerable attention in Washington. Excellent papers were presented dealing with the foremost African political problems in which the U.S. had a direct stake. Secretary of State Rusk addressed the conference and other high government officials, including Adlai Stevenson, attended various sessions of the conference as spectators. The conference was held at the height of one of the Congo crises and its final resolutions and statement hardly constituted a resounding endorsement of U.S. policies in Africa. Indeed, it led the **New York Times** to editorialize that civil rights leaders, and presumably Negroes generally, should confine themselves to expressing opinions on domestic matters and leave international affairs to the so-called experts.

The final document of the conference reiterated the statement which had underlain the founding spirit of the first conference.

> "The American Negro community in the United States has a special responsibility to urge a dynamic African policy upon our government. Although we have a serious civil rights problem which exhausts much of our energy we cannot separate this struggle at home from that abroad. If the United States cannot take vigorous action to help win freedom in Africa, we cannot expect to maintain the trust and friendship of the newly independent and soon-to-be independent peoples of Africa and Asia.
>
> "Further, the American Negro community has a responsibility in simple terms of historical continuity. Since the turn of the century Negro leaders and scholars have expressed the concern of Negro Americans for the elimination of colonialism and its evils. While our conference will not initiate a new interest on the part of American Negroes, it will launch a more aggressive determination to make our influence felt on the policies of our government in these critical areas of the vast continent."

The political positions adopted by the Leadership Conference were essentially those which independent African nations had been urging for some time. They include condemnation of apartheid practices in South Africa, urging of the return of Southwest Africa to the indigenous population, opposition to independence for Southern Rhodesia under a minority government, termination of U.S. assistance to and dependence on Portugal and positive efforts to achieve independence for Portugal's African colonies, and recommendations that the Congo problem be turned over to the Organization for African Unity for resolution. An aid program was requested for Africa of a magnitude comparable to that provided to Europe after World War II, and revisions in aid policies and in trade policies toward Africa were urged.

Taken altogether, the conference resolutions plotted out a dramatic new course for U.S. policy in Africa. Some of it was probably not practiable, at least in 1964: other portions, however, if heeded would probably have avoided or minimized some of the conflict and instability which characterizes much of Africa today. Unfortunately, there was no significant follow-through on these recommendations beyond a proforma meeting with President Kennedy, and the leadership Conference has continud to exist primarily as a phantom organization.

IMPACT SLIGHT

The extent of the American Negro's direct impact on U.S. policy in Africa thus does not appear to have been noticeable. Certainly it has fallen far short of its potential, a fact which may be must easily attributable to the recency of the Negro's emergence from total political and economic ineffectiveness. The American dream, focusing on the melting pot ideal which for the Negro has been interpreted as full integration into the white society, is a further obstacle to Negro-African identification. So long as the integration ideal remains dominant, though unachieved, the Negro's psyche is subjected to a dual and conflicting loyalty. Even today, the search for identity persists as the number one problem of the black man in America. Clearly, however, to the extent that the Negro comes to believe that integration will elude him in perpetuity in America, he is likely to broaden his identification with his national community. The outcome which such a shift in outlook might ultimately have on U.S. policy in Africa only the most foolhardy would dare to predict.

MARTYRS

They are lying there along the captured roads, along the roads of disaster
Slender poplars, statues of the sombre gods wrapped in long golden cloaks
The prisoners from Senegal lie like lengthened shadows across the soil of France
In vain they have cut down your laughter, and the darker flower of your flesh
You are the flower of the foremost beauty in stark absence of flowers
Black flower and solemn smile, diamond time out of mind.
You are the clay and the plasma ofthe world's vivid spring
Fresh you are of the first couple, the fertile belly, milk and sperm
You are the sacred fecundity of the bright paradise gardens
And the incoercible forest, victor over fire and thunder.
The immense song of your blood will conquer machines and mortars
The pulse of your speech, lies and sophistry
No hate your heart without hate, no guile your guileless heart.
Black martyres O undying race, give me leave to say the words which will forgive

Leopold Sedar Senghor (Senegal)

"The growing interest in Africa and the rediscovery of the lost African heritage launched the spread of Black Consciousness among young civil rights militants"

The Search For Africa

BY JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

THE AFRICANS who came to the United States as slaves started their attempts to reclaim their lost African heritage soon after they arrived in this country. They were searching for the lost identity that the slave system has destroyed. Concurrent with the black man's search for an identity in America has been his search for an identity in the world, which means, in essence, his identity as a human being with a history, before and after slavery, that can command respect.

Some Afro-Americans gave up the search and accepted the distorted image of themselves that had been created by their oppressors. As early as 1881, Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden, the great West Indian scholar and benefactor of West Africa, addressed himself to this situation when he said: "In all English-speaking countries the mind of the intelligent Negro child revolts against the descriptions of the Negro given in elementary school books, geographies, travels, histories . . . having embraced or at least assented to these falsehoods about himself, he concludes that his only hope of rising in the scale of respectable manhood is to strive for what is most unlike himself and most alien to his peculiar tastes."

Despite the alienation spoken of here by Dr. Blyden, the Afro-American's spiritual trek back to Africa continued.

Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, the elder statesman among the Afro-Americans, addressed himself to the broader aspects of this situation on the occasion of the celebration of the Second Anniversary of the Asian-African (Bandung) Conference and the rebirth of Ghana on April 30, 1957, when he said:

"From the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, the African

imported to America regarded themselves as temporary settlers destined to return eventually to Africa. Their increasing revolts against the slave system, which culminated in the eighteenth century, showed a feeling of close kinship to the motherland and even well into the nineteenth century they called their organizations 'African,' as witness the 'African Union' of New York and Newport, and the African Churches of Philadelphia and New York. In the West Indies and South America there was even closer induction of feelings of kinship with Africa and the East.

"The planters' excuse for slavery was advertised as conversion of Africa to Christianity; but soon American slavery appeared based on the huge profits of the Sugar Empire and the Cotton Kingdom. As plans were laid for the expansion of the slave system, the slaves themselves sought freedom by increasing revolt which culminated in the 19th century. In Haiti they won autonomy; in the United States they fled from the slave states in the South to the free states in the North and to Canada.

"Here the Free Negroes helped form the Abolition Movement, and when that seemed to be failing, the Negroes began to plan for migration to Africa, Haiti and South America.

"Civil War and emancipation intervened and American Negroes looked forward to becoming free and equal citizens here with no thought of return to Africa or of kinship with the world's darker peoples. However, the rise of the Negro was hindered by disfranchisement, lynching and caste legislation. There was some recurrence of the 'Back To Africa' idea and increased sympathy for darker folk who suffered the same sort of caste restrictions as American Negroes."

During the eighteenth century there was strong agitation among certain groups of black people in America for a return to Africa. This agitation was found mainly among groups of "free Negroes" because of the uncertainty of their position as freedmen in a slave-holding society. "One can see it late into the eighteenth century," Dr. Du Bois explains in his book *Dusk Of Dawn*, when the Negro Union of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1788, proposed to the Free African Society of Philadelphia a general exodus to Africa on the part of at least free Negroes."

The Back To Africa idea has been a recurring theme in Afro-American life and thought for more than a hundred years. This thought was strong during the formative years of the Colonization Society and succeeded in convincing some of the most outstanding black men of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, such as: John Russwurm, the first Negro college graduate (Bowdoin, 1826), and Lott Carey, the powerful Virginia preacher. Later the Society fell into severe disrepute after an argument with the Abolitionists.

Two freedom struggles emerged early in the nineteenth century—one African, one Afro-American. While the Africans were engaged in their wars against colonialism, the American blacks were engaged in slave revolts.

Some slaves took the Christian version of the Bible seriously and believed that God meant all men to be free. Such a slave was Gabriel Prosser, of Virginia, who felt that he was inspired by God to lead his people to freedom. Over 40,000 slaves were involved in his revolt of 1800 before it was betrayed. In 1822, in Charleston, S. C., a carpenter, Denmark Vesey, planned one of the most extensive revolts against slavery ever recorded. He, too, was betrayed and afterwards put to death along with 36 of his followers. In 1831, the greatest slave revolt of all occurred in Virginia, led by Nat Turner, a plowman and a preacher, whose father had escaped to freedom.

In 1839, Joseph Cinque, the son of a Mendi king in Sierra Leone, West Africa, was sold into slavery and shipped to Cuba. Cinque and his fellow Africans revolted on board the ship and ordered the ship's owners to sail to Africa. The Spanish owners of the ship steered northward when they were not being watched and eventually landed off the coast of Long Island. The Africans were arrested and sent to New Haven, Conn., where they were put on trial.

When the trial began, there was great excitement in the country. People talked about the case and took sides. Southern politicians wanted to give the Africans back to the Spaniards who had bought them. The trial lasted all winter.

In court, Cinque made a wonderful speech in his own language, telling the story of how he and his men had fought to be free. After that speech, the court ordered the Africans set free.

Cinque and his men were sent to school to be educated and were found to be intelligent and quick to learn.

Meanwhile, the two Spaniards and the Spanish government appealed to the United States Supreme Court to have the Africans returned to them as slaves. The friends of Cinque and his men asked John Quincy Adams, the former President of the United States and a great lawyer, to speak for the Africans. On March 9, 1841, after Adams had spoken, Chief Justice Taney of the Supreme Court ruled that Cinque and the others were to be freed.

After that, Cinque continued his schooling, and in 1842 he and his men returned to Africa.

All America had been stirred by this case. The slave owners feared that the news about the freedom and return to Africa of Cinque and his fellow Africans would cause their slaves to revolt and also demand to be returned to their homeland.

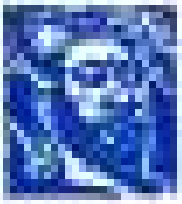
In the years before the Civil

War, plans for the migration of the "free" Negroes back to Africa were revived and agents were sent to South America, Haiti and Africa. Paul Cuffe, a free black ship owner from New Bedford, Massachusetts, had founded the Friendly Society For the Emigration of Free Negroes From America and had taken a large number back to Africa at his own expense.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, while the issue of slavery was being debated in most of the country, the feeling for Africa among American blacks was growing stronger. Publications like Freedom's Journal and Douglass Monthly, edited by Frederick Douglass, called attention to the plight of the people of Africa as well as the black Americans.

"I thank God for making me a man simply, but Delaney always thanks him for making him a black man." This spoke Frederick Douglass of his old friend, Martin R. Delaney, spokesman, physician, explorer and scientist.

Martin R. Delaney was proud of his African background and the Mandingo blood that flowed in his veins. He was one of the leaders of the great debate following the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850. He was the spokesman for the black people who felt that the bitter racial climate in America had made life for them, in this country, unbearable. Delaney was the strongest voice in several conventions of free Negroes to discuss plans for emigrating to Africa. In 1859, he led the first and only exploratory party of American-born Africans to the land of their forefathers. In the region of the Niger River, in the area that became Nigeria, Delaney's party carried out scientific studies and made agreements with several African kings for the settlement of emigrants from America. This interest in Africa was continued under the leadership of men like Rev. Alexander Crummell and Bishop Henry McNeal Turner.



During the latter part of the nineteenth century, Edward Wilmot Blyden, a native of what was then the Danish West Indies, called attention to the important role that Africa could play in emerging world affairs. He was convinced that the only way to bring respect and dignity to his people was by building progressive new "empires" in Africa. He was of the opinion that the "New World Negro" has a great future in Africa. He saw Liberia, in West Africa, as the ideal place where African-Americans could build a new and great civilization by making use of the things that they had learned in the West and preserving the best of the African way of life. Because of his, and the work of many others, the

(Continued on page 10)

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African consciousness was translated into useful programs of service to Africa. Afro-American institutions of higher learning joined in this service through their training of the personnel of the churches as well as their support of Africans involving in their institutions.

The idea of uniting all Africa had its greatest development early in this century. In 1900 a West Indian lawyer, H. Sylvester Williams, called together the first Pan-African Conference in London. This meeting attracted attention and put the word "Pan-African" in the dictionaries for the first time. The 30 delegates to the conference came mainly from England, the West Indies and the United States. The small delegation from the United States was led by W. E. B. Du Bois.

This meeting had no deep roots in Africa itself, and the movement and the idea died for a generation. Then came the First World War. At the close of this war, W. E. B. Du Bois led the determined agitation for the rights of African people throughout the world, particularly in Africa. Meetings were held and a petition was sent to President Wilson, who was meeting with other leaders of the Western World at the Peace Congress in Versailles.

Dr. Du Bois went to Paris with the idea of calling a Pan-African Congress for the purpose of impressing upon the members of the Peace Congress sitting in Versailles the importance of Africa in the future world. In spite of being without credentials and influence some attention was paid to the idea. President Wilson's Assistant, Colonel House, was sympathetic but non-committal. The Chicago Tribune said (January 19, 1919, in dispatch from Paris dated December 30, 1918):

"An Ethiopian Utopia, to be fashioned out of the German colonies, is the latest dream of leaders of the Negro race who are here at the invitation of the United States Government as part of the extensive entourage of the American peace delegation. Robert R. Moore, successor of the late Booker T. Washington as head of Tuskegee Institute, and Dr. William E. B. Du Bois, Editor of the Crisis, are promoting a Pan-African Conference to be held here during the winter while the Peace Conference is on full blast. It is to embrace Negro leaders from America, Africanists, Liberia, Haiti, and the French and British colonies and other parts of the black world. Its object is to get out of the Peace Conference an effort to moderate the dark continent, and in the world reconstruction to provide international machinery looking toward the civilization of the African nations.

"The Negro leaders are not agreed upon any definite plan, but Dr. Du Bois has mapped out a scheme which he has presented in the form of memorandum to President Wilson. It is quite Utopian, and it has less than a Chinaman's chance of getting anywhere in the Peace Conference, but it is nevertheless interesting. As "self-determination" is one of the words to conjure with in Paris nowadays, the Negro leaders are seeking to have it applied, if possible, in a measure to their race in Africa.

"Dr. Du Bois' dream is that the Peace Conference could form an inter-nationalized Africa, to have as its basis the former German colonies, with their 1,000,000 square miles and 12,500,000 population.

"To this," his plan reads, "could be added by negotiation the 800,000 square miles and 8,000,000 inhabitants of Portuguese Africa. It is not impossible that Belgium could be persuaded to add to such a State the 900,000 square miles and 9,000,000 natives of the Congo, making an international Africa with over 2,500,000 square miles of land and over 20,000,000 people.

"This Africa for the Africans could be under the guidance of international organization. The governing international commission should represent not simply Governments, but modern culture, science, commerce, social reform, and religious philanthropy. It must represent not simply the white world, but the evolved Negro world.

"With these two principles the practical policies to be followed out in the government of the new States should involve a thorough and complete system of modern education, built upon the present government, religion, and customary law of the churches. Within ten years 20,000,000 black children ought to be in school. Within a generation young Africa should know the essential outlines of modern culture. From the beginning the actual general government should use both colored and white officials."

W. E. B. Du Bois wrote extensively about the idea of Pan-Africanism and the world unity of people of African descent. This is the essence of his statement on the intent of the Pan-African Congress of 1919: This Congress represented Africa partially. Of the 57 delegates from fifteen countries, nine were African countries with 12 delegates. The other delegates came from the United States, which sent 16, and the West Indies, with 21. Most of these delegates did not come to France for this meeting, but happened to be residing there, mainly for reasons connected with the war. America and all the

colonial powers refused to hear special voice.

The Congress influenced the Peace Conference. The New York Evening Globe (February 22nd, 1919) described it as "the first assembly of the kind in history, and has for its object the drafting of an appeal to the Peace Conference to give the Negro race of Africa a chance to develop unhindered by other races. Seated at long green tables in the council room today were Negroes in the trim uniform of American Army officers, other American coloured men in frock coats or business suits, polished French Negroes who hold public office, Senegalese who sit in the French Chamber of Deputies. . . ."

The Congress specifically asked that the German colonies be turned over to an international organization instead of being handled by the various colonial powers. Out of this idea came the Mandates Commission. The resolution of the Congress said in part:

(a) That the Allied and Associated Powers establish a code of law for the international protection of the natives of Africa, similar to the proposed international code for labor.

(b) That the League of Nations establish a permanent Bureau charged with the special duty of over-seeing the application of these laws to the political, social, and economic welfare of the natives.

(c) The Negroes of the world demand that hereafter the natives of Africa and the peoples of African descent be governed according to the following principles:

1. The land and its mineral resources shall be held in trust for the natives and at all times they shall have effective ownership of as much land as they can profitably develop.

2. Capital. The investment of capital and granting of concessions shall be so regulated as to prevent the exploitation of the natives and the exhaustion of the natural wealth of the country. Concessions shall always be limited in time and subject to State control. The growing social needs of the natives must be regarded and the profits used for social and material benefit of the natives.

3. Labor: Slavery and corporal punishment shall be abolished and forced labor except in punishment for crime; and the general conditions of labor shall be prescribed and regulated by the State.

4. Education: It shall be the right of every native child to learn to read and write his own language, and the language of the trustee nation, at public expense, and to be given technical instruction in some branch of industry. The State shall also educate as large a number of natives as possible in higher technical and cultural training and maintain a corps of native teachers. . . .

5. The State: The natives of Africa must have the right to participate in the Government as far as their development permits in con-

formity with the principle that the Government exists for the natives, and not the natives for the Government. They shall at once be allowed to participate in local and tribal government according to ancient usage, and this participation shall gradually extend, as education and experience proceeds, to the higher offices of State, to the end that, in time, Africa be ruled by consent of the Africans . . . Whenever it is proven that African natives are not receiving just treatment at the hands of any State or that any State deliberately excludes its civilized citizens or subjects of Negro descent from its body politic and cultural, it shall be the duty of the League of Nations to bring the matter to the civilized World.

The idea of Pan-Africa having thus been established, Dr. Du Bois now attempted to build a real organization. The Pan-Africa movement began to represent growth and development. Soon the Du Bois approach to Pan-Africanism was challenged by the approach of Marcus Garvey.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People began its interest in Africa with support of the various Pan-African congresses called by Dr. Du Bois. The African and Afro-American freedom struggle that had met and joined forces, briefly, in the nineteenth century was now meeting again in the twentieth century.

Two great personalities were bringing the message of Africa's awakening to the world's attention. Both of them were saying in different ways that Africa was great once and will be great again. Both of them told the Afro-Americans that they had a part to play in Africa's redemption. The two personalities were W. E. B. DuBois and Marcus Garvey.

The Italian-Ethiopian war renewed interest in Africa. This interest sustained and was increased when, in 1957, the Gold Coast gained its independence and took back its ancient name—Ghana.

Black American grassroots identification with African problems burst upon the international scene during the first Congo crisis when a group of black nationalists created a disturbance in the galleries of the United Nations in protest against alleged U. N. connivance in the 1960 murder of Patrice Lumumba. This identification with African political affairs amongst the black masses reached its zenith with the visit to Africa by Malcolm X shortly before his death and his effort to enlist the support of the Organization of African Unity.

This growing interest in Africa and a rediscovery of the lost African heritage launched the spread of Black Consciousness among young civil rights militants. Out of this feeling the concept of Black Power was born.

MALCOLM X
THE MAN AND HIS TIMES

BY JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

"That a man who had inhabited the 'lower depth' of life could rise in triumph as a reproach to its life, and become an uncompromising champion of his people, is in itself a remarkable feat"

THE MAN best known as Malcolm X lived three distinct and interrelated lives under the respective names, Malcolm Little, Malcolm X and El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. Any honest attempt to understand the total man must begin with some understanding of the significant components that went into his making.

The racist society that produced and killed Malcolm X is responsible for what he was and for destroying what he could have been. He had the greatest leadership potential of any person to emerge directly from the black proletariat in this century. In another time under different circumstances he might have been a King—and a good one. He might have made a nation and he might have destroyed one.

He was a creation of the interplay of powerful and conflicting forces in mid-century America. No other country or combination of forces could have shaped him the way he was and ultimately destroyed him with such unique ruthlessness.

Malcolm X knew, before he could explain it to himself and others, that he was living in a society that was engaged in systematic destruction of his people's self-respect. His first memories are of conflict. In this respect his early life was no different than most Black Americans, whose conflict comes early and stays late. In his own words:

"When my mother was pregnant with me, she told me later, a party of hooded Ku Klux Klan riders galloped up to our home in Omaha, Nebraska, one night. Surrounding the house, brandishing their shotguns and rifles, they shouted for my father to come out. My mother went to the front door and opened it. Standing where they could see her pregnant condition, she told them that she was alone with her three small children and that my father was away, preaching, in Milwaukee. The Klansmen shouted threats and warnings at her that we had better get out of town because 'the good Christian white people' were not going to stand for my father's 'spreading trouble' among the 'good' Negroes of Omaha with the 'back to Africa' preachings of Marcus Garvey."

This was how he remembered his father, an ambitious dreamer attempting to maintain himself and his family while lagged white politicians, Ku Klux Klansmen and Black Legionnaires were determined to teach him to stay in "his place." The father of Malcolm X was killed while fighting against the restricted place that was assigned to his people in this country. Much later, and in many different ways, Malcolm X continued the same fight and was subsequently killed for the same reason.

Every major event in Malcolm's life brought him into conflict with the society that still thrives on the oppression of his people.

His mother was born as a result of her mother being raped by a white man in the West Indies. When he was four, the home where he and his family lived was burned down by members of the Ku Klux Klan. When he was six his father met a violent death that his family always believed was a lynching.

After the death of his father, who was a follower of the black nationalist Marcus Garvey, his family was broken up and for a number of years he lived in state institutions and boarding homes. When he finally went to school he made good marks, but lost interest, and was a dropout at the age of 15. He went to live with his sister in Boston and went to work at the kinds of jobs available to Negro youth—mainly the jobs not wanted by white people, like: shoe-shine boy, soda jerk, hotel bellboy, waiter of a dining car crew on trains traveling to New

York, and a waiter in a Harlem night club.

From these jobs, he found his way into the underworld and thought, at the time, that his position in life was advancing. In the jungle of the underworld, where the fiercest survive by fleecing the weak and the defenseless, he became a master manipulator, skilled in gambling, the selling of drugs, burglary and hustling. A friend who had helped him get his first job gave him the rationale for his actions. "The main thing you have to remember," he was told, "is that everything in the world is a hustle."

Malcolm returned to Boston, where he was later arrested for burglary and sentenced to 10 years in prison. The year was 1946 and he was not quite 21 years old. Prison was another school for Malcolm. He now had time to think and plan. Out of this thinking he underwent a conversion that literally transformed his whole life. By letters and visits from his family he was introduced to the Black Muslim Movement (which calls itself officially The Lost-Found Nation of Islam). He tested himself in the discipline of his newly chosen religion by refusing to eat pork. The event startled his fellow inmates, who had nicknamed him Satan. He describes the occasion in this manner:

"It was the funniest thing—the reaction, and the way that it spread. In prison where so little breaks the monotonous routine, the smallest thing causes a commotion of talk. It was being mentioned all over the cell block by night that Satan didn't eat pork. It made me very proud, in some odd way. One of the universal images of the Negro—in prison and out—was that he couldn't do without pork. It made me feel good to see that my not eating it had especially startled the white convicts. Later I would learn, when I had read and studied Islam a good deal, that unconsciously my first pre-Islamic submission had been manifested. I had experienced, for the first time, the Muslim teaching, 'If you take one step toward Allah—Allah with take two steps toward you' . . . My brothers and sisters in Detroit and Chicago had all become converted to what they were being taught was the 'natural religion for the black man.'"

His description of his process of self-education in prison is an indictment of the American educational system and a tribute to his own perseverance in obtaining an education after being poorly prepared in the public schools. While in prison he devised his own method of self-education and learned how to speak and debate effectively so that he could participate and defend the movement after his release from prison. He started by copying words from the dictionary that might be helpful to him, beginning with "A." He went through to "Z" and then he writes, "for the first time, I could pick up a book and actually understand what the book was saying."

This aspect of his story calls attention to the tremendous reservoirs of talent, and even genius, locked up in the black ghettos among the masses. It also indicates what can be accomplished when the talent of this oppressed group is respected and given hope and a purpose.

Within a few years he was to become a debater with a national reputation. He took on politicians, college professors, journalists and anyone, black or white, who had the nerve to meet him. He was respected by some and feared by others.

Malcolm was released from prison in 1952, when he was 27 years old. For a few weeks he took a job with his oldest brother, Wilfred, as a furniture salesman in Detroit. He went to Chicago before the end of that year to hear and meet the leader of the Nation of Islam—Elijah Muhammad. He was accepted into the movement and given the name Malcolm X. He went back to Detroit and was made assistant minister of the Detroit mosque. From this point on, his rise in the movement and in the eyes of the public was rapid.

At the end of 1953, he went to Chicago to live with the leader of the Nation of Islam and to be trained by him personally. After organizing a mosque in Philadelphia, he was sent to head the movement in Harlem in 1954 before he was 30 years old.

In a few years he was able to transform the Black Muslim Movement into a national organization and himself into one of the country's best known personalities. As the public spokesman and defender of the movement, he literally put it on the map. This was the beginning of his trouble with his leader, Elijah Muhammad. When the public thought of the Black Muslim Movement they thought first of Malcolm X.

Malcolm X had appeal far beyond the movement. He was one of the most frequent speakers on the nation's campuses and the object of admiration by thousands of militant youth.

In his pamphlet, "Malcolm X—The Man and His Ideas," George Breitman gives the following description of Malcolm's appeal as a speaker:

"His speaking style was unique—plain, direct like an arrow, devoid of flowery trimming. He used metaphors and figures of speech that were lean and simple, rooted in the ordinary, daily experience of his audiences. He knew what the masses thought and how they felt, their strengths and their weaknesses. He reached right into their minds and hearts without wasting a word; and he never tried to flatter them. Despite an extraordinary ability to move and arouse his listeners, his main appeal was to reason, not emotion . . . I want only to convey the idea that rarely has there been a man in America better able to communicate ideas to the most oppressed people, and that was not just a matter of technique,

which can be learned and applied in any situation by almost anybody, but that it was a rare case of a man in closest communion with the oppressed, able to speak to them, because he identified himself with them, an authentic expression of their yearning for freedom, a true product of their growth in the same way that Lenin was a product of the Russian people."

From 1954, when he was made responsible for the Black Muslim Movement in Harlem, the history of that movement is, essentially, the history of the rise of Malcolm X.

In public speeches, where he nearly always prefaced his remarks with the statement, "The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us," Malcolm X was teaching lessons about the black American's fight for basic dignity that was more meaningfully logical than anything that Elijah Muhammad had ever conceived. He was the public figure most identified with the movement and most sought after as its spokesman. Louis E. Lomax referred to him as the St. Paul of the Black Muslim Movement and adds, "Not only was he knocked to the ground by the bright light of truth while on an evil journey, but he also rose from the dust stunned, with a new name and a burning zeal to travel in the opposite direction and carry America's 20 million Negroes with him."

In these years, Malcolm X was preaching separation and frightening more white people than the social protest organizations that were demanding integration. The bold act of refusing integration was a challenge to a society that never intended to integrate the black Americans in the first place. With this act, Malcolm X put American society on the defensive by questioning its intentions toward his people and proving that these intentions were false. Also, he made black America question itself and face reality. He identified the enemy of their promise, indicted that enemy and still did not relieve the victim, his own people, of the responsibility for being the instrument of their own liberation.

To place Malcolm X and his rough-hewed grandeur in proper perspective, one must first understand the nature of the society that produced him and ultimately destroyed him. To a large extent, the shadow of slavery still hangs over this land, and affects the daily life of every American. Slavery was the black gold that produced America's first wealth and power. Slavery was the breeding ground for the most contagious and contaminating monster of all times—racism.

It was this racism and oppression by white America that convinced Malcolm X of the necessity of black nationalism as the vehicle for black liberation, as opposed to "integration," while he was in the Black Muslim Movement. Although his black nationalism, while he was in the Muslim organization, was narrow and sectarian, this did not prevent him from playing a tremen-

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deeply important role in the evolution of the black freedom struggle.

Prior to the arrival of Malcolm X on the scene, most of white America looked upon the established civil rights organizations as "extremists," although most of them were creations and creatures of the white controllers of power. But Malcolm comes along and says, "not only do I refuse to integrate with you, white man, but I demand that I be completely separated from you in some states of our own or back home in Africa; not only is your Christianity a fraud but your 'democracy' a brittle lie." Neither the white man nor his black apologists could answer the latter arguments.

Because they could not answer Malcolm in this area, they attacked him where he was most vulnerable—the concept of separatism; and that all white folks were "blue-eyed devils"—labeling him a "hate monger," "racist," "dangerous fanatic," "black supremacist," etc. In reality, he was none of these things. Certainly he didn't preach "black supremacy." Malcolm X preached black pride, black redemption, black reaffirmation, and he gave the black woman the image of a black man that she could respect.

The fact that Malcolm X, while in the Black Muslim Movement, could reject a white person on any term caused most of white America, psychological suicide. And invoked admiration and pride in most black Americans. For the eyes of most Americans are so blurred that they cannot conceive of a black man rejecting them.

It can be stated categorically that Malcolm X, while in the Black Muslim Movement and out of it, created the present stage of the civil rights struggle—to the extent that he was a catalytic agent—off stage, sarcastically ridiculing the "civil rights leaders," popping a whip which activated them into more radical action and programs. He was the alternative with which the power holders of America had to deal, if they didn't deal with the established "civil rights leaders."

On December 1, 1963, about two weeks after President John F. Kennedy's assassination, Malcolm X addressed a public rally at Manhattan Center in New York City. He was speaking as a replacement for Elijah Muhammad as he had done many times before. After the speech, in a question and answer period, Malcolm X made the remark that led to his suspension as a Muslim Minister. In answer to a question, "What do you think about President Kennedy's assassination?", Malcolm X answered that he saw the case as, "the chickens coming home to roost." Soon after the remark, Malcolm X was suspended by Elijah Muhammad and directed to stop speaking for 90

days. Some weeks later, when Malcolm X realized that there were a number of highly placed persons in the Black Muslim Movement conspiring against him, seemingly with Elijah Muhammad's consent, he left the movement.

Malcolm devotes a chapter in his book to the growth of his disenchantment and his eventual separation from the Black Muslim Movement. He says: "I had helped Mr. Muhammad and his ministers to revolutionize the American black man's thinking, opening his eyes until he would never again look in the same fearful way at the white man . . . . If I harbored any personal disappointment whatsoever, it was that privately I was convinced that our Nation of Islam could be an even greater force in the American black man's overall struggle—if we engaged in more action. By that I mean I thought privately that we should have amended, or relaxed, our general non-engagement policy. I felt that, wherever black people committed themselves, in the Little Rocks and the Birminghams and other places, militantly disciplined Muslims should also be there—for all the world to see, and respect and discuss."

On March 8, 1964, he publicly announced that he was starting a new organization. (In fact two new organizations were started, the Muslim Mosque, Inc., and the Organization of Afro-American Unity.)

Malcolm X was still somewhat beholden to Elijah Muhammad in the weeks immediately following his break with the movement. At his press conference on March 12th, he said, in part:

"I am and always will be a Muslim. My religion is Islam. I still believe that Mr. Muhammad's analysis of the problem is the most realistic, and that his solution is the best one. This means that I too believe the best solution is complete separation, with our people going back home, to our own African homeland. But separation back to Africa is still a long-range program, and while it is yet to materialize, 22 million of our people who are still here in America need better food, clothing, housing, education and jobs right now. Mr. Muhammad's program does point us back homeward, but it also contains within it what we could and should be doing to help solve many of our problems while we are still here.

"Internal differences within the Nation of Islam forced me out of it. I did not leave of my own free will. But now that it has happened I intend to make the most of it. Now that I have come independence of action, I intend to use a

more flexible approach toward working with others to get a solution to this problem. I do not pretend to be a divine man, but I do believe in divine guidance, divine power, and in the fulfilment of divine prophecy. I am not educated, nor am I an expert in any particular field . . . but I am sincere and my sincerity is my credentials.

"The problem facing our people here in America is bigger than all other personal or organizational differences. Therefore, as leaders, we must stop worrying about the threat that we seem to think we pose to each other's personal prestige, and concentrate our united efforts toward solving the unending hurt that is being done daily to our people here in America.

"I am going to organize and head a new mosque in New York City, known as the Muslim Mosque, Inc. This gives us a religious base, and the spiritual force necessary to rid our people of the vices that destroy the moral fiber of our community.

"Our political philosophy will be Black Nationalism. Our economic and social philosophy will be Black Nationalism. Our cultural emphasis will be Black Nationalism.

"Many of our people aren't religiously inclined, so the Muslim Mosque, Inc., will be organized in such a manner as to provide for the active participation of all Negroes in our political, economic, and social programs, despite their religious or non-religious beliefs.

"The political philosophy of Black Nationalism means: we must control the politics and the politicians of our community. They must no longer take orders from outside forces. We will organize and sweep out of office all Negro politicians who are puppets for the outside forces."

Malcolm X had now thrust himself into a new area of conflict that would take him, briefly, to a high point of international attention and partial acceptance.

During the last phase of his life Malcolm X established the Muslim Mosque, Inc., and a non-religious organization—the Organization of Afro-American Unity, patterned after the Organization of African Unity. He attempted to internationalize the civil rights struggle by taking it to the United Nations.

In several trips to Africa and one to Mecca, he sought the counsel and support of African and Asian heads of state. His trip to Mecca and Africa had a revolutionary effect upon his thinking. His potential call had always been for black unity and self-defense in opposition to the "integrationist's" program of non-violence, passive resistance and "Negro-white-unity." When he returned home from his trip he was no longer opposed to progressive whites uniting with revolutionary blacks, as his enemies would suggest. But to Malcolm, and correctly so, the role of the white progressive was not in black organizations but in white organizations in white

communities, convincing and converting the uncommitted to the black cause. Further, and perhaps more important, Malcolm had observed the perfidy of the white liberal and the American left wherever Afro-Americans sought to be instruments of their own liberation. He was convinced that there could be no black-white unity until there was black unity; that there could be no workers solidarity until there is racial solidarity.

The overwhelming majority of white Americans demonstrate daily that they cannot and will not accept the black man as an equal in all its ramifications—after having 345 years of racism preached to them from the pulpit, taught in the primer and textbook, practiced by the government, spatchcocked on editorial pages, leaked on the airways and television screens. It would be tantamount to self-castration, a gutting of the ego. It would be asking white America to completely purge itself of everything it has been taught, fed and believed for 345 years.

It was this recognition of what racism had done to the white mind and the black mind that the following paragraph was and is a keystone of the Organization of Afro-American Unity's program: "*We must revamp our entire thinking and redirect our learning minds so that we can put forth a confident identity and wipe out the false image built up by an oppressive society. We can build a foundation for liberating our minds by studying the different philosophies and psychologies of others. Provisions are being made for the study of languages of Eastern origin such as Swahili, Hausa and Arabic. Such studies will give us, as Afro-Americans, a direct access to ideas and history of our ancestors, as well as histories of mankind at large.*" More so than any other Afro-American leader, Malcolm X, realized that there must be a concomitant cultural and educational revolution if the physical revolution is to be successful. No revolution has ever sustained itself on emotion.

When Malcolm X returned from his trip to Mecca and Africa, he completely repudiated the Black Muslim's program of separation, their acquisitive thirst for money and property and machine idolatry. He felt that they were merely imitating the racist enemy. He still believed in separation from his racist enemy, but his was an ideological separation.

To Malcolm X, the belief was that the Afro-American must transcend his enemy not imitate him. For he foresaw that both the Black Muslims and the "integrationists" were aping the oppressor; that neither recognized that the struggle for black freedom was neither social nor moral. It was and is a power struggle; a struggle between the white-haves and the black-have-nots. A struggle of the oppressor and the oppressed. And if the oppressed is to breach the power of the oppressor, he must either ac-

quire power or align himself with power.

Therefore, it is not accidental that Malcolm's political arm, the Organization of Afro-American Unity, was patterned to the letter and spirit after the Organization of African Unity. Nor should it be surprising that he officially linked up the problems of Afro-Americans with the problems of his black brothers and sisters on the mother continent. Malcolm X's vision was broad enough to see that the Afro-Americans were not a "minority" as the enemy and his lackeys would have us believe. Afro-Americans are not an isolated 22 million. There are over 100 million black people in the Western Hemisphere —Cuba, Brazil, Latin America, the West Indies, America, etc. And Malcolm knew that when we unite these millions with the 300 million on the African continent the black man becomes a mighty force. The second largest people on earth. And as Malcolm's personal theme was unity, unity, unity.

The formation of the Organization of Afro-American Unity and the establishment of an official connection with Africa was one of the most important acts of the twentieth century. For this act gave the Afro-Americans an official link with the new emerging power emanating from both Africa and Asia. Thus, Malcolm X succeeded where Marcus Garvey and others had failed. Thus, doing this, Malcolm projected the cause of Afro-American freedom into the international arena of power.

When he internationalized the problem, by raising it from the level of civil rights to that of HUMAN RIGHTS and by linking up with Africa, Malcolm X threw himself into the cross-fire of that invisible, international cartel of power and finance which deposes Presidents and Prime Ministers, dissolves Parliaments, if they refuse to do their bidding. It was this force, I believe, which killed Malcolm X, which killed Lumumba, which killed Hammarskjold.

There is another and more potent reason why the American oppressors feared Malcolm X and desired him dead. And that is the publicized fact that he was going to bring the oppression of Afro-Americans before the United Nations, charging the United States government with genocide. Many of the oppressors had complexions when confronted with the prospect of a world body discussing the problems of Afro-Americans.

In the introduction to Malcolm X's autobiography, M. S. Handler has said: "No man in our time aroused fear and hatred in the white man as did Malcolm, because to him the white man seemed an implacable foe who could not be bought for any price—a man unswervingly committed to the cause of liberating the black man in American society rather than integrating the black man into that society."

He was, more precisely, a man in search of a definition of himself

and his relationship to his people, his country and the world. That a man who had inhabited the "lower depth" of life could rise in triumph as a rejoinder to its life, and become an uncompromising champion of his people, is in itself a remarkable feat. Malcolm X went beyond this feat. Though he came from the American ghetto and directed his message to the people in the American ghetto first of all, he also became, in his brief lifetime, a figure of world importance. He was assassinated on February 21, 1965, while on the threshold of his prime.

About the race of his head, the writer, John Oliver Killens, has said: "He was a dedicated patriot: DIGNITY was his country, MANHOOD was his government and FREEDOM was his land."—New York City, November 1964

John Henrik Clarke, author of "Malcolm X: The Man and His Times," is editor of several anthologies, including the popular *American Negro Short Stories*. He also is an editor of Freedomways magazine. The above article is adapted from his introductory essay to a book on the late Malcolm Shabazz to be published later this year.

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Current Trends in Negro Education and Shorter Papers

Section A: Africa and the American Negro Press

John Henrik Clarke

U.S. Correspondent on African Affairs, World Mutual Exchange, International News Features

The American Negro press has been more consistent in its coverage of African news than any other news media in the United States. This would indicate that its coverage has been adequate. Quite the contrary. While the quantity of this coverage could be accepted as adequate, the quality leaves much to be desired. In fact, the American Negro Press, like the American Press in general, have missed or mis-handled the story of emergent Africa. I believe the emergence of Africa to be the greatest news event in the age in which we live. In the handling of news relating to Africa, there seems to be a re-occurring multiplicity of errors that can be traced to one error—the inability or reluctance of the present interpreters of Africa to recognize and understand Africa's historical past. Contrary to a still prevailing concept, the Africans did not wait in darkness for the Europeans to bring the light. What we are now witnessing is neither the first nor the second emergence of Africa. This is an elementary fact, yet the "Johnny Come Latelys" who have lately discovered Africa, do not seem to be aware of it.

The awareness of Africa by the men who built and developed the American Negro Press, goes back to the heetic and heroic beginning of Negro journalism in this country. Some of the back issues of these old papers show their editors' keen awareness of Africa and its importance.

In the publication: Douglass Monthly, edited for the Anti Slavery Society by Frederick Douglass, the following news item appeared in the issue of January 1862, under the heading: The Future of Africa. Miscellaneous. By Rev. Alexander Crummell, B A., of Liberia, West Africa.

> The undersigned proposes to issue in twelve volumes of about 300 pages, orations, addresses, and other papers, mostly prepared for National and Missionary occasions in Liberia, West Africa; and pertaining to National Life and Duty.
>
> The following is a list of the articles:
>
> 1. The English Language in Liberia.
> 2. The duty of a rising Christian State to contribute to the World's well-being and civilization.
> 3. Address on laying the corner stone of St. Mark's Hospital, Cape Palmas.
> 4. Duty and relations of free colored men, in America to Africa.
> 5. Eulogium on the life and character of Thomas Clarkson, Esq.
> 6. God and Nation—an anniversary Sermon.
> 7. The fitness of the Gospel for its own work—a Convocational Sermon.
> 8. The progress and Prospects of the Republic of Liberia.
> 9. The progress of Civilization along the West Coast of Africa.
> 10. The Negro Race not under a curse—from the London Christian Observer of August, 1853.
>
> This volume will be printed on good white paper, in clear type, neatly bound, and at $1.00 per copy.

As it is published to help repair serious losses by fire in Africa, and to secure the education of children, it will not be published until 400 subscribers are obtained.

The aid of generous friends is requested, at an early day as possible as the subscriber is anxious to return, very soon, to his duty in Africa.

Alexander Crummel, Missionary
311 Spring Street
New York, N.Y.
December 12th, 1861.

Alexander Crummell, founder of the African Academy, friend and contemporary of Dr. Edwin W. Blyden, the great West Indian scholar and benefactor of West Africa, was one of the first of our early writers to call attention to Africa through the American Negro Press. He was the dean of the black scholarly and literary group, in the closing quarter of the nineteenth century. The life of Dr. Crummell later fired the imagination and redoubled the vigor of Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, whose sharp and penetrating pen burned his own path in National and international affairs, from the early nineties to the present day.

Du Bois, inspired by Alexander Crummell, made the subject of Africa a burning issue in the American Negro Press. In 1915, the Home University Library brought out a small book "The Negro," in which Du Bois outlined the program that must be followed in order to deal properly with the whole field of African life and history.

Carter G. Woodson came forward with his researches and publications which blossomed forth into the widest popularization of the subject. Quietly African scholars like J. E. Moorland, Arthur A. Schomburg, J. A. Rogers and William L. Hansbery led the field in gathering material.

After the first World War, Du Bois again accelerated the American Negro's interest in Africa by organizing a series of Pan-African Congresses. At a time when the news about the aspirations of Africans for self government was being ignored throughout most of the world, the American Negro Press gave full coverage to this subject.

In the pages of these newspapers we learned of the activities of outstanding African personalities stubbornly keeping alive the dream of eventual independence for all African nations.

The South African writer, Sol Plaatje and the trade unionist, Clement Kadalie made tours of the United States in 1927 and 1928. Now the story of Africa's struggles was brought directly to us by two able Africans. This occasion went unnoticed by all, except the American Negro Press.

From the reports on the Pan-African Congress we learned of other Africans of caliber. Dr. J. E. K. Aggrey had lived in the United States for a number of years and returned to the Gold Coast (now Ghana). The career of his fellow countryman, the Honorable Casely Hayford had been well reported in the American Negro Press. Again from the Pan-African Congress reports the names of Blaise Diagne, of French West Africa, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, Paul Panda of the Belgian Congo and Rene Maran of French Equatorial Africa, became identified with Africa's awakening.

The coverage of news relating to Africa was revitalized by the American Negro Press during the Italian-Ethiopian War. In the reporting of this conflict the American Negro Press was fortunate in having at least two reporters who had been well schooled in African History in particular and World History in general. In his dispatches from Ethiopia, J. A. Rogers gave an astute analyses to the Pittsburgh Courier, of the war, together with a commentary on the political intrigues in Europe that led to this conflict. Later, in a small book, "The Real Facts About Ethiopia," he digested his reports and produced the most revealing document of the Italian-Ethiopian War that has so far appeared in print.

Dr. Willis N. Huggins, a high school history teacher, author of a remarkable

book "Introduction to African Civilizations," went to Geneva and reported on the League of Nations meetings concerning the Italian-Ethiopian War, for the Chicago *Defender*. Here again the American Negro Press in its coverage of African news was fortunate to have on the scene of conflict a keen observer who could see through the subterfuge and pretenses of European powers in their frantic schemes to keep their African colonies. Both Rogers and Huggins saw behind and beyond the headlines and foretold the future repercussions of Ethiopia's betrayal. Their reports were a highwater mark in American Negro journalism.

While the coverage of African news by the American Negro Press was increasing, in the years since the Italian-Ethiopian War, the caliber of this coverage was sadly declining. Today, most of the news about Africa that appears in the Negro Press, consists of press release handouts from the various colonial Information Centers, re-written news items from white newspapers, and an occasional article or group of articles by a nonjournalist traveler, recently returned from a trip to Africa. Very little on the scene and behind the scene coverage of African news is being done. The few exceptions I will mention later.

The coverage of African news by the American Negro Press was accelerated when the rise of independence movements in Africa became international news. This acceleration reached some kind of ceremonious plateau the week the Gold Coast gained its independence and took back its ancient name, Ghana. The occasion was well observed by the American Negro Press. Most of the major Negro papers published special supplements, saluting the new state of Ghana.

For many years the Pittsburgh Courier has been ahead of all other Negro newspapers in its coverage of news relating to Africa. Their special supplement of the occasion of Ghana's independence was the most intelligently edited of the many that were published. In an article, "Ghana . . . The Empire in the Sudan," George S. Schuyler wrote a capsule history of the old Empire of Ghana and briefly appraised the significant events leading to the establishment of the new state. In other articles by J. A. Rogers, Marguerite Cartwright, and the editor of the Courier, the history and importance of the new state were presented in a manner that could be understood by readers who had no prior knowledge of the subject matter.

Here again an American Negro newspaper proved that it was capable of presenting African news on a high journalistic level. Unfortunately the American Negro Press has never been consistent in maintaining this high standard.

The largest Negro newspaper published locally, in New York City, The Amsterdam News, did not do as well as the Courier in its Ghana Independence Supplement, lacking the experienced writers on Africa that the Pittsburgh Courier has nearly always had. Their writer picked at and wrote about the subject, without showing any real understanding of it. His contribution lost my interest when he digressed in his article in order to explain how a Ghanaian male persuades a Ghanaian female to say "yes" to that ancient and obvious question.

The flurry of interest in African news continued somewhat abated. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of Ghana, became a national hero to the American Negroes, who were presently very short of heroes. Now he has a place in the right side of our heart, alongside Martin Luther King.

The Pittsburgh Courier continued to lead all other Negro newspapers in its coverage of African news, particularly in reporting the news as it relates to African history.

From September 7, 1957 to March 8, 1958, the Courier published a twenty-seven week series of articles under the title: "Famous African Chiefs." This was the longest series of this nature ever to appear in an American Negro newspaper. This series of articles were drawn from a completed book: "The Lives of Great African Chiefs." The book con-

sists of twenty-one short biographies of outstanding African Chiefs whose lives and activities have influenced the direction of African history in the years between the early part of the 18th century to the middle of the 20th century.

Now permit me to digress long enough to make one thing clear: commendable as the Pittsburgh Courier may be, I do not mean to imply that its coverage of African news is adequate. There is no really adequate coverage of African news by any newspaper in this country.

In the November 16, 1957 issue of the Courier another impressive Special Supplement was published on Africa. All the material for this supplement, except an article, "Africa's Peaceful Revolution" by George S. Schuyler, was prepared by the French Press and Information Service here in New York City. This supplement was informative in spite of being completely pro-French. After reading this one-sided recitation on the "achievement" of the French in Africa, an uninformed person could easily conclude that the French imperialists were angels who came to Africa to bring milk and honey. A well informed person could easily conclude that this was not the case. The major weakness of the American Negro Press in its coverage of African news is plainly shown in the publication of this supplement. All too often, news relating to Africa is published without question, examination or analysis.

In May 1958 the pro-French leaning of the Pittsburgh Courier was continued in a more direct way. George S. Schuyler, New York editor of the Courier made a tour through the French colonies in West Africa and wrote a series of revealing articles, titled: "In Brightest Africa." To me the articles revealed among other things: The French were obviously paying Mr. Schuyler's traveling bill and he was obviously seeing what they wanted him to see.

Once more, French imperialism was washed whiter than snow. I traveled through some of the same colonies last summer, paying my own traveling bill, and my eyes saw an entirely different picture. There is much to admire in French colonial administration and much to abhor; and snow is figuratively and literally whiter than anything I saw.

Another major weakness of the American Negro Press in its coverage of African news is the lack of a dynamic approach in presenting the African story. Indeed, they view with alarm as the unpredictable Africans move rapidly from one stage of transition to another. This alarm should be converted into a new and dynamic journalism that will present the story of emergent Africa in a manner that will summon both attention and respect.

First the standard setters of the American Negro Press will have to learn what makes a good African story. New and more interesting ways must be found to tell the African story, which indeed is the story of the new age of man.

A case in point: Last year Tshekedi Khama, son of the great Bechuana Chief of the same name died in London where he had gone for medical treatment. The name Tshekedi Khama has been in the news at regular intervals for more than twenty-five years. In addition to being the son of one of the greatest men born in Southern Africa, Tshekedi Khama was an able and defiant African leader who lived under British rule without ever really accepting it.

In 1933 Tshekedi Khama tried and punished a misbehaving Englishman for molesting some Bechuana girls. The incident made headlines around the world. The thought of a white man being tried and punished by an African, in an African court, shook the then prevailing colonial structure. Tshekedi's tribe, the Bamangwata, and others in Bechuanaland, were on the brink of revolution. The British muddled through this crisis by slapping Tshekedi's wrist lightly and carefully. Their reprimand was tantamount to a retreat.

After the passing of this crisis, Tshekedi Khama resumed his responsibilities as Paramount Chief of the Bamangwata

Tribe of Bechuanaland—following in the footsteps of his distinguished father. In the years that followed, he developed into one of the most able tribal rulers in all Africa. When he objected to his nephew's, Seretse Khama's, marriage to an English girl, he was back in trouble again, and back in the headlines.

The death of this outstanding African personality went almost unnoticed by the American Negro Press. This is what I meant when I said: "The standard sitters of the American Negro Press do not seem to know what makes a good African story." In addition to needing a new way to evaluate the African story, they also need a new way to re-evaluate the relations between the emergent African and the status of the people of African descent in the Western World.

Admittedly, the American Negro Press in its coverage of African news have been more consistent and thorough than any other news media in the United States—all the more reason why their present inadequacy cannot be excused. The African story is bigger than all the story tellers, and it is forever changing. No one is expected to tell it as well as it needs to be told. The many dimensions of the African story have made the collective efforts of all of its present day interpreters appear like a mole hill that leaves a mountain to be desired.

New Dimensions of An Old Struggle

Black Power and Black History

BY JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

It is not really a "Negro revolution" that is upsetting the country. What is upsetting the country is a sense of its own identity. If, for example, one managed to change the curriculum in all the schools so that Negroes learned more about themselves and their real contributions to this culture, you would be liberating not only Negroes, you'd be liberating white people who know nothing about their own history. And the reason is that if you are compelled to lie about one aspect of anybody's history, you must lie about it all. If you have to lie about my real role here, if you have to pretend that I hoed all that cotton just because I loved you, then you have done something to yourself. You are mad.

—James Baldwin from "A Talk to Teachers," December 1963

FIGURATIVELY speaking, the concept of Black Power and Black History are twins that were fathered by the same historical experience. This concept was created to counteract another concept: that the people of African descent had no history worthy of respect. The Europeans who started the slave trade and the colonial system that followed needed to propagate this concept in order to justify their action.

The present-day young black militants are asking, in many ways, why the word *history* is so limited when it is applied to their people. They are beginning to learn (belatedly) that history, depending on how it is manipulated, can be either an instrument of oppression or of liberation. In most cases, what is called "African History" is only the history of Africa's contact with Europe, beginning with the slave trade. What is called "Negro History" is generally the history of American slavery and subsequent effects.

The Europeans who started the slave trade in the fifteenth century had to forget—or pretend to forget—all they had previously known about Africa's contribution to the development of mankind.

The present-day Black Power and Black History advocates are trying to restore what the slave trade and the system of economic oppression took away. Their fight has long roots and it was not started by Stokely Carmichael or H. Rap Brown.

In a formal sense the concept of Black Power started in the nineteenth century, concurrent with the many attempts to restore Black men to an honorable place in history. The concept of Black Power confuses most people because they are looking for a complicated system. Black Power means no more or less than the right to determine your own destiny, starting with the control of your own communities. This is the same thing that every ethnic group in America has—or is trying to get. Black Power without a respect for Black History is meaningless. Until the essential manhood of a people is respected, no power in their hands is effective.

In a speech made in Cuba last year, Stokely Carmichael, while addressing himself to the subject "Black Power and The Third World," said this:

> Since 1966, the cry of the rebellions has been "Black Power." In this cry, there was an ideology implied which the masses understood instinctively. It is because we are powerless that we are oppressed and it is only with power that we can make the decisions governing our lives and our communities. . . . Black Power is more than a slogan; it is a way of looking at our problems and the beginning of a solution. Because our color has been used as a weapon to oppress us, we must use our color as a weapon of liberation. This is the same as other people using their nationality as a weapon for their liberation. . . . This coming together around our race was an inevitable part of our struggle. We recognize, however, that this is not the totality, only the necessary beginning.

Then, while emphasizing the need for the cultural restoration of a people he said:

> Black Power recognizes that while we are made to feel inferior, this is only that we can be easily exploited. Color and culture were and are key in our oppression, therefore our analysis of history and our economic analysis are rooted in these concepts. With power we will take our birthright, because it was with power that our birthright was taken from us. . . . Black Power not only addresses itself to exploitation, but to the problem of cultural integrity.

The nineteenth century black militants, and some before them, were saying essentially the same thing in different ways.

The fight against the distortion and suppression of the true history of the Africans and Afro-Americans was started long before the Civil War by "free Negroes" and escaped slaves who had learned to read and write.

The back-to-Africa idea has been a recurring theme in the lives of Black Americans for more than a hundred years. The thought was strong during the formative years of the Colonization Society and some of the most outstanding Black men of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries came under its persuasion. In the middle of the nineteenth century, while the issue of slavery was being debated in most of the country, the feeling for Africa among American blacks was growing stronger. Publications like Freedoms' Journal and Douglass Monthly, edited by Frederick Douglass, called attention to the plight of the people of Africa as well as the Black Americans.

As far back as 1881, the renowned scholar and benefactor of West Africa, Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden, speaking on the occasion of his inauguration as President of Liberia College, sounded the note for the organized teaching of the culture and civilization of Africa and decried the fact that the world's image of Africa was not in keeping with Africa's true status in world history. I quote from his address on this occasion:

> The people generally are not yet prepared to understand their own interests in the great work to be done for themselves and their children. We shall be obliged to work for some time to come not only without the popular sympathy we ought to have but with utterly inadequate resources.
>
> In all English-speaking countries the mind of the intelligent Negro child revolts against the descriptions of the Negro given in elementary books, geographies, travels, histories. . . .
>
> Having embraced or at least assented to these falsehoods about himself, he concludes that his only hope of rising in the scale of respectable manhood is to strive for what is most unlike himself and most alien to his peculiar tastes. And whatever his literary attainments or acquired ability, he fancies that he must grind at the mill which is provided for him, putting in material furnished by his hands, bringing no contribution from his own field; and of course nothing comes out but what is put in.

The great human drama now being called "The Black Revolution in the U.S.A." has long historical roots, and it cannot be fully understood until it is seen in this context. In his 1944 book, *Capitalism and Slavery,*

Dr. Eric Williams places the origin of this Revolution in historical perspective and calls attention to its early development:

> When, in 1492, Columbus, representing the Spanish monarchy, discovered the New World, he set in train the long and bitter international rivalry over colonial possessions for which, after four and a half centuries, no solution has yet been found. Portugal, which had initiated the movement of international expansion, claimed the new territories on the ground that they fell within the scope of a papal bull of 1455 authorizing her to reduce to servitude all infidel people. The two powers (Spain and Portugal), to avoid controversy, sought arbitration and, as Catholics, turned to the Pope —a natural and logical step in an age when the universal claims of the Papacy were still unchallenged by individuals and governments. After carefully sifting the rival claims, the Pope issued, in 1493, a series of papal bulls which established a line of demarcation between the colonial possessions of the states: The East went to Portugal and the West went to Spain.

Though the announcement of the fact came much later, the European "scramble for Africa" and subsequently, Asia and North America, started with this act. The labor and raw materials of Africa, Asia, South America and the West Indies financed the European Industrial Revolution.

The Africans who were brought to the New World against their will were dehumanized, and in most cases, deculturalized. They were neither respected Africans nor accepted New World Americans. They were renamed, and became a marginal branch of the human family now referred to as Negroes. The Europeans needed a rationale for their actions and a rationale was created with supporting concepts. The cruelest concept ever devised by the mind of man was created to support the slave trade and the colonial system that followed—the concept of race and the assumption that there are superior and inferior races. The Africans were depicted as a people without a history who had never properly handled power and who, certainly, had made no contribution to the development of human cultures. And thus the seeds of the present-day conflict were planted.

The American Federation of Teachers' Conference on "Racism in Education" held in Washington, D. C. on December 8, 9, and 10, 1966, set in motion much of the present action and the debate about Black History and how it should be taught in the public schools.

The noted actor, Ossie Davis, addressed the conference on the first day. His opening remarks were: "Those of us who are concerned, who are caught up, who really want to be involved in the revolution, must be prepared at this conference to tear aside our most private thoughts and prejudices. . . ."

The tone for the conference had been set. For two days more than 1,500 teachers and educators examined and indicated the American educational system. They were told that a curtain of ignorance hangs over the school systems of this nation and that our children are not being educated to face the realities of this nation and this world. Cases of deliberate distortion of the role that the Black Americans have played in the making of this country were pointed out. And it was further stated that everyone from professional textbook writers to missionaries had participiated in this distortion.

Ossie Davis cited the English language as a basic transmitter of prejudice. In his speech entitled, "The English Language is My Enemy," he said that he counted 120 synonyms for the term "blackness" in Roget's Thesaurus, half of which were grossly unfavorable.

Davis argued that right from the time a black child learns the English language he learns 60 ways to despise himself, and a white child learns 60 ways to aid and abet the crime.

Keith E. Baird, a New York school teacher, who followed Ossie Davis, talked about the importance of ethnic identification for Afro-Americans. Mr. Baird, who is a teacher of languages, spoke of the respected place in history, as celebrated in the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah of the Maccabees of Biblical times. He also pointed out that in the process of ethnic identification, not only a person's individual attributes are considered, but the "cultural identification of this group."

Baird presented to the conference a resolution that he urged it to adopt, the wording of which was:

> To say that the slavery-connected word "Negro" should be abandoned, and in its place the words "Afro" or "African-American" be applied to persons of African descent in the United States in all places where such reference to ethnic descent is appropriate.

At a later conference session concerning resolutions, this one was unanimously adopted.

In his presentation, Mr. Baird had defined what the cry for Black History is about—it is about the search for a people's identity and their need for a new image of themselves. The Black Americans are trying to locate themselves on the map of human geography. This explains the growing preference for the words "Black African" and "Afro-American". These words show how the Black Americans relate to a land, a history and a culture.

In a number of other conferences sponsored by the local branches of the American Federation of Teachers and the UFT, the teachers agreed on plans to implement courses in Black History. The main conferences were held in Detroit (May 11-13, 1967) and in Chicago (March 22-24, 1968), and conferences in Denver and St. Louis followed. While many of the white teachers clearly admitted that racism is rampant in the American educational system, very few of them had any basic plan concerning what to do about it. Their reluctance to commit themselves to the correction of this racism caused a lot of black teachers to form separate organizations, some within the framework of the American Federation of Teachers and the UFT. The Chicago Black Teachers' Caucus was one. In New York City the Afro-American Teachers' Association was another.

Still another organization, the Conference of Afro-American Educators, which met in Chicago in June 1968, shows the best potential of becoming a nation-wide force to affect change in the educational system. At this conference Donald Freeman, who renamed himself Baba Lamumba, defined education as it relates to black people:

> What we understand by education is the application of all one's knowledge for the benefit of the collective which in turn will benefit each individual within the collective. To this end what must constitute a basic part of one's education is the understanding of people rather than things. We realize that once people understand themselves, their knowledge of things is facilitated, that the exclusive knowledge of things does not guarantee knowledge of people and in fact contributes to the erosion, disintegration, and destruction of the creativity of man.
>
> Therefore, education must (1) teach Black people who they are, (2) teach Black people what they are fighting for, (3) teach Black people who they must identify with, (4) teach Black people where their loyalty must lie, (5) teach Black people what must be done, (6) teach Black people how to do it, and (7) teach Black people that the destinies of all Black people are inseparably linked whether we are in North, Central, or South America, the West Indies, Europe, Asia, or Africa.

Broadening his explanation, Mr. Freeman continued:

> Now, there must be a complete unity of all aspects of one's life and in particular education must be indelibly linked with one's life processes for the benefit of each Black man and woman and all Black people. Those who have knowledge primarily from books must be linked with those who have knowledge from the streets and vice versa to confront and solve all the problems of Black people. Education must assure that all of what one learns can be and will be applied to concrete practical problems and their solutions. If our people can throw molotov cocktails in white stores, we can certainly throw molotov cocktails in our minds. Mathematics, physics, electronics, sociology, religion and other sciences must not be viewed as abstractions, but comprehended as the concentrated experiences of man's inter-relationships with man, nature, and the universe to mold and control his own destiny.

It is obvious that the American educational establishment is not ready to correct itself and implement these suggestions that it would consider extreme. This would not only be tantamount to correcting itself, it would also be tantamount to repudiating itself. At the base of the grievance of the Black teachers and growing numbers of black people is the fact that they have been educated or miseducated in a system that has yet to acknowledge that they are an integral part of American or Western Civilization. Both the clamor for Black Power and Black History are the clamor of people to enter the mainstream of a society and to institute dynamic social reform—or to replace that society. The most far-reaching reforms will be in the field of education. Control is the key word in the school situation because it implies power to act in one's best interest at a time and a place of one's choosing. The educational establishment could digest or tolerate decentralization because the school system would still be run in the main by the educational establishment, which is a force operating outside of the local community. When community control is added to decentralization, a whole new area of power is defined. This means that the community will have the right to hire and fire teachers and to control the massive budget of the school system that is now a major American industry.

In an address in Ann Arbor, Michigan on May 25, 1968, Dr. Grace Boggs said in effect that the question of Black control of the schools has now become a question of survival for all black people. Urban school systems are disintegrating before their eyes to the point where their actual physical and mental safety are at stake. Black children and their parents have lost the traditional respect for the teachers and prin-

cipals of their schools because of the growing alienation between the school and the community. The mass media, principally television, have taught these children to become suspicious of most large establishments, especially police forces and governmental agencies that make promises which they do not keep.

Many of the white teachers in the large educational systems in cities like New York, Detroit, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Los Angeles, come to the system with preconceived notions about the ability of the Black child to learn. Instead of teaching him they spend a lot of time convincing themselves that the children are unteachable. They do not bring their best teaching ability to these communities because they do not respect the children or the community well enough to do so. In addition to being poor teachers for the Black community, these teachers are not even good baby-sitters. In a lot of cases they are arrogant, unfulfilled and insecure people, long overdue for analysis. Very often the Black child and the Black community become whipping-boys for their neuroses. Community control would mean that these teachers can be transferred or fired, once their lack of qualifications have been proven.

There is no attempt to drive all white teachers out of any Black community. However, teachers who fall within the above description will not be secure under any form of community control.

Keith E. Baird, director of the Afro-American History and Cultural Unit of the Board of Education, gave the following explanation of decentralization and community control at the Summer Forum at Columbia University in August of 1968 on the Black Experience.

> I am going to talk about decentralization in the public schools and its implications. I use the term "decentralization" largely because it is the one that is generally used. Now, most words that begin with this prefix "de-" suggest a kind of fall from grace, and I think that discussion about the changes that are being sought in the school system suffer somewhat from this semantic difficulty. I rejoice, however, to see that in this booklet the "Decentralization" means re-forming the present school system in New York City into largely autonomous school districts, joined with the central education agency into a city-wide federation.
>
> Now this is a fairly decent and workable definition, but what does it actually mean in terms of the "Black Experience," the context in which we have come together to discuss this matter? We seem to have two separate questions before us: "decentralization" and "community control." Of course, the two are not necessarily mu-

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tually exclusive: you can have decentralization without having community control and you can have community control without having decentralization.

Now there is no problem about white people controlling the schools, because that, of course, is what has always happened. The schools are run by white people: the majority of the teachers are white, and the people who administer the schools are in great part white. Thus we have what are essentially white schools, reflecting white interests, a white self-concept, and white culture. The question of community control comes in because certain enclaves, certain new ethnic enclaves, will now be having greater control, or at any rate be in a better position to exercise control over the schools their children go to—provided, of course, that the rules and regulations of the New York City Board of Education actually permit this to happen.

Thus we come to what is really the crux of the situation, namely, the control of schools in Afro-American and Puerto Rican areas by the Afro-American and Puerto Rican communities, particularly because these communities have not been significantly represented until now at the policy-making level in educational affairs. What community control boils down to is simply this: are we or are we not going to let Black people and Puerto Rican people really tell teachers what to do? Especially, tell white teachers what to do? And so on. That is really what this whole thing boils down to, and we may as well face up to it.

Because most of decentralization and community control talk in New York City is centered around I. S. 201 in Harlem and Ocean Hill Brownsville in Brooklyn, it would be well to show the essence of the background of this conflict.

The crucial issue of the I. S. 201 controversy is the poor quality of education in ghettos such as Harlem.

From the first through the twelfth grade, an increasingly larger proportion of ghetto youth perform below their grade level in reading and math. Eighty-seven percent of the pupils in the Harlem school district are below grade level. Better than two-thirds of the pupils drop out before graduation from high school. Daniel Schreiber, the former assistant superintendent of District 4, in which I. S. 201 is located, verified these figures.

The parents of school district 4 were willing to accept the promise

of the Board of Education that integration would help solve the problem of poor education for their children.

When 201 was proposed as a junior high school as far back as 1958, parents objected on the grounds that construction of a school at the proposed site would create another segregated school. As late as 1965, Dr. Bernard Donavan maintained that 201 would be an integrated school. He even alluded to having the school related to a University, accompanied by special programs. By February of 1966, Daniel Schreiber maintained that 201 would be integrated, but by this time, "integrated" had come to mean representative groups of black and Puerto Rican children.

As early as March 28, community representatives were demanding the establishment of a community group to which teachers would be responsible in addition to the demand for an integrated school. Parents' opposition to the Board of Education's response (or lack of response) to these demands canceled the scheduled opening of 201 for the spring term of 1966. The school district was gerrymandered without the consultation of the community to create a student body of Puerto Ricans and Negroes.

"Integration" gives way to "quality education." By the end of the summer, the Board of Education had to admit that it had no plan for truly integrating I. S. 201. The parents, realizing that the Board of Education had no intention of integrating the schools of Harlem, focused attention on the basic problem of improving the quality of education in Harlem with the realization that it would in reality have to be segregated.

There is agreement between the parents and the Board of Education that the Board has failed to integrate the Harlem schools. There is also agreement between the parents and the Board that the quality of education in Harlem is low. The disagreement lies in the means used to improve the quality of education. The parents place the full responsibility of poor education in Harlem upon the Board of Education whose present structure they feel is incapable of providing or administering a quality educational system to meet the needs of the ghetto community. The composition of the board, how its members are selected and its source of power indicate the distance that exists between the body that makes educational policy and the community for whom the policy is made.

The Ocean Hill-Brownsville decentralization experiment in Brooklyn, New York was spoiled by success. The Local School Board, consisting mainly of parents from the community, took their jobs seriously and asked that a number of teachers who they deemed incompetent be transferred. This move seemed to have shocked and angered both the Board of Education and the head of the United Federation of Teachers. This

abrupt exercising of power by the Local School Board and their Unit Administrator came unexpectedly.

The two large black ghettos of Brooklyn merge at Ocean Hill. Its inhabitants include a growing number of Puerto Ricans. Nothing of a dynamic nature was expected of these slumdwellers.

In September 1966, the controversy around I. S. 201 in Harlem had a profound effect on the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school district. That month a group of parents in Harlem demanded that the Board of Education respect their right to select the principal for I. S. 201. These parents were asking, for the first time, to have a voice in the administration of the schools in their community. The contagious cry for community control was now spreading beyond Harlem. It did not bypass the Ocean Hill-Brownsville School District in Brooklyn.

After some protracted agitation, the Board of Education allowed the people of Ocean Hill to form an administrative unit, with the understanding that the Board would relinquish some of its authority to this unit. The Administrative Unit and the local Governing Board succeeded and began to exercise the authority that the Board of Education never thought it would use. This is the basis of their trouble with the Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers.

The dispute between the people of Ocean Hill-Brownsville on one side and the Board of Education and United Federation of Teachers on the other side might well be a sad indication of what will soon be a national crisis in education. The cry for Black Power and Black History has rekindled a long smoldering fire that will, no doubt, affect major changes in the educational, political and economic structure of the United States.

John Henrik Clarke, author of the article, "Black Power and Black History," is a writer and lecturer of wide exposure and experience, an editor of Freedomways magazine, and the compiler and editor of several anthologies, including *American Negro Short Stories*. He recently collaborated with two other editors in a book about Brother Malcolm, *Malcolm X: The Man and His Time*.

The Alienation of James Baldwin

BY John Henrik Clarke

The now flourishing talent of James Baldwin had no easy birth, and he did not emerge overnight, as some of his new discoverers would have you believe. For years this talent was in incubation in the ghetto of Harlem, before he went to Europe nearly a decade ago in an attempt to discover the United States and how he and his people relate to it. The book in which that discovery is portrayed, *The Fire Next Time* (New York: Dial Press, 1963), is a continuation of his search for place and definition.

The hardships of that search were recently described by Sterling Stuckey, Chairman of the Committee of Negro Culture and History:

> The tragedy of the American Negro is born of the twin evils of the slave experience and varying patterns of segregation, supported by law and custom, that have been nation-wide in dimension for a century. The consequences of the Negro's quasi freedom, unfolded against a grim backdrop of two and a half centuries of slavery, have been no less destructive to his spiritual world—his hierarchy of values and his image of himself—than to his every day world of work.

This quasi freedom of the Negro is often more humiliating than slavery and more difficult to fight, because it gives the Negro the illusion of freedom while denying him the fact. Thus the Negro continues his alien status in a country where his people have lived for more than three hundred years. *The Fire Next Time*, like most of Baldwin's writings, is about this alienation.

Two essays, one long and one short, make up the book. The short essay, "My Dungeon Shook," originally appeared in the *Progressive* magazine. The long essay, "Down at the Cross," originally appeared in the *New Yorker* under the title, "Letter From a Region in My Mind," and the issue in which it came out is now a collector's item.

Baldwin more than any other writer of our times, has succeeded in restoring the personal essay to its place as a form of creative literature. From his narrow vantage point of personal grievance, he has opened a "window on the world." He plays the role traditionally assigned to thinkers concerned with the improvement of human conditions—that of alarmist. He calls our attention to things in our society that need to be corrected and things that need to be celebrated. The narrowness of his vantage point is no assurance that he is right or wrong; nor does it negate the importance of what he is saying. The oppressed person is the best authority on his oppression.

Racism in the United States has forced every Negro into a prolonged and pathetic war. He is either at war against his oppression or against the weakness within himself that frustrates his ability to participate in this war effectively. The saddest participants in this war for mental and physical survival and basic human dignity are those Negroes who think that they are removed from it—those who live with the illusion that they have been integrated. The limitation and uniqueness of Baldwin's vantage point is that he is addressing his audience from the war zone.

The first essay, subtitled "Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation," is Baldwin's advice to a young relative entering the area of racial conflict on the anniversary of the proclamation that is supposed to have set his people free. The thrust of the author's eloquent anger is deep.

> This innocent country set you down in a ghetto in which, in fact, it intended that you should perish. Let me spell out precisely what I mean by that, for the heart of the matter is here, and the root of my dispute with my country. You were born where you were born and faced the future that you faced because you were black and for no other reason. The limits of your ambition were, thus, expected to be set forever. You were born into a society which spelled out with brutal clarity, and in as many ways as possible, that you were a worthless human being. You were not expected to aspire to excellence: you were expected to make peace with mediocrity.
>
> Wherever you have turned, James, in your short time on this earth, you have been told where you could go and what you could do (and how you could do it) and where you could live and whom you could marry. I know your countrymen do not agree with me about this, and I hear them saying, "You exaggerate." They do not know Harlem, and I do. So do you. Take no one's word for anything, including mine—but trust your experience. Know whence you came. If you know whence you came, there is really no limit to where you can go.

This is close to the root of the matter. The Negro was not brought to the United States to be given democracy. When the promise of democracy was made, it was not made to him, and this is the main reason why the growth of democracy in this nation is retarded. Nonetheless, Baldwin advises his nephew not to despair:

> You came from sturdy, peasant stock, men who picked cotton and dammed rivers and built railroads, and in the teeth of the most terrifying odds, achieved an unassailable and monumental dignity. You came from a long line of poets, some of the greatest poets since Homer. One of them said: "the very time I thought I was lost, my dungeon shook and my chains fell off." You know, and I know that the country is celebrating one hundred years of freedom one hundred years too soon.

The long essay, "Down at the Cross," is brilliantly written, though much too long and involved for the meagerness of its message. In essence, it consists of Baldwin's reflections on growing up in Harlem and on how this ghetto upbringing influenced him. Baldwin's evaluation of the Black Muslims and their leader, Elijah Muhammad, tells us more about the author than about his subject. As a guest in the home of Muhammad, he seems to have vacillated between personal attraction and ideological estrangement. He speaks of his host as follows:

> I felt that I was back in my father's house—as indeed, in a way, I was—and I told Elijah that I did not care if white and black people married and that I had many white friends. I would have no choice, if it came to it, but to perish with them, for (I said to myself, but not to Elijah) "I love a few people and they love me and some of them are white, and isn't love more important than color?"

But the people in control of the power structure of the United States have already answered Baldwin's question in the negative. This answer is one of the main reasons for the existence of the Black Muslims, for in spite of all that can justifiably be said against them, they have found what most Negroes are still searching for—a way of reclaiming their dignity as human beings.

Baldwin is a highly regarded intellectual, the most honored Negro writer since Richard Wright. Yet the word struggle, inseparable from the existence of the Negro people, rarely appears in his work, nor as a novelist has he yet created a single Negro character who attains stature in a fight against his condition. Neither does he show any awareness of the economic base for oppression. These are serious limitations in a man hailed by many as the spokesman for his people.

There is a tangential aspect of Baldwin that requires brief comment. That is the cult of white followers that has grown up around him. These disciples flock to all his public appearances as to

some masochistic ceremony of penance. It is as though they cry out: "Oh, Jimmy, punish us for the sins we have committed against your people." Tears yes, actions never. For them Baldwin has become a sponge, soaking up the wastes of their conscience. In fairness to Baldwin, one must say that this cult is not of his making nor is it under his control.

A lot of people are hearing Baldwin's words but missing his message. What the Negro wants is justice, not sympathy; and if justice is not forthcoming, there may well be "the fire next time"—and sooner than we think.

Paul Robeson, the Artist as Activist and Social Thinker

BY John Henrik Clarke

Paul Robeson was indeed more than an artist, activist and freedom fighter. The dimensions of his talent made him our Renaissance man. He was the first American artist, Black or White, to realize that the role of the artist extends far beyond the stage and the concert hall. Early in his life he became conscious of the plight of his people, stubbornly surviving in a racist society. This was his window on the world. From this vantage point he saw how the plight of his people related to the rest of humanity. He realized that the artist had the power, and the responsibility, to change the society in which he lived. He learned that art and culture are weapons in a people's struggle to exist with dignity, and in peace. Life offered him many options and he never chose the easiest one. For most of his life he was a man walking against the wind. An understanding of his beginning and how he developed artistically and politically, will reveal the nature of his mission and the importance of the legacy of participation in struggle that we have inherited from him.

He was born, April 9, 1898, at a time of great crisis for his people. When he died, January 23, 1976, his people were still in a crisis, partly of a different nature, and partly the same crisis that they faced in the closing years of the nineteenth century, when Paul Robeson was born. He was born three years after Booker T. Washington made his famous Atlanta Exposition address, 1895, and two years after the Supreme Court announced a decision in the Plessy versus Ferguson Case, in which the concept of "Separate but Equal" facilities for Black Americans became law. Of course the separateness never produced any equalness. The time and the decision did produce some of the problems that Paul Robeson would address himself to in later years.

His early years were strengthened by binding family ties. They were not easy years. He recalled those years and reflected on their meaning in the introductory issue of the newspaper *Freedom*, November 1950.

> "My father was of slave origin," he said. "He reached as honorable a position as a Negro could under these circumstances, but soon after I was born he lost his church and poverty was my beginning. Relatives from my father's North Carolina family took me in, a motherless orphan, while my father went to new fields to begin again in a corner grocery store. I slept four in a bed, ate the nourishing greens and cornbread.
>
> Many times I stood on the very soil on which my father was a slave, where some of my cousins were sharecroppers and unemployed tobacco workers. I reflected upon the wealth bled from my near relatives alone, and of the very basic wealth of all this America beaten out of millions of Negro people, enslaved, freed, newly enslaved until this very day."

He grew to early manhood during the Booker T. Washington era. He made his professional debut at the Harlem YMCA in 1920, in a play, "Simon, the Cyrenian," by Redgely Torrence. The play was about an Ethiopian who steps out of a crowd to help a tired and haggard Jesus Christ carry his cross up Calvary Hill to be crucified. His role in this play was symbolic of his commitment to just causes and to oppressed people, the world over, the rest of his life. This dimension of his life is the main focus of this paper. He was not persecuted, denied a passport and attacked at Peekskill because he

was a world famous concert singer and activist.

Many of his persecutors admired him in these capacities. He was persecuted, denied a passport and attacked at Peekskill because he was an artist and activist who used his art and his personality to call for change in the society in which he lived. This was not a late development in his life. He grew to manhood observing the need for change.

Paul Robeson attended elementary and high school in Westfield and Somerville, New Jersey. He won a four-year scholarship to Rutgers College and entered in the fall of 1915. Only two other Black students had attended the school since its founding in 1776. Robeson's achievements in both scholarship and athletics at Rutgers were extraordinary. He won Phi Beta Kappa honors in his junior year, was valedictorian of his graduation class, and was the debating champion in all of his four years.

Although he was initially brutalized by his own team-mates when he tried out for the football team, he survived to become one of the greatest football players of all time. Walter Camp selected Robeson as his first-team All-America end for two years—1977 and 1918, and he was named on all important "consensus" All-America teams for both those years. Robeson was also a great all-round athlete, winning a total of 15 varsity letters in football, basketball, baseball and track.

In May of 1918 Reverend Robeson died, Paul's relatives and his football coach, Foster Sanford, were especially helpful to him during the trying time immediately after his father's death. Following his graduation in 1919, Paul went to live in Harlem and entered Columbia Law School, from which he graduated in 1923. To pay his way through law school, Paul played professional football on weekends, first with Fritz Pollard on the Akron, Ohio team in 1920 and 1921, and then with Milwaukee in 1922. In 1921, he met and married Eslanda Cardozo Goode, a brilliant young woman who was the first Black analytical chemist at Columbia Medical Center. Their marriage lasted forty-four years until Eslanda's death in 1965.

In the early 1920's Paul Robeson joined the Provincetown Players in Greenwich Village. This brought him to the attention of the American Playwright, Eugene O'Neil who selected him for the lead in his play, "All God's Children Got Wings." His performance in this play established his importance in the American Theatre. In 1924, he was in another Eugene O'Neil play, "The Emperor Jones." By 1925, he was known both in England and in the United States as an actor and as a concert singer. Lawrence Brown, who accompanied him during his first concert in 1925, remained with him for twenty-five years.

In these years following the First World War, Black Americans were discovering themselves, their culture and their history. Thousands of Black soldiers had returned from the war in Europe to face unemployment, bad housing and lynchings. The Universal Negro Improvement Association led by Marcus Garvey, and the intellectual movement called The Harlem Literary Renaissance reached their respective highs during this period. The years of the nineteen-twenties were proving grounds for Paul Robeson's development as an artist and a responsible person.

Many of the roles that Paul Robeson played in America were repeated in the theatres of London. It has been reported his political ideas took shape after George Bernard Shaw introduced him to the concept of socialism in 1928. This may be partly true about his political ideas in a formal sense, though his social awareness started before this time. His first visit to the Soviet Union in 1934 had a more profound influence on the shaping of his political ideas and understanding. Later, he publicly expressed his belief in the principles of scientific socialism. It was his convictions that a socialist society represents an advance to a higher stage of life for all mankind. The rest of his life was a commitment to this conviction.

He spoke out against oppression where ever he saw it, and not just the oppression of his own people. He went to Spain during the Civil War in that country and sang for the Republican troops

and for the members of the International Brigades. This was part of a gathering of anti-Fascist forces who were in battle with the army of General Franco who was backed by Hitler and Mussolini. When Paul Robeson returned to the United States be expressed the belief that the war in Spain represented dangers for the world far beyond that country's borders.

"I saw the connection between the problems of all oppressed people and the necessity of the artist to participate fully," he said.

He opposed every form of racism in his own country; he was the first American artist to refuse to sing before a segregated audience. He spoke out against lynching, segregated theatres and eating places a generation before the beginning of what is referred to as the Black Revolution. He supported all organizations that he thought were working genuinely to improve the lot of his people and mankind.

In his book, *Robeson: Labor's Forgotten Champion*, (Balamp Publishing Co., Detroit, Mich., 1975), Dr. Charles H. Wright states that:

> "Robeson saw the struggle of the working classes of Spain in the same terms that he saw the struggles of the black man in the United States. He made this clear after he left Spain and embarked on a series of public appearances on behalf of the Republicans, both on the continent and in England. It was from the continent, probably the Spanish Embassy in Paris that he issued what became known as his Manifesto against Fascism."

The Manifesto reads, as follows:

> "Every artist, every scientist must decide, now, where he stands. He has no alternative. There are no impartial observers.
>
> Through the destruction, in certain countries, of man's literary heritage, through the propagation of false ideas of national and racial superiority, the artist, the scientist, the writer is challenged. This struggle invades the former cloistered halls of our universities and all her seats of learning.
>
> The battlefront is everywhere. There is no sheltered rear. The artist elects to fight for freedom or slavery.
>
> I have made my choice! I had no alternative!
>
> The history of the era is characterized by the degradation of my people. Despoiled of their lands, their culture destroyed, they are denied equal opportunity of the law and deprived of their rightful place in the respect of their fellows.
>
> Not through blind faith or through coercion, but conscious of my course, I take my place with you. I stand with you in unalterable support of the lawful government of Spain, duly and regularly chosen by its sons and daughters."

In January 1938 he visited Spain with his wife, Eslanda. Plans had already been made for him to sing to the troops in the International Abraham Lincoln Brigades.

This was not his introduction to the international aspects of the fight against Fascism. The Spanish Civil War started in June 1936, the Italian-Ethiopian War had started the year before. On December 20, 1937, Robeson had participated in a meeting on the Spanish Civil War at Albert Hall in London. This and other anti-fascist activity disenchanted the United States Department of State. This was probably the formal beginning of his harassment by that agency. This harassment would continue for another twenty years. In his writings and speeches, for most of the years of his active career, Paul Robeson was very explicit in explaining the motive and antecedents of his fight against every form of racism and oppression. At a Welcome Home Rally in Harlem, June19, 1949, he restated his

position and the nature of his commitment.

> "I have traveled many lands and I have sung and talked to many peoples. Wherever I appeared, whether in professional concert, at peace meetings, in the factories, at trade union gatherings, at the mining pits, at assemblies of representative colonial students from all over the world, always the greeting came: "Take back our affection, our love, our strength to the Negro people and to the members of the progressive movement of America."
>
> I was then, through my athletics and my university record, trying to hold up the prestige of my people; trying in the only way I knew to ease the path for future Negro boys and girls. And I am still in there slugging, yes, at another level, and you can bet your life that I shall battle every step of the way until conditions around these corners change and conditions change for the Negro people all up and down this land.
>
> The road has been long. The road has been hard. It began about as tough as I ever had it in Princeton, New Jersey, a college town of Southern aristocrats, who from Revolutionary time transferred Georgia to New Jersey. My brothers couldn't go to high school in Princeton. They had to go to Trenton, ten miles away. That's right—Trenton, of the "Trenton Six." My brother or I could have been one of the "Trenton Six."
>
> Almost every Negro in Princeton lived off the college and accepted the social status that went with it. We lived for all intents and purposes on a Southern plantation. And with no more dignity than that suggests all the bowing and scraping to the drunken rich, all the vile names, all the Uncle Tomming to earn enough to lead miserable lives."

He could not see himself accepting any form of Jim-Crow Americanism. He said in many ways he hated what American was, but he lived what it promised to be. He defended the stated higher ideals and potential of the United States while calling attention to the fact that the nation's promise to all people had not been kept.

> "And I defied," he said, "and I defy any part of this insolent, dominating America, however powerful; to challenge my Americanism; because by word and deed I challenge this vicious system to the death."

Paul Robeson would not let his public acceptance as an actor and singer, make him relax in comfort and forget the struggle for basic dignity still being waged by the rest of his people. On this point he said:

> "I refuse to let my personal success, as part of a fraction of one percent of the Negro people, to explain away the injustices to fourteen million of my people; because with all the energy at my command, I fight for the right of the Negro people and other oppressed labor-driven Americans to have decent homes, decent jobs, and the dignity that belongs to every human being!
>
> Somewhere in my childhood these feelings were planted. Perhaps when I resented being pushed off the sidewalk, when I saw my women being insulted, and especially when I saw my elder brother answer each insult with blows that sent would-be slave masters crashing to the stone sidewalks, even though jail was his constant reward. He never said it, but he told me day after day: "Listen to me, kid." (He loved me dearly.) "Don't you ever take it, as long as you live."

In my opinion, the artistic and political growth of Paul Robeson has its greatest stimulant during the

nineteen-thirties. Paul was always discovering something new in the human situation, and new dimensions in old things he already knew. He was, concurrently, both a student and a scholar, in pursuit of knowledge about the world's people and the conditions of their lives. Africa, its people and cultures were of special interest to him. In a note, dated 1936, included in his "Selected Writings," published by the Paul Robeson Archives, 1976, he makes this comment:

> "I am a singer and an actor. I am primarily an artist. Had I been born in Africa, I would have belonged, I hope, to that family which sings and chants the glories and legends of the tribe. I would have liked in my mature years to have been a wise elder, for I worship wisdom and knowledge of the ways of men."

His artistic strength was in his love for the history, songs, and for culture of his people. In this way he learned to respect the cultures of all people.

I an article published in the *Royal Screen Pictorial*, London, April 1935 he said:

> I am a Negro. The origin of the Negro is African. It would, therefore, seem an easy matter for me to assume African nationality… At present the younger generation of Negroes in America looks towards Africa and asks, "What is there to interest me? What of value has Africa to offer that the Western world cannot give me? … Their acknowledgement of their common origin, species, interest and attitudes binds Jew to Jew; a similar acknowledgement will bind Negro to Negro. I realize that this will not be accomplished by viewing from afar the dark rites of the witch doctor. It may be accomplished, or at least furthered, by patient inquiry. To this end I am learning Swahili, Twi, and other African dialects which come easily to me because their rhythm is the same as that employed by the American Negro in speaking English; and when the time is ripe, I propose to investigate on the spot the possibilities of such a regeneration as I have outlined. Meanwhile, in my music, my plays, my films. I want to carry always this central idea—to be African. Multitudes of men have died for less worthy ideals; it is more eminently worth living for.

This interest in Africa, started during his "London years" continued throughout the rest of his life; and very logically led to his participation in the development and leadership of organizations like the Council on African Affairs (1937–1955) and the National Negro Congress. In an article in his "Selected Writings," that was first published in *Fighting Talk*, April 1955, Paul Robeson speaks of his discovery of Africa in this way:

> I "discovered" Africa in London. That discovery—back in the twenties—profoundly influenced my life. Like most of Africa's children in America, I had known little about the land of our fathers. Both in England, where my career as an actor and singer took me, I came to know many Africans. Some of their names are now known to the world—Azikiwe, and Nkrumah, and Kenyatta, who has just been jailed for his leadership of the liberation struggles in Kenya.
>
> Many of these Africans were students, and I spent many hours talking with them and taking part in their activities at the West African Students Union building. Somehow they came to think of me as one of them; they took pride in my successes; and they made Mrs. Robeson and me honorary members of the Union.
>
> Besides these students, who were mostly of princely origin, I also came to know another class of African—the seamen in the ports of London, Liverpool and Cardiff. They too had their organizations, and much to teach me of their lives and their various peoples.
>
> As an artist it was most natural that my first interest in Africa was cultural. Culture?

> The foreign rulers of that continent insisted there was no culture worthy of the name in Africa. But already musicians and sculptors in Europe were astir with their discovery of African art. And as I plunged, with excited interest, into my studies of Africa at the London University and elsewhere, I came to see that African culture was indeed a treasure-store for the world.
>
> Those who scorned the African languages as so many "barbarous dialects" could never know, of course, of the richness of those languages, and of the great philosophy and epics of poetry that have come down through the ages in these ancient tongues. I studied these languages—as I do this day: Yoruba, Efik, Benin, Ashanti and the others.
>
> I now felt as one with my African friends and became filled with a great, glowing pride in these riches, new found for me. I learned that along with the towering achievements of the cultures in ancient Greece and China there stood the culture of Africa, unseen and denied by the imperialist looters of Africa's material wealth.
>
> I came to see the root sources of my own people's culture, especially in our music which is still the richest and most healthy in America. Scholars had traced the influence of African music to Europe—to Spain with the Moors, to Persia and India and China, and westward to the Americas. And I came to learn of the remarkable kinship between African and Chinese culture (of which I intend to write at length some day).
>
> My pride in Africa, that grew with the learning, impelled me to speak out against the scorners. I wrote articles for the *New Statesman* and *Nation* and elsewhere championing the real but unknown glories of African culture.
>
> I argued and discussed the subject with men like H. G. Wells, and Laski, and Nehru; with students and savants.

He now saw the logic in this culture struggle and realized, as never before, that culture was an instrument in a people's liberation, and the suppression of it was an instrument that was used in their enslavement. This point was brought forcefully home to him when the British Intelligence cautioned him about the political meaning of his activities. He knew now that the British claim that it would take one thousand years to prepare Africans for self-rule was a lie. The experience led him to conclude that:

> Yes, culture and politics were actually inseparable here as always. And it was an African who directed my interest in Africa to something he had noted in the Soviet Union. On a visit to that country he had traveled east and had seen the Yakuts, a people who had been classed as a "backward Race" by the Czars. He had been struck by the resemblance between the tribal life of the Yakuts and his own people of East Africa.
>
> What would happen to a people like the Yakuts now that they were freed from colonial oppression and were a part of the construction of the new socialist society?
>
> I saw for myself when I visited the Soviet Union how the Yakuts and the Uzbeks and all the other formerly oppressed nations were leaping ahead from tribalism to modern industrial economy, from illiteracy to the heights of knowledge. Their ancient culture blossoming in new and greater splendor. Their young men and women mastering the sciences and arts. A thousand years? No, less than 30!

During his London years, Paul Robeson was also involved with a number of Caribbean people and organizations. These were the years of the Italian-Ethiopian War, the self-imposed exile of Haile

Selassie and Marcus Garvey, and the proliferation of African and Caribbean organizations, with London headquarters, demanding the improvements in their colonial status that eventually led to the independence explosion. In an article in the *National Guardian*, Paul Robeson spoke of his impressions of the Caribbean people, after returning from a concert tour in Jamaica and Trinidad. He said:

> I feel now as if I had drawn my first great of fresh air in many years. Once before I felt like that. When I first entered the Soviet Union I said to myself, "I am a human being. I don't have to worry about my color."
>
> In the West Indies I felt all that and something new besides. I felt that for the first time I could see what it will be like when Negroes are free in their own land. I felt something like what a Jew must feel when first he goes to Israel, what a Chinese must feel on entering areas of his country that now are free.
>
> Certainly my people in the islands are poor. They are desperately poor. In Kingston, Jamaica, I saw many families living in shells of old automobiles, hollowed out and turned upside down. Many are unemployed. They are economically subjected to landholders, British, American and native.
>
> But the people are on the road to freedom. I saw Negro professionals: artists, writers, scientists, scholars. And above all I saw Negro workers walking erect and proud.
>
> Once I was driving in Jamaica. My road passed a school and as we came abreast of the building a great crowd of school children came running out to wave at me. I stopped, got out of my car to talk with them and sing to them. Those kids were wonderful. I have stopped at similar farms in our own deep South and I have talked to Negro children everywhere in our country. Here for the first time I could talk to children who did not have to look over their shoulders to see if a white man was watching them talk to me.
>
> They crowded around my car. For hours they waited to see me. Some might be embarrassed or afraid of such crowds of people pressing all around. I am not embarrassed or afraid in the presence of people.
>
> I was not received as an opera singer is received by his people in Italy. I was not received as Joe Louis is received by our own people. These people saw in me not a singer, or not just a singer. They called to me: "Hello, Paul. We know you've been fighting for us."

In many ways his concert tours were educational tours. He had a similar experience, in New Orleans, on October 19, 1942 when he sang before a capacity audience of black and white men and women, seated without segregation, in the Booker T. Washington School auditorium. On this occasion he said:

> I had never put a correct evaluation on the dignity and courage of my people of the deep South until I began to come south myself. I had read, of course, and folks had told me of strides made…but always I had discounted much if it, charged much of it to what some people would have us believe. Deep down, I think, I had imagined Negroes of the South beaten, subservient, cowed.
>
> But I see them now courageous and possessors of a profound and instinctive dignity, a race that has come through its trials unbroken, a race of such magnificence of spirit that there exists no power on earth that could crush them. They will bend, but they will never break.

> I find that I must come south again and again, again and yet again. It is only here that I achieve absolute and utter identity with my people. There is no question here of where I stand, no need to make a decision. The redcap in the station, the president of your college, the man in the street—they are all one with me, part of me. And I am proud of it, utterly proud of my people.

He reaffirmed his commitment to the Black struggle in the South by adding:

> We must come south to understand in their starkest presentation the common problems that beset us everywhere. We must breathe the smoke of battle. We must taste the bitterness, see the ugliness…we must expose ourselves unremittingly to the source of strength that makes the black South strong!

In spite of the years he and his family spent abroad, he was never estranged from his own people. In his book, *Here I Stand*, he explained this in essence when he said:

> "I am a Negro. The house I live in is in Harlem—this city within a city, Negro Metropolis of America. And now as I write of things that are urgent in my mind and heart, I feel the press of all that is around me here where I live, at home among my people."

The 1940's the war years, was a turning point in his career. His rendition of "Ballad For Americans," made a lot of Americans, Black and white, rethink the nature of their commitment, or lack of it, in the making of genuine democracy in this country. The song stated a certainty that "Our Marching Song to a land of freedom and equality will come again." Mr. Robeson sang: "For I have always believed it and I believe it now." In this song, and his life he was asking that America keep its promise to all of its people.

On October 19, 1943, he became the first Black actor to play the role of Othello with a White supporting cast, on an American stage. He had played this role years before in London.

In 1944, Paul Robeson was awarded the Spingarn Medal by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Soon afterwards he took the lead in a course of actions more direct and radical than the NAACP. He led a delegation that demanded the end to racial bars in professional baseball. He called on President Truman to extend the civil rights of Blacks in the South. He became a founder and chairman of the Progressive Party which nominated former Vice President Henry A. Wallace in the 1948 presidential campaign.

In the years immediately following the Second World War, Paul Robeson called attention to the unfinished fight for the basic dignity of all people. The following excerpt was extracted from a speech he made in Detroit, Michigan on the Tenth Anniversary of the National Negro Congress:

> "These are times of peril in the history of the Negro people and of the American nation.
>
> Fresh from victorious battles, in which we soundly defeated the military forces of German, Italian and Japanese fascism, driving to oppress and enslave the peoples of the world, we are now faced with an even more sinister threat to the peace and security and freedom of all our peoples. This time the danger lies in the resurgent imperialist and pro-fascist forces of our own country, powerfully organized gentlemen of great wealth, who are determined now, to attempt what Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo tried to do and failed. AND The ELECTED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE UNITED STATES IS SERVING AS THE SPEARHEAD OF THIS NEW DRIVE TOWARD IMPERIALIST WAR IN THE WORLD AND THE RUTHLESS DESTRUCTION OF OUR FREEDOM AND SECURITY HERE AT HOME.

> I understand full well the meaning of these times for my country and my people. The triumph of imperialist reaction in America now, would bring death and mass destruction to our own and all other countries of the world. It would engulf our hard won democratic liberties in the onrush of native fascism. And it would push the Negro people backward into a modern and highly scientific form of oppression, far worse than our slave forefathers ever knew.
>
> I also understand full well the important role which my people can and must play in helping to save America and the peoples of all the world, from annihilation and enslavement. Precisely as Negro patriots helped turn back the red-coats at Bunker Hill, just as the struggles of over 200,000 Negro soldiers and four million slaves turned the tide of victory for the Union forces in the Civil War, just as the Negro people have thrown their power on the side of progress in every other great crisis in the history of our country—so now, we must mobilize our full strength, in firm unity with all the other progressive forces of our country and the world, to set American imperialist reaction back on its heels.

On this occasion he further stated:

> "I have been a member of the National Negro Congress since its inception. I have taken great pride in its struggles to unite the progressive forces of the Negro people and of organized labor in common struggle. And I know that I now talk to an assemble of approximately one thousand delegates, the overwhelming majority of whom are the elected representatives of millions of trade unionists throughout our country.
>
> Here is the concrete expression of one of the most salutary developments in the political history of America—the unity of the Negro people and the progressive forces of labor of which they are an increasingly active part."

The trouble of the post war years, mainly the lack of civil rights for his people, made him step up his political activity. At the World Peace Congress in Paris in 1940, he stated that:

> "It is unthinkable that American Negroes will go to war on behalf of those who have oppressed us for generations against a country (the Soviet Union) which in one generation has raised our people to the full dignity of mankind."

His words, often exaggerated out of context, turned every right wing extremist organization in America against him. Their anger reached a sad and destructive climax during two of his concerts in Peekskill, New York in the summer of 1949.

His interest in Africa, that had started early in his life continued through his affiliations with "The Council on African Affairs" and the column that he wrote regularly for the newspaper *Freedom*.

His association with organized labor was almost as long and consistent as his association with the concert stage. In a speech, "Forge Negro-Labor Unity for Peace and Jobs," delivered in Chicago, before nine hundred delegates to the National Labor Conference for Negro Rights, June 1950, his association and commitment to the laboring class was restated in the following manner:

> "No meeting held in America at the mid-century turning point in world history holds more significant promise for the bright future toward which humanity strives than this National Labor Conference for Negro Rights. For here are gathered together the basic forces—the Negro sons and daughters of labor and their white brothers and sisters—whose increasingly active intervention in national and world affairs is an essential requirement if we are to have a peaceful and democratic solution of the burning issues of our times.

> Again we must recall the state of the world in which we live, and especially the America in which we live. Our history as Americans, Black and white, has been a long battle, so often unsuccessful. For the most basic rights of citizenship, for the most basic rights of citizenship, for the most simple standards of living, the avoidance of starvation—for survival.
>
> I have been up and down the land time and again, thanks in the main to you trade unionists gathered here tonight. You helped to arouse American communities to give answer to Peekskill, to protect the right of freedom of speech and assembly. And I have seen and daily see the unemployment, the poverty, the plight of our children, our youth, the backbreaking labor of our women—and too long, too long have my people wept and mourned. We're tired of this denial of a decent existence. We demand some approximation of the American democracy we have helped to build."

He ended his speech with this reminder:

> "As the Black worker takes his place upon the stage of history—not for a bit part, but to play his full role with dignity in the very center of the action—a new day dawns in human affairs. The determination of the Negro workers, supported by the whole Negro people, and joined with the mass of progressive white working men and women, can save the labor movement. … This alliance can beat back the attacks against the living standards and the very lives of the Negro people. It can stop the drive toward fascism. It can halt the chariot of war in its tracks.
>
> And it can help to bring to pass in America and in the world the dream our father dreamed—of a land that's free, of a people growing in friendship, in love, in cooperation and peace.
>
> This is history's challenge to you. I know you will not fail."

In 1950 Paul Robeson's passport was revoked by the State Department, though he was not charged with any crime. President Truman had signed an executive order forbidding Paul Robeson to set foot outside the continental limits of the United States. "Committees To Restore Paul Robeson's Passport" were organized in the United States and in other countries around the world. The fight to restore his passport lasted eight years.

For Paul Robeson these were not lost or inactive years; and they were not years when he was forgotten or without appreciation, though, in some circles, his supporters "dwindled down to a precious few." He was fully involved, during these years, with the Council on African Affairs, *Freedom Magazine*, The American Labor Movement, The Peace Movement, and The National Council of American-Soviet Friendship.

From its inception in November 1950 to the last issue, July-August 1955, Paul Robeson wrote a regular column for the newspaper *Freedom*. After his passport was restored in 1958, he went to Europe for an extended concert tour. In 1963 he returned to the United States, with his wife Eslanda, who died two years later. After her death he gave up his home in Harlem and moved to Philadelphia to spend his last years with his sister Mrs. Marion Forsythe.

Next to W.E.B. DuBois, Paul Robeson was the best example of an intellect who was active in his peoples freedom struggle. Through this struggle both men committed themselves to the struggle to improve the lot of all mankind. Paul Robeson's thoughts in this matter is summed up in the following quote from his book, *Here I Stand*.

> "I learned that the essential character of a nation is determined not by the upper classes, but by the common people, and that the common people of all nations are truly brothers in the great family of mankind … And even as I grew to feel more

> Negro in spirit, or African as I put it then, I also came to feel a sense of oneness with the white working people whom I came to know and love.
>
> This belief in the oneness of humankind, about which I have often spoken in concerts and elsewhere, has existed within me side by side with my deep attachment to the cause of my own race. Some people have seen a contradiction in this duality…I do not think however, that my sentiments are contradictory … I learned that there truly is a kinship among us all, a basis for mutual respect and brotherly love."

At the time of his death, January 23, 1976, a new generation was discovering Paul Robeson for the first time. An older generation was regretting that it had not made the best use of the strengths and hope that he had given to them. The writer, L. Clayton Jones, made this comment in the *Amsterdam News*, after his death.

> "One watches with restrained anger as a nation of hypocrites grudgingly acknowledges the passing of a twentieth century phenomenon, Paul Robeson, All American Athlete, Shakespearean Actor, Basso Profundo, Linguist, Scholar, Lawyer, Activist. He was all these things and more."

In December 1977, an Ad Hoc Committee to End the Crimes Against Paul Robeson was formed to protest the inaccurate portrayal of Paul Robeson in a new play by Philip Hayes Dean. Their statement read, in part:

> "The essence of Paul Robeson is inseparable from his ideas—those most profoundly held artistic, philosophical and political principles which evolved from his early youth into the lifelong commitments for which he paid so dear and from which he never wavered down to his final public statement in 1975.
>
> In life, Paul Robeson sustained the greatest effort in the history of this nation to silence a single artist. He defied physical and psychological harassment and abuse without once retreating from his principles and the positions to which he dedicated his life. We believe that it is no less a continuation of the same crime to restore him, that he is safely dead, to the pantheon of respectability on the terms of those who sought to destroy him.
>
> Robeson is the archetype of the Black American who uncompromisingly insists on total liberation. His example and his fate strike to the very heart of American racism.
>
> For the nation to confront him honestly would mean that it confronts itself—to begin at last the process of reclamation of the national soul."

III.

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African Studies in the United States, An Afro-American View

John Henrik Clarke

University-based African Studies programs in the United States are comparatively new. Most of them did not exist prior to the African Freedom Exploration with the emergence of Ghana in 1957.

American interest in Africa is as old as the nation itself. But this interest has not always been in Africa's favor and it is highly questionable now.

Why are so many Americans now studying about Africa? Why are most of them white Americans? Why are there so few black Americans with decision-making positions in present-day African studies programs? In light of the prevailing American attitude toward Africa, mainly negative before the Freedom Exploration, what is the basis of their interest in Africa now?

Most of the African Studies programs in the United States deal more with anthropology and politics than with history. There is not a single African Studies program in the United States that is approaching African history systematically, beginning at the beginning. Indeed there is some justification for questioning whether these are really African Studies programs inasmuch as most of the attention is paid to the evolvement of Africa since the European contact in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and present-day African politics in transition. Couldn't these programs be more correctly called "American Studies of the Effects of European Expansion-1442-1969"?

DEFECTS IN AMERICAN AFRICAN STUDIES

The glaring defect in all of the American African Studies programs is the total, insulting neglect of the role that black Americans played in keeping alive an interest in African history when no university in the United States had any respectful interest in the subject.

Any honest approach to African Studies in the United States must begin with at least a brief history of the interest that black Americans have shown in this subject and the desire to reclaim their African heritage.

The Africans who came to the United States as slaves started their attempts to reclaim their lost African heritage soon after they arrived in this country. They were searching for the lost identity that the slave system had destroyed. Concurrent with the black man's search for an identity in America has been his search for an identity in the world; which means, in essence, his identity as a human being with a history, before and after slavery, that can command respect.

BLYDEN AND DUBOIS

Some Afro-Americans gave up the search and accepted the distorted image of themselves that had been created by their oppressors. As early as 1881, Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden, the great West Indian scholar and benefactor of West Africa, addressed himself to this situation when he said: "In all English-speaking countries, the mind of the intelligent Negro child revolts against the descriptions of the Negro given in elementary school books, geographies, travels, histories.....having embraced or at least assented to those falsehoods about himself, he concludes that his only hope of rising in the scale of respectable manhood is to strive for what is most unlike himself and most alien to his peculiar tastes."

But despite the alienation Dr. Blyden speaks of, the Afro-American's spiritual trek back to Africa continued. Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, the Afro-American elder statesman, addressed himself to the broader aspects of this situation at the celebration of the Second Anniversary of the Asian-African (Bandung) Conference and the rebirth of Ghana on April 30, 1957, when he said: "From the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, the Africans imported to America regarded themselves as temporary settlers destined to return eventually to Africa. Their increasing revolts against the slave system, which culminated in the eighteenth century, showed a feeling of close kinship to the motherland and even well into the nineteenth century they called their organizations 'Africans' as witness the 'African Unions' of New York and Newport, and the African Churches of Philadelphia and New York." Even closer kinship with Africa and the East was felt in the West Indies and South America.

THE AFRO-AMERICAN PRESS

The awareness of Africa by the men who built and developed the Afro-American Press goes back to the hectic and heroic beginning of black journalism in this country. Some of the back issues of these old papers show their editors' keen awareness of Africa and its importance.

Alexander Crummell, founder of the African Academy, friend and contemporary of Dr. Edwin W. Blyden, was one of the first of our early writers to call

attention to Africa through the Afro-American Press. He was the dean of the black scholarly and literary group in the closing quarter of the nineteenth century. The life of Dr. Crummell later fired the imagination and redoubled the vigor of Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, whose sharp and penetrating pen burned its own path in national and international affairs, from the early nineties to the present day.

DuBois made the subject of Africa an issue in the Afro-American Press. In 1915, the Home University Library brought out a small book, "The Negro", in which Dr. DuBois outlined the program that must be followed in order to deal properly with the whole field of African life and history.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson's researches and publications came forth into the widest popularization of the subject. Quietly, African scholars like Dr. J. E. Moorland, Mr. Arthur A. Schomburg, Mr. J. A. Rogers and Professor William L. Hansberry led the field in gathering material.

After the first World War, W.E.B.DuBois again accelerated the American black man's interest in Africa by organizing a series of Pan-African Congresses. At a time when the news about the aspirations of Africans for self-government was being ignored throughout most of the world, the Afro-American Press gave full coverage to this subject.

In the pages of these newspapers we learned of the activities of and briefly appraised the significant events leading to the establishment of the new state. In other articles by J. A. Rogers, Marguerite Cartwright and the editor of the "Courier", the history and importance of the new state were presented in a manner that readers who had no prior knowledge of the subject matter could understand.

BACKGROUND OF AFRO-AMERICAN INTEREST IN AFRICA

Interest in Africa extended into every part of Afro-American life. For nearly fifty years, the editors of "The Negro Year Book" published at Tuskegee Institute, compiled and published an annual list of books, monograms and articles relating to Africa. The Afro-American church interest was shown in their many missionary efforts and in the early concern for education in Africa.

In 1958, the French-African magazine, **Presence Africaine**, published a special issue devoted to the subject "Africa Seen by American Negroes". The publication was widely distributed by the American Society of African Culture. This organization was then young, bright and hopeful and a lot of black Americans were looking to it as the potential builder of a new bridge of understanding between Africans and Afro-Americans. Most of the articles in the publication "Africa Seen by American Negroes" tended to justify this potential.

In her article "African Studies Programs in the United States", Dr. Adelaide Cromwell Hill calls attention to the fact that the interest of American universities in Africa and their interest in area programs, as such, are two quite different things. In fact, she states, academic concern with Africa at the university level far antedates the popularity and feasibility of so-called area programs.

In calling attention to Afro-American interest in Africa, Dr. Hill makes this observation: "As early as 1903, W.E.B. DuBois, scholar, writer and university teacher makes the following assertion in his classic work, **Souls of Black Folk** — '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 seas.' DuBois was for some years associated with Atlanta University. As a teacher and thinker, he undoubtedly influenced generations of Negroes both within and outside the Negro universities. Another equally persuasive influence for students at Negro universities has been the work of Carter Woodson. The voluminous writings of Dr. Woodson represent a classic repository of reliable data, much of which was previously unknown to Negroes, on the history of the American Negro. In his many-times revised work **The Negro in Our History** Dr. Woodson underscores the African origin of American Negroes."

Among Afro-American universitites, Howard and Lincoln have had the best African Studies programs through the years: Howard, located in Washington, D.C. being the first black university with a full fledged program in African Studies. Lincoln University, in Pennsylvania, has played another important role in developing interest in Africa. A number of Africans who become the leaders of their respective nations such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and the late Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria were Lincoln University graduates.

There is a traditional interest in Africa in every major Afro-American organization. In the NAACP this interest was best expressed in the pages of the Crisis Magazine during the editorship of Dr. W.E.B. DuBois. A similar interest was reflected in the pages of the Journal of Negro History while that publication was being edited by Carter G. Woodson.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AFRICAN CULTURE

In June of 1959 the American Society of African Culture held its second annual conference at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City. The papers presented at this conference, collectively, represented a new and in-depth approach to African Studies. Most of the papers were prepared by black scholars. An ominous and negative note crept into this conference and went almost unnoticed by those attending. This was in the form of a paper by Dr. Harold R. Isaacs called "The American Negro and Africa: Some Notes". In this paper, Dr. Isaacs infers very uniquely that the Afro-American and the African are total

strangers and have a traditional dislike of each other. His pontifical attitude would later be reflected by what seemed to be a conscious attempt on the part of a number of white people involved in African Studies to spread dissension between Africans and Afro-Americans. Harold Isaacs continued his negative attitude in these matters and a second paper was presented at the third annual conference of the American Society of African Culture, University of Pennsylvania, June 1960. This time his paper was called "Five Writers and Their Ancestors". In the second paper, by taking some negative quotes from five major black writers out of context, he tried to reinforce the theme of the first paper. He later published an article in the New Yorker magazine in which he continued to persist in his negative emphasis on African and Afro-American relations.

At a subsequent conference of the American Society of African Culture, this thesis was challenged by Dr. Horace Mann Bond. Dr. Bond was overly kind to Dr. Isaacs who clung unrelentingly to his original point of view. It was three years after the presenting of the original paper that some of the members of AMSAC began to question why the organization was being used to project such a negative point of view. The idealistic hope that AMSAC would prove to be a bridge of understanding began to wane and the romance between AMSAC and some of its early members was over. Many continued to participate in the activities of the organization but it was no longer effective as the instrument for which it was understood to have been created. On reflection, many of the members mourned the loss of the potential that AMSAC could have had and have continued to work in an informal unit to exchange their points of view on African and Afro-American relations.

THE AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

While the African Studies Association is not the first organization of this nature in the United States, it is the largest and most influential because most of the other African Studies programs derive many of their program ideas from the ASA. There are some black Associate Members and Fellows, but the organization is essentially a white organization and there has been no overt attempt to solicit black membership until very recently. An examination of the participants in the conferences for the last ten years reveals that most of the papers are presented by white scholars, and their concern in the main, is African anthropolgy and African politics. There are very few papers presented on general African history and the attempt to correct the myriad of misconceptions concerning Africa, Africans and Afro-Americans is minimal. The ASA, being the largest and most influential organization of this kind, does not differ essentially from any of the other white organizations involved in African Studies. This brings to mind the question: What is Africa being studied for and why are there so few Afro-Americans involved in these programs?

At the tenth annual meeting at the New York Hilton in 1967, for the first time, there were panels on the teaching of African history and the future of African history with adequate Afro-American representation on the panels. This was some change from the previous practice of the association. There were similar panels at the 11th annual meeting in Los Angeles in 1968. It was at this conference that a group of Africans and Afro-Americans attending called a black caucus for the purpose of reassessing their role in the organization. It was not their intent to leave the Association but to demand decision-making positions within the structure. This was a revolt against the standard practice of African organizations, governed by whites, to give minute token participation to blacks in roles designed to leave them voiceless in matters concerning themselves. I think this revolt, which seemed minor on the surface, will have far reaching repercussions on African Studies programs in the United States, because it is not unrelated to the growing revolt of Afro-Americans against the structured exclusion from matters relating to them and their culture. Other segments of the black community, especially the students, are saying "I must be the authority on myself."

AFRICAN STUDIES PROGRAMS WILL CHANGE

The standard African Studies programs as now constructed are obviously being outmoded by the pressure of Afro-American students for a realistic presentation of African history that will not have as its main focus the European contact and the slave trade. The growing number of African and Afro-American scholars entering the field will play a major role in effecting this change.

The African Heritage Studies Association (AHSA): Some Notes on the Conflict with the African Studies Association (ASA) and the Fight to Reclaim African History
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THE AFRICAN HERITAGE STUDIES ASSOCIATION (AHSA): Some Notes on the Conflict with the African Studies Association (ASA) and the Fight to Reclaim African History

John Henrik Clarke

What is called the "conflict" seems to be very old right now, in view of all that has happened between 1968, when the conflict began to surface at the Eleventh Annual Convention of the African Studies Association in Los Angeles, and the present. The conflict is older than its formal beginning, and we are no closer to a solution now than we were in 1968. The conflict is over who will interpret African history. White scholars, more than blacks, have always understood the importance of controlling history and social thought. The best way to control a people is to control what they think about themselves.

There is a need, once more, to look back at the roots of this conflict in order to understand the present crisis in Western historiography. Many white "scholars," classified as historians, are neither scholars nor historians. They are clever propagandists writing rationalizations in support of white world domination. They are in serious trouble now, especially over the interpretation of African history. They are being questioned by African scholars throughout the world who, fortunately, are beginning to write the African side of history and the relationship of African history to world history. Most Western historians write about Africa as if this continent and its people waited in darkness for Europeans to bring the light. This is the recurring myth that has thrown human history out of kilter. Both black and white historians have failed to deal with the fact that for most of mankind's existence, Europe, as such, was not in existence. The world could not have waited in darkness for Europeans to bring the light because, when the ancient world emerged, what is now called Europe had no light.

In their book, *A History of the Modern World* (third edition, page 13), the writers R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton state:

> There was really no Europe in ancient times. In the Roman Empire we may see a Mediterranean world, or even a West and an East in the Latin- and Greek-speaking portions. But the West included parts of Africa as well as of Europe, and Europe as we know it was divided by the Rhine-Danube frontier, south and west of which lay the civilized provinces of the Empire, and north and east the "barbarians," of whom the civilized world knew almost nothing. To the Romans "Africa" meant Tunisia-Algeria, "Asia" meant the Asia Minor peninsula; and the word "Europe," since it meant little, was scarcely used by them at all. It was in the half millennium from the fifth to the ninth centuries that Europe as such for the first time emerged with its peoples brought together in a life of their own, clearly set off from that of Asia and Africa.

The only way to deal honestly with the above statement is to reverse history as we know it, because as we know it, it is a protracted "white lie." This, in essence, is what the conflict between the African Studies Association (ASA) and the African Heritage Studies Association (AHSA) is all about, whether the contestants know it or not. The one word, *heritage*, in the title of our organization makes a world of difference.

AHSA is part of the worldwide decolonization process. We now realize, as never before, that during the second rise of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Europeans not only colonized most of the world, but they also colonized (and began to monopolize) the interpretation of history, particularly African history. In their approach to Africa they literally wallowed in lies and in contradictions. The main lie was that Africa had no history. This condition was at the base of the expulsion against ASA in Montreal, Canada, October 1969.

In the last four years, a large number of Africans and Afro-Americans have joined ASA and act as if the differences between the two organizations have been settled. Some of them do not know anything about the differences in the first place. This is why I now feel called on to retell, at least briefly, what happened and why.

This crisis, like all crisis, has a background. The late discovery of Africa by the white academic community—who, in the main, still ignore this background—helped to create this crisis. This crisis was sharpened through the years by white "scholars'" domination over African studies programs in most American universities.

The glaring defect in all of the American African studies programs is the total, insulting neglect of the role that black Americans have played in keeping alive an interest in African history when no university in the United States had any respectful interest in the subject. Any honest approach to African studies in the United States must begin with at least a brief history of the interest that black Americans have shown in this subject and the desire to reclaim their African heritage.

The Africans who came to the United States as slaves started their attempts to reclaim their lost African heritage soon after they arrived in this country. They were searching for the lost identity that the slave system had destroyed. Concurrent with the black man's search for an identity in America has been his search for an identity in the world, which means, in essence, his identity as a human being with a history, before and after slavery, that can command respect. Some Afro-Americans gave up the search and accepted the distorted image of themselves that had been created by their oppressors. As early as 1881, Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden, the

great Caribbean scholar and benefactor of west Africa, addressed himself to this situation when he said: "In all English-speaking countries, the mind of the intelligent Negro child revolts against the descriptions of the Negro given in elementary school books, geographies, travels, histories . . . having embraced or at least assented to those falsehoods about himself, he concludes that his only hope of rising in the scale of respectable manhood is to strive for what is most unlike himself and most alien to his peculiar tastes."

Despite the alienation spoken of here by Dr. Blyden, the Afro-American's spiritual trek back to Africa continued. Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, the elder statesman among the Afro-Americans, addressed himself to the broader aspects of this situation on the occasion of the celebration of the Second Anniversary of the Asian-African (Bandung) Conference and the rebirth of Ghana on 30 April 1957, when he said:

> From the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, the Africans imported to America regarded themselves as temporary settlers destined to return eventually to Africa. Their increasing revolts against the slave system, which originated in the eighteenth century, showed a feeling of close kinship to the motherland, and even, well into the nineteenth century, they called their organizations "African," as witness the "African Union" of New York and Newport and the African churches of Philadelphia and New York. In the West Indies and South America there was even closer indication of feelings of kinship with Africa and the East.

There was a written interest in Africa by Afro-Americans during the days when their early newspapers and other publications were in their formative years. The awareness of Africa by the men who built and developed the Afro-American press goes back to the hectic and heroic beginning of black journalism in this country. Some of the back issues of these old newspapers show their editors' keen awareness of Africa and its importance.

Alexander Crummell, founder of the Negro Academy and friend and contemporary of Dr. Edward W. Blyden, the great Caribbean scholar, was one of the first of our early writers to call attention to Africa through the Afro-American press. He was the dean of the black scholarly and literary group in the closing quarter of the nineteenth century. The life of Dr. Crummell later fired the imagination and redoubled the vigor of Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, whose sharp and penetrating pen burned its own path in national and international affairs, from the early nineties to the present day.

Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, inspired by Alexander Crummell, made the subject of Africa a burning issue in the Afro-American press. In 1915, the Home University Library brought out a small book, *The Negro*, in which Dr. DuBois outlined the program that must be followed in order to deal properly with the whole field of African life and history.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson came forward with his researches and publications which blossomed forth into the widest popularization of the subject. Quietly, African scholars like Dr. J.E. Moorland, Mr. Arthur A. Schomburg, Mr. J.A. Rogers (from Jamaica), and Professor William L. Hansberry led the field in gathering material.

It was Carter G. Woodson who called attention to the fact that African history may well be the basis of world history. He said, in effect, that:

> Africa came into the Mediterranean world mainly through Greece, which had been under African influence, and then Africa was cut off from the melting pot by the turmoil among the European and the religious conquests incident to the rise of Islam. Africa prior to these events had developed its history and civilization, independent to its people and lands. Africa came back into the general picture of history through the penetration of North Africa, West Africa, and the Sudan by the Arabs. European and American slave traders next ravaged the continent. The imperialist colonizers and missionaries finally entered the scene and prevailed until the recent re-emergence of independent African nations.

After the First World War, W.E.B. DuBois again accelerated the American black man's interest in Africa by organizing a series of Pan-African congresses. At a time when the news about the aspirations of Africans for self-government was being ignored throughout most of the world, the Afro-American press gave full coverage to this subject.

Interest in Africa extended into every part of Afro-American life and influenced, in some way, most of their institutions. For nearly fifty years, the editors of *The Negro Year Book*, published at Tuskegee Institute, compiled and published an annual list of books, monographs, and articles relating to Africa. The Afro-American church's interest was shown in their many missionary efforts and in the early concern for education in Africa.

In 1958 the French-African magazine, *Presence Africaine*, published a special issue devoted to the subject "Africa Seen by American Negroes." The publication was widely distributed by the American Society of African Culture. This organization was then young, bright, and hopeful, and a lot of black Americans were looking to it as the potential builder of a new bridge of understanding between Africans and Afro-Americans. Most of the articles in the publication "Africa Seen by American Negroes" tended to justify this potential. In her article "African Studies Programs in the United States," Dr. Adelaide Cromwell Hill calls attention to the fact that the interest of American universities in Africa and their interest in area programs, as such, are two quite different things. In fact, she states that academic concern with Africa at the university level far antedates the popularity and feasibility of so-called area programs.

At ASA's tenth annual meeting at the Waldorf Astoria in 1967, for the first time there were panels on the teaching of African history and the future of African history, with adequate Afro-American representation on the panels. This was a change from the previous practice of the association. There were similar panels at the eleventh annual meeting of the ASA in Los Angeles in 1968. It was at this conference that a group of Africans and Afro-Americans attending called a "black caucus" for the purpose of reassessing their role in the organization. It was not their intent to leave the association, but to demand decision-making positions within the structure of the ASA.

The statement of the Black Caucus, 19 October 1969, is printed here in its entirety:

> The African Studies Association is called upon by the Black Caucus to immediately direct its energies towards rendering itself more relevant and competent to deal with the challenging times and conditions of Black people in Africa, in the United States, and in the whole of the Black world.
>
> In moving towards this objective, we charge the Association with taking the steps necessary to immediately broaden Black participation in all phases of the Association's operations. We note that at present only one Black person is holding a policy-deciding position in this Association dealing with predominantly Black countries and societies. Too few of the program chairmen and participants are drawn from Black

Africanists, and in general, the Association reflects the White caste and is identified with a White posture.

While trusting the academicians in the Association, we urge that Black people be recruited for participation in the African Studies Association, and that representation be drawn from those engaged in fields closely related to African and Afro-American studies, with particular emphasis on Black youth, inside and outside the universities.

We see the future prospects of a vital and meaningful Association linked directly to the significant strengthening of its ties with Black Africanists. We encourage ASA members to seek out African and Afro-American scholars to direct the rapidly developing Afro-American studies centers in the United States. Finally, the ASA must address itself in a meaningful and educational way to changing American public opinion based on deep racism and ignorance of the Black people whom the African Studies Association takes as its subject.

On 28 December 1968 a corps of the group that had met in Los Angeles met again in New York at the Mary McLeod Bethune School. Professor John Henrik Clarke presided. The group agreed:

1. that the name of the new organization should be the African Heritage Studies Association;
2. that a convention be held in Washington, DC, to ratify its name;
3. that many black scholars should be invited to the convention in Washington, DC, so that the new organization may get the benefit of both their larger experiences and their moral and financial support; and
4. that the AHSA should start a publication to mirror accurate scholarly research on the African pluriverse.

The demise of the Black Caucus heralded the birth of the African Heritage Studies Association. The first convention and the official launching of the association came on 27 June 1969, at Federal City College in Washington, DC. The convention lasted from 27 June to 29 June.

The change that I referred to earlier and the revolt against a white "scholar's" approach to African studies did not take long to develop. A meeting was planned between the executive committees of AHSA and ASA for 17 October 1969 in Montreal, Canada. The purpose of this meeting was to define the future relationship between AHSA and ASA. This meeting, carefully planned far in advance, never took place. Other events ruled it off the agenda. These events forced the members of the African Heritage Studies Association to move ahead of their own schedule and become the official spokesmen for the black intellectuals in Montreal during the twelfth annual conference of ASA in 1969.

Part of the confusion at Montreal was due to the fact that the main aims and objectives of AHSA had not been made known to any appreciable number of the attending black intellectuals, who could have explained these objectives to the students. Had these objectives been known, the revolt against the domination of the conference by white "scholars" might still have occurred, but it is my opinion that this revolt would have been more orderly and constructive.

For the record, the main aims and objectives of the African Heritage Studies Association are stated here.

Education

1. Reconstruction of African history and cultural studies along Afrocentric lines while effecting an intellectual union among Black scholars the world over;
2. Acting as a clearinghouse of information in the establishment and evaluation of a more realistic African or Black studies program.
3. Presenting papers at seminars and symposia where any aspect of the life and culture of African people are to be discussed;
4. Relating, interpreting, and disseminating African materials to elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities.

International

1. To reach African countries directly through embassies in order to facilitate greater communications and interactions between Africans and Africans in the Americas;
2. To assume leadership in the orientation of African students in the U.S. and orientation of Afro-Americans in Africa by establishing contacts;
3. To form a committee to argue for American foreign policy toward Africa, to strengthen and support Congressman Diggs as Chairman of the House Subcommittee on African Affairs.

Domestic

1. To inform all other Black associations and organizations of the existing responsibilities in the area of Black studies;
2. To solicit their influence and affluence in the promotion of Black studies and in the execution of AHSA programs and projects;
3. To arouse social consciousness and awareness of these groups;
4. To encourage their financial contribution to Black schools with Black studies programs.

Black Students and Scholars

1. To encourage and support students who wish to major in Black studies;
2. To instill in Black students and scholars the necessity for involvement in Black studies programs at all levels to the extent of their expertise;
3. To make sure that Black scholars attend national and international conferences relating to Black studies and persuade them to read papers at these conferences;
4. To ask all Black students and scholars to rally around AHSA to build it up as a sturdy organization for the reconstruction of our history and culture.

Black Community

1. All Black studies programs should be relevant to the Black community near the school and should in turn be supported by the Black community.
2. The Association (AHSA) should act as a liaison between black communities and funding agencies;
3. AHSA should compile a list of Black scholars who need financial support for their community projects or their academic research;
4. The Association will edit a newsletter or a journal through which its activities should be known.

The confrontation at Montreal cannot be honestly seen out of context with other events that helped to set it in motion. For years, the African Studies Association had been a white organization with token black representation that had little or no influence on the major decisions affecting the organization.

The African Studies Association is not just a professional association. Its leaders perform other functions that directly or indirectly affect the lives and livelihood of Africans and Afro-American scholars and students. Its annual meeting, which brings together government officials, journalists, publishers, foundation representatives, businessmen, scholars, students, and members of voluntary associations, serves as a point of contact and a market place where jobs, research funds, ideas, and information are exposed and exchanged. Its members are scholars whose research not only determines or influences at the very least the image of Africa in America, but also conditions the kind and scope of much of the written documentation available about the continent. Research completed by its members has provided background material for United States foreign-policy decisions in Africa. For these reasons we deemed the ASA annual meeting the proper forum for our demands.

The African peoples attending this conference demanded that the study of African life be undertaken from a Pan-Africanist perspective. This perspective defines that all black people are African people and rejects the division of African peoples by geographical locations based on colonialist spheres of influence.

This demand joined the issue and offended a large number of white "scholars" attending the conference. They resented the projection of African people as a world people with a common cause and a common destiny. More than anything else they resented the Afro-Americans being linked with the Africans in Africa. The demands of the blacks attending this conference had exposed the neocolonialism that a large number of these so-called scholars had been practicing for years. Africa to them was a kind of ethnic plantation over which they reigned and explained to the world. Most of them even resented Africans being considered authorities on Africa. The confrontation at Montreal awakened them from their dreams.

Specifically, the African people who made up the Black Caucus wanted their demands to be the means of changing the ideological and structural bases of the African Studies Association. As negotiations between the Black Caucus group and the ASA board progressed, it became clear that the demand for an equal number of black members of the board of twelve would be the most difficult demand for the old guard in the ASA to live with. The ASA executive board decided that perhaps they could offer three seats in addition to the two already held by blacks. The ASA board was surprised when the two black members, Dr. Absolom Vilakazi of South Africa and Dr. Elliott P. Skinner of Columbia University, supported the demands of the Black Caucus. The offer of three additional African members was rejected. This prompted the board to convene an assembly of the voting membership of the ASA to decide the issue.

Probably the most crucial event in the three-day confrontation was the ASA voting membership's rejection of the Black Caucus's demands by a vote of 103 to 97 in its plenary session on Friday afternoon. It is of interest that the ASA, an organization of scholars whose prestige and output depend upon maintaining good relations with Africans, both in terms of gaining entry into African countries and obtaining reliable information from them, would have permitted, if for no other than political reasons, their voting membership to go on record as having voted against minimal demands of African peoples.

People have argued in defense of the white ASA membership that a large number of them supported the demands, but they were affronted by the tactics of disruption and therefore could not in good conscience grant the blacks immediate representation on the board. If this assessment is true, then it raises a fundamental question of their ability to understand and evaluate societies, or even events occurring in those societies, with which they disagree in principle.

The Black Caucus/AHSA committee that negotiated with ASA's board consisted of Africans, West Indians, and Afro-American students and professors, one of whom had been an ASA voting member since its inception. Moreover, the majority of the African visitors invited by the ASA and the Canadian African Studies Committee to attend the conference supported the substance of the Black Caucus's demands. The Caucus's concerns over the white domination of scholarly output on Africa had been expressed by Africans at two earlier international conferences of Africanists at Dakar. Indications of African support was initially voiced by Gabriel d'Arboussier, a nationalist leader in francophone Africa since the 1940s and, at the time, Senegalese ambassador to Germany. D'Arboussier was slated to deliver the keynote address for the opening session, at which time the first statement of black demands was presented. Robert Gardiner, director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, actively participated in the Caucus's meetings and supported its demands. By Friday noon, when the Black Caucus met with the invited African guests to clarify our position in French and in English, they presented a written declaration of support which had been signed by most of the leading African participants. Leon Damas of French Guyana, one of the three original negritude poets along with Aime Cesaire and Leopold Sedar Senghor, read the declaration of solidarity cited below:

> We, the undersigned, participating in a joint annual meeting of the African Studies Association and the Committee on African Studies in Canada, in our capacity as guests of the latter, in face of the incidents which confronted the Afro-American participants and the ASA (USA) note that the Africanist Congress held the orientation of African studies in two resolutions adopted at the 5th and 6th Committees. We strongly reiterate the view that African studies as conceived within the context of colonialism and imperialist domination of the African continent have served exclusively to reinforce an ideology which serves their domination in the interest of foreign capital used to exploit the African continent.

The question of the procedure, tactics, and ultimate objective of the Black Caucus was a pivotal issue. In the eyes of the ASA white membership, any challenge to their authority that was not supported by the black ASA voting members had no legitimacy. However, they misinterpreted an expression by some black "Africanists" of nonsupport of tactics to also mean nonsupport of substantive issues.

In the confrontation at Montreal, the old order of the African Studies Association was challenged without compromise. The existence of this organization is now contingent on whether it can meet this challenge creatively and respectfully. First, an attempt should be made to understand the genesis of the African and Afro-American concern for their history and their long fight to make it an acceptable study in schools and universities.

Long before the recent discovery of Africa by the academic community, black Americans were showing an interest in African history. Most of the courses in African history and lecture discussions were held in churches and community centers. To the best of my knowledge, these were the first courses in African history held in this country.

The challenge and confrontation that started at Los Angeles in October 1968 and erupted into a dramatic climax in Montreal in October of the next year was a long time in the making. In the time span between the conference in Los Angeles and the one in Montreal, what started out as a Black Caucus became the African Heritage Studies Association. This association intends to examine every aspect and approach to the history and culture of African people in this country and throughout the world. Further, its members intend to project their influence into every organization that relates to Africans and the people of African descent. We will decide who is and is not an authority on our life and history, and we will question

black scholars as well as white ones. We deplore the fact that so many people, mainly white, are gaining quick reputations as authorities on African people. We suspect that this is a new area of academic colonialism and that it is not unrelated to the neocolonialism that is attempting to re-enslave Africa by controlling the minds of African people. Further, we suspect that this closely connected group of white "authorities" are attempting to control or direct the historical information relating to Africa in a manner that will make Africans believe that they are forever dependent on people of European descent and that the coming of the Europeans to Africa was, in spite of the slave trade and the colonial system, a blessing in disguise.

The intent of the African Heritage Studies Association is to use African history to effect a world union of African people. We do not believe that the closely connected group of white "authorities" on Africa are interested in such a union. In fact, we think the idea frightens them because this means that they will lose their control over information about Africa. They resent the idea of any black person taking it upon himself to question their authority and examine their credentials. That is precisely what the members of the African Heritage Studies Association intend to do. First, they intend to ask for an entire new approach to African history. This new approach must begin with a new frame of reference.

What and who are the African people? We make no sharp distinction between the Africans in Africa and the people of African descent in other parts of the world. This at once projects the possibility of a world union of African people. First, we will call for a new frame of reference in all matters relating to Africa. We reject the term "black Africa" because it presupposes that there is a legitimate "white Africa." The term "Negro Africa" is offensive to us because there is no such thing as a Negro. This word grew out of the European slave trade and the colonial system, and it fails to relate the people of African descent to land, history, and culture. Our original place of origin was Africa, and no matter where we live on this earth, we are an African people. Our approach to African history and culture everywhere will be in keeping with this definition. We intend to use history as a force for our liberation and as a basis of African world unity. We depend on an honest and creative approach to history to tell what we have been, what we are, and what we still must be. And thus, the African Heritage Studies Association was born.

This birth did not end our troubles or our confrontations with ASA. An analysis of the confrontations after Montreal and the attempts to work out a way for both organizations to coexist has been made in detail in another report by Dr. Elliott P. Skinner and need not be repeated here. However, attention should be called to another neglected aspect of the relationship of AHSA and ASA and their respective participation in the Third International Congress of Africanists, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in December 1973. First, let us say a word about the international congress and how it came into being.

The greatest achievement of the third international congress was the coming together of scholars from all parts of the world to present papers on the economic, social, political, scientific, cultural, and historical development of Africa. The International Congress of Africanists was formed in 1963 in Accra, Ghana. Formerly, the International Congress of Orientalists used to discuss scholarly issues on Asia and Africa, but when several African countries became independent, it was agreed that the African continent required an organization devoted solely to African matters—an organization which would hold its meetings on African soil. Thus, at the invitation of the Ghana government, and with additional financial support from UNESCO and US foundations, the first congress was held in Africa in December 1963. Hundreds of scholars from all over the world attended this first session, where statutes of the congress were drawn up, and many learned papers on Africa were read. The president of the first congress was Dr. Kenneth Onwuka Dike of Nigeria. The secretary-general was Dr. Nana Kabina Nketia IV of Ghana. The opening address was given by the late Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, then president of the Republic of Ghana.

At the invitation of the Senegalese government, the second congress was held in Dakar, Senegal, in December 1967. Again, many scholars participated and many papers were read. The president of the second congress was Dr. Alioune Diop of *Presence Africaine* and the International Society of African Culture. The secretary-general was Professor Glessane N'Daw of Senegal and the University of Dakar. President Leopold Senghor welcomed the delegates.

In spite of the fact that the first two congresses were held in Africa, they were dominated by white scholars, mainly from the US-based organization, the African Studies Association. No papers by black American scholars were presented at the first congress and only one at the second. Behind the scenes, white scholars manipulated both the first and second congresses. This is why the third international congress was exceptional—at last. The Africans took over, and the Afro-Americans played a major role and presented papers in a number of sessions; one Afro-American was elected to the permanent council that was to cover the congress for the next five years and plan future meetings. Afro-Americans participated on all levels of this conference.

The Afro-American delegation, led by Professor James Turner, director of the Africana Studies and Research Center, Cornell University, was a representative and well-balanced group that consisted of Patricia Karouma, Milfred Fierce, Mae King, Shelby Smith, Steven McGaines, John Henrik Clarke, Asa Davis, Hukudzo Murapa, Lori and Rosalind Jeffries, Isaac Akinyoom, Joseph Harris, Walter Rodney, Ahmed Mohiddin, and Elliott Skinner.

Before the conference officially began, a meeting was arranged between the two major American African historical organizations attending this conference: the African Studies Association, mostly white but now having a black president, the South African scholar named Absolom Vilakazi; and the African Heritage Studies Association, all black and headed by Professor James Turner. There was some fear that there might be, now on African soil, a recurrence of the conflict of 21 October 1969, when Afro-American scholars broke away from ASA in order to form AHSA.

The congress was officially opened on Monday, 10 December, with an address by His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie. In his remarks, he called attention to this fact.

> The weight of historical evidence attests that since the earliest times the civilization and progress of man has been based on knowledge gained through study and research rather than on that based on gratuitous assumptions. It is now generally acknowledged that for development and economic growth, study and research constitute a basis of proven worth. There can be no doubt that you, the scholars who have devoted your lifeworks

> to study and research on Africa, will, aside from your contributions to human knowledge in general, also make contributions that will form the basis for the growth and development of Africa.

In further remarks the emperor observed that the status of African scholars in the field of African studies was changing for the better, when he said:

> It cannot be denied that in the past the conduct of study and research on Africa was in the hands of non-Africans. The nature and content of such study and research was therefore primarily determined by non-African needs and interests. The time has now come when Africa, having abandoned the subservient status, is holding her own destiny in the political and economic spheres. In the academic sphere, as well, the time seems to have come when Africans can abandon the role of subservience and embrace that of full and equal participation. A clear demonstration of this is the fact that among you, the scholars assembled in this hall today, there is a greater number of African scholars than at any time in the past, already and able to participate in deliberations pertaining to their continent. While it is true that, as we pointed out earlier, scholarly research recognizes no political boundaries, yet it cannot at the same time be denied that Africans need to carry a greater share of the study and research on their continent than they do at present. Their greater participation can no doubt help to re-direct Africanist research into areas of greater relevance to Africa's needs and interests. We are convinced that the work of scholars can have great relevance to the struggle that our continent is now waging against poverty, ignorance, and disease.

The afternoon sessions began with the reading of papers on the history of northeast Africa and of Africa in general. This history still is in great dispute. It begs for good questions and good answers. What is history, and what is its meaning in the life of people in general and African people in particular? Why is there now a national and international fight over the history of African people, and who will interpret and control this history? White "historians" and "authorities" on the development of nations and civilizations, who for the past five hundred years, in most cases, have said that African people had no history, now are fighting to control the interpretation of the history they once said we did not have. What is this fight really about? To understand it, we might have to look backwards and forwards at the same time, while using the present as our vantage point. It was no accident that Professor Roland Oliver of England, a member of the old guard and the old school of interpreters of African history, was chairman of this first session on African history. There now exists a form of academic neocolonialism that intends to control African social thought. It would surface very early at this conference, and, fortunately, the Africans would prove equal to combating it.

Many of the papers on African economic and political development dealt with African problems in the abstract, as though a new African reality did not exist. The presenters of these papers and the other delegates had to be reminded of the existence of apartheid and the overall southern African problem of racism and oppression. They also had to be reminded of the fight against the Portuguese in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, where hundreds of people are dying daily.

The sessions on social and cultural development, many of the often neglected dimensions of African life, history, and culture were analyzed. Particularly outstanding were the following papers presented in the first sessions in the cultural development section: "Considerations of Some Ideological Problems in Ethiopia Today" by Girma Amare; "African Literature and Cultural Re-evaluation" by Ernest N. Emenyonu; "Toward an Operational Philosophy of African Education" by Patricia Kaurouma; "Africa as the Origin of Early Greek Theatre Culture" by Tsekaye Ghedre Yedhin, and "The Influence of African Cultural Continuity on the Slave Revolt in South America and in the Caribbean Islands" by John Henrik Clarke.

In the first of a number of keynote addresses, Professor L.K.H. Gama, of the University of Zambia, called attention to the "scientific underdevelopment of Africa" and pointed to the opportunities in this field that are still begging for more trained Africans.

In the second keynote address, "The Study of African History: The Present Position" by Dr. Kenneth Onwuka Dike, the still unresolved problems of writing and teaching African history were outlined. The closing sessions of the conference were devoted to a discussion of resolutions, choosing the site for the Fourth International Congress of Africanists, and in electing new members to the permanent council that will handle the affairs of the international congress (now retained the International Congress of Africanists) for the next five years. The leader of the black American delegation, Professor Turner, had insisted from the beginning of the discussions that, inasmuch as a member of the African Studies Association (ASA) had been the American representative on the permanent council of the congress for the past ten years, the next permanent member should be from the AHSA. Behind-the scenes meetings on this matter lasted for days—in fact, throughout the entire period of the congress. The candidate for the permanent council who was finally elected was John Henrik Clarke, the past president of AHSA, who is presently professor of black and Puerto Rican studies at Hunter College. This election gave the black Americans a decision-making position in the International Congress of Africanists for the first time.

This was the last confrontation with ASA. We were successful because the academic climate was changing in favor of an African interpretation of African history. In my opinion, ASA and the white "scholars" who still dominate it have changed very little, if at all. Both the Africans and Western black scholars have changed, and they have changed for the better. They have moved closer to each other's positions in matters relating to the reclaiming of African history by African people. This was evident in the support they gave each other during the meeting of the Third International Congress of Africanists in Addis Ababa.

The young and progressive African scholars, both in Africa and in the West, are now realizing that African history is an old and new academic battleground and that it is a part of the new education of the mind for liberation. They know that they cannot look to their former colonial masters to write their history. Powerful people never educate powerless people in the arts of power. History, properly understood and utilized, is power—a force for liberation or slavery depending on how it is used or misused. We remain strangers to the people who have been the instruments of our oppression. In the general sense, true African history and African historians are unknown to them.

This point was driven home to me about a month after the meeting of the Third International Congress of Africanists in Addis Ababa. I was meeting Immanuel Wallerstein, former president of ASA, and Absolom Vilakazi, then president of

ASA, to continue some of the discussion of the possible areas of cooperation between ASA and AHSA which we had suggested during the meeting in Addis Ababa. I mentioned very casually that Cheikh Anta Diop's new book, *African Origins of Civilization, Myth or Reality,* had just been published in the United States and that I had a review copy. Professor Wallerstein asked me if Cheikh Anta Diop had attended the meeting in Addis Ababa. His question, although, innocent, shocked me to the point of tears and violence. Neither the former president (white) of the ASA nor the then president of ASA (black) knew that Diop had attended the conference. I personally knew that both of them rode up on an elevator with Cheikh Anta Diop at least once and walked past him in the lobby of the hotel at least twice.

Cheikh Anta Diop is recognized as one of the great living African historians. No official recognition was made of his presence at this conference. In matters relating to African history and the values that Africans are placing on their historians, old and new, the members of ASA still seemed to be out of tune. In reading their publication, none of the new books on African history are reviewed, and in looking at the books and magazine articles by ASA members, it is rare that the work is even referred to or quoted, positively or negatively. The works of John G. Jackson, Chancellor Williams, and Yosef ben-Jochannon are almost completely ignored, along with the writings of a new generation of dynamic, new African historians. This incident made me realize more than ever that the existence of AHSA is justified and that the course of action that this organization set in motion in Montreal in 1969 will have to be strengthened, expanded, and continued.

The ideological perspective of this organization, which was in its formative stages in Montreal, is now more precisely defined. I am concluding this paper with an extraction from some notes written as an ideological framework for AHSA, which I wrote in 1970 when I was the president of the organization.

The intent of the African Heritage Studies Association is to use African history to effect a world union of African people. This association of scholars of African descent is committed to the preservation, interpretation, and creative presentation of the historical and cultural heritage of African people, both on the ancestral soil of Africa and in diaspora in the Americas and throughout the world. We interpret African history from a Pan-Africanist perspective that defines all black people as an African people. We do not accept the arbitrary lines of geographical demarcations that were created to reflect colonialist spheres of influence. As scholar-activists, our program has as its objective the restoration of the cultural, economic, and political life of African people everywhere. In our ideological perspective we are committed to taking the concept of Pan-Africanism into another dimension beyond its present meaning. We recognize the need for the cultural unity of the black peoples of the world, and we are committed to all sincere efforts that will make this unity a reality; but this is only the beginning. We know that there is no way to move a people from slavery to freedom and self-awareness without engaging in political experience and revolutionary coalitions. As scholar-activists, our primary role is to define the historical currents relating to this action in such a manner that when this inevitable action occurs, it can proceed with a minimum of confusion. The essence of what our ideological perspective should be is contained in a recent poem, "On Pan-Africanism" by Carolyn F. Gerald, a young Afro-American poet, essayist, and teacher.

> Pan-Africanism means an inner need in us which has finally surfaced on the world, after decades of fermenting in the ground. It's not the whole thing (though it has to be a part of it) to fight with our black brothers in other parts of the world, to fight with our Bandung brothers all over the world (though the fight helps us to re-define ourselves) against a common, rampant, raging enemy. We'll keep looking at each other, examining each other's tools and comparing the artifacts we make with them, testing them out on ourselves - each other. Till we unclog our own suspicious moods and recognize the same images looking back at all of us over the seas and the centuries.

In a word, the ideological perspective of AHSA will have to define the method and importance of putting a fragmented African people back together again, and in finding a way to heal the deep psychological wounds that are the legacy of the slave and trade and the colonial system. In our search for definition, unity, identity, we will have to evolve to Pan-Africanism and go far beyond it. It is not enough to be united unless that unity has some meaning and goal. We had a common heritage before and after the slave trade. We will have to make creative uses of this heritage. First we will have to define *heritage* itself. Saunders Redding has said, in effect, that heritage is reflected in how a people have used their talent to create a history that gives them memories that they can respect and use to command the respect of other people. The ultimate purpose of heritage, and heritage teaching, is to use a people's talent to develop an awareness and a pride in themselves. This sense of identity is the stimulation for all of a people's honest and creative efforts. A people's relationship to its heritage is the same as the relationship of a child to its mother. It will be our function as scholar-activists to put the components of our heritage together to weld an instrument of liberation.

John Henrik Clarke, Member Grants Review Committee. Professor, Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, New York. Past President, African Heritage Studies Association.; Founding Member, Black Academy of Arts and Letters. Prolific writer of articles on African and Afro-American history and culture appearing regularly in leading journals in the USA and abroad; author of over 50 short stories, some reprinted in 10 different anthologies; papers given at conferences in USA and abroad; co-founder and Assoc. Editor of *Harlem Quarterly;* Assoc. Editor, *Freedomways* Magazine; Director, Heritage Teaching Program, HARYCU-ACT, 1964-1969; Special Consultant and Coordinator, CBS TV Series, "Black Heritage: The History of Afro Americans", 1968; author and/or editor of 13 published books; Honorary Degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, University of Denver, 1970.

Race: An Evolving Issue in Western Social Thought

BY John Henrik Clarke

...in the kind of world we live in, being Black and beautiful means very little unless one is also Black and powerful. There is no way to succeed in the struggle against racism without power. That is a part of our new reality and our new mission.

Early in this century, the elder scholar among African Americans, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois said: "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line." Unfortunately, his prophecy was correct. In spite of all the talk and the sociology—good and bad—we have not made much progress in resolving this issue. We have talked about it extensively without really dealing with it. To deal with it, we will have to identify and explain its genesis. To explain its genesis, we will have to ask ourselves some hard questions, and we will have to be boldly honest with our answers. Some of the hard questions are: How did racism start in the first place and for whose benefit was it created? Who benefits from it now? Why do we lack the strength, or the nerve, to destroy it?

In this paper I am dealing, mainly, with the form of racism that affects people of African descent (or Black people in general). I am aware of the fact that certain manifestations of racism existed in Europe before the massive European expansion into the broader world of Africa, Asia and the West Indies. The racism that I am now attempting to examine is distinctly different because the factor of color was added, and the Christian Church played a major role in creating the rationale that sustained this racism in the mind of Western man. The genesis of this racism is in the rise of Europe after the fifteenth century; the development of the slave trade and the colonial system that subsequently followed.

It is too often forgotten that when the Europeans gained enough maritime skill, and gun power to conquer most of the world, they not only colonized the bulk of the world's people but they colonized the interpretation of history itself. Human history was rewritten to favor them at the expense of other people. The roots of modern racism can be traced to this conquest and colonialization.

In a speech delivered to the Pan-African Students Organization in the Americas, New York City, November, 1964, Richard B. Moore observed: "In the attempt to justify the conquest and enslavement of African people, European rulers and their spokesmen found it expedient to regard and set forth Africans as beings of a low and brutish order who indeed were hardly human. Such creatures then were deemed to have done little or nothing which could be dignified as history."

The dehumanization of the African people had already been started. The false images were in the making. The stereotypes and mental images of "savage Africa" and the "Dark Continent" were deeply impressed upon the minds of Europeans. The distortions were repeated until some of the victims began to believe them.

In his book, *Race, Science and Humanity*, (p. 111) Dr. Ashley Montagu refers to the belief in race as a "widespread contemporary myth in the Western World." He further states that, "It is the modern form of the older belief in witchcraft."

This point of view is extended in the following quote from the introduction to his book:

> I am convinced that when the intellectual history of our time comes to be written, the idea of "race," both the popular and the taxonomic, will be viewed for what it is: a confused and dangerous idea which happened to fit the social requirements of a thoroughly exploitative period in the development of Western man. The idea of "race" was developed as a direct response to the exploitation of other peoples, to provide both a pretext and a justification for the most unjustifiable conduct, the enslavement, murder, and degradation of millions of human beings.

European interest in formalizing the concept of race, that started with the slave trade, dates back to the early part of the eighteenth century. Dr. Montagu[1] maintains that the development of the idea of race may, with some justification, be traced back to the scholastic naturalization of Aristotle's doctrine of Predictable Genus, Species, Difference, Property, and Accident. He further maintains that the concept of race had another development during the early days of the "Age of Enlightenment" when the Swedish botanist, Linnaeus, in 1735, took over the concepts of Class, Species and Genus from the Theologians to serve them as systematic tools.

These conclusions show how important it is for us to deal with both the genesis and the present application of racism.

The great human drama that was being called "The Black Revolution in the U.S.A." has deep historical roots, and it cannot be fully understood until it has been seen in this context. In his book, *Capitalism and Slavery*[2], Eric Williams places the origin of this revolution in historical perspective and calls attention to its early development"

> When, in 1492, Columbus, representing the Spanish monarch, discovered the New World, he set in train the long and bitter international rivalry over colonial possessions for which, after four and a half centuries, no solution has yet been found. Portugal, which had initiated the movement of international expansion, claimed the new territories on the ground that they fell within the scope of a papal bull of 1455 authorizing her to reduce to servitude all infidel people. The two powers (Spain and Portugal), to avoid controversy, sought arbitration and, as Catholics, turned to the pope—a natural and logical step in an age when the universal claims of the Papacy were still unchallenged by individuals and governments. After carefully sifting the rival claims, the Pope issued, in 1493, a series of papal bulls which established a line of demarcation between the colonial possessions of the states: The east went to Portugal and the West went to Spain.

Though the announcement of the fact came much later, the European "Scramble for Africa," and subsequently Asia and North America, started with this act. The labor and raw materials of Africa, Asia, South America, and the West Indies financed the European Industrial Revolution.

In the year 1457, the Council of Cardinals met in Holland and sanctioned, as a righteous and progressive idea, the enslavement of Africans for the purpose of their conversion to Christianity, and to be exploited in the labor market as chattel property.

This devilish scheme speedily gained the sanctimonious blessing of the Pope and became a standard policy of the Roman Catholic Church and later the Protestant churches, enduring three centuries. And thus the ghastly traffic in human misery was given the cloak of respectability and anointed with the oil of Pontifical righteousness in Jesus' name. And so, the slave trade began, inaugurating an era that stands out as the most gruesome and macabre example of man's disregard for the humanity of man.

There is no way to understand the African slave trade without understanding slavery as an

institution. It is almost as old as human societies. Every people has at some time or another been slaves! In fact, Europeans enslaved other Europeans for a much longer time than they enslaved Africans. Yet this slavery did not give birth to racism, though it did lay the basis for feudalism.

Slavery was a permanent feature of the ancient world, in Egypt, Kush, Greece and Rome. The African slave period is best known to us because it is the most recent—and the best documented. These documents on slavery have often done more to confuse the issue than to explain the subject. Most people write about slavery in a manner that makes the victim feel guilty. There is probably more dishonesty related to the interpretation of this subject than any other known to man.

The "Christians" of European descent have never felt at ease in an honest discussion of this subject, because every examination of the subject will prove that slavery and the slave trade were the incubator for present day racism.

In the book *The Idea of Racialism*[3] by Louis L. Snyder, attention is called to the statement of the British historian, Lord Bryce, who says that: "self-conscious racial feeling hardly existed in any country until the French Revolution." In spite of what seems to be an exaggeration, there is more than an element of truth in what Lord Bryce has said, if we qualify this by making a distinction between racism, which was rampant, and self-conscious racial feeling, which was developing.

From the sixteenth century onward, Europeans ranged the earth conquering, mainly, defenseless people. They set themselves up as ruling aristocracies. In this world-wide rape of peoples and countries, they destroyed many cultures and civilizations that were old before Europe was born. Their rationales and justifications for these actions were the rankest form of racism ever conceived by the human mind. This tragedy continued during the era of colonialization in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and again in the era of neo-mercantilist revival called imperialism that had so many articulate defenders in the nineteenth century.

The Christian Church was the handmaiden for the development of racism. While it propagated the theory that all men were created equal in the sight of God, in practice, it found all sorts of arguments to prove that non-European peoples, especially Black men, were inferior and could not be considered as men in the general sense.

A search for ways to justify European domination over most of mankind led biologists to the works of Linnaeus and Buffon. Thus, the classification of races began. In deciding the distinctions between higher and lower races, the Europeans, of course, became the hierarch of races.

In many ways this was a continuation of the rationales set up to justify the slave trade. We will have to look at this trade, and the periods of its development again and again in order to understand that we are now reaping the bitter harvest of human discord and social dislocation that was planted over five hundred years ago.

The demand for Black power and Black history has made publishers, from time to time since the 1960's, realize that books on this subject can be a profitable enterprise. In the rush to capture this market, a number of hurriedly written books on the slave trade have been published. None of the new "authorities" on the subject seem to see the African slave trade as the incubator of modern racism that it was.

The African slave trade—like African history in general—is often written about and rarely ever understood. I think this misunderstanding grows out of the fact that we nearly always start the study of the African slave trade in the wrong place.

The story of the African slave trade[4] is essentially the story of the consequences between the passing of the Roman Empire in the eighth century and the partial unification of Europe, through the framework of the Catholic Church, in the fifteenth century, Europeans were engaged mainly in the internal matters within their own continent. With the opening up of the New World, after the

expulsion of the Moors from Spain during the latter part of the fifteenth century, the Europeans started to expand beyond their homeland, into the broader world. They were searching for new markets and materials, new manpower and new lands to exploit. The African slave trade was created to accommodate this new expansion.

The Europeans, mainly the Portuguese who came to the West Coast of Africa in the fifteenth century, were not at first looking for slaves. The search for gold and other treasures lured them to Africa. They did not have to fight their way onto the continent. They came as guests and were treated as guests. Finally, when they grew strong enough, they turned on their hosts and decided to stay as conquerors.

The basis for the future European industrial revolution had already been established. They had already created an embryo technology—principally the gun.

The Chinese had gunpowder before the rise of Europe and the African had iron. It is interesting to speculate on why they did not put the iron and gunpowder together and form a partnership to take over the world, inasmuch as they knew each other and were carrying on peaceful trade for a number of years, along the coast of East Africa. The Europeans created the gun to protect themselves from other Europeans. During the fifteenth century, they found other territories for this weapon, though they still needed it in the never-ending wars with their neighbors.

In the centuries that followed, they used this weapon and other advantages, mainly a large fleet of ships and mercenary sailors and soldiers, to take over most of the world. In so doing, they destroyed a large number of nations and civilizations that were older than Europe.

In order to justify this destruction, a monster that still haunts our lives was created: racism. The slave trade and the colonial system that followed were, figuratively, the mother and father of this catastrophe.

The opening up of the New World opened up more than new territory. It opened up a new era in human relations, mostly bad. The Europeans, being "Christians," had to find a way to live with their consciences after the formal starting of the slave trade. The Africans made the original mistake of asking the Europeans to settle some of their family disputes. Unfortunately, the Europeans many times conquered both branches of the family.

The Europeans were no strangers to Africa, and this really wasn't their first meeting. But in order to justify the slave trade, they had to forget, or pretend to forget, all that they had previously known about Africa. They had to forget that a lot of the early culture of Europe has as African base. They also had to forget that there were periods when Africans and Europeans lived in comparative harmony and Europeans married into African royalty and saw no difference in one royal personage and the other. Therefore, the Europeans had to forget that the Africans had a history and a heritage that could command respect.

In the opening up of the territory called the New World, two competing slave systems were set in motion, and each of these systems served as some form of racism. The dehumanization of the African had started in European textbooks, geographies, and travel books. In South America and the Caribbean area, the plantation owners generally bought slaves in large lots and kept the lots together principally because they thought they could work them better that way—and they were right. In the United States, however, where the most vicious form of racism was manifested, the slavery system operated more like a brokerage system. A plantation owner could and would very often buy ten slaves and re-cell five of them before the end of the week. This meant the immediate breaking up of the cultural continuity, linguistic continuity, and all things that held the African together within Africa, therefore, creating a family dislocation that the Black American has not recovered from to this day. This dislocation was a form of racism.

The mentality, the rationales, and the various ways of justifying the slave trade had already started in Europe with Europeans attempting to justify the enslavement of other Europeans. This is a neglected aspect of history that is rarely ever taken into consideration. There was at first a concerted effort to obtain European labor to open up the vast regions of the New World. It is often forgotten that, in what became the United States, white enslavement started before Black enslavement.

In an article, "White Servitude in the United States," *Ebony Magazine*, November, 1969, the African American historian Lerone Bennett, Jr., gives the following information about this period: "When someone removes the cataracts of whiteness form our eyes, and when we look with unclouded vision on the bloody shadows of the American past, we will recognize for the first time that the Afro-American, who was so often second in freedom, was also second in slavery.

"Indeed, it will be revealed that the Afro-American was third in slavery. For he inherited his chains, in a manner of speaking, from the pioneer bondsmen, who were red and white."

The enslavement of both "red" men and white men in the early American colonies was a contradiction of English law. The colonies were founded with the understanding that neither chattel slavery nor villeinage would be recognized. Yet, forced labor was widely used in England. This system was transferred to the colonies and used to justify a form of slavery that was visited upon "red" and white men. Concise information on this system and how it developed is revealed in the book, *Slavery and Abolition, 1831–1841* by Albert Bushnell Hart, first published in 1906.

It was decreed that the apprentice must serve his seven years, and take floggings as his master saw fit; the hired servant must carry out his contract for his term of service; convicts of the state, often including political offenders, were slaves of the state and sometimes sold to private owners overseas. The colonists claimed those rights over some of their white fellow countrymen. A large class of "redemptioners" had agreed that their service should be sold for a brief term of years to pay their passage money. There was also a class of "indentured" or "indented" servants bought by their masters and under legal obligation to serve for a term of years and subject to the same penalties of branding, whipping and mutilation as African slaves. These forms of servitude were supposed to be limited in duration and transmitted no claim to the servant's children. In spite of this servitude, the presumption, in law, was that a white man was born free.

The English settlers had, at once, begun to enslave their Indian neighbors, soothing to enslave their consciences with the argument that it was right to make slaves of pagans. In large numbers, the Indians fled or died in captivity, leaving few of their descendants in bondage. The virgin soil of the new English settlements continued to need more labor. This led to a fierce search for white labor that subsequently led to a search for Black labor.

The continuation of Lerone Bennett's comments on this situation is, "It has been estimated that at least two out of every three white colonists worked for a term of years in the fields or kitchens as semi-slaves … white servitude was the historic foundation upon which the system of black slavery was constructed."

Mr. Bennett's statement is indicative of the new insight into the slave system. African slave labor and the raw materials taken from the countries of the enslaved were important features in the development of the European industrial revolution.

American abolitionists, Black and white, were fighting against a form of racism that had begun to crystallize itself in the embryo of the colonies' educational systems, filtering down from the attitude prevailing in the churches. During the period of the founding fathers, the Black Americans heard promises about democracy, but the American promises really weren't made to them. That was the basis of their dilemma during the formative period of this country, and it is the basis of their dilemma right now. This country was born in racism, and it has evolved in racism.

Finally, in the early years of the nineteenth century, the system of chattel slavery gave way to the colonial system, after the British abolished slavery—at least on paper—in 1807. This was not the end of racism as it affected Africans and other people of color throughout the world; it was only a radical change in how it would be manifested. The Europeans would now change the system of capturing Africans and other people of color and enslaving them thousands of miles from their homes. They would now enslave them on the spot, within their own countries, and use those countries as markets for the new goods coming out of the developing European industrial revolution, as well as use the homes of the colonialized and their labors to produce the grist for new European mills. So the industrial rise of the West has as its base a form of racism. Racism helped to lay the base of the present economic system we now call capitalism.

Theoretical racism, in the main, is of nineteenth century origin in America and in Europe. And yet the nineteenth century was a century of the greatest resistance against racism. It was during that century when Africans the world over began to search for a definition of themselves. The concept of African redemption is of nineteenth century origin. The theoretical basis of the Black Power concept started in 1829, with the publication of David Walker's *Appeal*. The great Black ministers of the nineteenth century, such as Henry Highland Garnet, Samuel Ringgold Ward, and Prince Hall, who founded the black Masons, were all using Christianity in a struggle against racism.

The highwater mark of the Africans' reaction to European racism came in the middle of the nineteenth century in the presence of great Black intellects such as: Martin R. Delany and Edward Wilmot Blyden. Delany wrote a number of outstanding papers on the subject; the best of these papers were brought together in his book, *Origin of Races and Color* published in 1880. During this period, the great defenders of the Africans' history, culture and right of self-determination, were Black Americans and "West Indians." Singularly, the most outstanding was Edward Wilmot Blyden.

Edward Wilmot Blyden, who was born in what is now the Virgins Islands, was the intellectual bridge between Africa, the Caribbean Islands and the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century. Some of his nineteenth century plans and programs for the redemption of Africa were realized in the twentieth century. Many of our modern day African American youth, who have mouthed the phrase "Black and beautiful," do not know that Edward Wilmot Blyden said the same thing, and much better, over fifty years before they were born. Dr. Blyden went back to Africa, physically and spiritually, and started to reclaim his heritage in the eighteen-fifties. He became, in many ways, more African than some African-born Africans, and he became the defender of the history and culture of that continent and its people.

Dr. Blyden did not originate the formalized Pan-African idea. This started among a few "West Indian" and African American intellectuals in the early years of the twentieth century as a reaction against the enslavement of, and discrimination against, Africans in the New World and their reputed backwardness on the continent of Africa. This group came to view the problems of the African people as a whole, and their solutions aimed at bringing prestige and dignity to the entire people. They came to reject any white-dominated society as unfit for African people's habitation and thought in terms of establishing societies and nations in which Blacks would have unfettered opportunities for demonstrating their talents. Unquestionable, they were influenced by those British and American "humanitarians" who wished to "regenerate" Africa and under whose auspices free Blacks from Britain and North America and founded the colonies of Sierra Leone (1787) and Liberia (1822). The early Pan-African nationalists optimistically regarded Sierra Leone and Liberia as a new kind of society which could combine the best in western and African cultures. They believed that sustained New World African "repatriation" would result in the establishment of major progressive African nations through whose agency the African people would make a distinctive contribution to world civilization. Such were the views of Paul Cuffee, Daniel Coker, Hilary Teage, Elijah Johnson, Lott Cary and John B. Russwurm, all of whom played prominent roles in the early history of Liberia or Sierra Leone or both, and all of whom but Cuffee died in the service of the new

societies for which they held such high hopes.

With the death of the above leaders, the next Pan-African figure to emerge was Edward Wilmot Blyden who, because of his intellectual brilliance, his single-mindedness of purpose, and a long life, became easily the greatest of the Pan-African figures of the nineteenth century. Blyden became a convert to Pan-Africanism in 1850 at the age of eighteen, while on a visit to the United States from his native St. Thomas. The young West Indian had come to the United States to seek entrance into a theological college. Not only were his applications turned down because of his race, but he had the traumatic and humiliating experience of witnessing the recently passed Fugitive Slave Law unscrupulously brought in to operation against the free Blacks of New York; he himself "feared being seized for a slave." From his American and other experiences as well as from his readings, Blyden became convinced the Black people would never be treated as the equal of whites in the New World. In the meantime, he had learned of Liberia and had become greatly excited by the possibilities for development of the former colony of the American Colonization Society which in 1847 had achieved full sovereign status as a Republic. Accordingly, Blyden emigrated to Liberia, arriving there in late January, 1851. The remainder of Blyden's long life, apart from visits to Europe and America, was spent doing "race work" in English-speaking Africa.

Unquestionably, it is primarily as a man of letters and ideas, rather than as a man of action, that Blyden made his greatest impact. He began writing at the age of eighteen, at first for the colonization journals of America. His writings, apart from condemning slavery and advocating the emigration of free African Americans to Liberia, were concerned with proving that the Black Race had a history and culture of which it could be proud. Thus, at the outset of his career, he realized that an indispensable prerequisite to Pan-African action was the creation of pride and self-esteem among his people.

Near the end of the nineteenth century, the great intellectual giant, W.E.B. DuBois took up this fight and ably carried it to the middle of the twentieth century. He is the father of the present struggle against racism and for African redemption. Men like Marcus Garvey, though they differed with W.E.B. DuBois, would draw in part on his intellectual conclusions on this subject.

There is now an international struggle on the part of people of African descent against racism and for a more honest look at their history. On university campuses and in international conferences they are demanding that their history be looked at from a Black perspective or from an Afrocentric point of view. This has taken the struggle against racism to the world's campuses, where the theoretical basis of racism started. This has helped to create new battlelines and a lot of fear and frustration on the part of white scholars. They still do not recognize that removing the racism that they created is the healthiest thing that present day Black scholars can contribute to the world; that in the cry for Black power and Black history, Black people are saying a very powerful, complex, yet simple thing: "I am a man." The struggle against racism all along has been a struggle to regain the essential manhood lost after the European expansion into the broader world and their attempts to justify the slave trade. This struggle has brought us to where we are now, standing on the "Black and Beautiful" plateau. From this position, Black people will walk into another stage, much higher and more meaningful for mankind. After reclaiming their own humanity, I think they will make a contribution toward the reclamation of the humanity of man. First they will have to realize that in the kind of world we live in, being Black and beautiful means very little unless one is also Black and powerful. There is no way to succeed in the struggle against racism with out power. That is a part of our new reality and our new mission.

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A Dissenting View

BY John Henrik Clarke

The following is Dr. Clarke's response to "Black Demagogues and Pseudo-Scholars"

In reference to the OP-ED of Henry Louis Gates Jr. the New York Times (Monday, July 20, 1992), entitled "Black Demagogues and Pseudo-Scholars," I am raising the following questions: At once, I questioned the title of Professor Gates' article. He should never refer to anyone as a demagogue unless he's ready to call the names of the demagogues, singular or plural, and point out the nature of their demagoguery. He should never refer to any scholar as being pseudo, unless he is ready to name the scholar and prove the pseudo nature of his or her work. To disagree with a scholar does not make the scholar a demagogue.

Most of the old and new Black scholars asking for a total reconsideration of African history, in particular, and world history, in general, are using neglected documents by radical White Scholars who are generally neglected by the White academic community.

In African history I am referring to scholars like Gerald Massey and his work, Egypt, Light of the World, (two volumes), The Book of the Beginnings, (two volumes) and Natural Genesis, (two volumes).

I am also referring to Gerald Massey's greatest English disciple, Albert Churchward, whose book, The Signs and Symbols of Primordial Man, asks for a reconsideration of the role of people outside of Europe and their role in human development.

Your attention should also be called to the work, Anacalypsis, two volumes by Godfrey Higgins, published in 1837. These books deal with the dispersions of African people throughout the world.

Many of these Black scholars, whose work Professor Gates questioned, were reading works by Whites in French, German and other languages that spoke positively about African American achievement long before Mr. Gates' parents were born.

This school of Black scholars are neither demagogues nor are they pseudos; they are the forerunners of the present propagators of Afrocentricity. They know what Professor Gates doesn't seem to know: that African people are the most written about and the least understood people in the world.

If Professor Gates has not read the works of the White pioneer scholars about the role of African people in world history, it stands to reason that he has no understanding of the senior Black scholars such as Yosef ben-Jochannan, John G. Jackson, Cheikh Anta Diop, Jacob Carruthers, Chancellor Williams, Lao Hansberry and myself.

Professor Gates' reference to Black anti-Semitism is an exaggeration. A new Black awareness is causing Blacks, young and old, to question everything that has any influence on their lives. We are realizing that Jewish people have an influence on our lives far out of proportion to their numbers in the population. I totally disagree with Professor Gates that anti-Semitism among Whites is on the wane in the country. Quite the contrary, I think it is increasing in this country and in the world, and Black people are not the cause of it.

What you have in this new charge of Black and Semitism against Blacks is the most pathetic of all tragedies, a scapegoat looking for a scapegoat. Because of Black Americans' reading or misreading of the Bible, we have always had a sentimental attachment to Jewish people and, to a large extent, most of us still do. During slavery, we wanted to attach ourselves to a people who had escaped from bondage. So, the Exodus story in the Bible became more real to us than to the Jewish people.

Right now, in a large number of Black Baptist churches, you can get a large number of the congregation to shed real tears of sympathy over the three Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace. Most of them dare not question whether this is folklore or fact.

There are well over 300 organized White hate groups in the United States. I know of no overt attacks by the Jews being made on any of them. Yet, Jewish people have attacked Louis Farrakhan more than they have attacked the leaders of the Aryan Nation or the American Nazi Party. Are the Jews in America looking for an easy victory or the Truth? Black Americans have never been their enemy. And they, the Jews, have never been our friends unless it was to their convenience. Neo-Nazism has fully re-emerged in Germany and in other states in Europe. These are people with a nation structure and armies. Why is it that a group of weak Black Americans are getting more attention from the Jews than these powerful White forces rising against them?

I'm sorry that Professor Cornell West saw fit to make a statement about this false charge of Black anti-Semitism. I could agree with his statement if the statement were true. What Black people are realizing in this country, in the Caribbean Islands and in Africa is that the Jewish people, of European descent, are a part of the world apparatus of European control. And, in the matter of White control over the world, their position is no different than that of other Europeans. I am not saying that the Jews of Europe are more bent on world dominance than other Europeans; I am saying that they are not radically different from other Europeans in this regard. Internal disputes between the Jews and other Europeans is a form of European domestic racism. European racism has spent itself out outside of Europe. During the Nazi regime in Germany, that racism turned inward on itself and created what is referred to as The Holocaust. This was a problem started in Europe by Europeans that should have been resolved in Europe by Europeans.

Repeatedly I have said that Europeans are geniuses at draining the diseased pus of their political sores on the lands of other people. What is now being called anti Semitism among a newly awakened Black intellectual class is that they are beginning to look at the people referred to as Jews as part of the totality of European world dominance. We are not saying that the European who is a Jew is any more of an imperialist than any other of the Europeans, but that he is basically the same. We are not saying that the role of the Jews in the slave trade was any different then any other Europeans, but that it was basically the same. When they saw the opportunity to make money in the slave trade, they took advantage of this opportunity the same as other Europeans in the same business.

I do not choose to deal with Jesse Jackson's opportunistic appearances at the World Jewish Congress and the statements that he made. Jesse Jackson has his own agenda that is unrelated to the Liberation Movement of his own people. He was catering to his Jewish audiences for reasons unrelated to Black people and their liberation movements.

Black people are becoming increasingly conscious of people who exploit their community and hold them in contempt. We make no exceptions when these exploiters are non-European.

In referring to present-day anti-Semitism and the attempt to trace it to having roots in Christianity, Professor Gates shows his lack of understanding of the manifestation of Christianity among American Blacks and how that interpretation of this religion is part of their humanity. Their interpretation, in no way, relates to anti-Semitism.

I wonder if Professor Gates would explain the words in the Negro spiritual:

Go down Moses ...
Tell ol' Pharaoh
To let my people go.

or the words:

Deep river,
My home is over Jordan.

This is African identification with the Biblical people of the Hebrew faith. It would help if Professor Gates would read a towering masterpiece in three volumes by James Fraser, The Folklore in the Old Testament and another contemporary book, Hebrew Myths, edited by Robert Graves and Raphael Patai.

I do not think that Professor Gates completely read Michael Bradley's The Iceman Inheritance before referring to it because in it Michael Bradley has very little to say about the Jews. The book, in essence, is about the rise of a certain kind of temperament that changed the world-the European Personality. This personality has shown little or no respect for civilizations, cultures and ways of life that it did not create. Cultures and people that the European did not understand were declared primitive.

In the last 500 years especially, European historians have inferred, or said outright, that the world waited in darkness for the Europeans to bring the light. In fact, the Europeans destroyed more civilization than they ever created. They destroyed civilizations that were already old before Europe was born.

Michael Bradley was characterizing the Europeans as "Icemen" is not totally incorrect, if it is incorrect at all. I wrote the Introduction to the new edition of this book, because I considered the book to be of some significance in explaining the origin of racism. I did not say the book was a masterpiece of the greatest achievement in writing. It was good basic research and told honesty about Europeans' beginnings and the impact of racism on the broader world. I have also written the Foreword to another book by Michael Bradley that will be even more controversial, Chosen People From The Caucasus: Jewish Origins, Delusions Deceptions, and Historical in the Slave Trade, Genocide Cultural Colonization. (Third World Press, Chicago).

My writing on Black-Jewish relationships is not new. I participated in forums on this subject in the old Harlem History Club in the 30s. In my latest book, Notes for an African World Revolution: Africans at the Crossroads, (Africa World Press, Trenton, 1991), Chapter Four is called 'Africa, Zionism, and Friends Without Friendship." This is an analysis of 500 years of African-Jewish relationships. I am not writing about an historical Black-Jewish affiance, because the one often referred to is a myth. There can be no successful alliance between weak people and strong people.

There have been times when it was to the best interest of the Jews to support certain Black causes, and they have supported them. When it was no longer in their interest, they withdrew from them. The Jewish people have practiced what all people on this earth have a right to practice the essential selfishness of survival.

Indeed, I have criticized multiculturalism and Jewish control over the education system in New York City and the education system in the United States, in general, especially the Teachers Union. Jews have had no compunction in fighting for a holocaust curriculum. And in many schools it is mandated and Black students must learn about the Holocaust before they learn about their own history.

Over the years, I have said repeatedly I am not willing to argue whether Hitler killed 6,000,000 or six. He was wrong if he only killed six. I think he committed one of the greatest crimes in history. No human being would ever approve of this crime. If we are honest about historical information, we would know that the mass murder and what is referred to as the Holocaust was a small event in comparison to other mass murder events in history. The Belgians killed three times more people than this in the Congo. In an island near Australia called Tasmania, the British killed every man, woman and child. In the years of the slave trade, Africa lost, over one hundred million people. For every African captured, three were killed. The Arab slave trade in East Africa that started a thousand years before the European Atlantic slave trade and the Atlantic slave trade that lasted approximately 300 years was a holocaust against African people, which started 500 years ago and is not completely over to this day.

If the four policeman in Los Angeles had been beating a dog instead of Rodney King, they would

have been put on trial and convicted. It is time to speak of the Great Holocaust in history. The European holocaust, I repeat, was small in comparison to some of the others.

When Professor Gates refers to me as the paterfamilias of the Afrocentric movement," I'm not too clear about whether this is a compliment or a thinly veiled insult. I did not go to the dictionary to look up the words because I never use dollar words in 25 cents situations. But, as a matter of fact, my interest in African history and world history in general started when I was a Baptist Sunday School teacher in Columbus, Georgia, where I grew to early manhood. I could not find the image of my people in the Bible, so I began the search through the literature of the world until I found them and learned why some people considered it a necessity to leave African people out of the respectful commentary of history. I became active in the old Harlem History Club at the Harlem YMCA soon after arriving in New York City at the age of 18 in 1933.

The study of African history, culture and politics and world history in general has been the all-prevailing passion of my existence. It is something I do, like breathing is something I do.

I think too much fuss has been made of the case of Professor Jeffries who has said nothing that he cannot document. It is too often forgotten that most of the information Professor Jeffries gave on the slave trade was taken from Jewish writers.

The book, The Grandees, by Steven Birmingham, set his search in motion. He read large numbers of documents over and beyond that book, such as more revealing books by Professor Ben-ram Wallace Korn: Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South 1789-1865, (1961), and The Early Jews of New Orleans, (1969).

The story of Aaron Lopez of Newport, Rhode Island, is too well-known to be retold here. Conrad Muhammad and Kahlid Kahfah are not intellectual cohorts with Professor Jeffries. I doubt if he's met either one of them. Neither one of these men belong to the academic community, nor is either one well read enough to be classified as a scholar. They are mainly Moslem zealots; not too different from zealots of other religions.

I have no argument for or against the Learned Protocols of the Elders of Zion. I have not been able to authenticate it one way or the other. If someone assures me that it is a piece of fiction, I am not prepared to argue.

Professor Gates' complaint about the book, The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews seems without justification. The book is no masterpiece. It is a competent piece of research. The documentation is good. Instead of complaining about the footnotes, Professor Gates should read some of the footnotes and the books they refer to; especially he should read the works of Professor Bertram W. Korn, an able Jewish scholar whose writings about the role of American Jews in the slave trade is most revealing. Professor Gates should also learn that neither Blacks nor Jews can go on forever denouncing every thing that is not in their favor.

Honest sentiment and some very able research in favor of the Jewish people was started in the old Harlem History Club by Willis N. Huggins in the 30s. Some of the best known of these findings were published in the Chicago Defender and in the magazine, The African. The following quote is from Willis N. Huggins' article, "How Wrong is Hitler?...On the History of Jews, Black Folk and 'Aryanism?'" (Chicago Defender, Chicago, January 28, 1939).

When the news broke in the American Press on July 15th that the Italians were ready to go tread "The Aryan Path," it evoked as much laughter as the world may get when news comes from Germany that Max Schmeling has been cast out of the "Aryan Fold" because "anonymous scientists" have discovered that he has a grandfather named Goldberg. "Political Aryanism," according to a prominent Nazi leader, "aims to turn its ire against Jews, Gypsies and the Negro races."

Since Jews are able to take care of their part of this "sentence" and, doubtless, the Gypsy does not give a hoot I should like to summarize the reactions of black folk to the new "Aryan Wave." If we

should look at the records we would see that the early Aryan language-groups stemmed from the black Dravidians who occupied southern India in remote times. 'Me two peoples mingled freely. Thus, the so-called Indo-European movements around 2,500 B.C., were basically migrations of a Negroid folk which pooled itself in southern southeastern and southwestern Europe, around 2,000 B.C. Indeed black African races, The Grimaldi" had already covered most of Europe as early as 20,000 B.C. They left a secondary African base for art in ancient Hellas (Greece) and a primary African base for color in Austria, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal.

Willis N. Huggins also wrote a series of articles on the African origin of Adolf Hitler's racist symbols. In my opinion, I think both Blacks and Jews are often arguing about the right thing the wrong way. Jews who lived in slave trading countries participated in the slave trade as citizens of the respective country. Slavery was a business, a dirty business, but still a business. Business people engage in any business where profit can be made. The same thing is true about business people living in colonial countries in relationship to African people. I place no special blame on Jewish people who are white Europeans. I offer no special vindication, either. Their behavior in relationship to non-Europeans is basically the same as other Europeans. The internal difference and difficulties that Jews have had within the White family does not alter or change what I have just said.

What Professor Gates, the Jews and some people referred to as "Black Conservatives" fail to understand is that the African people throughout the world have suffered a special catastrophe over and above that of other people of the world. When Europeans rose in the 15th and 16th century, started the slave trade, colonized history and information about history, they also colonized the image Of God. They took away from millions of people the image of their original God-concept and replaced him or her by a god conceived in Europe. Again, I ask Professor Gates and other Black conservatives to try to understand that for 500 years we have lived in a European-conceived intellectual universe. I am willing to acknowledge that I am influenced by this conception, but I am, at least, at war against it because I realize that it is not only detrimental to my people, it is detrimental to the whole world. Professor Gates and other Black conservatives are the crawling dogs to this new design to continue European world dominance.

Professor Gates is snide in his assumption that "We can rarely bring ourselves to forgive those who have helped us." The truth is the contrary. African people have always over-rewarded those who have helped them, often to their detriment. I wish he would explain the nature of the help and the time it was given. All people that have come among us have taken more than they have given and have eventually done us more harm than good. If you forgive the modesty, I refer you to my pamphlet, Black, White Alliances: A Historical Perspective (Third World Press, Chicago, 1971).

Professor Gates keeps referring to an historical alliance between Blacks and Jews. I wish he would be more precise and say when this historical alliance occurred. I have been a teacher of African World History most of my life and a student of history in general. I know of no evidence indicating such an alliance. The earliest opportunity for a coalition between Blacks and Jews came in 1675 B.C., when an African people called the Egyptians took in the sons and daughters of Abraham, who were fleeing from hunger and starvation in Western Asia. After receiving food, clothing and shelter as well as the foundation for Judaic culture, language and religion, the majority of these a guests" joined the invaders, the Hyksos (or Shepherd Kings) rather than form an alliance to defend the country of their African benefactors. They had found a greater acceptance in Africans than Africans have ever found in a European-dominated country. With this visit to Africa, the people who would later be known as Jews conspicuously entered world history.

Professor Gates, Cornel West and other Black conservatives use beautiful words, sometimes to say nothing, sometimes to say what has already been said and sometimes to say what is not in debate. They display their ignorance of European history and history in general. They decry any form of Black nationalism and often call it racism without knowing that for the last 500 years the world has been controlled by European or White nationalism.

African self-assertion, the demand for a proper curriculum in the schools demand that we stop praising a liar and a faker like Christopher Columbus who discovered absolutely nothing-threatens an apparatus of European control set in motion by the Atlantic slave trade and continued with colonialism that ultimately laid the basis for present-day monopoly capitalism. No matter what Europeans say they believe religiously, politically or culturally, their main objective in the world is control. Everything that has ever been developed in the European mind was meant to facilitate mind control of the world. There are no exceptions, Left or Right politically.

Black conservatives are really frustrated slaves crawling back to the plantation, figuratively, letting their master know that they are willing to go back into bondage. One needs to question their words because, as slaves and enemies of their people, they will say what they are told to say and do what they are told to do. The Black conservatives have nothing to conserve except their miserable obscurity and their tragic cowardice. These pathetically lost creatures and avid White behind kissers don't have the nerve to be African or Black.

To be African or Black with the understanding of all of its ramifications is, in itself, a commitment to the unification and uplift of all African people on the face of this earth. It is a commitment, also, to take Pan-Africanism beyond its narrow base of Black nationalism to a concept of an African world union.

When the real tragedy of Black-Jewish relations is finally identified, I think it will be the dictionary and how we have misused its words. Here is a case where semantics change depending on who is listening and what they are listening for. Your listener will often hear what you did not say and stubbornly ignore what you said. The present controversy around Black and Jewish relations is a good example of a poor and unimaginative use of words.

What exactly do we mean by Black-Jewish relations? From these words we have no way of knowing that there are Blacks who are also Jews, members of the Hebrew faith.

There is a genuine conflict between Black and Jewish people, and this conflict has international implications. We can not deal with this conflict honestly until we call it by its correct name and examine its origin and development. African people the world over have no culture or religious fight with Jewish people. We come out of pluralistic societies, of our own making, where we lived side by side with a multiplicity of cultures and religions, most of the time in peace. Cultural and religious tolerance is part of our heritage as a people. If we were disposed to be against any culture or religion, it would probably not be Jewish culture and religion that had part of its early development in Africa.

Now that I have eliminated culture and religion as the basis of the Black-Jewish conflict, precisely what is the conflict about? It is about power and the emerging expectations of most of the world's people who until recently were mainly ruled by Europeans or people of European extraction.

The one thing the conflict is not about is anti-Semitism. There is a world-wide Black-White conflict which is part of the broader conflict between European and non-European people. African people are on one side of that conflict, and the people we refer to as Jews are on the other side.

When I use the words Jews or Jewish people, I am referring to White people of European descent, whose culture, development and political loyalty is European. This political loyalty to Europe and the part that Jewish people still play in maintaining European world-wide power, and not anti-Semitism, is the basis of the conflict between us. This conflict will become more fierce and tragic as non-European people challenge the power of European people all over the world.

With urgency I invite you to read Yosef A.A. ben-Jochannan's book, We the Black Jews and the book by John G. Jackson, Christianity Before Christ. I believe that Blacks and Jews need a genuine partnership. Before one can be built both of them have to be honest in admitting that they have no partnership now. Figuratively speaking, the partnership between a horse and a rider is neither a partnership or an agreement.

Today the Jews are aligning themselves with the forces of White supremacy that is diametrically opposed to the interest of most of mankind. I think they have made a political mistake of disastrous proportions, and I compare their present political position with the period of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt and the period and time that followed the loss of political connections with the Egyptian Court that Joseph made for them.

And I wonder will their present position lead to another time when a king will arise, figuratively speaking, who politically knew not Joseph.

Concept of Deity

BY John Henrik Clarke

To hold a people in oppression you have to convince them first that they are supposed to be oppressed.

When the European comes to a country, the first thing he does is to laugh at your God and your God concept. And the next thing is to make you laugh at your own God concept. Then he don't have to build no jails for you then, cause he's got you in a jail more binding than iron can ever put you.

Anytime you turn on your own concept of God, you are no longer a free man. No one needs to put chains on your body, because the chains are on your mind.

Anytime someone say's your God is ugly and you release your God and join their God, there is no hope for your freedom until you once more believe in your own concept of the "deity."

And that's how we're trapped. We have been educated into believing someone else's concept of the deity, and someone else's standard of beauty. You have the right to practice any religion and politics in a way that best suits your freedom, your dignity, and your understanding. And once you do that, you don't apologize.

Nothing the European mind ever devised was meant to do anything but to facilitate the European's control over the world. Anything that you get from Europe that you are going to use for yourself, remake it to suit yourself.

Where did we go wrong educationally? After the Civil War, the period called reconstruction, a period of pseudo-democracy, we began to have our own institutions, our own schools. We had no role model for a school, ... our own role model. So we began to imitate White schools.

Our church was an imitation of the White church. All we did is to modify the old trap. We didn't change the images, we became more comfortable within the trap. We didn't change the images, we changed some of the concepts of the images, but the images remained the same. So the mis-education that gave us a slave mentality had been altered. But it remained basically the same."

In Our Image

BY John Henrik Clarke (September 1989)

Because what we see about ourselves often influences what we do about ourselves, the role of images and the question of how they control our minds are more important now, in our media-saturated society, than ever before. For the last 500 years, the history of African people throughout the world has been told through the slavery experience—only a short period in our life, considering that we are the oldest of the world's peoples.

There is a need now to look behind the slavery curtain in order to see what African people achieved as an independent people, before slavery. Because this independence existed for thousands of years before Europe itself existed, we should examine the far-reaching power of a European-created media over the minds of the world. Prior to the slave trade and European colonialism, which began in the fifteenth century, most of the peoples of the world had a concept of God shaped by their own culture and their own understanding of spirituality. They generally saw God, or any deity, as a figure resembling themselves. The expanding presence of the European made them consider not only a new God but a new image of God as well.

Because the Europeans did not have enough manpower to control the vast territories and populations they were taking over in Africa and Asia, they began to use the media as a form of mind control, colonizing people around the world, just as they also colonized information about the world. Today the mass media includes every visual object that influences the mind—billboard advertisements, commercials and more, but especially movies and television.

Since we don't usually think of school textbooks as an aspect of the mass media, we don't fully understand that both Black and white children have a misconception about the role their respective peoples have played in the development of civilization. Because of the exaggeration of the lives and achievements of Western heroes, especially Christopher Columbus, school children in general are of the opinion that most of the world's explorations and discoveries were made by Europeans. They also believe that Europeans went on discovery missions to other countries in order to spread Christianity and civilization. The contrary is true in many cases. In their expansion into Africa, Asia, the Caribbean islands and the Americas, the Europeans destroyed many old and well-functioning societies, usually for political or economic gain. The mass media has given us another picture of this phenomenon in history, and we have forgotten a recurring fact of history—that is, powerful people never have to prove anything to anyone. And by extension, powerful people never apologize to powerless people for the actions they take in order to remain in power.

Because of the prevailing one-dimensional view of history that generally favors white people, who control the textbook industry, African American students throughout the country began in the 1960's to call for Black-studies programs to correct come misconceptions about African people in world history. Twenty-one years ago (i.e. 1968, editor), I and others with similar concerns established the African Heritage Studies Association. Its purpose was to bring together scholars of African descent who would dedicate themselves to the preservation, interpretation and academic presentation of the historical and cultural heritage of African peoples, both on the ancestral soil of Africa and in the diaspora in the Americas and throughout the world.

I have no illusions about the role of the mass media in mind control, and I know that we will have to be more aggressive in calling for change and that we must develop the personnel and the funds that will give us some control over at least part of the mass media. We can start by developing programs, textbooks and newspapers that cater to the African people of the world and will also be

of interest to others. We need to seriously question and challenge the educational system that gives direction to our children. We also need to establish an independent educational system, starting in our homes.

We will have taken one giant step forward when we face this reality: Powerful people never teach powerless people how to take their power away from them. Education is one of the most sensitive arenas in the life of a people. Its role is to be honest and true: to tell a people where they have been and what they have been, where they are and what they are. Most important, though, the role of education is to tell a people where they still must go and what they still must be.

Jews and the African World

International Implications; Israel, Islam, Black Muslims, Africa and the Third World (1973)

BY John Henrik Clarke

When the real tragedy of Black-Jewish relations is finally identified I think it will be the dictionary and how we have misused its words. Here is a case where semantics change depending on who is listening and what they are listening for. Your listener will often hear what you did not say and ignore what you said. The title for this conference is a good example of a poor and unimaginative use of words. What exactly do we mean by Black-Jewish relationship? From these words we have no way of knowing that there are Blacks who are also Jews.

In this paper I have asked and have tried to answer the questions: Who and what is a Jew and who and what is an African person? Inasmuch as Jews and African people have met many times on the crossroads of history we need to know the nature of these meetings from pre-biblical times to the present. Especially, we need to know more about the history of Egypt and that part of Western Asia that is called the Middle East. Here is where Jews and African people met for the first time. They have been meeting through the years and their relationships have been more good that bad.

This in essence, is the point that I was trying to explain at the 87th meeting of the American Historical Association, in New Orleans, on December 30, 1972. The panel session was called "Black Anti-Semitism: Myth or Reality." The chairman was Professor Louis Ruchames, of the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Beside myself the other main participant was Dr. Nicholas C. Polos, of La Verne College, in California. Comments on the papers came from Dr. Morris U. Schappes, Queens College City University of New York, who is also Editor of the magazine "Jewish Currents" and Dr. Phillip Foner, of Lincoln University.

Dr. Nicholas C. Polos' paper was on what he called "Black Anti-Semitism: A Historical Genesis." In spite of the title of his paper he did not talk about any "historical genesis of Black Anti-Semitism." His paper was mainly about some current dissatisfaction with the Jews and some ill-advised statements about Jews that were made by people like Malcolm X, James Baldwin and Harold Cruse. These statements, quoted out of context and misunderstood, did not prove that an entire people are anti-Semitic. The comments of Morris U. Schappes and Phillip Foner were more interesting to me, considering their radical political backgrounds. In their comments they were defenders of the European concept of history. Both of them took exception to the amount of space I took in my paper to explain the role of Egypt in world history and the fact that the Egyptians of the ancient world were a distance African people whose civilization was old before Europe was born; therefore, they could not have been what we now call a white people.

In the part of the session that followed the presentation of papers and comments, I tried to explain the favorable image of the Jews in the religious life of Black Americans. In the song, "Go Down Moses, Tell Old Pharaoh to Let My People Go," the Blacks who are of African descent are on the side of the fleeting Hebrews against the African Pharaoh. Again in the song, "Deep River My Home is Over Jordan," once more Black people are identifying culturally and geographically with the Jews of the ancient world.

In the fact and folklore of our resistance, the leaders of some of the best known of the revolts are nicknamed *Moses*. In alluding to these images my intent was to establish the fact that Jews have lived, in peace, among African people, and Arabs, longer than they have lived among other people,

and that there is no historical basis for the charge of Black Anti-Semitism.

Looking again at the ancient world I maintain that Jews who originally came into Egypt were welcomed, and they rose to high positions in the Egypt of that day. The period of persecution, so overtold in the *Book of Moses* and other writings, did not start until the end of that period, and it started for political reasons that had no racial overtones.

According to tradition the seventy Jews who came into Egypt increased to 600,000 by the time of their flight from Egypt four hundred years later, indicating extensive intermingling between the Jews and the Africans. No matter who the original Jews were who came into Egypt, when they left four hundred years later, they were ethnically, culturally, and religiously an African people.

This kind of analysis of Black-Jewish relations can get you in a lot of trouble fast. I did not have to wait long to learn this. When I arrived back in New York from the conference in New Orleans, two days later, several editors had called my home requesting copies of the paper. A reporter from the Los Angeles Times interviewed me about the paper, the session at the American Historical Association conference on Black-Anti-Semitism: Myth or Reality and Black Jewish relationships in general. The interview was published in the Los Angeles Times issue of January 22, 1973, and was reprinted in several newspapers throughout the country. The title of the interview was a question: *Do The Jews Really Dominate Black Ghettos?* This title was provocative, though like most newspaper headings, inaccurate. Jewish influence in the Black ghettos is only part of what the interview was about.

We talked about a range of subjects, such as the tragic Jewish dominated school system of New York City, where Black and Puerto Rican children are not being educated for manhood and to hold future positions of power in a changing society. Control and not education is the name of the game in New York City. It is the same in Chicago, and in Boston, where the Irish dominate the educational system. Yet, no one is calling Black anti-Irish for objecting to the Irish control of the schools in Chicago, and in Boston. Why then in New York City are we being called anti-Semitic for objecting to Jewish control?

In the interview we also talked about the conflict in survival competition between minority peoples and the fact that Blacks are fighting for a piece of the "power pie." Figuratively speaking, the political pie is not getting any bigger, but those who are claiming pieces of it are becoming more numerous. The ethnic groups in the northern urban ghettos, mainly Blacks and Puerto Ricans, who were not in on the original cutting of the political pie, cannot get any pie until someone is willing to give up part of theirs. This, in essence, is what the Black-Jewish conflict in New York City is about. This, in part, is also what the fight against quotas and compensatory treatment for Blacks is about. A man with a quota of ten resents a man with a quota of zero who is willing to accept a quota of one because one is better than zero. The man with a quota of ten feels threatened by the man with a quota of zero, who for the time being might settle for a quota of one. The fear is that the quota of one for the man who has no quota at all might have to be taken from the man with the ten.

Soon after the interview appeared in the Los Angeles Times, January 22, 1973, the *Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith* was on the case. Completely misinterpreting what I said and what I meant. In their letter to Dr. Jacqueline G. Wexler, President of Hunter College, Milton A. Seymour, Chairman, New York Board, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, February 8, 1973, strongly suggested that I might not be the kind of teacher for the faculty of Hunter College. The matter was partly settled because the President of Hunter refused to panic and I was in a position to document everything I had said.

In spite of the danger and sensitivity, there is a need to open up this subject much further and look at the international implications of Israel in world politics; Islam, and its rising influence among non-Arab speaking people; the Black Muslim Movement in the United States; and Africa, and the Third

World.

Modern Israel was born as a result of the troubles of Europe. The creation of this state has a pattern that can be traced back in European politics for more than two thousand years. Beginning with the invasion of Egypt by Alexander the so-called Great (331 B.C.), the Europeans have nearly always found a way to drain the diseased pulse from their political sores and the lands of other people. This pattern continued through the aggressive *Punic Wars* (265–201 B.C) that resulted in the destruction of the city of Carthage. From this period to the present day the relationship of Europeans to non-European people has been protracted aggression.

The problem of Israel stems from its European connection, Culture, and attitude. Her problems were created in Europe by Europeans and should have been solved in Europe by Europeans. In looking at the current problem between Israel, Islam, and the Arabs an important aspect in the history of both these people are unfortunately forgotten. A search through the history of the Arabs and Islam will reflect no deep-seated hatred of Jews as a people.

What I believe is most objectionable is the arrogance and aggression that stems from their European and American connection.

It's assuming that the African states that broke off diplomatic relations with the Israel are the captives of the Arabs. The role of Israel deteriorated in Africa when the African began to observe that they were not radically different from other European people in their attitudes and their actions and their relationship with South Africa, Rhodesia, and Portugal was not to Africa's best interest.

It is my opinion that in choosing such allies the Israelis are making one of the greatest mistakes in their history. They are aligning themselves with the forces of white supremacy that is diametrically opposed to the interest of most of mankind. I think they have made a political mistake of disastrous proportions and I compare their present political position with the period of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt and the period and time that followed the loss of the connections with the courts that Joseph made for them.

And, I wonder will their present position lead to another time when a king will arise figuratively speaking, who politically knew not Joseph.

The Boy Who Painted Christ Black

He was the smartest boy in the Muskogee County School - for colored children. Everybody even remotely connected with the school knew this. The teacher always pronounced his name with profound gusto as she pointed him out as the ideal student. Once I heard her say: "If he were white he might, some day, become President." Only Aaron Crawford wasn't white; quite the contrary. His skin was so solid black that it glowed, reflecting an inner virtue that was strange, and beyond my comprehension.

In many ways he looked like something that was awkwardly put together. Both his nose and his lips seemed a trifle too large for his face. To say he was ugly would be unjust and to say he was handsome would be gross exaggeration. Truthfully, I could never make up my mind about him. Sometimes he looked like something out of a book of ancient history...looked as if he was left over from that magnificent era before the machine age came and marred the earth's natural beauty.

His great variety of talent often startled the teachers. This caused his classmates to look upon him with a mixed feeling of awe and envy.

Before Thanksgiving, he always drew turkeys and pumpkins on the blackboard. On George Washington's birthday, he drew large American flags surrounded by little hatchets. It was these small masterpieces that made him the most talked-about colored boy in Columbus, Georgia. The Negro principal of the Muskogee County School that he would some day be a great painter, like Henry O. Tanner.

For the teacher's birthday, which fell on a day about a week before commencement, Aaron Crawford painted the picture that caused an uproar, and a turning point, at the Muskogee County School. The moment he entered the room that morning, all eyes fell on him. Besides his torn book holder, he was carrying a large-framed concern wrapped in old newspapers. As he went to his seat, the teacher's eyes followed his every motion, a curious wonderment mirrored in them conflicting with the half-smile that wreathed her face.

Aaron put his books down, them smiling broadly, advanced toward the teacher's desk. His alert eyes were so bright with joy that they were almost frightening. .. Temporarily, there was no other sound in the room.

Aaron stared questioningly at her and she moved her hand back to the present cautiously, as if it were a living thing with vicious characteristics. I am sure it was the one thing she least expected.

With a quick, involuntary movement I rose up from my desk. A series of submerged murmurs spread through the room rising to a distinct monotone. The teacher turned toward the children, staring reproachfully. They did not move their eyes from the present that Aaron had brought her... It was a large picture of Christ – painted black!

Aaron Crawford went back to his seat, a feeling of triumph reflecting in his every movement.

The teacher faced us. Her curious half-smile had blurred into a mild bewilderment. She searched the bright faces before her and started to smile again, occasionally stealing quick glances at the large picture propped on her desk, as though doing so were forbidden amusement.

"Aaron," she spoke at last, a slight tinge of uncertainty in her tone, "this is a most welcome present. Thanks. I will treasure it." She paused, then went on speaking, a trifle more coherent than before. "Looks like you are going to be quite an artist...Suppose you come forward and tell the class how you came to paint this remarkable picture."

When he rose to speak, to explain about the picture, a hush fell tightly over the room, and the children gave him all of their attention...something they rarely did for the teacher. He did not speak at first; he just stood there in front of the room, toying absently with his hands, observing his audience carefully, like a great concert artist.

"It was like this," he said, placing full emphasis on every word. "You see, my uncle who lives in New York teaches classes in Negro History at the Y.M.C.A. When he visited us last year he was telling me about the many great black folks who have made history. He said black folks were once the most powerful people on earth. When I asked him about Christ, he said no one ever proved whether he was black or white. Somehow a feeling came over me that he was a black man, 'cause he was so kind and forgiving, kinder than I have ever seen white people be. So, when I painted his picture I couldn't help but paint it as I thought it was."

After this, the little artist sat down, smiling broadly, as if he had gained entrance to a great storehouse of knowledge that ordinary people could neither acquire nor comprehend.

The teacher, knowing nothing else to do under prevailing circumstances, invited the children to rise from their seats and come forward so they could get a complete view of Aaron's unique piece of art.

When I came close to the picture, I noticed it was painted with the kind of paint you get in the five and ten cents stores. Its shape was blurred slightly, as if someone had jarred the frame before the paint had time to dry. The eyes of Christ were deepset and sad, very much like those of Aaron's father, who was a deacon in the local Baptist Church. This picture of Christ looked much different from the one I saw hanging on the wall when I was in Sunday School. It looked more like a helpless Negro, pleading silently for mercy.

For the next few days, there was much talk about Aaron's picture.

The school term ended the following week and Aaron's picture, along with the best handwork done by the students that year, was on display in the assembly room. Naturally, Aaron's picture graced the place of honor.

There was no book work to be done on commencement day, and joy was rampant among the children. The girls in their brightly colored dresses gave the school the delightful air of Spring awakening.

In the middle of the day all the children were gathered in the small assembly. On this day we were always favored with a visit from a man whom all the teachers spoke of with mixed esteem and fear. Professor Danual, they called him, and they always pronounced his name with reverence. He was supervisor of all the city schools, including those small and poorly equipped ones set aside for colored children.

The great man arrived almost at the end of our commencement exercises. On seeing him enter

the hall, the children rose, bowed courteously, and sat down again, their eyes examining him as if he were a circus freak.

He was a tall white man with solid gray hair that made his lean face seem paler than it actually was. His eyes were the clearest blue I have ever seen. They were the only lifelike things about him.

As he made his way to the front of the room the Negro principal, George Du Vaul, was walking ahead of him, cautiously preventing anything from getting in his way. As he passed me, I heard the teachers, frightened, sucking in their breath, felt the tension tightening.

A large chair was in the center of the rostrum. It had been daintily polished and the janitor had laboriously recushioned its bottom. The supervisor went straight to it without being guided, knowing that this pretty splendor was reserved for him.

Presently the Negro principal introduced the distinguished guest and he favored us with a short speech. It wasn't a very important speech. Almost at the end of it, I remembered him saying something about he wouldn't be surprised if one of us boys grew up to be a great colored man, like Booker T. Washington.

After he sat down, the school chorus sang two spirituals and the girls in the fourth grade did an Indian folk dance. This brought the commencement program to an end.

After this the supervisor came down from the rostrum, his eyes tinged with curiosity, and began to view the array of handwork on display in front of the chapel.

Suddenly his face underwent a strange rejuvenation. His clear blue eyes flickered in astonishment. He was looking at Aaron Crawford's picture of Christ. Mechanically he moved his stooped form closer to the picture and stood gazing fixedly at it, curious and undecided, as though it were a dangerous animal that would rise any moment and spread destruction.

We waited tensely for his next movement. The silence was almost suffocating. At last he twisted himself around and began to search the grim faces before him. The fiery glitter of his eyes abated slightly as they rested on the Negro principal, protestingly.

"Who painted this sacrilegious nonsense?" he demanded sharply.

"I painted it, sir." These were Aaron's words, spoken hesitantly. He wetted his lips timidly and looked up at the supervisor, his eyes voicing a sad plea for understanding.

He spoke again, this time more coherently. "Th' principal said a colored person have jes as much right paintin' Jesus black as a white person have paintin' him white. And he says... " At this point he halted abruptly, as if to search for his next words. A strong tinge of bewilderment dimmed the glow of his solid black face. He stammered out a few more words, then stopped again.

The supervisor strode a few steps toward him. At last color had swelled some of the lifelessness out of his lean face.

"Well, go on!" he said, enragedly, "...I'm still listening."

Aaron moved his lips pathetically but no words passed them. His eyes wandered around the room, resting finally, with an air of hope, on the face of the Negro principal. After a moment, he jerked

his face in another direction, regretfully, as if something he had said had betrayed an understanding between him and the principal.

Presently the principal stepped forward to defend the school's prize student.

"I encouraged the boy in painting that picture," he said firmly. "And it was with my permission that he brought the picture into this school. I don't think the boy is so far wrong in painting Christ black. The artists of all other races have painted whatever God they worship to resemble themselves. I see no reason why we should be immune from that privilege. After all, Christ was born in that part of the world that had always been predominantly populated by colored people. There is a strong possibility that he could have been a Negro."

But for the monotonous lull of heavy breathing, I would have sworn that his words had frozen everyone in the hall. I had never heard the little principal speak so boldly to anyone, black or white.

The supervisor swallowed dumbfoundedly. His face was aglow in silent rage.

"Have you been teaching these children things like that?" he asked the Negro principal, sternly.

"I have been teaching them that their race has produced great kings and queens as well as slaves and serfs," the principal said. "The time is long overdue when we should let the world know that we erected and enjoyed the benefits of a splendid civilization long before the people of Europe had a written language."

The supervisor shook with anger as he spoke. "You are not being paid to teach such things in this school, and I am demanding your resignation for overstepping your limit as principal."

George Du Vaul did not speak. A strong quiver swept over his sullen face. He revolved himself slowly and walked out of the room towards his office...

Some of the teachers followed the principal out of the chapel, leaving the crestfallen children restless and in a quandary about what to do next. Finally we started back to our rooms...

A few days later I heard that the principal had accepted a summer job as art instructor of a small high school somewhere in south Georgia and had gotten permission from Aaron's parents to take him along so he could continue to encourage him in his painting.

I was on my way home when I saw him leaving his office. He was carrying a large briefcase and some books tucked under his arm. He had already said good-by to all the teachers, and strangely, he did not look brokenhearted. As he headed for the large front door, he readjusted his horn-rimmed glasses, but did not look back. An air of triumph gave more dignity to his soldierly stride. He had the appearance of a man who had done a great thing, something greater than any ordinary man would do.

Aaron Crawford was waiting outside for him. They walked down the street together. He put his arms around Aaron's shoulder affectionately. He was talking sincerely to Aaron about something, and Aaron was listening, deeply earnest.

I watched them until they were so far down the street that their forms had begun to blur. Even from this distance I could see they were still walking in brisk, dignified strides, like two people who had won some sort of victory.

- John Henrik Clarke

(abridged)

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Section F: The Morning Train to Ibadan

John Henrik Clarke

Associate Editor, Freedomways Magazine

Lagos is far from being my favorite African city. It's cosmopolitan air and the incongruous mixture of African and European ways of life left me singularly unimpressed. In spite of my feelings about it, I must admit Lagos is not a city without attractions. Lagos is a colorful city with a dual personality—one foot in the 19th century and the other one stepping, with awkward rapidity toward the 20th.

I left the hotel, absurdly called "The Palace," with a feeling of relief that was closely related to happiness. The Palace was absolutely the worst hotel that I have ever encountered in all of my years of travel. The spell of early morning was still upon the city and I had more than enough time at my disposal. I decided to walk the mile and a half to the Lagos Train Terminus. The cab drivers, already on the street in full force, offered their services and accepted my refusal with bad humor, as though I was an escaping thief.

The road to the Terminus stretched through one of the worst slum areas that I have ever seen: crossed a long bridge over a lagoon, intruding upon the landscape in the heart of the city with touches of magical beauty.

At the station I showed my ticket and watched the expression on the clerk's face as he weighed my hand bag and viewed the ticket again, frowning in disbelief. He was surprised to see an American traveling third class. I have been in Africa over two months now, traveling in mostly out of the way places that most tourists never see. This is as it should be because I am not a tourist. My life-long interest in Africa brought me here to my ancestral home to see and try to understand, at least part of the temperament and importance of this emergent continent and its people who will, no doubt, influence the future of mankind.

In the station there were separate eating facilities for third class travelers. This duplication made no sense to me and seemed rather silly. This is a new station built under British supervision. British city planning in Africa always leaves much to be desired. I purchased a cup of tea and a sweet bun before boarding the morning train to Ibadan. Some of the cars were almost full a half hour before the time of departure. I walked through the train until I found a seat near a window. Chatting Nigerian women wearing multi-colored dresses and large bandana-like head pieces give the train a circus atmosphere. Nearly all of the women had children. More passengers with odd-shaped luggage and some carrying their belongings in bags and boxes soon filled up the train. Friends and relatives of the passengers stood inside and on the platform, giving out last minute instructions and advice, sometimes in anxious and serious tones as if the passengers were about to depart for the moon. At exactly eight o'clock the train started its journey to Ibadan.

A beggar came on pleading for the price of his morning meal. Leaving Lagos, we passed through Yaba, a residential suburb where most of the better class Africans and a few Europeans live. Shops, theatres and small hotels were scattered through the settlement.

At Ebute Metta, the first stop, the beggar left the train and three more got on. After one more sub-station stop we were out of Lagos. When we left the third stop, Mushin, the country-side began to unfold. Shacks and huts punctuated the blankets of green foliage stretching before us further than the eye could see.

From my accumulated provisions I

made a large sardine sandwich and I was still in the process of consuming it when we reached Agege, the fourth stop. Two conductors moved rapidly to the back of the train, talking in excited tones. They were hurrying to the first and second class cars where some kind of commotion was attracting the attention of the people waiting to board the train. I called out in vain to a chatting market woman who was selling boiled guinea fowl eggs, two for three pence. The train pulled away as she noticed me and tried to reach the window where I was sitting.

A beggar boarded the train at this stop, carrying a sign saying he was deaf and dumb. He wore the attire of a Mohammedan—a poorly kept Mohammedan. His long white robe was dirty and torn in several places. For a hat he wore a red fez. He looked to be of Hausa extraction, though he was much shorter than most of the Hausa people that I have seen.

At 9.15 we stopped at Kajanya. The market women along the tracks offered nothing for sale that I had enough nerve to eat. As the train was leaving Kajanya I noticed the "deaf and dumb" beggar standing by the tracks, laughing and talking to a group of similarly dressed men.

The train moved through a thick forest area. The stray cinders from the engine had spoiled my cheap bargain basement suit. Still another beggar came through the train wearing a sign announcing that he too was "deaf and dumb." The soliciting methods of this beggar were much more intriguing than those of the last one. He was calling attention to his sign with a tin rattle that made a sad, haunting kind of music. He was also more imaginative and more energetic than the last beggar. He turned completely around several times, almost aggressive in acting out his plight. Even without this ceremony his manner of dress was rightful enough to get him all the attention he needed. A pang of depression and disappointment touched my spirit when he left at the next stop.

There was no lull in the excitement. More third class passengers were boarding the train. A lady came into the car carrying a large straw sleeping mat on her head, one child in the cloth cradle on her back and a bundle in one arm. Other passengers were equally burdened, some were carrying cooking facilities.

In spite of my fascination for third class travel, I still have some prejudice against it that is being rapidly dispelled by scenes like this. Third class accommodation makes it possible for a lot of people, with very little money, and an excessive amount of luggage, to travel at a fare they can afford. But for third class accommodations most people in Africa who fit into this category would not be able to travel by train at all.

The lady with the straw sleeping mat put down the first load of her belongings and brought in a tin pan that was much larger than most American wash tubs. Her little girl came over to me, greeted me warmly in the Yoruba language and climbed into my lap. I answered her with a smile as she continued to talk. When she finally discovered that I did not know her language her small face lost some of the bright glow of friendship and plainly showed its bewilderment. The child waited with admirable patience while her mother found a place for her many belongings and found time to take her. Her mother was noticeably pregnant.

As the train started to move forward the cluster of the newly arrived passengers acquainting themselves with the others, rose to crescendos of clashing sounds and created, for me at least, a strange kind of confused jubilation. From the window I saw the green countryside unfolding its primeval splendor. About a half hour later we stopped at a small village surrounded by a thick forest. I sat in the window speculating about the names of the diverse species of trees scattered along the tracks. The train stood panting, as if anticipating the journey that lay ahead . . . seemingly wondering, as I was wondering, why this stop was made. We were nowhere near a

station. No one got on or off. My American mind expects a reason for everything. The Nigerian passengers were still filling the car with criss-cross conversations.

The child of the lady with the straw mats and all the other bulky paraphernalia had fallen asleep. The train started jerkily, awakening the child who looked up at her mother for one surprised moment and closed her eyes again. Still no one, except me, seemed to care why the train had stopped in the first place.

I left my seat and walked through the third class cars until I reached one marked: CANTEEN. This was the closest approximation to an American dining car I could find. A cup of tea cost me three pence. The scant choice of food was not impressive. I arrived back at my seat as the train was making another stop, for no reason that I could understand. Up ahead of us I saw a city built on the side of a hill. It looked to be new. The shiny tin roofed houses looked as if they had been freshly painted. The city was Ado.

The market women at this station did not have any attractive items for sale . . . mostly sugar cane and agidi. Agidi consists mainly of maize (corn) meal. It is one of the most important items in the West African diet. My favorite market women, the fruit sellers, arrived a few seconds before the train pulled away. I bought a bunch of eight bananas for three pence.

A few miles away from Ado we reached a large city called Abv. Some passengers left at Abv. For less than one minute the aisles were uncongested. Soon, more colorfully dressed people came aboard. Some were carrying straw mats. Where are they taking these mats? A lady pushed a large dishpan under my seat. A child was tied to her back and another one was growing in her abdomen. On the platform near the window where I was sitting, an argument was in process. A white-robed man was in the middle of a cluster of people, standing stoutly silent as their uninhibited wrath was poured upon him. All of his tormentors were dressed in smocks of different colors. This made the completely white robe of the assailed man stand out with contrasting sharpness. His face bore a peculiarly passive expression. He seemed neither for nor against his assailants. He stood and listened as though listening was a penitence, totally unrelated to guilt.

Every seat in the car was occupied now. Market women invaded the train along with the new passengers. Movement in the aisles became a problem—a rather hectic one. The local argument outside of the train continued, heated and confusing. The lady with the large pots and pans prepared some food for her child. The child was beautiful. To me she seemed over-dressed. I could be absolutely wrong because I am not sure what being overdressed consists of in this or any other part of Africa.

As the train started its forward thrust the argument on the platform ended abruptly. The white-robed man got in to the third class car behind us. The group of men wearing the multi-colored smocks who had been addressing him in heated tones, were looking toward the train now. Their faces uniformly showed a flush of satisfaction, as if they had won some kind of victory. Probably, just being heard was all they wanted or needed.

The lady with the many pots and pans had one full of agidi wrapped in banana leaves. She took one ball of agidi from the pan and gave it to the child, who made no attempt to eat it. She held the food in her hand and watched me as though I was likely to take it from her. A group of men carrying briefcases and flaunting airs of officialdom walked through the train.

At the next stop some of the passengers with the straw mats left. A new passenger came into the car carrying what seemed to be a large cat fish. One of the "deaf and dumb" beggars ended his tour at this station and was met by friends. He took off his sign and stood by the tracks, laughing and talking as other friends came up to greet him. Here-

after it is going to be difficult for me to believe that anybody in Nigeria is really deaf and dumb.

The little girl seated opposite me took off her headpiece, unfolded it, covered herself and went to sleep. The train moved through a valley. At another stop a stout Nigerian woman boarded the train carrying a large basket of bark and some earthenware pots and dishes. She leaned out of the window and gave instructions to three people standing outside as we got under way again. The station was only a large platform with no cover. A small herd of goats was grazing near the tracks. They looked up for a moment as the heavy straining noise of the engine was becoming incongruous in the midst of this pastoral scene. The new passenger found a seat, made a new friend or rediscovered an old one.

The little girl who had been sleeping under her headpiece got up and opened one of the pots of food. She prepared a meal for herself, using banana leaves for a plate. Her mother gave her one glance of approval and continued a conversation with another passenger across the aisle. At 12:40 the train made another one of its unscheduled stops. We were near a village of small farms. Finally the train resumed its journey, jarring the little girl's food in its banana-leaf plate. The man with the big cat fish had hung his property above his seat. No one, except me, bothered to stare at this sight. The train moved over a long stretch of straight track. For the first time it reached a speed that might have been thirty-five miles an hour.

The little girl finished her meal, threw the banana-leaf plate out of the window and rediscovered my presence. For a moment I thought she was going to stare me through my seat. She was not hostile. She was intensely curious. I think she had realized that I was, at least, not a local African and there was something out of the ordinary about my presence in a third class car on the morning train to Ibadan.

We reached a village of red clay houses with tin roofs. A train to Lagos, full of passengers, was waiting on the side tracks. I saw a few drops of rain. The rain made me more conscious of wanting and needing a bath. The cinders from the engine, flying into the open window, had ruined my cheap suit. I must remind myself to never again wear a light colored bargain basement suit on an African train.

Another stop was made at 2:05 P.M. The stout woman with the basket of bark and the earthenware pots and dishes got off, while handing her belongings adroitly and continuing a conversation with her friends. Fifteen minutes later, the train was pulling into Ibadan. The conductor walked through the cars, announcing: "Ibadan! We are now in Ibadan!"

The man with the large cat fish brushed against me on his way to the door. The conductor continued to give out his needless message until he came to me. His observation of me was slow and thorough.

"American?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Ever been in Ibadan before?"

"No."

His expression became a mixture of pride and condescension. His next message was also needless.

"You are now in the largest city in West Africa," he said.

Clark Atlanta University

Third Class on the Blue Train to Kumasi
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By JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

Third Class on the Blue Train to Kumasi

THE NIGHT BEFORE my departure for Kumasi most of the families in the apartment compound in Jamestown, the Ga community of Accra, Ghana, had ventured to my small room and wished me "safe journey." Soon after I arrived to live among them they readily adopted me and became concerned about all of my activities during my "African mission." Someone jokingly forewarned me against the Ashantis of Kumasi. Many years ago they were the traditional enemies of the Ga people. Their disputes and wars and how they were eventually settled are now a part of the history and legends of these two proud African tribes.

My Ga friend and host, James A. Kotey, packed my handbag with tender care and thoroughness. In many ways he was more "civilized" than I, because he was more adaptable to the hereness and nowness of every occasion.

On the morning of my departure, Mr. Tamakloe, the community business man, dispatched one of his helpers to the station ahead of me to pick up my ticket. The old ladies who sat all day on the veranda of the house and the children bade me "goodbye" after I assured them that I would be returning to Accra in four days.

Mr. Tamakloe was still amazed over my preference to travel third class. Most visitors to his country do not travel on African trains, third class or otherwise. The ticket to Kumasi, about two hundred miles into the interior of Ghana by railroad route, cost seven shillings and seven pence - - a little more than one dollar in American money. The travel time from Accra to Kumasi had been announced as being seven hours. On a continent where most people take an informal attitude about punctuality, I had been emphatically told that the Blue Train from Accra to Kumasi would depart and arrive at its destination on time.

Mr. Tamakloe had arranged for me to stay at the home of Mr. Stanley C. Lokko, Senior Prison Superintendent at Kumasi. Mr. Lokko is a member of the Ga tribe who formerly lived in the community of Jamestown in Accra.

We arrived at the station at five minutes to seven. Most of the passengers had already boarded the train. A contagious circus atmosphere

prevailed in the station and extended far beyond it. Market women, petty traders, friends and relatives of the passengers fiercely endeavored to make themselves heard. One of the Station Master's assistants blew a whistle and announced the time of the train's departure.

Mr. Tamakloe's helper took my bag and led me on the train, which was now almost full. The first two cars in the third-class section of the train have leather cushioned seats. All of these seats had been taken before I arrived. I found a seat near a window in one of the cars with hard board seats. I gave Mr. Tamakloe's helper a shilling for handling my bags. He seemed embarrassed about accepting it. In spite of the sharp buying and selling ability of the Ga people, they do not like to be paid for service rendered to a friend.

In the few minutes left before departure Mr. Tamakloe found a traveling companion for me. One of his friends, a Mr. Codjoe, was going to Kumasi. I asked Mr. Codjoe the meaning of his name. In answering my inquiry he taught me the first in a series of lessons on the history and customs of the Akan people.

The engineer blew the whistle of the panting train. The tempo of the many conversations was shattered. For a fleeting moment the noise diminished almost to a hush. The Station Master's assistant also blew his whistle repeatedly, and turned completely around several times, making sure he was heard. Why? I will never know. The happy faces of the friends and relatives of the passengers were wishing them "safe journey." No doubt, at this moment the circus atmosphere in the station had reached its highest point of excitement. Over the heads of the crowd, I could barely see the waving hands of Mr. Tamakloe and his helper. It was exactly seven o'clock as the train pulled away from the station. The celebrated Blue Train to Kumasi departed on time.

We passed the new Kwame Nkrumah station, recently finished and waiting for its official opening. About two hundred yards to the right of the station the fountains in Kwame Nkrumah Circle, on Kwame Nkrumah Boulevard, sprayed streams of water toward the sky.

My appointed traveling companion, Mr. Codjoe, was a civil servant on vacation. He was a small man, neat and handsome. Like most Africans, he wore his dark complexion with unobtrusive pride — a trait the people of African descent living in the Western world lost long ago. The lesson he was teaching me about the history and customs of the Akan people continued.

His name, Codjoe, meant male child born on Monday. Had he been born on Tuesday, his name would have been Kwabina, Wednesday Kwaku, Thursday Yaw, Friday Kofi, Saturday Kwame. (So the Prime Minister of Ghana was born on Saturday.) Kwesi is the name for a male child born on Sunday.

The coastal city of Accra was behind us now. The train moved inland

toward Kumasi. The first stop was at Achimota Station, near the famous college that was inspired and developed by the great African, James E. K. Aggrey. Leaving Achimota Station, the train moved into the forest area. The faces of the passengers no longer reflected the buoyant excitement of the departure. Children left their mothers' care and made a playground in the aisles between the seats. In the cross-currents of conversation the languages spoken were mostly Ga, Twi and Ewe. I could distinguish the sound of one from the other without understanding any of them. Figuratively, the conversation in English between Mr. Codjoe and me was an island of speech surrounded by a large and alien sea.

The maximum speed of this train, on its good days, is thirty-five miles per hour. This was not one of its good days. The large toy engine plunged ahead on the narrow tracks past more forest, then a cluster of small fields. Occasionally an African farmer straightened up and waved at the passengers. The farmer was nearly always a woman working in an odd-shaped patch of land with a short hoe. We rode through several villages. In this country, as in most of Africa, the effects of rapid transition are altering the face of the land and the people. The traditional huts are being replaced by cement-block houses. This country has large quantities of high-grade hard wood. Why this wood is rarely ever used in building houses, I do not know.

Mr. Codjoe interrupted his teaching and looked toward the front of the train. The head of the engine was bending into a city. The city was Kotoku, our second stop. Some of the passengers got off here. A small group of men looking like government officials boarded the second-class car. Market women, petty traders and other sellers of everything from baby nippers to full dress suits, swarmed over the train. I tried in vain to get the attention of the fruit sellers.

The train was in motion, pulling away from the station before the army of salesmen lowered the crescendos of their chatter and moved their baskets and bundles away from the tracks. Inside the car some of the children had left their playground in the aisles between the seats and were being fed by their mothers. A beautifully dressed woman — with her feet as bare as they were when she came into the world — stretched out on her seat and went to sleep. Two of the market women who had got on at the last stop were still walking through the cars selling sweet cakes. A male food seller, who was also a combination concessioner and auxiliary conductor, was selling the same items as the women and there was no apparent conflict between them.

Beyond the city the train entered the forest area again and increased its speed to what Mr. Codjoe said was thirty miles an hour, seemingly to refute my premature assumption that this was not one of the train's good days. Mr. Codjoe continued to explain the history and customs of

the Akan people of Ghana. The present lesson was about the land tenure system among the Akans and the significance of the earth Goddess Asase Efua. Asase means earth or ground; Efua means originating or born on Friday and female.

We reached our third stop, the city of Nsawam, before the lesson was concluded. The market women at this station were selling a more substantial quality of food, mostly fish, beef and rice and fried plantains. A bare-breasted woman, well dressed from the waist down, came to the train to greet a friend.

The train left Nsawam and crossed the bridge of a small river called Densu. The last part of the city was built away from the railroad tracks. The steeple of what seemed to be an old church was seen in the foreground.

In one corner of the car a lady was nursing her child and eating sweet cakes. Another lady had gathered up part of her loose-fitting garment and made a shield for her face while she slept. After the nursing baby finished its meal, the mother opened a can of sardines that she had bought at the last stop. Now that the baby was fed and peaceful, she leisurely enjoyed her meal of sardines and bread.

I bought some sweet cakes that were not very sweet or very good. As we moved once more through deep forest country, the engineer slowed the speed of the train, seemingly in meditation and in respect for the grandeur of nature's handiwork in the tall, singing forest. The lady passenger who had covered her face with her garment while sleeping was now watching the world from the window of the train. The well-dressed lady with no shoes finished her nap and assisted another passenger in calming a crying child.

Mr. Codjoe concluded a lesson on the early history of the Akan people, calling my attention to a coco tree and a local vegetable called coco yams. The train came out of the deep forest country and moved across a green valley that ended before we reached the city of Kofariqua, our fourth stop. Kofariqua is the capital of the Eastern Region and the headquarters of the Regional Commissioner.

The station was larger than the one at Accra, and cleaner. Small boys competed with each other, selling Ghana newspapers to the passengers. The sugar-cane sellers were doing a brisk business. I bought a piece, mostly because eating sugar cane is a habit I used to have during my childhood days in the state of Georgia. The men in the second-class car, who looked like government officials, got off here. They were waving at some of the passengers as the train moved on to Tafo, the fifth stop.

The station at Tafo was only a shed. We stopped there for about two minutes. Some of the sleeping babies had awakened and were being breast fed. I was eating sugar cane, as were some of the other pas-

sengers. We passed through a village where coco kernels were drying in the sun. The next town was Nhawkaw, the sixth stop. We arrived at Nhawkaw as Mr. Codjoe was explaining the ceremony of marriage and the components of the family structure in the social community of the Akan people. The town and its tin-roofed houses were soon behind us.

We moved deeper into the part of the country that is heavily populated by the Akan people. Who are the Akan people? What is the significance of the role they have played in the old and new history of Ghana?

According to the eminent Ghanaian scholar, Joseph B. Danquah, greatest living authority on the Akan people, the Akan, as a distinct social community, formed part of the great migration of people who were dislodged by the Moslem conquest of the Western Sudan in the tenth and eleventh centuries. They gravitated southward and settled in the territory later called the Gold Coast.

The original home and empire of the Akan people was known as Ghana, and was located on the bend of the Niger River. This country fell to the Moslems, under the leadership of Abu Bekr of the Sasso Empire, in 1076 A.D.

The Akan of Ghana are classified in three major groups, Nta, Ntu, and Nxe. The Nta stock embraces the Gonja, Later (Guan), Etsi, Fetu, Affuto, Obutu, Awutu, Asebu, Ante (Ahanta), and allied tribes in the east and south of Ghana. The Fante (Fa-Nte) came in the second wave of the great migration. Their first habitation was near Techiman in Ashanti. Eventually they moved their capital to Mankessim. The Portuguese came into this territory as traders in 1481. At that time the Fantes were still paying homage to the ruler of Walata as their superior king. Walata was the successor of the ancient Empire of Ghana. The third Nta stock, the Asante (Asa-Nte) was the last and most powerful of the waves of Akan people to come from the north. Many centuries later, after the Asante (called Ashanti by the Europeans) had formed a great federation, they built the capital of modern Ashanti, Kumasi. The Ashantis became the most powerful of all the Akan people and the central power of Akan dynastic rulers. Their power grew and remained intact until the British entered Kumasi toward the end of the seventeenth century.

Historically speaking, Europeans have been preying upon the west coast of Africa for over five hundred years. The Portuguese came in the fifteenth century and built Elmina Castle. The Dutch, Swedes, Danes and English came afterwards. The Swedes established themselves at Cape Coast and the Danes built Christianborg Castle at Accra. By 1662 the British had gained the upper hand in the Gold Coast slave trade. After the withdrawal of the Dutch, the British monopoly over the West African slave trade prevailed until it was abolished in 1807.

In 1896, Kwaka Dua III, King Prempeh of Ashanti, was seized and

exiled by the British. Ashanti was declared a "Protectorate" of the British in 1901, after its great woman warrior, Yaa Assantewa, Queen-ruler of Ejisu, had been defeated in the last Ashanti uprising (called the Yaa Asantewa war) in 1900. King Prempeh was permitted to return home in 1925, after taking an oath of allegiance to the British. The nearly thirty years of exile had not broken his spirit. The Ashanti Confederacy was restored in 1935 and once more it became the paramount centralized Akan government in the whole of the country then called the Gold Coast.

The culture of the three Nta races of the Gold Coast was spoken of as Akan, meaning 'the first,' possibly 'first in culture.' The land inhabited by the Akan people, before the disruption of their social community by the Moslem conquest, was known as Akana or Akane, called Ghana by the Arabs and Guinea by the Europeans. At the beginning of their modern history, the main feature of Akan political life had been a democratic form of kingship which the warrior kings of Asante stock imposed upon all the tribes and lands around them. These were the people that I had set out to visit.

The train passed through another town and slowed its speed without stopping. A flock of vultures sat on a dilapidated house at the edge of the town and stared vacantly at the passengers. Except for Mr. Codjoe and me, and the ladies with small babies, most of the passengers were asleep. We had now been riding on the Blue Train to Kumasi for nearly four hours. The group of chatting women who had gotten off at the last stop had taken away most of our amusement.

The train came out of another stretch of forest and passed the Kwahu Mountain Range. At the last stop Mr. Codjoe had bought a bunch of ten bananas for tuppence. I ate some of them after I had finished my sweet cakes. The long mountain range disappeared and the train moved through another cluster of farms. Mr. Codjoe explained the names and uses of the vegetation growing along the tracks. I can neither pronounce nor remember the names.

Before we reached the seventh stop, Wahu-Prasu — "city on the Pra River" — the mountain range came back into view. The Pra River was once the dividing line between warring tribes. Osei Tutu, first great King of Ashanti, was ambushed and killed in 1731 while crossing this river at a place called Coromantee, and his body was never recovered. A royal entourage of three hundred persons, including sixty wives of the king and the nobles of his court, was also killed. This great tragedy occurred on Saturday. In commemoration of the sad event, Osei Tutu's people initiated their most sacred oath — Coromantee Minindu (Coromantee Saturday) — known as "The Great Oath of the Dreadful Day." This oath is considered so solemn and binding that it is rarely mentioned by name. On the few occasions when it is mentioned, it is spoken of in fearful whispers.

Mr. Codjoe unfolded lesson after lesson in the history, religion and folklore of the Akan people as the rattling Blue Train took us closer to our destination, Kumasi. A Mohammedan passenger put down his rug and said his midday prayers, after which a beggar who had boarded the train at Wahu-Prasu chanted for pennies in the same aisles.

Mr. Codjoe paused hastily in his teaching as the train was approaching the city of Konongo, the eighth stop. He stared expectantly out of the window and was rewarded as the train screeched to a halt. His wife, who was visiting friends in Konongo, came to the train to greet him. As he leaned out of the window, their hands touched and they talked a full minute in the language of their tribe before Mr. Codjoe introduced me. His wife was a beautiful Ashanti girl, obviously much younger than he, dressed in expensive hand-loomed Ashanti cloth. Her two female companions looked over her shoulders and speculated about me, showing by their expressions that they were amused.

By then, the food sellers had invaded the station in full force. Mr. and Mrs. Codjoe had to raise their voices to a shout in order to hear each other. Mr. Codjoe was giving his wife some money as the heavy, strained panting of the train engine started its forward thrust. The food sellers scrambled from the train while hurriedly returning change to their customers.

Outside of Konongo, Mr. Codjoe called my attention to a gold mine. A new conductor, the third since Accra, came through the cars and picked up all of the tickets. Why so many? I do not know. It was now 12:55 P.M. Across the aisles from me the forever hungry baby was being fed again. The engineer was bringing the train back to its maximum speed, about thirty miles per hour. After the feeding, the mother gave the child a sponge bath. No one, except me, was surprised at seeing a baby being bathed on a train. On my last trip to the private place (toilet), I had noticed a lady at the far end of the car with a small crate of chickens near her seat. Yes, chickens on the Blue Train!

The baby, a girl child, now redressed and seemingly happy, was handed over to another lady passenger while its mother refreshed herself.

Mr. Codjoe finished teaching the last lesson on the history and customs of the Akan people at 1:40 P.M. I had been a passenger on the Blue Train to Kumasi since 6:55 A.M. The love affair I originally had with the hard seats, and this mode of travel, was over.

The well-dressed lady who gave the impression of having no shoes took her belongings down from the rack and displayed a pair of African sandals before she put them on. All of the lady passengers with small children had placed them in the cloth cradles on their backs. Nearly every passenger on the train was standing, anticipating the moment of their departure. We were on the outskirts of Kumasi.

The time was now one minute after 2 P.M. According to my advance information, Kumasi is a city of about eighty thousand people. On the left side of the train the buildings of the Kumasi College of Technology could be seen. The train curved toward the station. Soon, and with breathtaking suddenness, Kumasi was in full view, a city built on a group of sloping hills, beautiful, as are most beautiful cities, in spite of the incidence of squalor and ugliness. As the train reached the station and slowed to a halt, I looked at my watch and discovered that the celebrated Blue Train from Accra to Kumasi, highly publicized for its consistency in arriving at its destination on time, had arrived four minutes late.

In the station, bedlam reigned unabated. The passengers for the Blue Train's trip back to Accra were already waiting and showing no patience. The arriving passengers called out to friends and relatives and took their own time leaving the train.

In the midst of this scene, I thanked Mr. Codjoe for his teaching and his kindness, gathered up my notes and my belongings and searched over the thickening mob of people, in hope of being able to identify the face of Mr. Stanley C. Lokko, who was to be my host during my stay in Kumasi. I alighted from the train and inquired about him. Without knowing it, I was standing near his car. Mr. Lokko and his son, Ferdinand, had gone to the first-class cars to wait for me, believing or assuming that an American visitor to their country would not travel any other way.

A tall man wearing the uniform of a prison guard greeted me and departed; soon he brought Mr. Lokko back to the car where I was waiting. He was a fine example of Ga manhood, solid, black and handsome, with a proud soldierly swagger in his walk. His smile, thoroughly genuine, said: "You are welcome." He wore the uniform of his office, Senior Prison Superintendent in this Ashanti town. With absolute confidence I moved toward his outstretched hand.