On the Unity of African People

guest editorial

by

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Cheikh Anta Diop the Pan-Africanist from West Africa, in his work entitled 'Black Africa' reminded us that Egypt was the cradle of civilization. In those days, Egypt was peopled by a African nation. It drew on the African hinterland of the Nile River. It was this catchment area that created the Nilotic civilization, the first civilization in the world with a high degree of culture manifested in its science, art and human attributes.

By the sixth century BC, with the eclipse of the Nile civilization, its people fanned southwards, and a few centuries later (around the first century), they founded the first civilization further south in the west part of Africa – in a place they called Ghana, and later civilizations such as Nok-Ife, Zimbabwe, and others came into being. From radio-carbon research methodology it is now known that the earliest sites in Zimbabwe date to the first century of the Christian era.

Exhumation and archeological research on African history from the period of antiquity to the present day has not been undertaken in a systematic way by African people. So you have a people without a detailed modern scientific history. Through traditional methods, such as oral history, one has an outline of what happened; however, what is missing is the detail, which has to come from African people themselves.

According to Diop, a consideration of the pre-colonial African family, state, and its accompanying philosophical and moral concepts and the like, reveals a cultural unity of African people, resulting from similar adaptations by various ethnic groups in the same material and physical conditions of life. However, the period of the European colonization in general has robbed African people of their interest in their own history, a situation aggravated further by the African bourgeoisie, their intellectuals and their wholesale adoption of Eurocentric modernization theory.

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According to W.E.B. Dubois the objective of Pan-Africanism would be the uniting of the thought and ideals of all the native peoples of the continent, and the Diaspora in the western hemisphere and eastern hemisphere in north Africa, Arabia, India and elsewhere. Today the aspiration of African people in general is to be united with others of African descent, within an African nation, wherever they are found in Africa and in the global African Diaspora; hence, the overall conceptualization of the African nation.

The first systematic depopulation of Africa had taken place a millennium ago by the Arabs, who entered north east Africa through the Sinai in AD 639-640. These people were described as Indo-Europeans, who dislodged the African original occupants of north Africa. Having done so, they enslaved African people moving southwards, marching their captives, especially women and children, northwards and by sea into Arabia. Many, maybe most, lost their lives in this long trek. Arab expansion southwards continues today as a matter of policy, being led by Sudanese destabilizing militias in places such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR). There is good reason to believe that this drive southwards is aided and abetted by western special forces – a similar situation of a-mixing in the internal affairs of others, as found in Syria today.

Although this history seen from the perspective of the western hemisphere is widely known and understood, it was only in the current century that the experience of those living under Arab hegemony in Africa reached the attention of the African community south of the Sahara as a result of the exposure of the Sudan issues to the glare of public opinion and the increased attention given globally to the use of violence and terror as a means of domestication and colonization, be it in Europe or in Africa south of the Sahara.

It has become known that fighting went on in south Sudan starting in the current phase with the Torrit rebellion one year before Sudan's self-government in 1956, with the mutiny of soldiers from the south against their northern officers. This ignited a war which continued up to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, with a ten year interregnum following on the Addis Ababa Agreement of 27 March 1972. The question to be asked was why was the south prone to fighting? Were there lessons to be drawn for the Afro-Arab borderlands in general from the experience of south Sudan, Darfur and the Nuba Mountains, indeed from the marginalized long suffering people of Sudan? Linked to this is the question of what has been the African experience in Arabized north Africa and what are the aspirations of the marginalized Africans of north Africa, such as the Tawargha and Tebu in Libya?

It would be of interest to know how much Nkrumah's thinking on the Afro-Arab borderlands conformed to the views of his colleagues Sekou Toure of Guinea and Modibo Keita of Mali. Suffice it to conclude that Nkrumah passed on to future generations the ideological approach to African unity of continentalism, being the geographical unity of Africa as a continent, most probably based on principles of socialist solidarity.

Dr. Peter Adwok Nyaba in his seminal paper on 'The Afro-Arab conflict in the 21st century' goes to the heart of the Sudan issues. Prior to the self-government of South Sudan on   9 July 2011 the issues of Sudan were not the subject of inquiry by African states. It is said that during the long years of war the south lost some 2.5 million people through war. Despite these casualties the situation in the south did not lead Africa to act. Sudan claimed, as a member of the Arab League, that the affairs of Sudan, such as the south, were a matter for the Arab League not the African Union (AU). However everybody knew of the Khartoum government's expansionist ambitions going south. Why has Africa south of the Sahara chosen to pretend that Sudan is a law abiding member of the international community? Is this a matter of cowardice or a fear of retaliation? Your writer recalls a military officer in Juba complaining bitterly around 2007 that the southerners had been 'sacrificial lambs' on the altar of peaceful coexistence in Africa. When did Africa reward the south for its sacrifice of its sons and daughters?

There are many variants of world religions. As regards Islam, in west Africa generally, it has been integrated into the lives of the peoples. Some of those were enslaved and taken to the Americas from Africa were Muslims. The holy shrines in places such as Timbouktou are a reflection of the harmonious practice of Islam in the African context, which evolved over a long period. Today the International Criminal Court (ICC) has investigated how those shrines were desecrated by the likes of Ahmed Al Mahdi. Islamic fanatics such as Al Mahdi have brought dissention, chaos and divisiveness to the Sahel, such that Mali today is in danger of splitting up into two parts, north and south. If this happens, who's best interest will that split serve? Which external agencies have been supporting elements such as Ahmed in Mali? At his trial before the ICC Al Mahdi promptly pleaded guilty and the world was denied the opportunity of understanding the mind of persons such as Ahmed, who are intent in changing the demography of the Sahel.

We shall see that the events in Mali are not an isolated circumstance. It will be recalled that early in 2016 when the waves of migrants were arriving at the borders of the eastern European Union in the Balkans many of the states in the area complained of Arabization and Islamization and that the Syrians and Iraqis transiting their borders were not innocent and only concerned about their safety. What became clear was the belief in the Balkans that they were the target for long term Arab colonialization by way of Arabization and the propagation of Arab culture.

This came as a latent echo of what southern Sudanese had complained about over many decades. It had resonance with the story of the Darfur genocide around 2002, when marauding bands of Janjaweed slaughtered Darfuri and burn their settlements and yet the Darfuri are Muslims, African Muslims, whose fault was, in the view of Khartoum, that the Darfuri were insufficiently Arabised and consequently were primitives, not worthy of living.

Dr. Nyaba starts his article by stating that 'Islam, as a religion as well as culture, is a major factor in the Sudanese conflict'. Religion has been used as a vehicle for the Arabization of African people in Sudan since the eleventh century. Adwok Nyaba sees the intent as being to re-conquer Africa. Southerners time and time again return to this conclusion, that there is a concerted effort to take control of Africa south of the Sahara. It may surprise many to know that numerous southerners believe that it is inevitable that Arabia will conquer Africa eventually. What is also shocking is that many African people plead ignorance of Arab intentions in Africa. Here too one is reminded that European top leaders seemed unaware of the implications as they welcomed thousands of immigrants from Arabia. It was only after a seizable number had entered the European Union and been connected with acts of terrorism that eyes were opened. Whereas southern Sudanese from the onset of the Arab migration into Europe were able to assess what was afoot.

In his analysis of the root cause of the Afro-Arab conflict in the Sudan going forward into the 21st century Dr. Nyaba, a former Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in South Sudan, goes to the core of the increasingly aggravated situation we find today in the Afro-Arab borderlands. It is therefore worth quoting two of his points:

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

This statement needs to be matched with the following:

… the NIF regime has adopted a political survival strategy by fomenting conflict and instability in the neighboring countries. It actively supports Islamic and dissident groups fighting the governments in the neighboring countries of..., and in the objective of this strategy is first and foremost to destabilize, and then, where possible, assist in the overthrowing of the regimes in order to pave the way for the takeover of the state by the Islamic groups in these countries.

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This expansionist and political survival strategy, mediated by the export of a brand of Islamic fundamentalism, utilizes subtle means including terrorism, drug trafficking and corruption, and aims to create a halo of satellite regimes around Khartoum as the center of fresh Arab conquest and colonization in Africa.

Dr. Nyaba quotes the late Dr. Hassan Abdalla el Turabi, once the NIF regime's chief ideologue and the architect of Islamic revivalism, as saying in February 1999 ' We want to Islamize America and Arabize Africa'.

Pan-Africanism

The developments of western capitalism in the fifteenth century lead to Caucasian expansion to other parts of the world. Driven by the pursuit of profit, their civilization destroyed local peoples and cultures which came their way as happened in the Americas, in Australasia and elsewhere.
The past four hundred years of the history of African people in Africa and without, has been a persistent and determined struggle against oppression, marginalization and exploitation. The rule of thumb was to make Africans 'scream' whilst siphoning off their natural resources by financial manipulation via the international financial institutions. It had been the sweat and blood of the African enslaved that laid the foundation of western capital development. Thereafter it was cheap African resources that kept the system afloat. Today the west is looking to reconfigure its system of capital accumulation based on the dependence on the raw materials of others, but has so far failed to find other ways than colonization for accumulation and globalization, in the face of challenges from Asia and the coming of robots.

With the imposition of slavery the natural mode of development within Africa was arrested, blocked and interrupted on a scale and magnitude not reproduced elsewhere. Asia never experienced anything like it. It was the resistance to enslavement in the Americas which established a history of militancy, which found expression later through heroes such as Simone Bolivar, Tousaint L'Ouverture, Shaka, Garvey, Du Bois, Nkrumah and Machel. The Mau-Mau of Kenya were part of the tradition of resistance as were the Black Panthers in the USA. The ideology of Pan-Africanism grew out of the historical experience of African people and at the same time affected and channeled that historical experience of resistance.

Both the ideology and the historical experience interacted and were mutually influenced in their development – in other words ideology and practice were in a dynamic dialectical relationship. Of course at each historic juncture the Pan-Africanists were scorned and ridiculed by opposing forces, but ultimately their will prevailed and although many of their objectives have still to be obtained, their actions were adopted by African people in general, especially the youth, as their ideal, and they became role models. The late Marcus Garvey was one such pillar of the Pan African movement in the 20th century, and his spirit lives on into the 21st century.

Pan-Africanism is an ideology which expresses the unity in struggle of the African nation. There is an umbilical cord between the ideology and the social conditions of African people. The method of attainment of its objectives has varied dependent on circumstances, the persons involved and their political orientation, thus, we find both capitalists such as Garvey and socialists such as Du Bois propagating and militating for Pan-Africanism, one placing emphasis on private enterprise, the other adopting an intellectual approach. Both the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X supported variants of Pan-Africanism.

Marcus Garvey established the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) on the 1 August 1914. Branches were established all over the global African Diaspora and in the African continent south of the Sahara. For example, in South West Africa, which became Namibia, the UNIA had branches, in Luderitz, Walvis Bay, Usakos and in Windhoek. The list of members of these offices reads like a roll call of early Namibian nationalists. Of note were the 'Monrobians', product of the interaction over time of Liberian seafarers and those of coastal South West Africa. The role of Garveyism in South West Africa is equated with the birth of modern nationalism in the country. Whereas prior to the advent of Garvey's thought the various ethnicities were fighting amongst themselves, that situation changed and African people adopted a united position in the face of western invaders, who committed genocide, stole the land and cattle, ultimately enslaving the people in a modern slavery called apartheid.

As a point of departure, it is important to recognize the fact that the roots of Pan-Africanism itself can be traced back to several sources such as the struggle for freedom among African people of the Diaspora, as well as African primary resistance against colonization.

In the early part of the twentieth century Garvey's movement spread in the Americas, the Caribbean and Africa. After the First World War Garvey lead the most significant global/mass movement of Black people that the world has seen. The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) membership was reputed to range from 500,000 to three million members. This movement has been immortalized by the Caribbean artists and forms the basis of their folklore and the lyrics of their reggae music. Not only do the lyrics provide an ethical standard, they provide a gateway for other global citizens to understand the marginalized status of African people. Garvey's influence was a major motivation for the socialist Nkrumah of Ghana. Garvey promoted the back-to-Africa movement, known as repatriation and also promoted reparations for slavery. These two strands, repatriation and reparations, are the bedrock of the African struggle for an equal place in the world order. They represent beacons guiding the struggle forward of the Africans in the Diaspora.

It is too early to say what Garvey's long term impact may be in the African eastern Diaspora in Arabia, India etc. For with time, overcoming the designs of Jihadi such as Tourabi in Sudan with their project to Islamize people of African heritage in north America and Arabise African people in Africa, those of African descent in Arabia and places such as India, where they are in general the poorest of the poor, may draw on the Pan-African experience in the Western Hemisphere of members of the African nation, so that the African Diaspora of the east becomes an integral part of the global Pan-African community and the African nation.

Arab Expansion: North Africa and Sudan

Dr. Adwok informs us that the Arab people in the seventh century united in a holy war in Yemen and the adjoining territories into an army of conquest, destroying civilizations and cultures that stood in their way, enslaving people and erasing their cultures in a concerted effort of expansion and conquest, destroying languages as they went forward. According to Sir Thomas Arnold the strategic impulse for Arab expansion was 'the migration of a people driven by hunger and want to overrun the richer lands of their neighbors' as stated in Anthony Nutting's *The Arabs, of 1964*. The level of pillage, enslavement and wanton destruction is explained, according to Nyaba, by the impoverishment and arid conditions from which the Arabs came. Thus the Arabs arrived in north Africa. By AD640 Egypt had been conquered. In 643 Arab armies ransacked Tripoli, being in present day Libya. The Berbers being the people in this area were fought to submission, thus the whole of the Maghreb was colonized. All were forced to convert to Islam.

Dr. Nyaba also states that the countries of north Africa being todays Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania were Arabized and Islamized, and thus brought under Arab domination. Those people preceding Arab conquest, living in these areas were Black people. Traces of them remain. As the NATO forces invaded Libya in their overthrow of Gadaffi's people's government, it will be recalled that a settlement peopled by African descendants disappeared from one day to the next. When the question was asked, what was to be done to assist the few remaining African people in north Africa, the response was they should be asked what assistance they needed. Only the Berbers were able to retain their identity and languages amongst the original inhabitants of north Africa, and of the others, their religions, culture and languages were systematically erased. Dr. Nyaba informs us that it was the inhospitable Sahara desert, the suddud marshes and the thick tropical forests that obstructed Arab penetration further going southwards into Africa. A situation which today no longer inhibits attempts at Arab expansion southwards, as we will see.

More than anything else Dr. Nyaba ascribes the limits of Arab expansion southwards into Africa as being conditioned by the main concern of the Arabs, being their designs on Europe and Asia, in their ambition to Arabize and Islamize the world. In their scheme of things Africa was not the primary concern.

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Arab movement down the Nile river was done overland from Egypt in search of slaves, gold, ivory, ebony and the like. Ibn Khaldun describes the Arab conquest of Sudan as follows:

They filled those parts and conquered the land of the Nuba and swarmed over those of Abyssinia and shared their countries with them…

In the process the Turks were encountered, Christian Kingdoms overcome and African kingdoms, such as the Funj, destroyed.

On the Arab penetration southwards Dr. Nyaba reproduces two quotes from H.A.MacMichael's *A history of the Arabs in Sudan* as follows:

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

This was how the demographic composition changed in favor of the Arabs. MacMichael goes on to say:

Once the Arabs had overthrown the Christian Kingdoms of Dongola and established themselves, they rapidly amalgamated themselves with the local Nubians and began to send colonizers further afield

Thus the Arab seizure of northern Sudan was completed. Some claim that the Shulluks founded the Funj Kingdom. An African people, of central Sudan, the Funj were over time Islamized with the Funj King claiming Arab ancestry. After the defeat of the Mamluks former leaders in Egypt, Egypt succumbed to Turkish rule. Turco-Egyptian rule of northern Sudan was ruthless and oppressive giving much attention to the traffic in slaves. This lead to an Islamic revolt of the African people of western and eastern Sudan against Turco-Egyptian rule lead by the Mahdi, a religious jihadi figure. He was defeated by the Anglo Egyptian expedition in 1898, which ruled Sudan as the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium up to the self-government of Sudan in 1956.

The paper of Dr. Nyaba links the present conflicts in the Sudan to the Afro-Arab conflict mentioned above which began twelve centuries ago leading to the Arabisation and Islamisation of north Africa. In my view, there is an ongoing Arab design to 'defeat' Africa.

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This project is aided and abetted by interests that are imperial and who have worked traditionally with elements in Arabia, such as seen under the Anglo-Egyptian condominium. The re-colonization of Africa is a real threat and will remain so, as long as there is dependency on African resources. So long as the model for capital is to siphon off profit from the processing of African minerals, the need for capital to control access to African resources will remain. Capital always seeks to maximise its profit, at whoever's costs.

In order to survive Khartoum stirs war elsewhere, especially amongst its neighbors. It destabilizes and thereafter seeks to change the government to its liking. Having lived in Juba, I can attest that Sudan's interference proceeds on the basis of micro-management and it will run several militias ostensibly fighting each other as it watches on. Even if at the time of writing a fragile peace is being administered by the United Nations (UN) in South Sudan, this does not stop the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) from being attacked by Khartoum sponsored bandit militias at any time.

Other means are used than fighting, such as aerial bombardment , terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism and drug trafficking to create client states as neighbors and to push Islamization and Arabization further southwards.

In Africa the enslavement of African peoples by first the Arabs and later by Caucasians was a form of terrorism. Large numbers of people were removed from their natural habitat and sent to work elsewhere for profit. Africa has longer experience of marginalization and subjugation by use of terror. The connection between underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment is a sure cocktail for violence and extremism. Rebel groups tend to flourish in the impoverished parts of weak states, and external actors interfere in such situations to carry out their machinations.

Case Studies: Covert Jihad in Africa

Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

Chronologically what is known about the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), apart from it being reputed to be the Islamist terror group positioned the furthest south in Africa, is that the ADF was formed in the late 1990s. In the literature the ADF, it is described as a 'mysterious' organization. Seemingly it does not seek publicity. However it is a terrorist organization and has been classified as such by the United Nations. It emerged in western Uganda with bases in northern Kivu, where it was active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but apparently in recent years it has moved back to Uganda.

Stories abound, but the most repeated one is that the ADF was set up by the Government of Sudan. Dr. Adwok Nyaba in his article entitled 'Afro-Arab conflict in the 21st century' published in Tinabantu in 2002, asserts that the ADF was established by the Khartoum based Sudan government, as part of its strategy of destabilizing its neighbors. He goes on to remind us of the declaration of Hassan el Turabi, who famously said 'We want to Islamize America and Arabize Africa'. Dr. Nyaba mentions Khartoum's continued logistical support to the ADF in the DR Congo. This support he states should be seen in terms of Khartoum's longer term ambitions in central and southern Africa.

The Ugandan government alleges that the ADF has support from Khartoum. It also states that ADF has links with Somalia's al-Shabab (globalsecurity.org 13/6/16). It is described as one of the oldest armed groups in eastern Congo. It had originated as a coalition of groups in western Uganda, who found themselves marginalized after the fall of the late President Idi Amin in Uganda, which regrouped in the early 1990s inside Congo in the area called Beni, working with the Nande community, exploiting timber and gold. It had launched its first attack against the Uganda government in 1996. There after it disappeared and re-surfaced later. It was supplied by Khartoum to wage a proxy war against Uganda. This was in response to the heavy support the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) had received from Uganda in South Sudan. At that time the ADF promoted a heavily militarized Islamic agenda, conducting raids into southwest Uganda from bases in the Congolese Rwenzori Mountains.

The ADF was a combination of fundamentalist Tabliq Muslim rebels and another rebel group, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), which claimed responsibility for bombings in Uganda, particularly in Kampala (globalsecurity.org 13/6/16).

The ADF was formed by Muslim Ugandans of the Tablighi Jamaat group, which had merged with the remainder of the NALU. The main figure in the group was Jamil Mukulu, a former Protestant who converted to Islam. The members were largely from central Uganda, in particular Iganga and Masaka. Western Uganda was selected as the terrain for operations for three reasons – the terrain is ideal for rural insurgency, proximity to DRC to set up bases and recruit fighters and the presence of some Ugandan ethnic groups hostile to the Ugandan government, and they were able to offer assistance, supported by Sudan which was in dispute with Uganda.

The study of ADF activities teaches us that ADF has been able to sustain from its early days up to date, due to the fact that its recruitment and financial networks have remained intact. These activities are as follows:

- February 1998 the abduction of 30 students from Mitandi Seventh Day Adventist College in Kasese in Uganda

- 4 April 1998 the US Embassy reported that two bombs exploded at two Kampala restaurants killing five persons. These were the Nile Grill eatery and the Café at the Speke Hotel nearby the US Embassy and the Sheraton Hotel

- 8 June 1998 the ADF killed 80 students of Kichwamba Technical College in Kabarole district by setting locked dormitories on fire. An additional 80 students were abducted

- June 1998 100 school children were abducted from a school in Hoima district

- 9 December 1999 ADF began a renewed offensive in Bundibugyo district targeting barracks and a regional prison

- Before the January 2001 Withdrawal Agreements the Ugandan Army defeated the ADF in DRC and the Ugandan Army withdrew two battalions from Congo. This lead to a period of inactivity in Congo for the ADF

- 2002 the Uganda Minister for Internal Affairs told Parliament that the ADF had ties with al-Qaida

- By 2007 foreign armed groups operating in the DRC were not just a problem for the DRC, but were also a source of friction between the Congo and its neighbors

- By March 2007 the ADF made incursions into western Uganda along the Muzizi River, near the Semikim National Park in Bundibugyo District. This lead to the killing or capture of 100 ADF fighters

- By June 2010 the presence of ADF bases in the eastern DRC lead to the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF) invasion of northeastern DRC. Consequent on discussions between the governments of Uganda and DRC, the Congolese launched the military operation 'Rwenzori' against the ADF and its allies in Beni. This operation dislodged the ADF and displaced some 100,000 Congolese civilians, according to UN officials

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- 5 October 2011 the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated Jamil Mukulu, Commander of the ADF, prohibiting US citizens from engaging in transactions with Mukulu and freezing his assets within US jurisdiction. In February 2011 Mukulu was the subject of an INTERPOL red notice for his connection with terrorism.

- Early in September 2013 regional leaders of the Great Lakes region (ICGLR) asked the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade under the United Nations Organization Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to attack positions of foreign forces operating in the DRC, including the ADF

- From a reading of the United Nations website done 13 June 2016 reporting on the 2013 Final Report of United Nations Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic (GOE) we know that the ADF had between 1,200 and 1,500 armed fighters in the north east Beni territory of North Kivu province, close to the border with Uganda. The report states that ADF recruiters in Uganda lure adults to the DRC with false promises of employment, and children with promises of education. Recruits reported child soldiers and violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law against women and children, including killing, maiming and sexual violence

- In January 2014 the Congolese Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) launched a major offensive against the ADF. The military commander of ADF was said to be Hood Lukwago and ADF supreme leader Jamil Mukulu . By April Mukulu and other senior leaders of the group fled their headquarters camp from approaching FARDC forces. The remaining ADF fighters – alongside women and children retreated into the forest, where their numbers were reduced by starvation, desertion and FARDC attacks

- On 1 July 2014 the US Department of the Treasury sanctioned the ADF for targeting children in situations of armed conflict, including through killing, rape, abduction and forced displacement, in pursuance of Executive Order (EO) 13413, in connection with the use of widespread violence and atrocities that threaten regional stability. This action was taken in support of the UN Security Council's imposition of targeted sanctions (travel ban and assets freeze) against the ADF

- In late April 2015 Jamil Mukulu was arrested in Tanzania. In July 2015 he was extradited to Uganda

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- 13 May 2015 a United Nations human rights report states the Ugandan based ADF had committed grave violations of international humanitarian law in Beni territory, in North Kivu province, in north east DRC, in a three month period between 1 October and 31 December 2014, by attacking 35 villages, killing at least 237 civilians, including 65 women and 35 children, with a further 47 civilians wounded, 20 abducted and two sexually abused. The attackers used machetes, hammers and knives. Some had their throats slit; others were shot while trying to flee or were burned alive in their houses.

- As at November 2015 ADF attacks on Congolese forces continued in Beni and Irumu

- 13 August 2016 ADF kills 50 persons near Beni, in their homes and fields, sparking national outrage and demonstrations in Kinshasa Katarina Hoije reporting from the DRC for Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) News, reproduced in the Southern Times of Windhoek, Namibia and Harare, Zimbabwe in an article entitled 'Are the ADF 'Islamist' scapegoats in Congo ?' dated 17 April 2016, points out the strong links developed by ADF with local political and economic figures in its areas of operation and that ADF has tapped into trafficking networks, mainly in timber, taking advantage of corruption within the Congolese army and the local administration. She points out that whereas local political leaders connect ADF with Islamic militancy and al-Shabab in Somalia and Kenya, this narrative is cautiously supported by the UN Peacekeeping and Stabilization Mission in Congo, MONUSCO. General Jean Baillaud, Deputy Force Commander of MONUSCO stated that several armed groups operated in the region, a situation seen in south Sudan of a multiplicity of armed groups working in one area. He considered the ADF the main threat, because of its links to armed groups in neighboring countries. General Marcel Mbangu Congolese Army Commander in Beni calls ADF a terrorist organization which has lost capacity but remains hard to eradicate. He is clear the attacks in his area are the responsibility of ADF. Locals have noted that the Congolese army is not as vigilant and responsive as they would expect, in the face of attacks on civilians. Jason Stearns of the Congo Research Group (CRG), which monitors violence in the eastern DRC, states that ADF' is not a foreign Islamist organization, but a militia deeply rooted in local society with links to political and economic actors'. CRG holds the ADF, the Congolese army, former members of the rebel Rasemblement Congolaise pour la Democratie – Kisangani/Mouvement de Liberation (RCD-K/ML), as well as members of communal militias as responsible for civilian deaths, using terror tactics.

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Insurgency in Mali

Armed conflict in Mali can be traced, in part, from elements of the Tuareg society who rejected their inclusion into the Malian state. Whether their inclusion was the deliberate design of the French colonialists falls outside the framework of this work. Suffice it to say that the Tuareg are found not only in Mali but generally in Sahelian countries. An armed rebellion broke out in Mali in 1963 and was brutally suppressed by the Malian army. In the following decades grievances grew among the population of northern Mali who felt marginalized and neglected by the central government in Bamako. Further armed clashes aimed at more autonomy in the Tuareg heartlands north of the river Niger in 1991 and 2006. The rebellion in 2012 seeking the establishment of the Azwad Republic followed earlier turbulence, aiming for independence rather than autonomy within Mali.

The state of unrest which continues today involved armed groups functioning on the ground. The past decades have seen numerous Tuaregs leave northern Mali in search of employment and better living conditions. Some have fought in Libyan armed groups under Gaddafi before returning to Mali in late 2011.

Islamist roots in Mali reach back to the ninth century. I have visited historical sites in the country such as Mopti, Timbouktou and Gao. The majority of Malians follow tolerant Islamic traditions, which have been Africanized over time, as also found in Senegal and the Sahara in general. Timbouktou is noted as an advanced center of learning in Ajami (African languages in Arabic script), and it houses many manuscripts in Ajami. In the past decades, Salafist thought was established amongst sections of the Malian society, and Salafist organizations run religious schools that receive financial support from Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia which have been a key element in the spread of Salafism in Mali (extract from Small Arms Survey 2015, p. 162).

Whereas the Islam practiced generally in Mali incorporates aspects of African traditional belief, such approaches are rejected by Salafism which sees Islam as having strayed from its origins, holding to return to the teachings of Mohamed and his early disciples who will permit the Muslim community to be free from enemy oppression and re-establish the perceived former glory of Islam. When Timbouktou was captured by violent Salafists in 2012, they destroyed traditional shrines, a similar phenomenon seen in Darfur, Sudan, due to their integration of African cultural facets, deemed heathen. One of the architects of violence in Timbouktou, Ahmad al Faqi Al Mahdi, was tried in 2016 by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague for such desecrations.

It is alleged that Mr. Al Mahdi, born in Agoune, 100 kilometres west of Timbuktu, Mali, was an active personality in the context of the occupation of Timbuktu. He allegedly was a member of Ansar Eddine, a movement associated with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb ('AQIM'), working closely with the leaders of the two armed groups and in the context of the structures and institutions established by them. It is alleged that, until September 2012, he was the head of the 'Hisbah' (a body set up to uphold virtue and prevent vice), set up in April 2012. He was also associated with the work of the Islamic Court of Timbouktu, and involved in the implementation of its decisions.

Al Mahdi was prosecuted for the alleged deliberate destruction of the following historical and religious monuments in Timbuktu, Mali, between the approximate dates of 30 June 2012 and 11 July 2012: 1) the mausoleum Sidi Mahamoud Ben Omar Mohamed Aquit, 2) the mausoleum Sheikh Mohamed Mahmoud Al Arawani, 3) the mausoleum Sheikh Sidi Mokhtar Ben Sidi Muhammad Ben Sheikh Alkabir, 4) the mausoleum Alpha Moya, 5) the mausoleum Sheikh Sidi Ahmed Ben Amar Arragadi, 6) the mausoleum Sheikh Muhammad El Mikki, 7) the mausoleum Sheikh Abdoul Kassim Attouaty, 8) the mausoleum Ahmed Fulane, 9) the mausoleum Bahaber Babadié, and 10) the door of the Sidi Yahia mosque.

Al Mahdi was surrendered to the International Criminal Court ('ICC' or 'the Court') on 25 September 2015 following the issuance of an arrest warrant against him on 18 September 2015. The confirmation of charges hearing was held on 1 March 2016, after which ICC judges committed the case to trial. At his trial he pleaded guilty, avoiding the exposure of his psychology and what motivated him.

Violent Salafism was popularized by al-Queda, which complimented the Salafist worldview with radical Islamic arguments. Violent Islam and Jihadist groups exist in Arab countries such as Iraq, Syria, and to a lesser extent in some African countries such as Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan and Mali. Often its spread is by way of radicalization, as has happened with the Toureg in Mali. Iyad Ag Ghaly, founder of Ansar Dine, a terrorist organization in Mali, which published on a website linked to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in early August 2014, stating "Since the beginning of the Crusader aggression against us…we…fulfill the duty of defending our religion…The war between us and them is still ongoing…".

Another approach adopted by the fundamentalists has been to focus on educating the population on 'true' Islam as a step to win their support.

On the 6 April 2012 the Mouvement National Pour La Liberation de L'Azawad (MNLA) surprised the world by unilaterally declaring what they called 'Azawad' (northern Mali) independent. This move was not universally supported among insurgents and the local population. Amongst the dissenters were sedentary farmers of the Sonhgai and Fulani groups who feared Tuareg domination and wished the region to remain within the Republic of Mali.

Some wanted to maintain secular structures; others wanted Islamic structures, including jihadists groups who were not fighting for the independence of Azawad, but for the introduction of Islamic law in Mali. In 2012 the jihadists controlled Gao, Timbouktou and neighboring areas. In the areas under their control, a radical interpretation of Sharia Islamic Law was implemented, including the prohibition of music, and alcohol and cigarettes were banned. Public beatings of individuals were inflicted on those accused of adultery, and the amputation of limbs of those accused of theft or of buying and selling of stolen goods.

In the end the jihadist were working with other groups that seized power unto themselves, consolidating their dominance of northern Mali. Once this was accomplished, the jihadist pushed south in order to capture Bamako, the seat of government in Mali. French troops arrived in Mali along with UN forces and soldiers from neighboring African countries (AFISMA), who with the Malian Army drove the jihadists out of the major population centers. A peace agreement was signed in June 2013 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, restoring the territorial integrity of Mali. However, the national Army has shown little appetite to fight, was poorly equipped, and they withdrew from some locations in northern Mali.

Another meeting took place in Algiers in July 2014 of all the interested parties, which found it difficult to arrive at consensus on the future of northern Mali. Later in 2014, there were reports of suicide bombings and other offensive actions by the jihadists. From the beginning of the current phase of armed interaction, it was clear that the Malian Army was unable to secure national integrity, so the country has fallen back on France in not only security matters, creating a grave dependency on its former colonial master in the form of re-colonization.

As seen in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), organized crime is part of the mix resulting in violence in Mali, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish if the use of violence is for spiritual or criminal purposes. Entrenched cross-border smuggling networks have long provided the background to armed violence in northern Mali. In the past, cigarettes were smuggled across borders profitably by crime rings. Alcohol was also trafficked through the Malian desert and more recently, narcotic drugs. In 2009 there was the incident when a burnt out plane was found in the desert of northern Mali. Investigations revealed that the plane originated in Venezuela. After offloading the narcotics in Mali, the cargo was shipped northwards by a convoy of 4X4 vehicles for markets in Europe. Such traffickers are key players at the local level and form alliances with armed groups and politicians in northern Mali and in Bamako. Moktar Belmoktar founded the Jihadist group Al-Mourabitoune. Previously he had trafficked cigarettes across the Sahara, gravitating to the kidnapping of Westerners, and later became active in violent jihad (such use of 4X4s follows on the camel caravans which traditionally crossed the Sahara).

Northern Mali has experienced repeated drought, including in the 1970s and 1980s, effecting livestock herding and human settlement. I recall newly appointed United Nations Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon's first visit to Juba, South Sudan around 2006, and when asked about the cause of incessant fighting in the area, he ascribed it to the contestation for water.

The drought in northern Mali has further impoverished the inhabitants of the area, but it is not a root cause of armed conflict. It has meant that due to poverty, recruits are available, and it has been reported that jihadist groups offer US$300 per month to recruits, depending on their function. Further, northern Mali is located in the Afro-Arab borderlands, inhabited by both African and Arab ethnic groupings, including the Tuareg, amongst whom there is a history of contestation as seen in the Sudan, with some holding that those who profess to be Arabs, do not belong to the African nation.

The Small Arms Survey (SAS) of 2015 report entitled 'Expanding Arms in Northern Mali - insurgent arms in northern Mali', on which this section of the paper is drawn, is inspired by the study of small arms use in the country, which provides a detailed picture of the security situation in Mali today. In late June 2016, France committed to increase its troop deployment to Mali by several hundreds more 'boots on the ground'. Hence, SAS concluded its 2015 report projecting that violent jihadists were likely to pose an ongoing threat in northern Mali.

Overt Jihad in Africa

Hassan al-Turabi in Sudan: 1989-2003

Al Turabi is known to Pan-Africanists. He is much admired by Islamists. This resulted in many mis-reading his influence in Arabia and in Africa. From an African perspective the critique may be late, but Tourabi was not universally admired. He was fully integrated within and representative of the Khartoum power elite. After losing influence he continued to live in Khartoum and lead a political party. A visit on him at his Khartoum residence was obligatory for anyone interested in Islam in the Middle East and Africa.

The period covered is that when his influence was as a leader of Sudan and one of the main architects of Pan-Arabism, Pan-Islamism and global Jihad. He provided the platform and protection for Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri. Such persons lived in Khartoum and used it as a base to conceptualize what today has become a major factor in international relations – Islamic fundamentalism. Al Turabi was the planner and convener of 21th century global jihad. He was part of the early planning of the next stage of Islamic international power politics, which ushered in terror as a legitimate arm of struggle, which would later become violent and intermixed with Western strategic planning in Africa and the Middle East as seen in Syria today. Whilst in power in Khartoum he waged a merciless fight against South Sudan in his attempt to Islamize and Arabize it, which ultimately lead to South Sudan exiting Sudan.

Al Tourabi has not received the international notoriety he deserves, probably due to his careful management of public relations and his assumption of spiritual mantel as Imam, although he ruthlessly exercised temporal power towards Islamic ends. He used his influence as a Muslim scholar to precipitate a Pan-Arab revolution under the mantle of Pan-Islamism, whose precepts he helped to fashion over decades of political involvement in Sudan.

It is important to keep in mind that for Tourabi, Islam and Arab were identical terms of reference and that the word African, referred to a 'transition to Arab identity'. He was sociable and always available to the Western media. It was his pulling together of the international Islamic movement by providing haven, arranging meetings, organizing networks, mastering global intelligence, that earned him credentials as an implacable enemy of Pan-Africanism. A wolf in sheep 's clothing, urbane, articulate, it was he who said 'we will Islamize (Black) America and Arabize Africa'. In this strategy he was light years ahead of African descendants and Africans in general. To him we have to owe responsibility to a certain indifference, even hostility to Black Africa by elements in the leadership of the North American Afro Islamic Diaspora. This Diaspora was a special target of Turabi's attention and yet few there know of his role and the scope of his influence.

Al -Turabi was born in Sudan in 1932 at Kassala near the Ethiopian border. He was the son of an Islamic judge. He was raised amongst the Ikwan, who were devoted to the restoration of Islamic law, the Shari'a and Quranic values. His secondary education was in Khartoum and tertiary education in London, England and Paris, France. Dr Turabi returned to Khartoum to become Dean of the Law Faculty.

He married the sister of Sadiq Al Mahdi, former President of Sudan and member of the family of the late Sudanese nationalist and Jihadist, the Mahdi. He stimulated a Islamic renaissance through the use of logic and theology. He established the political party, the National Islamic Front (NIF), which rules Sudan today. His NIF and its military backers introduced a revolutionary Islamist experience into Sudanese politics. Sudan's only comparative experience might be the Mahdist Jihad of the 1880s. Tourabi's considerable organizational abilities were used to create and organize the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference, which served as a meeting point for many Islamist revolutionary movements and future terrorist leaders to plan their global strategies. He was the political guide (Murshid) and eminence grise of the Sudanese Islamist movement.

Al-Turabi was advisor to the Sudanese military lead by Al Bashir, who seized power from Sadiq Al Mahdi in June 1989. He eventually emerged from the background of Bashir's government to dominate not just domestic, but also foreign policy, until his arrest by his former ally, President Al Bashir in 2003. Al Bashir, suspected Turabi as the author of challenges to his authority in Sudan had Turabl arrested many times. Turabi was released from jail in March 2009, days after Bashir was charged by the International Criminal Court of Justice (ICC) for crimes against humanity. Turabi died on 5 March 2016.

The Experience in Libya

Horace G. Campbell, Professor of African American Studies and Political Science at Syracuse University in New York in the United States in his paper dated 28 April 2016 published by www.pambazuka, provides further insights into the use of terror in Africa, in this instance in Libya. For those who followed the evolving situation in Iraq and Syria as these became war zones and who were witness to the increased role of Saudi Arabia and Iran in Middle Eastern affairs in the last years, it became clear that overt great power involvement as direct actors in the Middle East and north Africa (i.e. Arabia) has been in decline, and today there is visible movement towards a multi-polar world, in which previously second level countries are increasingly authoritative on African issues, where terror is the weapon of choice.

This is not the platform to interrogate Western e-mixing and early use of terror through the deployment of proxies in Africa, by way of influencing events. The trajectory of the al-Queda leader Ben Laden was initiated in Saudi Arabia, where he was born and continued through Sudan and into Afghanistan. Campbell in his paper alerts us on efforts underway to use Islamic terrorism to control the resources of Africa, Libya and Arabia.

Campbell reminds us of Libya's vast resources, which were known long ago, be they mineral or water aquifiers. Under the leadership of the late leader Gaddafi and with new direction, when the OAU became the African Union Commission (AUC), Libya's plan to create an African Monetary Fund backed by its oil revenues and a common currency was seen as a direct threat to western interests in Africa. After the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) eliminated Gaddafi in 2011, it was also concerned about the flow of migrants from Africa through Libya to Europe. Since 2014 when the Islamic State militant group (ISIS) appeared dramatically in Libya, the West had been seeking a pretext to intervene militarily in Libya and sent into Libya its Special Operation Forces (France, Britain and Italy).

Christopher Stevens, the US diplomat in charge of the US Legation in Benghazi, according to Campbell:

…had been at the center of working with the other imperialists to recruit the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), had worked hard to give legitimate cover for these jihadists as the CIA and Stevens mobilized the eastern region of Dernia as the filter for sending Jihadists from Libya to fight in Syria. The so-called ISIS in Libya are working within the same infrastructure organized by the United States to destabilize North and West Asia.

He also names Britain, France, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, Sudan, Turkey and Egypt as the mobilisers of the 1700 militia groups operating in Libya in 2012. Campbell continues: 'Two years after the CIA and the US legation were exposed in the supply of Jihadists from Libya to Syria, the world was told of a new 'threat' to Libya in the form of ISIS'.

2.25

Quite rightly the professor compares the outcry on the ISIS threat with the silence on the funding of the Gulf Cooperation Council who 'finance and facilitate the deployment and circulation of ISIS elements'. He states that it is the responsibility of progressive Pan-African forces to make this information known. As regards the African Union Commission (AUC), Campbell states it's diplomatic efforts should be geared at removing Libya from the foreign military elements of Qatar and the Emirates, who are carrying out a proxy war in Libya. Elements such as Turkey and Sudan should, he says, be forcibly removed from Libya by the AUC.

In addition to armed violence, Libya is the main conduit for refugees and illegal migrants coming from Africa, going to Europe. The issue of migration to Europe is handled in the article entitled 'Seeking refuge' appearing in the *Beijing Review* of 26 May 2016, which calls into question the European Union (EU) arrangements with Turkey to block Arab migrants crossing Turkey en route to Europe, which offends the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees. In the case of African migrants traversing Libya, a similar arrangement was struck by the EU with Sudan, to block Eritreans crossing through Sudan en route to Libya. What is cause for concern in the Libya situation is the high rate of reported deaths of African people in the Mediterranean, and the absence of voices defending their interests and articulating their situation.

Some Outcomes

In the 1990s terror attacks were episodic and limited in Algeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Uganda. However, today a quarter of a century later, the security scenario in Africa has changed with internal conflicts being replaced by terrorism with wars in Syria, Yemen and Libya, more than half a dozen countries south of the Sahara are now in low-intensity war. In some, the state is seriously eroded, e.g., the emergence of Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria and the spread from Somalia of the influence of Al Shabaab into Kenya and Uganda.

With the decolonization of Africa, the conventional wars of liberation have more or less come to an end, only leaving the Western Sahara outstanding. Apart from Burundi, South Sudan and the eastern DRC, with minor skirmish here and there, since January 2016 over ten African countries, including Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast have experienced terror attacks. These attacks follow a new pattern. The attackers, without a local base or support and with no clear local goals – come from elsewhere, kill indiscriminately and disappear. The synchronization of these attacks and their targets appears rather to be connected with events taking place outside of Africa, in Europe or the Middle East.

Africa hosts several terrorists groups, as this paper has illustrated, all of which are affiliated or influenced by al-Qaeda. The response to externally influenced terrorism in Africa is seen to come principally from France and its NATO allies who are elaborating on what some call an 'African security architecture'. This development is ominous and at the same time is growing political teeth and financial muscle, consequent on 'political cowardice' in the face of the intimidating tactics of the terrorists. All of the terrorist actions are aimed at innocents and result in the displacement of thousands of African people.

Nigeria, in recent times, has shown that with determination 'push back' can be achieved in the fight against terrorism. But to achieve this, Nigeria was dependent on western support, which was delayed. Thus, Sudan is the homeland of terrorism, supported by countries in the Middle East, aided and abetted by empire building interests in the developed world, which see Africa as a soft target ripe for re-colonization.

What the Future Holds

The year 2002 has been adjudged by some as marking a milestone in the movement towards the unity of African people. This was the year when the Organization of African Unity (OAU) became the African Union Commission (AUC). The Vice-Chairperson of the Pan-African Institute for the Study of African Society (PAISAS), based in Windhoek, Namibia, Dr Theo-Ben Gurirab, was in 2002 the Foreign Minister of Namibia.

He attended both the Foreign Minister's pre-Summit meeting held in Durban, South Africa in 2002 and the Summit itself, being in attendance of HE Sam Nujoma, Head of State of the Republic of Namibia and leader of the delegation of the government of Namibia to the Summit. Dr. Gurirab affirms today that the 2002 Summit voted for the adoption of the African Diaspora as the 6th Region of the AUC. Why was this resolution not implemented, given the role of the African Diaspora in the Pan-African struggle and the creation of both the OAU/AUC?

We ought to be clear that Pan-Africanism emerged from the enslavement of African people in the western hemisphere, particularly in Europe, North and Central America and the Caribbean. However the Western encounter had been preceded by a millennium by the Arab enslavement of African peoples, which continues up to today. The products of Arab enslavement constituting the African eastern Diaspora are found in North Africa and the Middle East. These African descendants are members of the African Diaspora. There are also persons of African descent in India called the Siddis.

On the right of return, all nations recognize such rights for their nationals. Indeed some accord nationality rights to those returning who have lived overseas for generations. In the African circumstance such rights are known as the right to repatriation. Concepts such as 'the key link' of Africa and its Diaspora inform the insistence that Pan-Africanism be taught at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in institutions of learning in countries populated by African people and those of African descent, in order to make them conversant with their patrimony.

Time and time again as we seek to project the future of Pan-Africanism we are obliged to refer to the intellectual and political thought of Walter Rodney. For purposes of this exercise these insights are culled from the excellent book on Rodney by Professor Rupert Lewis, whom I meet at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica around 2003. Specifically chapter seven of the book is incisive which reveals conclusions drawn during Rodney's sojourn at the University at Dar es Salaam. Lewis points out that Rodney's views on Pan-Africanism reflected his Marxist outlook. Rodney was of a different political generation than George Padmore, C.L.R. James and Franz Fanon. Because he was assassinated he did not live to update and to share with us his interpretation of current events. We have his projections which are accurate on what is going on today. His paper prepared for the Sixth Pan-African Congress which held in Dar es Salaam in June 1974 was entitled 'Aspects of the International Class Struggle in Africa, the Caribbean and America' remains as relevant today as at the time of delivery.

To quote Lewis: 'Rodney's paper was a sharp critique of post-independence regimes and he was especially critical of the exclusion of nongovernmental radical parties by ruling parties (at the Congress)'. Issues of class were very much pertinent in African politics. The struggle of the African people had intensified rather than abated. Rodney noted the contradiction between the African producers and the European capitalists on the one hand, and the Black working masses and a small African possessing class.

Between Rodney and James there was a different assessment of the political role of the African and Caribbean middle classes in what they were capable of. James was more optimistic about the possibilities for Pan-Africanism in the neo-colonial situation. Rodney was not. James tended to focus on personalities whereas Rodney was critical of personalities and focused on the social forces they represent. Rodney felt that the OAU had done 'far more to frustrate than to realize the concept of African unity'. He was skeptical of the potential of the middle class. Rodney foresaw that with the passage of time, unity would become more difficult to attain and that the political classes would not be willing to surrender their perks and privileges in the name of unity for all.

Rodney wanted the Congress to discuss the class character of the national movements. He wanted to know which class leads the national movement, and is this class capable of carrying out the historical tasks of national liberation, and who are the silent classes on whose behalf 'national' claims were being articulated?

In his approach to the Congress CLR James avoided critique of African political leadership. He thought that the initiative of Pan-Africanism belonged to continental Africans. Rodney did not share such sentiments, believing that the Diaspora had equal responsibility. James was more optimistic about the possibilities for postcolonial Pan-Africanism. Rodney was not. I share Rodney's assessment. Indeed the door is closing for Pan-Africanism. Reactionary forces are working overtime, led by certain circles in Arabia to sever Africa from the Diaspora as permanently as possible. The Arab political elite have never been interested in the continent linking with the north American Diaspora. This placed 'distance' between the types planted by the likes of Tourabi in north America and their active engagement with Pan-Africanism. The making of the link between Africa and its Diaspora is a cardinal factor in the unity of the African people/nation.

Rodney was critical of the African petty bourgeoisie for lacking vision and of being essentially parasitic. He claimed that African governments had not done enough to educate their people on the struggles in southern Africa. To encapsulate the thrust of Rodney's observations, Lewis states Rodney's thinking that 'The unity of Africa requires the unity of progressive groups, organisations and institutions rather than merely being the preserve of states'.

Race and Class in 2016: From George Padmore to Marcus Garvey

The late George Padmore, who was born 28 June 1903 in Guyana as Malcom Nurse, arrived in Moscow on 8 January 1930 on his first official visit functioning amongst others, as a journalist and representative of the United States Communist Party. He was coming from the United States of America (USA), where he had been active with the Workers (Communist) Party of the USA. He stayed in the USSR till the end of 1931. He was the first person of African descent to serve on the august Soviet foreign policy body, the Comintern (Communist International).

His arrival coincided with a 'turn to the left' in Comintern strategy, known as the Third Period, endorsed at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928, which foresaw world revolution as imminent and adopted a 'class against class' approach to international affairs. This would impact the South African Communist Party. This was at a time of the Great Depression. At that time the work of the Comintern in Africa was focused on the trade unions in South Africa. Padmore followed the line of Harry Haywood and James La Guma supporting the cause of a 'Native Republic' in South Africa. Through the remainder of his life he never wavered from this position as regards the struggle in South Africa, whereas the Soviets, particularly during Stalin's leadership took a contrary position. Padmore was critical of the Comintern line of 'anti-fascism before anti-imperialism', prioritizing anti-fascist alliances over anti-imperial activity. In his work Padmore clearly defined the role of imperialism and its different actors and the workings of race and class in Africa, all of which remains highly relevant today, especially as we seek to understand how in South Africa today, a country constituted by a majority of African descent, a white minority rules via economic leverage.

Africa, according to Padmore, had no sizable bourgeoisie, the beginnings of an industrial proletariat and in the international setting strong race chauvinism preventing white workers from uniting with black workers. To quote from Leslies James 'Padmore's position on the centrality of racial chauvinism in the anti-imperial struggle came directly from his Marxist education', as for him racism was part of capitalism. Racism was a social construct. Rather for Padmore 'Africans for Africans' rather than 'class against class' best served the African revolution. Like his close friend Nkrumah, Garvey's refrain on African people was part of his ideological make up.

The 8th Pan-African Congress, 14-16 January 2014, University of Witswatersrand, Johannesburg

I had the good fortune to be a member of the Preparatory Committee for the 8th Pan-African Congress (8PAC). This Committee meet in January 2010 and in August/September 2012, both meetings being in Johannesberg, South Africa. The Congress met in January 2014 at the Univerity of Witswatersrand. Amongst other things, this Congress 'finally buried Continentalism' (continentalism: unity of the African continent) to mark a clean and clear break with the unity approach based on the unity of the geographical land mass of the continent of Africa. It opted for an approach uniting Africa south of the Sahara with the African Diaspora, wherever found be it in the Americas, the Middle East, India etc. (i.e., the African nation). It excluded the involvement of African governments; its unity impulse was bottom up and it saw unity as a process of development of an African national consciousness. This then is the future trajectory to build the unity of African people, which needs to be driven by public education of its theory and practice. Far too few presently understand Pan-Africanism from a studied point of view, based upon African realities. For example, in mid-2016 Nigeria blocked the admission of Haiti to the AU. Such a decision by a regional power in African affairs is difficult to fathom, given Nigeria's previous positions via the Diaspora, and Pan-Africanism.

Projections

At present, the AUC's increasing involvement in the Pan-African Congress series, with Nigeria's obstruction of the entry of Haiti into the AUC that the forces for disunity are in the ascendancy and matters will no longer be handled on casual basis. We are moving rapidly towards a 'forcing'. Without more dissemination and training on Pan-Africanism, especial with the youth, one is setting out on unchartered waters. In the end, the need for unity will override all else, and the people will take matters into their own hands. African unity is anchored in its own history, cosmology, traditions and customs. The key to the future is the taking of Pan-Africanism seriously, within basic education and at all other levels of schooling.

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