The general history of Africa: studies and documents 9

The educational process and historiography in Africa

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The educational process and historiography in Africa

Final Report and papers of the symposium
organized by Unesco in Dakar (Senegal)
from 25 to 29 January 1982

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Preface

In 1964 the General Conference of Unesco, as part of the Organization's effort to further the mutual understanding of peoples and nations, authorized the Director-General to take the necessary measures for the preparation and publication of a *General History of Africa.*

Activities in the early stages of the project (1965–70) in Africa and elsewhere consisted mainly of work on the collection of oral and written sources such as the *Guide to the Sources of the History of Africa.*

At the same time, international scientific consultations were organized to consider the methodology of the project. This led to a number of recommendations made by meetings of experts held in Paris (1969) and in Addis Ababa (1970), which launched the second phase of the project, i.e. the preparation and drafting of an eight-volume *General History of Africa* under the sole intellectual and scientific responsibility of a scholarly body, the International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa.

This committee, governed by the Statutes adopted by the Executive Board of Unesco in 1971, is composed of thirty-nine members (two-thirds of whom are African and one-third non-African) serving in their personal capacity and appointed by the Director-General of Unesco for the duration of the committee's mandate. The committee, at its first session, defined its task as follows:

Although aiming at the highest possible scientific level, the *History* will not seek to be exhaustive and will be a work of synthesis avoiding dogmatism. In many respects, it will be a statement of problems showing the present state of knowledge and the main trends in research, and it will not hesitate to show divergencies of doctrine and opinion where these exist. In this way, it will prepare the ground for future work.

The committee decided to present the work in eight volumes, each containing some 750 pages, with illustrations, photographs, maps and line-drawings. The eight volumes are the following:

Volume I *Methodology and African Prehistory*
(Editor: Professor Joseph Ki-Zerbo)

Volume II *Ancient Civilizations of Africa*
(Editor: Dr Gamal Mokhtar)

Volume III *Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*
(Editor: H.E. Mr Mohammed El Fasi)
Volume IV *Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*
(Editor: Professor D. T. Niane)
Volume V *Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century*
(Editor: Professor B. A. Ogot)
Volume VI *The Nineteenth Century until 1880*
(Editor: Professor J. F. A. Ajayi)
Volume VII *Africa under Foreign Domination, 1880–1935*
(Editor: Professor A. A. Boahen)
Volume VIII *Africa since 1935*
(Editor: Professor A. A. Mazrui)

The drafting of the volumes began in 1972 and is still going on. In addition, it was felt that scientific studies, colloquia and symposia on related themes should be undertaken as part of the preparatory work. Such studies and meetings have been and are being organized in order to provide wider and deeper background information on the volume concerned and also to help situate it in relation to the other volumes.

The papers prepared for discussion and the exchanges of views on a wide variety of subjects at these meetings have provided valuable historical material which Unesco decided to make known as widely as possible by publishing it in a series entitled 'The General History of Africa: Studies and Documents'.

The latest meetings have been convened in connection with Volume VIII, which covers the recent history of Africa. These meetings have dealt with 'The Historiography of Southern Africa', 'The Decolonization of Africa: Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa' and 'The Methodology of Contemporary African History'. The present book, the ninth in the series, contains the papers presented at and a report of the discussions that followed a symposium organized by Unesco on 'The Educational Process and the Historiography in Africa', held in Dakar, Senegal, from 25 to 29 January 1982.

The authors are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this book, and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of Unesco and do not engage the responsibility of the Organization.

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Unesco concerning the legal status of any country or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitations of any country or territory.

Contents

Introduction

As soon as African colonial territories achieved or regained their independence from the former colonial rulers, they set themselves certain objectives aimed at creating political, social and economic as well as educational institutions and systems which they considered to be relevant to the local conditions and which could meet the needs and aspirations of their people. Within the contexts of these goals new or modified political and socio-economic theories were formulated and put into practice.

The formulation and introduction of these socio-economic theories was accompanied by the need for educational reforms. These reforms were needed partly as an indirect answer to the question, 'what kind of education is needed which will prepare specialists and experts to implement the proposed socio-political reforms?' and partly as a way of making the educational system relevant to the local geo-cultural conditions. The latter aim was imperative because in almost all countries the educational systems inherited from the colonial administrators were, as a general practice, patterned along those found in the metropolitan countries.

It therefore became necessary for theoreticians and philosophers of education, curriculum developers, education administrators and teachers to conceive and plan a new system of education, one which would be relevant to the needs and aspirations of the country and peoples concerned. These attempts to introduce educational reforms or modifications of the systems inherited from the colonial rulers form an important part of the history of post-independence Africa. No history of contemporary Africa can disregard the educational changes and development that followed the attainment or recapturing of political independence. That is why the International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa, at its meeting held in Ibadan, Nigeria (20–31 July 1981), requested the Director-General of Unesco to convene a symposium of experts to discuss the theme 'The Educational Process and Historiography in Africa', in relation to the preparation of Volume VIII of the *History*, especially its Chapter 22 entitled: 'Education and Social Changes'. In accordance with the recommendations of the committee and the major theme of the symposium, the experts, both in their written communications

and oral contributions in the subsequent debate, devoted most of their time to the following subtopics: the nature of education inherited at the time of independence—the triple heritage, i.e. indigenous, Islamic and Western/Christian traditions (the language problem; the different approaches adopted by the colonial powers—British, French, Belgian and Portuguese); the problem of education and the search for authenticity; decolonization of education and the attendant conflicts; conceptualization and definition of different terminologies related to socio-cultural institutions, e.g. clan, family, etc.; political institutions such as kingdom, empire, theocracy, etc.; ideas related to law and order; revolutionization of teaching and contents of African history; the development of education and training in Africa in general. Lastly, the experts examined the problem of African education in a global context by looking at the contributions made by the studies conducted in the New World on the Diaspora of blacks in North America and the Caribbean.

Given its content, this book is of relevance not only to the historian, but also to educationists, philosophers, planners and curriculum developers interested in educational development as well as the historiography of Africa since independence.

The educational process and historiography in contemporary Africa: background paper

J. F. Ade Ajayi

This is one of the seminars organized by the International Scientific Committee in charge of the Unesco *General History of Africa* to clarify some of the central issues in contemporary African history so as to guide the authors of Volume VIII and facilitate the work of the Volume Editor. One of the most prominent of the central issues is of course educational, and it is no mere coincidence that the International Congress of African Studies has also chosen as theme for its session in 1983 'African Education and Identity'. Whether we regard the dominant theme of contemporary Africa as maximizing development or removing underdevelopment, increasing modernization, promoting de-colonization, or solving the problems of identity, the issue of educational systems and processes in themselves and as they relate to historiography and our philosophy of history loom large.

Historiography here involves a concern not only with understanding individual historical events, but also how the totality of those events are perceived. As contemporary Africans trying to understand the long-term significance of current events in Africa with the whirlwind pace of change, the layers of colonialisms, the fragmentations of cultures and multiplicity of educational systems, we need to explore such fundamental issues for possible signposts. We have a concern not only to understand how the contemporary situation has come to be, but also what the trends are and what alternative models are suggested for the future. Here the concern of the historian for long-term perspectives on individual events meets the search of the philosopher and social scientist for a pattern of events. If we are to avoid the beguiling simplicity and tendency to favour monocausal explanations inherent in much of the rhetoric of underdevelopment, we can hardly do better than to explore also the interrelationship between historiography and the educational process.

By educational process we mean much more than the content of education and the activities taking place within educational establishments. We are concerned with the whole process of the acquisition and transmission of knowledge and culture in its broadest connotation within different African societies. We are concerned with the philosophies underlying education; the different systems of education and the values and world views they inculcate;

languages, acculturation and socialization, and the whole elaborate and complex ways in which education and values interact with society; and, finally, the cumulative impact of these over time on contemporary African societies.

The interaction between the educational process and the way we live and perceive history is itself a complex issue for study. The coupling of historiography with the educational process should not be taken as implying cause and effect in a simple deterministic manner. The relationship between change in an educational system and changes in the society of which it is a part has been described as 'certainly one of the most important and least understood problems' confronting the historian [1, p. 143].[1] While historiography in part results from and reflects the educational process, the prevalent philosophy of life also exerts its pressure on the educational process. We need therefore not only to explore separately the educational process and historiography but also the interaction between the two in seeking to establish signposts for charting the topography of contemporary history.

The first issue to confront is the multiplicity of systems of education, not merely within the continent as a whole, but also within each state, and even within each cultural group in Africa. We need to examine each major system, its historical role, and the values and ideologies inherent in it.

The Islamic system of education

The Islamic is also an Arabic system of education. Islam was revealed in Arabic and its expansion was tied irrevocably to the expansion of the Arabs, as well as the language and culture of the Arabs. This involved a massive colonization of the Nile Valley down to the northern parts of the Sudan, across North Africa and parts of the Sahara by the Arab peoples. In the process, many African languages in those parts have disappeared and surviving ones like Berber have become dependent on the Islamic system of education. Outside those areas, where massive Arabic colonization has not taken place, the spread of Islam has nevertheless remained tied to Arabic language and culture. Some attempt was made in a few places to write languages such as Swahili and Hausa in the Arabic script, but even those languages were not integrated into the Islamic system of education. The transmission of such languages and their cultures remained the preserve of indigenous systems of education which even periodic jihads could not destroy.

This is not to deny that in various places and to varying extents, the Islamic system was influenced by indigenous cultures, values and philosophies. It has been pointed out, for example, that African Islam has not been able to

1. References appear at the end of this paper.

ignore the central role of ancestors and the predominant sense of the continuity of history, and that the cult of saints, some aspects of the mysticism of Sufi orders and maraboutism represent manifestations of the impact of indigenous African thought on Islam [2, pp. 62–4]. However, the unity of Islamic faith as manifested in the Koran, the Hadith and the five pillars of Islamic law and practice has remained the dominant ideal.

The Islamic system of education is oriented, therefore, towards both the religion of Islam and the language and culture of the Arabs. Where Arabic has become the language of the mass, the Islamic system has been able to promote mass education. In other areas, education remains an élite pre-occupation. High achievement in Islamic education opens up avenues for leadership within the Islamic community as imam, teacher, judge, and trusted adviser of the ruler who has to be guided by Islamic law. Islamic education, while becoming a factor of social differentiation locally, also promotes the unity of the worldwide Islamic community. It gives access to a specific view of the world, with its own political culture, its own history of ideas, treasuries of literature, a golden past when such ideas ruled the world, a current sense of humiliation and a continuing search for revival. Despite its universal appeal, the epicentre of Islam has remained in the Middle East and it is largely the historical experience of the Middle East that dominates its world view.

With its emphasis on literacy in Arabic and access to an international community, the Islamic system of education encouraged a feeling of superiority to non-Muslims. It thus acted as a bulwark against the spread of Christianity and Western imperialist expansion. This became one of its major attractions to Africans and explains why it spread so rapidly during the colonial period. The colonial powers unwilling to antagonize powerful Muslim states on religious grounds encouraged the spread of Islam at the local level [3, pp. 359–60]. They supported elementary education in Koranic schools while discouraging higher education and the international outlook of Islam, thus further reinforcing the spread of maraboutism.

The end of the colonial period has seen the restoration of the international outlook. The role of the Islamic system within the overall educational process in Africa, however, remains ambiguous. Both in the Arab and non-Arab parts, there is ambiguity in the search for revival whether it is to be through a renewal of the fundamental religious roots of Islam or through the mastery of modern technology. Educational methodology in the Koranic schools has remained resistant to change and has become outmoded. Teachers of Arabic trained in modern methods of language education are few. There is need therefore to modernize the Islamic system. In the non-Arab parts, there is the further complication of coming to terms with the African roots in terms of integrating African languages and cultures into the system, especially in multinational secular states.

The Christian and Western systems of education

Before the rise of Islam, North Africa and the Nile Valley became integrated into the Christian world, but the flood of Islam and Arab colonization soon wiped out this early Christian influence except for branches of the Eastern Orthodox Church, which has survived among the Copts of Egypt and Ethiopia. Surviving as beleaguered communities in a hostile world, the Church in both places became intensely patriotic. But while the Copts of Egypt are socially a depressed community of peasants, the Church in Ethiopia enjoyed the support of the Amharic population and the patronage of the monarchy and nobility. In both places, the Church monopolized the educational process and used it not for educating the whole community but for the training of priests and other leaders who ensured the survival and primacy of the Church. Literacy remained an esoteric art and a preserve of monks and nobles. In both places, the Church developed deep local roots, and integrated local languages and cultures into the educational process, but these were not extended further as the Church developed no missionary initiatives. By the nineteenth century, when missionaries from the Western world—Europe and North America—were trying to re-establish Christian missions in other parts of Africa, some considered that Ethiopia itself needed missionaries. The monarchy has now been abolished and the social transformation of the country poses a problem that is just as much educational as it is political or economic.

In spite of occasional other-worldly fundamentalist groups, the Christianity that came to parts of Africa in the nineteenth century reflected the arrogance and confidence of an increasingly industrialized and technologically advancing Euro-American world. The missionary expansion became part of the expanding search for markets for products of the new industrialization, and precursors for European colonial conquest and rule. In spite of the Christian religious orientation, therefore, the dominant ethos of the missionary movement was secular, involving co-operation with the different colonial regimes or working under their sufferance and regulations. The Christian system of education thus became an aspect of colonial administration.

The educational process under colonial rule was intended to facilitate control and exploitation by the European powers. Although there were marked differences of policy between Protestant and Catholic missions, and between British, French, Portuguese and Belgian regimes, the goal of subordination to European interests was general. There was variation as to how much encouragement the use of African languages received in the conduct of affairs [4, Chapter I], how much free hand the missionaries received or how much restrictive regulations were intended to curb the pace of social change. Uniformly, however, Western education bred respect for European values, and contempt for African values. Very rarely did it happen that the missions

succeeded in converting whole African communities as communities. Usually, the missionaries sought out converts as individuals, and many a community faced competing missionary bodies seeking to convert it.

The Western system of education as it emerged was a system for recruiting individual members of a new élite with varying levels of education as auxiliaries in the colonial system. Some of these were members of the traditional élites, but the majority represented new social classes. The Western system of education did not merely despise African cultures. Even when it used African languages within the educational process, especially for purposes of evangelization, it was not able to integrate such languages into the educational system or allow them to displace European languages. Yet, as the political and economic systems became increasingly integrated into the European systems, Western education was found to confer access to advantageous positions within that European system. It opened up access to the European world view and values, expanding fields of European science and technology and European ideas of modernity. The access was severely restricted by the constraints of a colonial system, but the constraints were not always successful because education has a momentum of its own, sometimes independent of the system trying to regulate it. And most African states have now had nearly two decades of trying to expand and re-shape the system.

The indigenous systems of education

In spite of the extent of Islamic influence in Africa and the spread of Christianity and Western education, especially in the last century, the indigenous systems of education as a group remain widespread and influential and may be regarded as having wide responsibility but no power. They command little of the attention of educationists and historians, and little of the allocation of resources. However, all the myriads of African languages and the basic education of the vast majority of African children, especially from mothers and family relations in the first five years, are taught within the indigenous system. Only in North Africa and the Nile Valley can it be said that Arabic has displaced indigenous languages. Even here there are surviving pockets of pre-Arabic languages and cultures the transmission of which appears to be essentially outside the purview of the Islamic system of education, even though it may be dependent upon it. Elsewhere, the indigenous systems of education exercise a predominant influence over broad areas of the transmission of African languages and cultural values.

The continuing importance of the indigenous systems of education in contemporary Africa needs to be emphasized. Except in those places where, and to the extent to which, Islam or early Christianity has assimilated, or been

assimilated by the indigenous systems, it is the indigenous systems that determine the basic social and religious instincts, aesthetic and ethical values, attitudes to authority and essential world view of most African parents. As educationists realize, these attitudes and values of the parents are deeply impressed on their children, especially in the first five years [5, 6]. As the children grow up, even when they embrace new religions and are subjected to other values, the indigenous values imbibed in the early years may be reinforced or questioned, but are rarely displaced or modified to any great extent.

Two factors in Africa further emphasize this parental influence in the transmission of traditional values and the perpetuation of the influence of indigenous systems of education. One is the close-knit nature of the African family and the co-operative effort in educating the child and socializing him as a functional unit within the family and the large community. In this close-knit family, the influence of the mother calls for special mention because of the particularly close ties between mother and child in the child-rearing practices of most African societies.

The second factor arises partly from this close mother–child relation. The mother dominates the teaching of the mother tongue, and the formative influence of African languages on African children in the early years of life can hardly be exaggerated. African languages taught until now almost exclusively through the indigenous systems of education establish the foundations of the thought patterns and basic understandings of African children. It is because of the uncooperative or even hostile attitudes of other available systems of education to African languages that the indigenous systems of education as patrons of African languages remain so influential. All this is in addition to the role of the indigenous systems of education in general adult education, in the training by apprenticeship in specific skills in arts and crafts, as well as for various professions such as divining, entertaining or delivering health care according to traditional methods which are still prevalent especially in the rural areas.

It is therefore surprising that so little scholarly effort has so far been devoted to studying and analysing the indigenous systems both for content and methodology or the impact of the process as a whole on society. We are still at the level of having to rely on purely descriptive studies or uninformed generalizations and hypotheses, some of which should be examined in this seminar.

It has been suggested, for example, that the basic philosophy of history inherent in the indigenous educational systems and derived from traditional African religions is retrogressive. This tends to be the interpretation of the central position that ancestors occupy in African religions and philosophies: the time of the ancestors is a golden age when everything had been established

in a golden state and passed on to us as an inheritance which we can only maintain but not improve upon. John Mbiti has reinforced this view by the argument that in African thought in East Africa time moves 'backwards', and the future, other than the immediate future, hardly exists [7, pp. 29–30]. But in the thinking of other African peoples, time moves 'forward' if only because the ancestors themselves are conceived as those who have gone 'ahead' to the great 'beyond', and that concern for the ancestors included a concern for the future when we too would have become ancestors, in the great 'after tomorrow'. What emerges is a preoccupation with a sense of history, a sense of continuity. In oral traditions, the sense of continuity was deliberately exploited to favour social and political stability: periods of intense conflict and gaps in continuity are played down structurally as new consensus is substituted for the old as if conflict had never taken place [8].

Another hypothesis is that the indigenous systems of education promote a pre-scientific process in which causation is explained in terms of myth, magic and the supernatural rather than in terms of objective phenomena. In the words of Musgrove [9, p. 365]:

> One of the great difficulties in the higher education of Africans is their inability to see causation as the natural interplay of geographic, economic and historical factors. Where the Western mind fragments and analyses the world in which it lives, the African mind tries to achieve harmony with the visible and invisible worlds. There is surely more than a chance resemblance here to the magical beliefs and animism which Piaget has described among Western children and which precede the attainment of operational thinking.

It is possible to question whether this view of the problems of Africans in higher education is based on objective observation or prejudice. Moreover, the dichotomy between science and myth implied here has similarly been called in question [10]. What is more important is that in our observation of the indigenous systems of education, we have tended to play down the element of close observation, logical deduction and scientific analysis in the indigenous practice of medicine, agriculture and technology generally in favour of the non-rational element in religion, myth and magic.

A third hypothesis is that the indigenous systems of education promoted group and social values at the expense of the individual conscience, and consensus and conformity at the expense of competition and initiative. This has been the most generally accepted criticism of the indigenous systems of education, the absence of incentives to personal growth and individuality. How much this is based on objective analysis or a distortion arising from the contrasts with Western society is not clear. When Vernon says that 'the African does not work for gain or personal advancement, but as a member of a tribe or an extended family' [9] it can only be added that he is reflecting an outmoded

view of African historiography of the static tribal society in a state of perfect equilibrium. If intra-group rivalry was discouraged, it does not follow that the possibility of competition as such was excluded between and even within families, and between social, ethnic and territorial groups. Competition promoted rivalry for power and leadership positions and this left room for personal initiatives. At any rate, there is need for more objective research before underdevelopment can be explained away solely in terms of the complete absence of Western-type individuality and individual initiatives within the indigenous educational systems.

Towards autonomous growth

The efforts made by various governments in Africa since independence indicates that they recognize the crucial importance of education as a factor in development. Yet the efforts in the two decades can only be said to have failed to make a significant change. The statistics on the increasing rate of expenditure and the growth in the number of schools, colleges and universities are impressive, but the rate of illiteracy is growing and nowhere has education become a mass movement [11, 12, 13, 14]. The English, French and Portuguese languages dominate in the educational systems. Little transfer of technology seems to be taking place, while unemployment grows and the institutions of higher education seem to have become outposts of neo-colonial influence said to be promoting more of European than African education. What is more, the educational systems remain fragmented, no coherent world view seems to be emerging and the problem of African identity remains.

This can be described as a classic case of underdevelopment arising from the integration of the African economies into the world capitalist system in that the educational system serves the interests of the metropolitan capitalists and local exploiting élite, and its inadequacies can be explained in terms of the peripheral and dependent nature of African economies. One of the most glaring inadequacies of this theory for historical analysis, however, is that it leaves very little room for evaluating the effort of various African régimes in dealing with the problems facing them. The only prescription offered them would be to align themselves with the socialist system, but that seems doomed from the start since their economies in any case are already integrated into the Western system and the socialist countries have little to offer as alternatives. We do not deny the fundamental importance of the economic base of society or the extent to which African countries are at the mercy of global factors that we do not control. However, analysis that leaves whole communities powerless in the face of their predicament seems ahistorical and unacceptable. History is a record of the effort of man to deal with his social and physical

environment, an understanding of what options are open to him and the manner and extent to which he is able to exploit those options. The theory of underdevelopment should not discourage us from evaluating the effort of our societies to understand and tackle the problems facing them. We cannot even begin to tackle the global dimensions of underdevelopment without a closer look at our fragmented educational system and seeking to reform it towards the creation of the kind of society we desire for the future.

This implies some prior agreement as to the kind of society that is desired. Consensus within each individual country may not come easily. But there may be agreement to seek a system capable of mobilizing the majority of people behind the development effort. This calls for strategies to achieve mass education. This cannot be done without communicating with the masses through their own languages and cultures and indigenizing the foreign institutions we have adopted in our new multinational states by infusing them with the kind of ethos that sustained and held together our traditional societies. This involves also adequate attention to religious aspects of the educational process so as to indigenize both Islamic and Western systems of education compatible with the role of the state to ensure freedom of worship to all. Finally, African states cannot ignore modern science and technology. They will not be transferred or imported. They have to be promoted as an integral part of a new educational framework, borrowing from abroad as necessary, but developed locally within an overall autonomous system capable of generating growth.

The existing indigenous system will appear to provide the foundations for such a possible autonomous system, in the basic education and introduction to African languages and cultures that it gives. Even if English, French and Portuguese are to play a role in a new integrated national autonomous system, the fundamental role of African languages ought to be better appreciated. In view of the multiplicity of African languages, a vigorous language policy is called for within each country to assign roles for different languages in the educational system. It is on that foundation that the new superstructure will have to be built. To generate growth, the indigenous system has to be developed into a system of mass education. The crucial role of mothers, many of them still illiterate and poor, as the essential factor providing basic education, the first language of the child, as well as an informal nursery education, needs to be recognized. She ought to be assisted through adult education, mass media and special educational programmes to perform her fundamental task more effectively and purposefully.

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Critical reflections on the ideas of law and power in pre-colonial Africa—terminological and conceptual problems

R. Verdier

The first requirement: finding the right perspective

While it is true that man, and indeed every individual of the species, is basically a political animal and while there is plainly more to political science than the theory of the state—and as Durkheim said, we do not know where the state begins and ends—it is clearly difficult to grasp politics, at one and the same time, in its necessity and contingency and its permanence and variability.

It is appropriate, therefore, to measure the full extent of its variety and relativity in historical and cultural terms and to single out the basic and general factors that give it its unity and universal scope.

The awareness of the diversity of forms that politics assumes and through which it finds expression should preclude us from producing a general definition derived from one of its specific forms and, especially, from one of those forms which it takes on in the present-day Western world. According to the very pertinent observation made by C. Savonnet-Guyot, political scientists must be wary of categories and concepts that are symptomatic of what has been rightly called 'Western provincialism'.[1] It should be borne in mind, in fact, that the modern state has served as an explicit reference pointer or implicit premise for the opinions and judgements passed on the political and legal systems of the colonized peoples. Moreover, politics, especially in societies in which it does not constitute a specific level of authority, has very close links with social organization and the entire system of representations and values.

Hence, it is important to adopt a socio-anthropological standpoint and to envisage politics and law in terms of their relationship as part of the normative and ideological system, to social groups.

1. A different approach to politics has to be adopted as soon as society as a whole, in accordance with a unitarian, individualist and universalist

1. C. Savonnet-Guyot, 'La communauté villageoise comme système politique: un modèle ouest-africain', *Revue française de science politique*, Vol. XXV, No. 6, December 1975.

ideology, is no longer visualized as the sum total of the individual wills of its members (no partial society within the state, as Rousseau said).

Contrasting with this 'modern' conception of politics based on the general will, there is a 'traditional' conception, both pluralist and particularist, which defines the whole of society on the basis not so much of the individuals composing it as of the different groups having specific powers within it. Instead of being an aggregate composed of identical individuals, the body politic then emerges as a set of specific groups contributing, in different ways, to the establishment of a common order.

2. Similarly, we have to set aside our legalistic and contract-oriented conception of law that has gained ground with the growth of the modern idea of the state and the individual. According to the statist and subjectivist ideology, the law is a mode of expression of the general will and an instrument of rulers, whereas right is a power vested in the individual subject (the consensual and voluntarist concept of contract) and a realm of freedom (the absolutist and exclusivist concept of property).

   In the traditional societies of Black Africa, the law is not an instrument of government and right is not the power of the free will vested in the individual. The law can be traced back to the beginnings of society and acts as its basis and source of legitimacy. It remains inseparable from the origin myth and is enshrined in the ancestral customs. The rights of individuals are linked to corresponding statutory obligations and do not derive from a separate power vested in notional individuals but from the actual positions and functions assumed by them in the different social formations.

3. We are compelled to admit that the conceptual tools we use are still largely dependent both on our Western conception of politics and law in the context of the modern state and on the image we have of the evolution of society from its beginnings and the overall scheme of things as we see it.

The first typology which political anthropologists have had to accept is based on the dichotomy existing between society with a state and stateless society. The essential feature of political organization therein is the control and regulation of the use of physical force, while law is defined by reference to 'the exercise of a power of coercion'[1] or to 'the legitimate use of physical constraint'.[2]

In our view, the main drawback of these definitions is that they are incapable of helping us understand politics in different societies because all

1. Radcliffe-Brown, 'Preface', in M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (eds.), *African Political Systems*, 1940.
2. A. Hoebel, *The Law of Primitive Man*, 1954.

they do, in fact, is to give expression to the conceptions whereby we tend to identify law with the state and to lay stress on sanction and coercion.

The fact of power developing into domination and law into constraint means that the established order is not imposed on all citizens automatically and that, if they fail to obey, they have to be made to submit. However, it does not follow that all power is necessarily coercive or that all law must be accompanied by sanctions. The prime function of both is, in the first place, to establish a communication and exchange space in which all members of the society recognize one another.

In the last century Maine[1] and Morgan[2] drew a contrast between early social organizations based on kinship and those based on local contiguity, which were to emerge at a later date. This typology, which is based on the distinction made between blood ties and land ties, is somewhat arbitrary, in that it tends to dissociate two links that are, in fact, complementary: there is no shared territory on which relationships of alliance and kinship are not created between the people residing there, and there is no society, no matter how mobile, which has not left its mark on the land. Moreover, in instances where the kinship structure is composed of lineages, the ties with the great ancestors having founded the lineage are at the root of the sacred places marking the kinship space.

Thus, land and kinship are always linked together to varying degrees and it is at the point where the former (which ensures production) meets the latter (which promotes reproduction) that we have to seek the *locus primus* of politics as the space conferring internal order and external protection.

Power, kinship and territoriality

The central role of the state in modern society prompts us to look at politics in institutional terms. Is not the 'institution of institutions' responsible for ensuring that order and security prevail and for having the monopoly of 'legitimate' violence? Should we not conclude, therefore, that societies which do not have specific political institutions are 'anarchic' societies or societies in which 'sovereignty is diffuse' (Durkheim), and that, failing the existence of specialized organs of government, they are prey to instability and disorder?

And yet, according to Evans-Pritchard, there could be said to be an 'ordered anarchy' among the Nuer.[3] Hence, the organ is not essential for the function to exist, and the institutional approach proves inadequate when politics is not invested with autonomous power.

1. H. S. Maine, *Ancient Law*, 1861.
2. L. Morgan, *Ancient Society*, 1877.
3. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940.

In societies based on lineages, politics derives from the kinship pattern: the basic political and legal unit consists of the descent group, lineage or segment of the lineage, and the relations of authority and solidarity for the purpose of ensuring communication and social equilibrium are regulated by the kinship pattern. Political relationships display three main features:

First, a varying degree of *mobility*. The kinship group is not cast in a rigid mould: in the first place, it opens up to people from the outside, in that wives are integrated into it and strangers join it; in addition, it is called upon to put down deeper roots and to spread through the birth of new generations; finally, it may break down into segments after reaching a given genealogical threshold, with the segments acquiring a measure of independence in their external relations, or else, as a result of internal conflicts, it may split up into two new units: for instance, lack of authority or abuse of that authority may impel one fraction to go and settle elsewhere.

Secondly, political relationships follow a *hierarchical* pattern on the basis of a number of criteria, the chief of which are sex, generation and age, but also knowledge and personal qualities. In other words, politics is linked to the grading of statuses and power is apportioned and distributed in accordance with a ranking order. Thus, when we speak of 'diffuse power' or 'minimal government',[1,2] we are not taking due account of this linkage of powers.

Thirdly, violence cannot be allowed to go unchecked within the political unit. It is the task of the people in whom authority is vested to arbitrate disputes and pacify internal quarrels by their conciliatory words and the rituals they engage in to secure redress. Unlike wars between independent political units, *revenge*, in the form of feuds between opposing groups, is an intrinsic feature of the political unit. It is a mechanism for prevention and social control based on the principles of reciprocity and solidarity which is designed to ensure respect for the autonomy and plural equilibrium of the groups within the society.[3]

Hence, in societies on the lineage model, kinship orders and regulates all social life. The genealogical tree is a substitute for a constitution and power is wielded without organs and specific instruments and is not allowed to become dissociated from the kinship pattern and from the hierarchical and statutory relationships it establishes. Government is accordingly neither 'minimal' nor 'diffuse'; it is plural and is shared between the people holding positions of authority within the different groups.

1. G. Balandier, *Anthropologie politique*, 1967.
2. L. Mair, *Primitive Government*, 1962.
3. R. Verdier, 'La vengeance', *Études d'ethnologie, d'histoire et de philosophie*, Vol. I, 1981.

At the same time as it defines and marks out its own temporal power through the interplay of generations and lineages, kinship fits into a given territorial space.

No matter how widely scattered it may be, the kinship group has a local base, a place from which it originates or where it was founded. Depending on the mobility of the group or the extent to which it has been fragmented, that place will, in some cases, be the clan or lineage territory or, in others, that of a segment. In every instance, however, the kinship community is united by its link with the land.

1. The concept of the *ancestral land* is a key religious and political feature in a very large number of peasant societies.[1] In the first place, it is at the base of the institution of the land priest, who is the representative of the founder and the symbol of the unity and integrity of the group. Basically, the land is the property of the ancestors and is meant to be handed down to their offspring. It may neither be expropriated by individuals for their private use nor alienated to outsiders. Land may not be transferred to strangers unless they are integrated into the community and perform the rituals required to ally them with its 'spiritual guardians'. Furthermore, while a conquering power may annex the territory, subjugate the population and levy a land tax on it, it cannot, in principle, use its right of conquest to contest the rights of the 'first occupants' and to demand the transfer of land which they only hold in trust. In addition, we see the conqueror seeking alliance with the autochthonous population and asking the land priest to participate in the enthronement of the chief or king. Royal justice and 'land justice' (in respect of certain offences) can accordingly be seen to exist side by side.[2]

2. The concept of the *village community* epitomizes the political system adopted by many peoples, in which kinship and territoriality are linked together to describe a two-dimensional political space with, on the one hand, the family group and, on the other, the village composed of a set of dwellings forming an autonomous and sovereign entity. The village is not a 'mere juxtaposition of lineages working a tract of land in common' but the 'spatial expression of a common will to live together' under the authority of the senior representative of the founding lineage. In such cases, the fulfilment of the community's goals depends on the age associations, which are responsible for the civic and religious education of young people and which, by imparting instruction in the tenets of fraternity and friendship, establish a collegial exercise of authority.[3]

1. R. Verdier, 'Chef de terre et terre de lignage', in J. Poirier (ed.), *Études de droit africain*, 1965.
2. M. Izard, *Les archives orales d'un royaume africain: recherches sur la formation du Yatenga*, 1980.
3. G. Le Moal, *Les Bobo, nature et fonctions des masques*, 1980.

3. We feel that it would be useful to introduce the concept of the 'city' to describe the religious, territorial and political system adopted by certain sovereign communities that are not grouped together in villages and whose domestic groups, scattered over a common territory and facing the outsider or the enemy, share a set of religious and ritual practices designed to secure peace and prosperity among their members under the protection of their gods. The 'city' is primarily a territory that takes its bearings from its occupation by the founders of the clan or lineage. The civic space is created around the founding localities, all of which are sanctuaries to which the qualified representatives of the different domestic groups come to propitiate the ancestors and spirits for the general good. On the basis of the ties of kinship and alliance, and over and above those ties, the civic community is built up through religious ceremonies and the accomplishment of age-set and initiation rituals, which turn the individual into a citizen, and through the creation of public assemblies for the purpose of taking collective decisions and settling internal disputes.[1]

4. By contrast, although some authors use it, the concept of *feudalism* should not strictly be applied, in its twofold economic and political connotation, and undue liberties have been taken in comparing African sovereigns with the feudal lords of the Middle Ages, who derived their political and economic power from the land. J. J. Maquet, for instance, gives a purely political definition of feudalism and confines it arbitrarily to 'personal relationships involving protection in return for services'.[2] Similarly, J. Lombard, when discussing Bariba feudalism, had to admit that, 'strictly speaking, no bond was created by the fief' and that the lord had only political rights over the land. While the ruling category arrogated to itself the right to appoint the chief of the land, it acknowledged the principle whereby his actual election to supreme authority was decided on by an electoral council headed by the autochthonous chief. In most cases, in fact, it appointed the latter to be prime minister, with the power to act as regent or to deputize for the lord. Moreover, it was the usual practice for the conqueror to marry into one of the autochthonous families, as a rule into that of the chief of the land. Among the young Bariba, political power lay on the patrilineal side, but they went to be blessed and obtain the protection of the local spirits on the matrilineal side, in the autochthonous group.[3]

Although kinship and land, in combination, are in fact the primary source of politics, they also determine its scope and its limits, and the power deriving

1. R. Verdier, 'La cité Kabiyè traditionnelle', *Annales Univ. Bénin*, 1979.
2. J. J. Maquet, 'Une hypothèse pour l'étude des féodalités africaines', *C.E.A.*, No. 6, 1961, pp. 292–313.
3. J. Lombard, *Structures de type féodal en Afrique noire*, 1965.

from them cannot—and must not—set itself up as an independent authority and a differentiated entity.

In fact, the local kinship pattern is responsible for statutory distinctions and authority relationships (the power of command versus obedience) but, in theory, it is not instrumental in establishing power relationships (domination versus submission), whereby individuals are made the subject of a power in which they do not share and the users of land which does not belong to them.

In peasant societies formed on the lineage model, land is not property that is monopolized or capitalized: it belongs to everybody who works it and makes it fructify. Similarly, kinship is not a bond that is annexed and appropriated: it is a pattern of relationships which makes one person the equal—or the inferior—of another and places everybody under an obligation to everybody else. Hence the power that has its roots in kinship and land can only be a *plural power* distributed among the different kinship and territorial groups. If that power departs from the initial determinations, it is cut off and isolated and, at the risk of fomenting rebellion, has to seek another source of legitimacy to justify its strength. For instance, it may lay claim to control over the land on account of having occupied it first or earlier, or by virtue of its right of conquest. At the cost of this break with its origins and its limits, it becomes autonomous and forms a power on its own.

Law, cosmic order and social control

As we move from the political to the legal plane, which, for the purposes of this analysis, have been dissociated from each other, we have to introduce a third dimension, failing which we are liable to misjudge the intrinsic nature of what has come to be known as traditional law. In other words, the cosmic dimension has to be added to the kinship and territorial dimensions.

The visible and invisible worlds

We should certainly not repeat the mistake of deliberately confusing the terms 'law' and 'religion', as though all the standards of behaviour originating in the hereafter were sanctioned by the blessings or curses of invisible forces.

In studying the legal phenomenon, due allowance has to be made for the twofold aspect of society, whereby the living and the ancestors and, in more general terms, both visible and invisible beings, are incorporated into its overall scheme of things.

In a manner of speaking, this dichotomy only represents the translation o the spiritual plane of the two other dimensions, the kinship dimension and he territorial dimension. Kinship and land are bearers of life—blood and

earth being the vehicles symbolizing life—but only if they receive the life-infusing breath emanating from the spirits or jinns.

If their beneficent action is not present, there can be no new lease of life: it is heading for extinction, as it were, and cannot be revitalized without being the carry-over of previous life. Hence, an attempt is made, through libations and sacrificial offerings, to re-establish communication between the two worlds and, once again, to exchange life between those who bestow it (the spirits) and those to whom it is entrusted (men).

Hierarchical dependence

In this universe, where there is no break in continuity between life on earth and life hereafter, the term hierarchy takes on its full force and confers meaning on the concept of dependence.[1]

The debt of life

Human life is both a series of 'movements' linked to the principal stages represented by death and birth and by initiation and marriage and, at the same time, an 'interwoven pattern' of ties, which, when linked to those different stages, connect man to his ancestors, his patrilineal and matrilineal forebears, his companions in the age and work sets and, lastly, his relatives by marriage (*affines*). Being free signifies first belonging to a lineage and then founding a home. Slaves are not free because they are 'descentless', while bachelors are only half-free. Birth and marriage are accordingly the two fundamental links in the social 'recognition' of the individual, who has to acquit himself of his debt on both counts. What does this mean?[2]

The new-born child is situated at the point of intersection of the paternal and maternal lineages and is identified with one or other of them. He owes his existence to that ancestor and is, in a way, the latter's representative. In other words, he is born owing a debt of acknowledgement, which, on innumerable occasions throughout his life, he will take care to discharge by means of libations and offerings.

In addition to this first obligation or *ancestral debt*, when a man marries, he contracts a debt to those people who give him a wife and, as long as his wife continues to bear children, he will likewise never stop discharging that *marriage debt*. It is possible to gauge, therefore, how eminent a place the wife's brother occupies—because he has symbolically relinquished his sister for the husband's benefit—and how important a role he plays as the uterine uncle.

1. L. Dumont, *Homo hierarchicus*, 1966.
2. R. Verdier, 'Malheurs de l'homme et mise à mort de l'animal domestique dans la société Kabiyè', *Cahiers systèmes de pensée en Afrique noire*, No. 5, 1981.

The reciprocity of rights and duties

Our modern subjectivist approach prompts us to give prominence to the rights of the individual and to relegate the duties that are their counterpart to the background. By contrast, traditional legal thinking visualizes the individual in terms of the functions he performs and the obligations to which he commits himself. Just as the freedom of the individual derives from the ties that bind him to the community, so the source of his rights lies not in his own individuality but in the duties which he is called upon to perform, depending on the social position that he occupies in the group.[1]

Regardless of whether the group is based on kinship or locality, it represents something more than the sum of the elements composing it. It is not merely an aggregate of individuals: it is a *universitas*, in the Roman sense of the term: '*quod universitatis est non est singulorum*' (*Digest*, I, 8, law 6). It is a personalized being with a name and heritage differing from those of its members considered *ut singuli*. The example already quoted of the lineage's land, which cannot be alienated to outsiders and has to be handed down to future generations, clearly illustrates this collective end-purpose of the kinship group which, in our legal jargon, we would describe as being endowed with legal status.

The idea of *status* accordingly plays an essential role in traditional societies: the group defines the social position of each person within it and the whole range of reciprocal rights and duties corresponding to that person. However, that position is not circumscribed and static and the ranking order of statuses is consistent with a dynamic equilibrium existing between the beings and things in movement within the community.

Colonization was destined to have a far-reaching and distorting effect on these social relationships because it cast them in a rigid mould and inhibited their normal development. A large number of groups were accordingly reduced to their individual components and lost their specific end-purpose. Right was cut off from its counterpart and became privilege, while duty became oppressive constraint: the ranking order of statuses was henceforward a source of inequalities and abuses.

The force of taboos and the order of the law

Ethnologists usually avoid speaking of laws. When they study prohibitions and preventions, they are wont to employ the term taboo and attach a religious value to the infringement or failure to act. However, the idea of taboo is open to a variety of interpretations.

1. R. Verdier, 'Premières orientations pour une anthropologie du droit', *Droit et Cultures*, No. 1, 1981.

Some people lay stress on the isolation or separateness of the forbidden person or object and on its danger and potentially contagious properties, or else on its emotional ambivalence (the attraction of desire on the one hand and the fear of misfortune on the other). Others emphasize its classifying and organizational function. For example, according to Mary Douglas, the taboo aims at 'tracing the contours of the cosmos and the ideal social order'. Breach of taboo lets loose disorder and constitutes a threat of pollution and contagion.[1]

In colonial times, the lawyers did not use the term law to describe 'indigenous' legal practice. They usually spoke of 'custom' and 'customary law', reserving the term 'law' proper for the standards of behaviour imported by the colonial power.[2]

At this stage, we need only point out the terminological confusion that has arisen over the expression 'customary law'. Despite the widespread use to which it has been put, it really only covered the law that was situated midway between traditional law and modern law, which was applied and sanctioned by local jurisdictions created by the colonial legislators. Hence, it has to be asked whether traditional law—which is not to be confused with colonial 'customary law'—embodied the idea of a legal standard and, if so, what it represented.

In the absence of a thorough study covering the vocabulary used for the purpose in a wide variety of African languages, we shall merely take a few examples.

The Tswana employ the word *molao* to designate 'the law in general', but they seldom use it to speak of an order or command emanating from the chief. As Schapera says, they regard their laws as having existed since man was first created or as having been laid down by God and the spirits of their ancestors. This does not imply that there are no laws that are regarded as being the work of man. However, an important point stems from this: legal procedure is largely used to strengthen practices that have been long established and have been borne out by tradition.[3]

The Mandingo word *sira* forms part of the ethical and legal language and means path or road. The Mandingo speak of the path of the ancestors and the path of God, and whoever departs from that path is a deviant. In the view of M. B. Traoré, this is a fundamental value denoting truth and right and entailing the idea of compliance and submission to the moral and social order. The *sira* focuses on social peace and respect for every individual and for the statutory differences existing between them. Anybody infringing the *sira* lays himself open to the symbolic violence of the *nyama*, a sort of power of the

1. M. Douglas, *De la souillure*, 1979.
2. R. Verdier, 'L'acculturation juridique', *Année sociologique*, Vol. 27, 1976.
3. I. Schapera, *A Handbook of Tswana Law*, p. 39, 1938.

'collective ego' that is at the root of all the feelings of guilt and anguish which grip those who do not respect the standards of social behaviour.[1]

Among the Kabiyè, order and social control are based on the idea of *sonsi*: this mainly designates the great ancestor rituals, and especially the age and initiation-set ceremonies. Through the performance of these ceremonies, the original foundation of the society is made a living reality again: the people have their identity conferred on them and the civic community is endowed with its unity. In the final analysis, this is the society's religious and political charter. In each 'city', the high priest is the descendant of the founder of the clan and is his living incarnation. The law guarantees fertility and peace. The high priest is the man of the land and of fertility and he is accordingly forbidden to engage in any violent act.[2]

These few examples clearly show us that, in African tradition, the law is an order that imposes itself on man and that it is radically different from our modern conception of a command emanating from the political authority. From this point of view, the African conception of the law can be compared with the Ancient Greek *nomos*, which has a religious and moral meaning rather similar to that of *cosmos* (order or arrangement). The law can be said to have been 'a principle of classification and solidarity through which a balance is struck between people having magic and religious powers' (the mythical theme of the *dianomai*).[3]

This fundamental law, which orders human relationships within nature and society, is transmitted by myths and rites. Man has to set about learning them within the family, and subsequently on initiation. When he becomes a fully fledged adult, from then onwards he is required to abide by the standards in force or sanctions will be taken against him.

The two poles of justice

Contrasting with the law, both natural and social, there are two justices, or rather justice has two poles corresponding to the two dimensions—visible and invisible—of man and the world: that of the ancestors and spirits from on high and that of men from down here on earth. How do these two poles exist side by side and how are they linked together?[4]

The justice of the spirits reminds man that there are sacrosanct rules that

1. M. B. Traoré, 'Régulation sociale, justice et résolution des conflits chez les Malinké et Bambara du Mali', *Droit et cultures*, No. 2, 1981.
2. R. Verdier, *Cité des dieux, cité des hommes*, 1981.
3. L. Gernet, *Recherches sur le développement de la pensée juridique et morale en Grèce*, 1917.
4. P. Agondjo, 'La notion d'espace juridictionnel en droit bantou', *Droit et cultures*, No. 2, 1981.

he must not contravene, lest disorder be unleashed. In many accounts of creation, God is seen as establishing order as a force opposing the original chaos. Disorder is accordingly held in check but, like the dark side of man surrendering to his passions (such as envy, jealousy and revenge), it is still present in the universe and threatens to spread at any moment. The fundamental taboos in regard to witchcraft, incest, theft or murder are intended to channel it. Breaking taboo entails not only exposing oneself to misfortune but, worse still, exposing others to a mortal risk. It is then incumbent upon the spirits, as the guardians of the ancestral standards, to act on their own initiative or at the instigation of qualified agents, such as seers and priests, to put an end to the criminal acts that are a threat to order and to restore equilibrium between the contending forces. Depending on the seriousness of the act committed, either the offender will be punished by being struck down by illness or death, or else he will be called upon to make amends and repair the wrong he has done, and to purify himself.[1]

Whereas the justice of the spirits restores communication between the visible and invisible worlds that has been broken by the transgression, human justice aims at restoring peace and social relations between the parties involved in the offence. It is only if the crime is particularly odious and is liable to undermine the integrity of the group that the guilty party is removed by banishment or death. If material damage or moral injury is involved, every endeavour is made to bring about a reconciliation of the parties. The task of the mediator, arbitrator or judge will not entail applying a rule, but will consist of assessing the behaviour of each party and of weighing the rights and wrongs. If each party is at fault, he will attempt to prevail upon them to acknowledge the fact, and this will be the surest guarantee of the eventual reconciliation sought by the judge. It is particularly necessary for the judge's decision to elicit the assent of the groups involved because he usually has no means of ensuring its enforcement.[2]

All we can do by way of conclusion to this short paper is to stress its limitations and shortcomings. There are two reasons for this:

In the first place, it is virtually impossible, in a foreign language and with our inadequate modern Western vocabulary, to give an account of the political and legal thinking of other peoples. This is why we have had to give a fresh definition of certain concepts, such as law, and set aside certain terms like feudalism or expressions like diffuse or minimal power, and to propose others, like 'city' or plural power, in their place.

1. G. Le Moal, 'Rites de purification et d'expiation', *Systèmes de signes*, 1978.
2. R. Van Rouveroy, 'Conciliation et qualité des relations sociales chez les Anufom du Nord Togo', *Droit et cultures*, No. 2, 1981.

Secondly, discussing traditional thought in a wholesale and a historical manner entails yielding to the temptation to engage in an 'ethno-philosophical' disquisition in which we seek to reconstitute a 'collective and unconscious vision of the world' and 'unformulated wisdom'.

Even so, while these criticisms are amply justified, we are compelled to query the terminology and concepts we use, for this should contribute, with the assistance of historians and philosophers, to gaining a clearer understanding of African thought, both traditional and modern.

Towards decolonizing modernity: education and culture conflict in Eastern Africa

Ali A. Mazrui and T. Wagaw

A persistent and obstinate question in Africa since European colonization is whether modernization is feasible without Westernization. Can the new universe of technology and the nation-state, the new realities of participation in the world economy, the new languages of international communication and statecraft, the new toys and gadgets ranging from the transistor radio to the dishwasher, ever be adopted increasingly in Africa without a concurrent deepening of acculturation? Can the corpus of Western science and technology be embraced without an African capitulation to Western culture?

These questions have of course been confronted before in other parts of the world. The most dramatic confrontation was, on the one side, Japan after the Meiji restoration of 1868 and, on the other side, Turkey in the wake of the Atatürk revolution after the First World War. The Japanese engaged in purposeful cultural selectivity, captured in their slogan 'Western technique, Japanese spirit!' They planned to pick and choose from among the different elements of the Western heritage. They were particularly interested in technique, but aspired to preserve enough of the Japanese soul to render their society authentically itself.

Turkey under Kemal Atatürk, on the other hand, decided that a modern body could not thrive with a traditionalist soul, Western techniques could not effectively be utilized without adopting Western culture. The Atatürk regime went to the extremes of promoting Western dress, adopting European words into Turkish in exchange for Arabic loan words, and forcing the pace of popular secularization even to the extent of being anti-religious. Atatürk had decided that Westernization was the only route to modernity. The Japanese, on the other hand, had decided that there were different roads to the culture of modernism.

Purely on the basis of performance by the two countries, it would seem that the Japanese were right. Even before their second economic miracle following the Second World War, the Japanese demonstrated that they could match the West in its technological game without accepting too much of Western culture.

And yet there are other differences between Japan and Turkey which

might help to explain comparative performance between the two societies. It becomes important therefore for every other non-Western society to explore for itself this dilemma between modernity and Westernism.

This essay limits itself to the field of education, perhaps in many ways the most important arena of culture-conflict in Africa. What educational traditions already existed in Eastern Africa when the European imperial powers arrived? What were the basic ends and purposes of those educational traditions? What changes have now taken place as a result of the European model of education? These are some of the issues that we are proposing to confront in this analysis.

Three traditions of education in Eastern Africa antedate the European impact. We might call these the indigenous, the Afro-Christian, and the Afro-Islamic. What we have therefore is a triple heritage in Eastern Africa before Westernization got under way.

The indigenous tradition in our sense refers to the educational methods and customs traditionally observed by the different ethnic groups. Communities like the Baganda, the Gikuyu, the Samburu, the Somali, and the Chaga, all had their own ethnic systems of transmitting skills, values and ideas. These different ethnic systems add up to our category of the indigenous tradition.

The Afro-Christian tradition refers especially to Ethiopia, but not exclusively. Most parts of Eastern Africa received their Christianity from Western missionaries and teachers. The religion and culture of Jesus came with the label 'imported from Europe'. But Ethiopia is a striking exception in Black Africa. Christianity first arrived in Ethiopia in the fourth century, when much of Europe was still not Christianized. Over the centuries the local cultures in Ethiopia were in an important sense Christianized; on the other hand, Christianity in Ethiopia also got substantially indigenized. Education through the Coptic Church of Ethiopia was therefore a striking amalgam of tradition, and was very different from education through schools built by European missionaries.

The third tradition that existed in Eastern Africa before Europe intruded was the Afro-Islamic trend. This included the Koranic schools throughout this subregion of Africa. The influence of the Arabs both from the Nile Valley and from Southern and Eastern Arabia was an important element in this tradition, but indigenous Muslim leaders were also part of the cultural and educational scene.

This then was the triple heritage of pre-colonial Eastern Africa. And then in the last third of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth, Europe established a decisive presence in this part of the world. With that European intrusion came a fourth model of education. Before long the great dilemma that had agitated the Japanese after the Meiji restoration,

and the Turks, especially after the Second World War, began to rear its head on the African horizon. Were African cultures backward and anachronistic? If so, could they be brought up to date without being totally replaced by Western culture? Was selective modernization a contradiction in terms?

The colonial powers themselves differed in their own approaches to this problem. The British were more like the Japanese—they believed that selective modernization was feasible, that the heritage of the West need not destroy in entirety the traditions of the colonized. British political culture itself at home had all along found selective modernization cogenial. The British led Europe in the Industrial Revolution while still maintaining monarchical and aristocratic institutions. At least for a while Great Britain became both the workshop of the world and the paradigm of modernized feudalism. The House of Lords sat in session discussing policies on industrialization, ready at times to block the ideas of the House of Commons. Both Great Britain and Japan had in fact succeeded for a while in mobilizing a semi-feudal class structure into an instrument of industrialization. Both of them had in fact tapped the culture of deference, and transformed deference into discipline. The Japanese genius of synthesis has lasted longer than that of the British. What is clear is that the British invoked the same genius in aspects of their colonial policy. The doctrine of 'indirect rule' which the British utilized in their African colonial policies amounted to a commitment to exploit local institutions and culture rather than destroy them. The British made use of Ugandan kings and Nigerian princes, they respected many local customs, and encouraged the utilization of local languages in education at least at the elementary level.

In contrast, the French were closer to Atatürk and the Turkish revolution than to the Japanese and the Meiji restoration. Like Atatürk, French colonial policy believed that there was only one dependable road to modernity and civilization—the Western road. Perhaps the French vision was even narrower—emphasizing the French road. At any rate a whole colonial doctrine of assimilation was worked out in Paris, designed ultimately to turn Africans into approximations of the French themselves. Educationally this doctrine meant considerable integration between colonial schools and the metropolitan system of education in France. The doctrine also meant no compromise with local African languages as media of instruction in colonial schools. While schoolchildren in English-speaking Africa did not have to learn geography in the English language until their third or fourth year of school, schoolchildren in French-speaking Africa plunged into the intricacies of the French language in the very first grade.

Nor did cultural relativism greatly moderate the curriculum in a colonial institution. The idea was to expose the colonized as rapidly as possible to real genuine French educational culture. If Turkey had fallen under French colonial rule, Atatürk would have fully sympathized with the French mission.

But although there were indeed real differences among the colonial powers, these differences were only a matter of degree. Under colonial and neo-colonial control, regardless of the imperial power, Africa found itself being modernized through the process of Westernization. The schools that were established under colonial and missionary sponsorship were modelled on European images of educational institutions. To the present day those schools are Euro-modern in conception, and have yet to evolve into Afro-modern educational media.

Those then are the four traditions that will concern us in this essay. But the traditions will be related to four different, though sometimes overlapping, foci of education. Firstly, does the educational system implicitly and objectively focus primarily on serving society? If so, the ultimate purposes of the educational system are 'sociocentric'.

Does the educational system aim mainly at serving God? Is the religious purpose of an Islamic Koranic school, or a church school in Ethiopia, so powerful that it constitutes almost the *raison d'être* of the enterprise? If so, the orientation of the educational system is 'theocentric'.

Does the educational system cultivate and promote a broader understanding of nature and the universe independently of service to either society or God? Does it encourage curiosity about things that range from the mating patterns of beetles to the movement of stars in the cosmos? If so, those sections of the educational system are, at least to some extent, 'ecocentric'.

Or is the educational system ultimately committed to the business of enabling every individual to fulfil himself or herself, and release individuality and creative energies person to person? If the philosophy of the educational system includes this commitment to the ideal of the individuality, the orientation is to some extent 'egocentric'—but using the word 'ego' without its pejorative connotations.

In addition to the four traditions of education (indigenous, Afro-Christian, Afro-Islamic and Euro-modern) and the four foci of education (sociocentric, theocentric, ecocentric and egocentric) this paper is also concerned with the three functions performed by education in Eastern Africa—training, socialization and acculturation. Training in our sense is about the transmission of skills. Socialization has to do with the transmission of values, perspectives and sense of identity in relation to the wider society. Acculturation involves cross-cultural transfers, the impingement of one system of values upon another, at times an interaction between whole civilizations.

Let us now relate these three functions of education and the four foci to the four traditions of educational experience in Eastern Africa.

The indigenous tradition

One characteristic about indigenous ('tribal') education in Eastern Africa is that it is functionally versatile. The educational systems of the different communities have traditionally sought to transmit a variety of skills in the context of traditional culture, ranging from such economic skills as crop cultivation and animal husbandry to the military skills of warriorhood. In many traditional communities warriorhood was an important *rite de passage* for every male child. So might the skills of making a livelihood also be important pre-conditions for initiation into adulthood. Traditional education also quite often included sex education. Usually the transmission agents were neither dispassionate teachers distant from the family nor were they the parents of the children. Sex education was ideally transmitted by uncles, aunts, or grandparents—partly depending on the customs of the different communities.

Sex education was of course important for both boys and girls; but other aspects of domestic preparation could be gender-specific. In some societies the cultivation of land was part of the preparation of women, while control over the animals was a prerogative of men. But in addition, women were called upon to acquire the traditional skills of housekeeping, ranging from rearing children to cooking.

This functional versatility of traditional education also carried with it non-formality. We prefer the word 'non-formality' to 'informality' since the latter has acquired connotations of casualness and lack of structure. Important areas of traditional education included structure, sometimes highly elaborate. Nor is casualness a proper attribute for many methods of socialization and training in traditional societies. There were elaborate rules of transmission of knowledge, skills and values. Joking relationships in a particular culture could be a subtle and complex pattern of interaction, with taboos and incentives that required skill to master.

But traditional education is not formal in a Euro-modern sense either. There need not be special classrooms for children to be trained in; no special hours for mathematics as against geography; no elaborate grading systems to measure performance and progress. Because indigenous education is not as formal as this, we might rightly distinguish it from the schematic framework of Western education.

This brings us to the third dimension of traditional indigenous education—the fact that there is no sharp distinction between education and socialization, between school and family. The transmission both of skills, on one side, and of general values, on the other, might well be done by the extended family in the first instance, without the mediating role of a neutral school system.

The processes of training and socialization also merge. The transmission

of the skills of handling cattle, or those of a warrior in combat, and the transmission of values of masculine responsibilities, are often part of the same process of both training and socialization.

As for the balance between focus on society (sociocentrism) and focus on individuals (egocentrism), traditionally indigenous education scores high on the former and relatively low on the latter. The idea of these native systems is not to release the intellectual independence of the individual and lay the foundations of individual self-fulfilment, but to prepare the individual for an honourable and constructive role in society.

What should be remembered is that there are some variations among the different 'tribal' cultures. For example, it is arguable that the Gikuyu in Genya encourage greater individualism than do the Banyoro of Uganda. A spirit of entrepreneurship is often stronger among the Gikuyu than among the Banyoro.

It has also often been suggested that the Ibo in Nigeria encourage greater individualism in their culture than do the Hausa. This difference might itself have been one of the major contributory factors behind the Hausa uprising against the prosperous Ibo in Nigeria in 1966, in which thousands of Ibos were killed. The riots themselves were part of the background to the Nigerian civil war.

But while the balance between sociocentrism and egocentrism does indeed vary from one traditional indigenous society to another, it would still be true to say that most African educational traditions lean towards collectivist socialization rather than individualist orientation.

Yet another characteristic of most indigenous systems of education in East Africa is that they are based on the oral tradition rather than the written one. This is not to suggest that the written tradition has been entirely absent. On the contrary, both the Amharic literary culture and the Kiswahili literary culture are centuries old. But most 'tribal' educational systems in Eastern Africa operated on the basis of the supremacy of the oral tradition, with only a minor role for the written word until very recently.

The sixth characteristic of traditional indigenous education is that it is, on the whole, unicultural. It is concerned with the transmission of a particular system of values and functions, a particular cultural universe. This contrasts with Afro-Islamic and Afro-Christian traditions that are on the whole bicultural, involving a Middle Eastern religion and local normative ways. As for the Euro-modern systems of education, these are ultimately multicultural. This is both because, across the centuries, European civilizations have borrowed and absorbed elements from diverse civilizations—Judaeo-Christian, Graeco-Roman, Indian, Islamic, Chinese and the like. The sources of European civilization are thus diverse. Secondly, the fact that European civilization is the vanguard of modernity has itself made it transcultural in scope in the contemporary world. It has in fact been conquering one culture after another.

But indigenous approaches to training and socialization among, say, the Karomojong of Uganda or the Masai of Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania are almost ideal types of uniculturalism. They have tended to resist the influence of other cultures; nor have they attempted in turn to conquer other cultures.

In reality, no culture is ever an island unto itself. We are talking here about *degrees* of cultural separateness. Of the three functions of education we mentioned—training, socialization and acculturation—the last is least relevant when we examine indigenous educational systems, except in so far as those systems are now increasingly threatened by the conquering power of either Western or Islamic civilizations.

What about the focus of ecocentrism in indigenous educational approaches? To what extent is man's relation with nature a central interest in traditional indigenous training systems?

Again there would be some variation between one ethnic community and another. But in any case, we must distinguish here between ecological curiosity and ecological concern. Ecological curiosity is that framework of intellectual agitation that seeks to explore and discover new factors about nature. The impulse behind ecological curiosity is, quite simply, the excitement of a thirst for knowledge without reference to function. Certain forms of ecological curiosity are very selective, as individuals sit for hours studying birds and their habits just for the sheer enjoyment of observation. Other individuals develop appetites for underwater exploration, studying shells, fish, and geological formations beneath the seas. Such extra-curricular interests are much more part of Western civilization than of African.

Ecological concern, on the other hand, goes beyond mere fascination with the environment. It implies a commitment to conserve and enrich it, and sometimes a capacity in man to empathize with nature. It implies a readiness on the part of human beings to see a little of themselves in their surroundings. Ecological concern requires a totemic frame of reference. To that extent, it is much more deeply interlinked with fundamental aspects of African belief systems than it is to European ones.

Ecological curiosity is an aspect of science in its quest for explanation and comprehension. Ecological concern is an aspect of morality in its quest for empathy. Africa's record in the field of ecological concern is more impressive than that of Europe; Europe's record in ecological curiosity is more dazzling than that of Africa.

Historically, Europe's ecological curiosity was linked to both science and commerce. The sources of funds for exploration, both seafaring and overland, were varied. Bodies like the Royal Geographical Society—important in the exploration of Africa—were primarily motivated by scientific considerations. On the other hand, much of the vigorous exploration to find sea routes

to the Orient was inspired by considerations of trade and diplomatic rivalry among European powers.

But European ecological curiosity did not limit itself to parts of the world that were habitable or commercially exploitable. The same spirit that made many a European adventurer seek to conquer Mount Kilimanjaro simply because it was there also made him explore other unknown areas of the human environment, including the Arctic and the Antarctic, often at considerable physical peril. There is little doubt that Europe's record in ecological curiosity is second to none in human history. And with that record, Europe's technological and scientific edge over the rest of the world began to widen.

With regard to ecological concern, on the other hand, many African societies went to the extent of identifying themselves with specific animals as totems. Clans among communities like the Baganda adopted totemic symbols that established a sense of continuity between nature and man. Indeed, many African belief systems still include animistic tendencies, which blur the distinction between man and nature, the living and the dead, the divine and the human. The belief systems of indigenous Africa did not assert a monopoly on the soul for the human species alone. Could a tree have a soul? Could a mountain have a soul? Could a river, in spite of its flow, retain a soul? Again, it took poets in Europe to appreciate the belief systems of societies such as those of Africa and the native Americans before the ecological curiosity of Europe hit them hard. Alexander Pope, in spite of himself and his desire to be proper in Christian terms, nevertheless felt his muse drawn to the world view of the so-called 'savage'

> . . . whose untutored mind
> Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
> His soul proud Science never taught to stray
> Far as the solar walk or Milky Way;
> Yet simple nature to his hope was given,
> Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler Heaven.[1]

Pope himself moved then to a pantheistic interpretation of the relationship between man, nature and divinity. Carried away beyond his orthodox Christianity the poet asserts:

> All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
> That change through all, and yet in all the same,
> Great in the earth as in the etherial frame,
> Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees.[2]

1. Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*, edited by A. Hamilton Thompson (Cambridge University Press, 1913); also edited by Mark Pattison (Oxford University Press, 1887).
2. Ibid.

What all this means from the point of view of this essay is that African educational systems at the indigenous level encouraged a moral concern about animals and rivers and hills and trees, but did not encourage an intellectual curiosity into the essence of their nature and the dynamics of their existence. African educational traditions did indeed produce cultures which were capable of treating leopards, hyenas, monkeys, and even snakes as brothers, sisters and cousins, sharing a world. This could at times be a morality of ecological universal brotherhood. But those same African cultures fell short of developing physics, chemistry, zoology, botany, and mathematics. Ecological ethics was not accompanied by ecological science.

But the nature of ecological concern in African culture cannot always be distinguished from issues of divinity and religion.

> All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul . . .
> All Nature is but Art unknown to thee;
> All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;
> All partial Evil, universal Good.[1]

Driberg defines the Nilotic concept of *Jok* in terms which see it once again as the force which unifies the whole of nature.

> Jok, like the wind or air, is omnipresent, and like the wind, though its presence may be heard and appreciated, Jok has never been seen by anyone. . . . His dwelling is everywhere; in trees it may be, or in rocks and hills, in some springs and pools . . . or vaguely in the air.[2]

It was a Kenyan Nilote, B. A. Ogot, who helped to confirm this interpretation of a force permeating all things.

> The spiritual part of man, the only part which survives death, is *Jok*, and it is the same power which is responsible for conception as well as for fortunes and misfortunes. Thanks to the Nilote, Jok is not an impartial universal power; it is the essence of every being, the force which makes everything what it is, and God Himself, 'the greatest Jok' is life force in itself.[3]

What emerges from all this is that ecocentrism in many African societies is virtually indistinguishable from theocentrism, a concern about nature inseparable from a concern about God and the supernatural. Indeed, the triangle in many African societies consists of God, man, and nature permeating each other. Religion, sociology, and the natural sciences are thus interfused.

1. Ibid.
2. J. H. Driberg, *The Lango*, cited by Okot p'Bitek in *Religion of the Central Luo*, p. 50, Nairobi, East African Literature Bureau, 1971.
3. B. A. Ogot, 'Concept of Jok', *African Studies*, Vol. XX, 1961.

But at least in one part of Eastern Africa this fusion began to be undone centuries before the colonization of the subregion. Christianity arrived in Ethiopia, and in time the relationship between ecological concerns and divine purpose became complicated. It is to this Afro-Christian phenomenon in Ethiopia that we should now turn.

An Afro-Christian legacy

From the fourth century of the Christian era the Ethiopian Church, with the active moral, political, and material support of the reigning monarchs, nobility and other people of power, assumed the responsibility of educating functionaries of the Church and high-ranking civil and military leaders of government. The focus on serving God through educational institutions and the focus of serving society through those same institutions were unmistakable from quite early on. The Church assumed full responsibility for training priests, *debtra* (deacons), monks, and scholars. The Church schools were not proselytizing institutions, as were the later Church schools of Roman Catholicism and different schools of European Protestantism operating in Africa. On the contrary, the Ethiopian Church schools were designed to produce religious and secular leaders, and tended therefore to attract students from among the converted. There was a built-in élitist bias in the educational system—in contrast to the other forms of indigenous educational traditions that sought to initiate every young person into the ways of the society.

Interest in developing the individual and enhancing the individual's capacity for personal self-fulfilment was very low from the beginning. In other words, almost no part of Ethiopian traditional education sought to emphasize ego-related areas of vindication and accomplishment.

But the training and socialization for God and society were for a while quite strong and productive. The Ethiopian system sought to assume the triple responsibility of enriching the culture, transmitting it and conserving it from generation to generation. The ultimate custodians of the culture and traditions of the Ethiopian (Abyssinian) state were the Ethiopian Church and the nobility.

But although the Church itself was now an amalgam of at least two civilizations, the indigenous and the Christian, the country entered into a long period of isolation. The country was almost insulated from international intercourse from the seventh century to the seventeenth. This sense of withdrawal denied the society an adequate stimulus for creative change. This was aggravated by the series of national turmoils. The productive forces that had been the catalyst in the creation and advancement of one of the more advanced civilizations that Africa had produced, became increasingly stagnant to the point of ossification. The system of education did continue to engage in some

kind of training, and was of course still involved in maintaining a system of socialization. But *acculturation* as a channel of cross-cultural fertilization seemed to be drying up.

It was in the nineteenth century that the intellectual impoverishment of Ethiopia began to be understood by Ethiopian reformers themselves as contact with the more aggressive European civilization revealed the differences in power and sophistication.

And yet Ethiopia in the same period also demonstrated the resilience of its own legacy following a series of military successes that it had against major European powers. And as the country began to interact once again with the outside world, Ethiopia found itself lacking in trained human power in vital areas of modern statecraft, industry, diplomacy and commerce.

Instead of trying to reform the existing educational structure, Emperor Menelik II decided to import a foreign model of schooling from Europe. As might have been expected, this move aroused the indignation of Church leaders, and a period of sustained resistance ensued. After Menelik's death, the country was plunged into turmoil once again—this time to be rescued by Haile Selassie I, who captured the throne. He was himself a product of one of Menelik's schools. Following in Menelik's footsteps, Haile Selassie sought actively to expand the new educational system and to control it, while at the same time maintaining imperial influence on the more traditional schools as well. The new emperor was convinced that the modernization of the society required the modernization of the educational system and the production of better educated human power. But Haile Selassie also believed that these newly educated products could be manipulated and brought to conform to requirements of traditional sources of authority and power. He believed Ethiopia could be modernized without being destabilized. He thought he could risk exposing the imperial system to the scrutiny of the educated.

This contrasts with traditional Ethiopian attitudes towards scrutinizing the majesty of God Almighty. The traditional educational culture of the Ethiopian Church emphasized communication with God rather than interpretation of God. It was deemed to be sinfully arrogant to attempt to understand God. This included discouragement of the study of such branches of knowledge as astronomy.

One consequence of this attitude was a discouragement of the natural sciences. After all, the rise of the study of science both in Islamic civilization in the first eight centuries after Muhammad and among Puritan scholars in Great Britain and America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was partly due to the religious motive of trying to understand the ultimate glories of God. Thus, ecocentrism in science was in reality derived from a theocentric effort to praise God by demonstrating His genius in nature.

But in Ethiopian traditions, there was a curtain of mystery that was part

of the majesty of God. For a mere mortal to seek to open the curtain was presumption of the worst kind. That ecological curiosity which had inspired European science was effectively restrained by Ethiopia's insistence on respecting God's privacy and maintaining divine mystery. Far from theocentrism leading on to ecocentrism, as it had done among Muslims in the Middle Ages and the Protestant revolution in more recent times, Ethiopian traditions made worshippers retreat in modest embarrassment away from the majesty of the Lord. It was like avoiding looking the emperor in the eye. Casting one's eyes down in the presence of the human emperor had its equivalent in man's relationship with God.

Ethiopian educational traditions also discouraged the achievement motive within individuals. No man was in control of his own destiny—except perhaps the emperor. And if a particular individual appeared to triumph against all odds and accomplish something momentous, tradition assumed that he was possessed of divine power. This certainly applies to the great Ethiopian musical genius of the sixth century, Saint Yared, who invented musical notations and composed music that seemed truly inspired. The Church took the word 'inspired' in its old theological meaning of divine intervention. Subsequently, the musical composer was canonized. Such brilliance in an individual could only be accounted for by divine intervention.

And in battles, great acts of heroism by individuals were often attributed either to God or to the king. So limited was room for individual achievement that it seemed a wonder that Ethiopians fought with such distinction in the nineteenth century, and created such an interesting civilization from the fourth century onwards.

The achievements of the Falasha Jews of Ethiopia appeared more paradoxical to the Christian Ethiopians. On the one hand, the Falasha Jews were kept at a distance socially, in many ways treated as an outcast group. Theologically, since they were not believers, one would have expected them to be distant from God's grace as interpreted by the Ethiopian Church. Yet clearly the Falasha were gifted in certain skills, such as pottery, weaving, blacksmith skills, the production of ploughshares and sickles, all necessary to many Ethiopian Christian farmers. In these areas of work, the Falasha Jews often outskilled any Christian imitators.

Had there been divine intervention to make the Falasha Jews more skilled—in spite of the fact that as non-believers they were theologically damned? Popular opinion among Ethiopian Christians was not consistent on this issue. There was an assumption that the Jews were indeed possessed of special skills, but this did not reduce the social distance that had been created by the Christians to keep the Jews in their place. On balance, it remained true that the original Church forms of instruction in Ethiopia discouraged the achievement motive in the individual, and was a denial therefore of egocentrism.

Those forms of instruction, as we indicated, also discouraged curiosity about the general ecology. Only theocratic and sociocentric tendencies were emphasized.

Haile Selassie I attempted to introduce changes. But did he still want the majesty of the emperor to retain its mystery, and thus maintain its legitimacy? Was he hoping that the newly educated Ethiopians would continue to cast their eyes down, fearful of the dazzle of the imperial presence? Could he promote modern education and still save the old traditional and monarchical order from critical scrutiny?

As it turned out, it was precisely because of the creation of a modern secular educational system that the glaring anomalies of the society were progressively exposed. The dazzle of the emperor was not enough. The students at the university in Addis Ababa were getting increasingly radicalized. The newly arrived trainees from abroad had also been exposed to alternative paradigms of social and political order. The stage was set for the 1974 revolution in Ethiopia, which overthrew the emperor and fundamentally, perhaps even permanently, changed the course of Ethiopia's recorded history of thirty centuries.

With the disruption of the old social order, and an attempt to create a new national ideology, the school system in Ethiopia is changing itself. Because the new ideology is socialistic, it can be presumed that egocentrism will continue to be discouraged in the new era. Because the current regime is Marxist, it is to be expected that theocentrism, a preoccupation with God, will be diluted in the educational system if not eliminated. Because socialism is preoccupied with creating a new class order, it is to be expected that sociocentrism will reign supreme for the time being in the educational philosophy of revolutionary Ethiopia. Because socialism claims to be a science, and asserts its linkage with other branches of human knowledge, curiosity about ecology may well rise to a new level in the years ahead. Ethiopia might at last produce an adequate number of physicists, chemists and biologists of international calibre.

But under the new regime, is the system still Afro-Christian? The Christian culture of Ethiopia could not be abolished overnight by the intervention of soldiers from the barracks. Nor could the African foundations of Ethiopian culture (whether recognized as such by the Ethiopian establishment or not) be destroyed in a single decade of political turbulence.

What is clear is an attempt to move from Afro-Christian institutions to Euro-modern institutions, but patterned after the models of Eastern Europe rather than Western. Ethiopia might well be in transition from Afro-Christianity to Euro-modernity of the Marxist kind. But the transition may take much longer than the reformers currently realize. And it may take new reformers altogether to innovate and create not a European form of modernity but an African approach towards similar goals. The period of innovation in Ethiopia

lies in the future; the period of imitation and experimentation is now at hand.

But Christianity is not of course the only religion from the Middle East that has profoundly affected institutions of training and socialization in Africa. Islam has also played a comparable role in different parts of the continent, including parts of Ethiopia itself. Indeed, there is a tradition among Muslims that Islam's first contact with the African continent was in fact through Ethiopia. This happened when the Prophet Muhammad was being persecuted in Mecca. Some of his followers, so it is suggested, were forced to cross the Red Sea in search of refuge among the *Habash*. The Prophet himself also subsequently fled, in the direction of the city of Medina. He lived to fight another day—and established his own political control over those who had once persecuted him.

It is to the impact of Muhammad's religion on educational systems in Africa that we must now turn.

The Afro-Islamic heritage

Although Islam's first contact with Africa might have been via the Hornt Islam's first conquests in Africa were further north. Soon after the Prophe, Muhammad died, the new leaders in Arabia decided to take on two major empires of the ancient world—Byzantium and the Persian empire. Against all odds, this presumption paid off—and Arabs entered the main stage of world history. Persia was subjugated, and Egypt was detached from Byzantine suzerainty. The Islamization of North Africa began, followed later on by its Arabization. We define Islamization as the process of converting the people religiously; we define Arabization as a process of assimilating the people linguistically. North Africa underwent both processes.

But elsewhere in Africa, where Islam has established a presence, what have emerged are communities who profess the faith of Islam rather than communities to whom Arabic is the mother tongue. For our purposes here, let us regard Northern Sudan as part of North Africa—at any rate, both Islamization and Arabization triumphed in Northern Sudan. But in places like Senegal, Mali, Northern Nigeria, Tanzania, and much of the Horn of Africa, the triumph has been of the religion only rather than the Arabic language as well.

And yet, though Arabic has not become the mother tongue of Muslims like the Fulani or even like the Somali, some level of Arabic has always accompanied Islam. This is partly because Muslim prayers require a good deal of recitation in Arabic from the Koran—and there are five compulsory prayers a day for Sunni Muslims. Muslims are also encouraged to read or recite the Koran in other contexts outside formal prayers—ranging from weddings to

mourning ceremonies, from celebrations of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (*Maulid*) to sheer learned conversations among the literati.

Inevitably, therefore, there began to develop in the Islamized parts of Eastern Africa a special institution for the teaching of the Koran. In some cases, there was co-education in such institutions, but this was rare. Most Koranic schools in Eastern Africa were for boys, though girls were taught to recite the Koran in private homes. Occasionally, special schools for girls were established.

The three relevant Rs in these schools were not reading, writing and arithmetic—but tended to be reading, reciting, and ritual. Indeed, one of the striking things about these particular small educational institutions was the sharp differentiation between reading and writing. Far more emphasis was put on reading than on writing. Some Koranic schools had next to no writing exercises assigned to pupils.

Part of the problem was due to the perception of the Prophet Muhammad, himself as a man without the skills of literacy. The Koran itself is regarded as a miracle precisely because the Prophet Muhammad, who uttered all the verses under inspiration, was an illiterate man. The first verse of the Koran to be revealed concerned issues of reading and reciting. Muhammad used to retreat to the Hill of Hira near Mecca, and contemplate in isolation. This was before he sensed he had a divine mission. One day when he was sitting on this hill near sunset, he suddenly saw a being who later introduced himself as the Angel Gabriel. Gabriel said to that frightened and lonely man: 'Read and recite'. Muhammad was more bewildered than ever. He protested that he was not among the literate. Then Gabriel uttered the first verses of what later became Islam's holy book, the Koran. Gabriel said to Muhammad: 'Read and recite in the name of God who created man . . . and who taught man what he did not know before.'

Many Muslims in different parts of the world have concluded that the imperative of literacy is one of God's priorities for man. But what constitutes literacy has turned out to be culturally relative. Popular opinion in East Africa, at least before the impact of the more aggressively literate Western civilization, was modest in its aspirations. The ability to read the Koran, without necessarily understanding it, was often deemed to be adequate. Many young East Africans can pronounce Arabic sounds remarkably well, and can read the printed page of the Koran with smooth facility in the Arabic language. And yet if you singled out any particular phrase and asked the reader to say what it *means*, it is not at all certain that the reader would rise to the occasion. The Koran is sometimes read in a manner comparable to an American opera singer singing Verdi in the original Italian. The singer need not understand every word, every phrase of a particular song—though he or she must at least capture the mood of the song. Similarly, many East African Muslims lack any

clue as to what a particular phrase from the Koran might mean, but they could pronounce the Arabic phrase with impeccable precision, reading it out straight from the printed page.

Koranic schools are definitely not élitist. Most parents of Muslim faith until recently made provision for their children to learn the rudiments of Islam and the skills of reciting the Koran. But in addition, there were sometimes evening classes in mosques in parts of Eastern Africa. The evening classes were often more sophisticated, and taught by instructors who were much more learned. At times even grown-ups came to the mosque to listen. Some of these evening classes concerned the interpretation of the Koran, verse by verse. But more often the classes addressed themselves to the broad ethics and theology of Islam—ranging from the nature of prayer to the precise rituals of the pilgrimage to Mecca, from stories about the childhood of the Prophet Muhammad to aspects of the laws of marriage and divorce in Islam.

Some of these classes in the evening in mosques also addressed themselves to sex education from an Islamic point of view. Sexuality is discussed in very explicit terms, sometimes using Arabic words for 'penis' and 'vagina' as euphemisms to avoid using local sexual vocabulary. But on the whole these classes were frank and explicit about sexuality, conception, the rules of intercourse in Islam, and the necessary conditions for cleanliness according to Muslim precepts.

These Muslim evening classes were opened to anyone who cared to attend, and there were no fees charged for them—unlike the day classes in formal Koranic schools, where some contributions were expected towards the *Mwalimu's* (teacher's) livelihood.

Adult education classes in Islamics were also often held in the mosque. More advanced interpretations of the Koran or more advanced classes in Islamic law and theology and ethics might be open to all comers. These would normally be once or twice a week, but there are instances of more frequent classes than that.

Fourth, there are the seasonal classes. This is particularly true of the month of Ramadan during which Muslims are required to fast from before dawn to dusk. Almost every day in the afternoon, in carefully selected and centrally located mosques, special *darsa*, or lessons, in Islamics are held. Particularly popular are *darsa* concerned with elaborate literary, contextual, and historic interpretations of Koranic verses. Sometimes a whole afternoon would spent discuss one single verse in the Koran. The sheikh or professor would discuss the Koran in the local African language after translating it from Arabic. He would refer to the verse's revelation, the circumstances which led to God's intervention in this way, the implications of the verse, its relationship to some other verses elsewhere in the Koran, its impact on Islamic law and so on and so forth. Some of these sheikhs are immensely learned

people in their own field, and local people who do not normally go to *darsa* turn up in large numbers during Ramadan.

The fifth level of Islamic education is truly élitist. It is the equivalent of attending a university. Only a few places in Eastern Africa commanded that degree of scholarly respectability. The most widely acclaimed was the Riyadha in Lamu along the coast of Kenya. Lamu is a small town which still has an air that is almost biblical, and has been protected from tourist invasions by its relative inaccessibility for a substantial part of the year when the road to Lamu is virtually washed away by the rains. But the mosque of Riyadha, and the learned Islamic community of scholars there, were for a long time widely accepted as the pinnacle of Islamic scholarship in East Africa. A select cadre of students from other parts of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda found their way to Riyadha to learn at the feet of the great teachers. Many of those great teachers were supposed to be *masharifu*, or descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Arabs had been coming to the coastal parts of Kenya and Tanzania with the monsoons for centuries, and some of them had intermarried with local people. The *masharifu* of Lamu, especially if they were very learned, commanded considerable reverence and admiration.

But there were other major centres of Islamic learning in Eastern Africa. These included Zanzibar before the revolution of 1964, Mogadishu in Somalia, and Kibokoni in Mombasa, Kenya. There were also learned scholars scattered from Tanga in mainland Tanzania to Kibuli in Kampala, Uganda.

Islam in Ethiopia was overshadowed most of the time by theocratic Afro-Christianity. Indeed, it was not until the radical socialist revolution of 1974 that Islam in the twentieth century in Ethiopia received theoretical parity with Christianity in the country.

Throughout Eastern Africa, Islamic education was primarily theocentric, and to a lesser extent, sociocentric. But the aim of cultivating individuality was often remote. Islamic education in Eastern Africa sought to promote either conformity with the will of God, or conformity with the customs of society. The achievement motive in the individual was seldom encouraged—except to the extent to which it signified excellence either in piety or in social conformity.

As for concern with ecology, this was more characteristic of Islam in parts of Saudi Arabia than with Islam in Eastern Africa. The harshness of climatic conditions in the Arabian peninsula sometimes created strong bonds between human beings and animals, and a strong sense of identification with the elements. The image of a lonely camel driver in the midst of an Arabian wilderness carries with it the metaphor of fusion of man, animal, and the desolate environment.

But East African Islam outside Somalia has not been comparable. The nomadism of certain Somalis creates similar bonds between man, animal, and environmental desolation. But elsewhere in Eastern Africa Islam has been

relatively insensitive to ecological issues. Where African Muslims have identified with animals or trees or hills, it has been *in spite of* Islam rather than because of it. After all, many African Muslims combine in their belief systems and value elements from both their own indigenous religious culture and the new imperatives of the minaret. By and large, ecological sensitivity has tended to be more characteristic of the indigenous heritage in Eastern Africa than of the Islamic.

As for the balance between training, socialization, and acculturation in Islamic education, the training part in Eastern Africa has been the weakest. Islamic education has not really been designed to transmit functional skills. The emphasis on reading, reciting and ritual has not exactly been a quest for skilful utilitarianism.

But Islamic education has included a marked preoccupation with pious socialization. Much of the effort in those evening classes at the mosques especially has been devoted to the task of producing knowledgeable Islamic citizens, sophisticated in the ways of their religion and culture, and able to respond to the rules of social life and to the imperatives of religious life in areas of experience that range from prayer to sexuality. As for the functions of acculturation in Islamic education, this is clearly implicit in a subregion like Eastern Africa. In such an area, Islam is a civilization from the outside, interacting with cultures of the locality, and producing distinctive combinations of values, perspectives and beliefs. To that extent, Islam in Eastern Africa is, almost by definition, the cross-cultural phenomenon. Normative transfers and normative exchanges are part of the natural order of interaction in such a situation.

The spread of Islam as a religion in Eastern Africa was to some extent arrested by European colonization. This is in contrast to the West African situation, where Islam continued to spread and conquer in spite of European imperialism.

But since independence, East Africa has witnessed a revival of the confidence of Muslims. This is part of the global phenomenon of the Islamic resurgence. In reality, Islamic theology has declined in influence in Eastern Africa, but Islam has begun to reassert itself politically. This is partly connected with the rise of Muslim oil power. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is overwhelmingly a Muslim institution. This has made even those parts of Eastern Africa that are primarily Christian respond more seriously to the views and aspirations of the Muslim world, and cultivate more self-consciously the loyalties of their own Muslim minorities.

With the theological decline of Islam in Eastern Africa (in spite of its political resurgence) Muslim educational institutions have also been on the wane. The old Koranic schools have been disappearing as more and more Muslim children go to secular schools, often based on principles of Euro-

modernity. Theologically, the crescent over Eastern Africa is the dying crescent of the twenty-first day of the lunar month. But politically, the crescent over Eastern Africa is the younger crescent of the new moon. Educational patterns in the subregion are a reflection of this interplay between the young political crescent on the ascent and the old theological crescent in decline.

The Euro-modern challenge

But the most ascending of all cultural trends in Eastern Africa is the rise of Western civilization itself. All other educational institutions have been on the defensive as a result of the staggering conquering power of Western values and perspectives.

Western motives in promoting education in Eastern Africa fluctuated between utilitarian cynicism and idealistic missionary commitment. The utilitarian cynicism included the desire for administrative functionaries drawn from the native population to consolidate European rule or European control. Idealistic missionary commitment to education, on the other hand, combined both the pursuit of the good life for the natives in this world here and now and the pursuit of salvation in the hereafter. In the earlier phases of colonial rule, the missionary factor was more pronounced. The colonial powers, hampered by other political considerations, succumbed to the temptations of convenience. Part of their burden as trustees of the colonial territories could be borne by religious and philanthropic institutions from their own part of the world. To such institutions, Africa was regarded as a new moral horizon in need of redemption. It was a rugged ethical frontier, requiring the moral adventurism of the gospel in adversity. The Bible left Europe—to search for the soul of Africa. The missionary school was part of that search.

As the colonial political presence got more consolidated, the colonial state took greater responsibility in the social services generally, and sought to exercise greater control over those services provided by private philanthropic and religious organizations.

As it turned out, the schools and colleges established by European missionaries and colonial governments were the greatest instruments of acculturation in Eastern Africa. Curiously enough, the main instrument of acculturation was not religion but language. We have noted that in the case of the Islamic impact on Africa south of the Sahara religion was the major foundation of culture transfers and normative convergence. But with regard to the Western impact, it was Western languages rather than Christianity which, in the end, turned out to be the most important transmission belt of values and ideas. This was so in spite of the fact that very often the Western languages were being taught by religious missionaries.

The stratification system of Eastern Africa has undergone dramatic modification as a result of that linguistic (as distinct from religious) influence. In one African society after another, the élite has in part been defined in terms of mastery of the imperial European language of that particular society. Competence in either English or French or Portuguese, depending upon who was the imperial power, constituted credentials for leadership and the basis for influence. In one African country after another, qualifications for election to the national legislature rested in part on command of the relevant European imperial language. Because membership of Parliament required competence in a European language, participation in the executive branch of government similarly assumed such competence. In the majority of African countries today, it is inconceivable that the President should be a person who knows only African languages and is not at the same time a pretender to European linguistic competence.

What all this means is that a marked power of acculturation is the most distinctive aspect of the Euro-modern tradition of education in Africa.

But is European education also a form of socialization in Africa? In some sense, it might be so described. But it is perhaps at least as arguable that Euro-modern education in African conditions has been a process of *desocialization*. It has tended to divorce children from the norms and values of their parents. It has been inclined to dis-Africanize the Africans—moving in the direction of assimilating them to the conquering paradigm of the European world view.

In Eastern Africa, far from this constituting a cultural threat to be militantly resisted by the local population, it has often constituted a cultural magnet, attracting local populations irresistibly towards it. Parents have sent their children unhesitatingly to missionary schools, in quest of supposed skills which in fact amounted to cultural imperialism. One result today is that most Africans themselves speak of whole subregions as English-speaking Africa, or French-speaking Africa, or Portuguese-speaking Africa. We hardly ever refer to French-speaking Asia or English-speaking Asia. The identities of Asian countries are less tied up with the linguistic heritage of their former imperial masters than the identities of African countries seem to be.

But in addition the intrusion of European perspectives into Africa has sharpened two foci which on balance have been weak in Afro-Christian and Afro-Islamic trends, and to some extent also weak in indigenous traditions. These distinctively Western emphases have been the focus on individualism and the focus on ecological curiosity.

Education as the purposeful cultivation of individual genius is, from our point of view, a strikingly innovative intrusion into the complexities of the African cultural scene. The idea that educational processes were designed to release the individual from the constraints of religious dogma, or release the

individual from the constraints of social conformity, was clearly a wind of educational change.

Individualism in Western-styled schools in Africa had three main sources. One was Western liberalism, which politically had been developing in the direction of maximizing individual choice in the electoral system and individual autonomy in the wider political system. The second major ingredient in Western individualism was the principle of individual accountability in the Protestant ethic. The individual stood in terms of direct answerability to his or her Maker. The third source of individualism in African conditions was the new secular orientation of the natural sciences, with a commitment to original thinking and independent scientific methods in relatively objective conditions.

In the educational system, individualism took a variety of forms. In examinations it was regarded as unethical to copy from other students or share their insights directly.

Plagiarism was regarded as the supreme sin. Each student or pupil had to struggle under his own steam. Copying from others could, in some Western schools, result in expulsion from school. Many Westerners had forgotten that great geniuses like William Shakespeare plagiarized right, left, and centre—from other playwrights or other artists. The idea of treating the work of somebody else virtually as a proportion of one's own collective heritage was, in Western civilization, strictly circumscribed by considerations of individual achievement and accountability.

And as students towards the end of their student career enter Ph.D. programmes either in African universities or in their Western equivalents, the focus until now has been disproportionately on the *originality* of the individual Ph.D. candidate. Distinctive accomplishment at the Ph.D. level rested on the distinctiveness of the individual. To this extent, the Euro-modern tradition of education in Africa has often been strikingly egocentric.

As for ecocentrism, this has also been above average in the Afro-modern tradition of education in Africa. Being curious about nature to the extent of investing a whole lifetime into it was something distant from many African cultures. As we have indicated elsewhere, many inhabitants around Mount Kilimanjaro never bothered to conquer the mountain simply because it was there. It took the culture of white people in Eastern Africa to develop elaborate systems of encouraging young men and women to climb Mount Kilimanjaro simply as an experience in personal individual achievement and sometimes collective team-work in climbing.

With regard to theocentrism, this has been a medium contribution in recent times rather than an especially striking orientation. The missionary schools did indeed proselytize, unlike the schools of the Church of Ethiopia. But after the Second World War actual focus on God and His miracles was considerably weakened in Western schools in Eastern Africa.

What all this means is that the Western tradition in Africa scored high in three out of the four functions—it scored high in promoting individualism (egocentrism); it scored high in cultivating a concern and curiosity about the environment (ecocentrism); it scored high on the purpose of releasing the individual and reinforcing his or her creative energies without necessarily promoting either submission to the will of God or conformity with the ways of man.

As for the role of Western education in *training*, this has also been relatively striking. In reality, there were important differences among the colonial powers. For example, Belgium did try to encourage vocational training and to relate education more systematically to functional utilitarianism in what was then called the Belgian Congo. It seemed to work for a while. But when politics overwhelmed administrative policy, and the Congo had to become independent sooner than previously envisaged, the whole system collapsed in the face of educational and training deficiencies.

Britain and France, on the other hand, were less oriented towards practically relevant forms of training for the natives. At first glance, this should have meant disaster at the time of independence. In some cases it has indeed meant disaster. But on balance, former French Africa and former British Africa are much better off from the point of view of educated human power than Zaire (formerly Belgian Congo) can claim to be. On the whole Afro-modern educational systems in Africa have been more sensitized to the needs of training, and to the transmission of functional skills, than most indigenous, Afro-Christian or Afro-Islamic systems of education in the subregion.

Underlying the whole impact of European education on African patterns of socialization and training is the deep-seated spectre of dependency as a kind of cultural imprisonment for yet another generation of bewildered Blacks on the African continent.

Towards an Afro-modernity

Is there a way of escaping this cage of cultural and educational dependency? Is there a way of fully releasing the energies of the African peoples without enticing them towards imitation and emulation? Part of the answer depends upon the accepted definition of 'development'. For our purposes here, development equals modernization minus dependency.

But what is modernization? For our purposes, it is change which is compatible with the present stage of human knowledge and does justice to the potentialities of man as a social and innovating being. This definition encompasses three imperatives. Modernization includes the imperative of

action informed by know-how. It also includes the imperative of action based on expanding social horizons. And, thirdly, it includes action based on facilitation of innovation.

But what is dependency? For our purposes here, dependency could mean either surplus need or deficit control. Country B is dependent on Country A if Country B has greater need for Country A than A has for B. Surplus need is on the part of Country B.

But dependency could also mean deficit control. Country B is dependent on Country A if Country B has less control over the relations between the two countries than Country A has.

These two principles—surplus need and deficit control—need not always pull the same way. For example, until recently, the Western powers needed Saudi Arabia more than Saudi Arabia needed the Western powers. It might therefore be argued that the Western powers were the dependencies of Saudi Arabia since the West was the one in the torment of surplus need. Saudi Arabia therefore had deficit control over its own relationship with the consumers of its own oil.

These two principles of deficit control and surplus need therefore to be weighted in relation to particular case-studies. For our purposes in this essay, it is sufficient to note for the time being that modernization is identical with Westernization for as long as the modernization process includes a heavy dependency upon the West. But modernization begins to be divorced from Westernization if there is a systematic attempt to reduce dependency upon the West and imitation of the West.

As for the essence of modernization itself, we have indicated that it postulates action informed by genuine know-how, a familiarity with the science of cause and effect, a training in calculating ends in relation to means. Modernization also, as we intimated, requires expanding social horizons moving from obsession with clans and with tribes to an interest in the wider national environment and an ultimate commitment to planetary solidarity. Thirdly, as we suggested, modernization is a readiness to accept innovation, to submit to the imperative of reform where this seems justifiable, to respond to a basic readiness to try out the new or even put the old to eternal rest. The achievement motive in modernized conditions sometimes requires the imperative of innovation.

Eastern Africa is caught up in these dialectics and dilemmas. Sociocentrism and theocentrism have tended quite often to be the greatest bulwarks of tradition and continuity, the pointer to conformity. God and society in Eastern Africa in the twentieth century have been the joint magnates of divine submission and social cohesion. 'For God and Country'—that was the fusion of piety and patriotism.

But at the level of modernization, egocentrism and theocentrism might

be a more strikingly relevant alliance. Egocentrism includes in this case a commitment to independent thought and individual experimentation, an abode of creative autonomous thought. Egocentrism could be an infrastructure for producing individual geniuses like Darwin and Einstein.

Yet those very examples in turn illustrate the potentialities of eco-centrism. Isaac Newton, if the traditions be right, stood there wondering why the apple fell downwards instead of upwards. The laws of gravitation were conceptualized as a result of that exercise in musing. The environment was posing puzzles, teasing the intellect. Great Western curious minds proceeded to seek answers to those puzzles. The stage was set at the highest for invention, but also at a lower level for experimentation and innovation.

The quest for Afro-modernity must continue beyond this century. Once again such modernity should be weighed against the dictates of genuine development. And genuine development, in our sense, is indeed the process of modernization minus dependency.

The indigenous systems of education might seek to protect themselves against excessive dependency simply by attempting to discover levels of authenticity and investigate their compatibility with the dictates of modernization.

The Afro-Christian heritage in Ethiopia has, in any case, suffered severe strains in the aftermath of radical socialist revolutionary changes. Dependency upon Eastern Europe and its culture would still prevent modernization in Ethiopia from being genuine development, since it would still include dependency. But at least a trend is also under way in both Ethiopia and Somalia, a trend to reconcile imported ideologies with local realities, alien paradigms with cultural flows.

The Afro-Islamic tradition also needs to come to terms with modernity. In Mombasa, Kenya, the colonial authorities did set up in the 1940s and 1950s the Mombasa Institute of Muslim Education for the peoples of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Zanzibar and Somalia. The great majority of instructors in this Mombasa institution were Europeans. The students were exclusively Muslims from all those territories from Eastern Africa. Was the curriculum the Koran? Of course not. The curriculum consisted of mechanical and electrical engineering, the nautical sciences, chemistry, mathematics, and even carpentry and woodcarving. The British Governor of Kenya, Sir Philip Mitchell, had decided that the Muslims of Eastern Africa needed above all a major initiation into the technological aspects of Western civilization. He thought he could help to realize this through promoting an interterritorial college of technical education. He succeeded in persuading His Highness the Aga Khan, and the then Sultan of Zanzibar, to commit some of their own resources to the establishment of a region-wide college of technical education. The dream came to fruition. Young Somali Muslims, young Zanzibaris, Ugandans, Kenyans, and Tanganyikans, found their way to Mombasa for

that purpose. Islam was in the process of being married to a new technological civilization. The level was quite modest. But the Mombasa Institute of Muslim Education was symbolic of the conquering power of Western educational systems even when they are sympathetic to non-Western ways. Similarly, African cultures are challenged by Westernization. It still remains to be seen whether dependency can be transcended and Afro-modernity at last achieved for better or for worse.

But in the final analysis the educational struggle in Eastern Africa has three targets—the elimination of Euro-modernity, the creation of Afro-modernity, and the gradual integration of the indigenous, the Afro-Islamic and the Afro-Christian traditions of education under the broader umbrella of Afro-modernization. This triple process of eliminating the European paradigm, creating a new African one, and integrating African traditions in the context of the newer indigenous paradigm, would require a new balance between and among society, the individual, the environment and the realm of the spiritual.

One area of re-definition facing Africa concerns the balance between ecocentrism and theocentrism. We mentioned earlier that African traditions tended to lean towards ecological concern, a moral identification with the wider environment; while Western traditions tended to lean towards ecological curiosity, a scientific inquisitiveness into nature. Ecological curiosity in the West, unaccompanied by ecological concern, has led to pollution, depletion of resources, a threat to the ozone layer, and a reckless insensitivity to the delicate balances in nature. On the other hand, mere ecological concern among African people without an adequate sophistication and inquisitiveness into the dynamics of nature have led to moral empathy with the animals devoid of scientific understanding of their needs.

In the religions of the Western world (especially Christianity and Judaism) sacredness tended to be monopolized by the human species. Man was created in the image of God, and the hereafter was conceived in anthropomorphic terms. Cats, snakes, trees and lakes, on the other hand, had no soul in this Judaeo-Christian cosmology. In contrast, African religions tended to give sacredness to rocks and mountains, and identified sacredness in at least some of the animals with whom Africans shared the wider environment.

By making a sharp distinction between God and nature, the West fostered scientific curiosity about nature without marrying that curiosity to a moral concern about the environment. African cultures, on the other hand, refused to concede any sharp distinction between God and nature. Ecological concern was deepened—but ecological curiosity even under the Afro-Christianity of Ethiopia was basically minimal.

The challenge of modernization without Westernization from this point of view is a genuine marriage between traditional ecological concerns of

African societies and the new ecological curiosity of Western civilization. Educational curricula in Africa should reflect this basic fusion.

But there is in addition the need to balance ecology not only with God but also with society. This, in our categories, would be a quest for an area of accommodation between ecocentrism and sociocentrism. Again, African societies have drawn no sharp distinction between the social world of animals and the social world of human beings. Totemism involved clans of a society identifying with different animals in the environment. The bond between a clan and its symbolic animal often involved a vow never to harm the animal, and certainly never to eat it. The clan of the goat would not eat goat meat; the clan of the snake would not kill a snake. The boundaries between human beings and other animals were blurred.

Modernization without Westernization in Africa requires taking advantage of this blurring. African educational institutions should reflect precisely these anthropological and ecological aspects of African societies. Schools should address themselves to the dilemmas between ecological conservation, on one side, and social and economic development on the other. Much of the worst harm done to the environment has been perpetrated by more advanced societies. But African countries should be aware of their own heritage of linkage between ecology and society; and while they are struggling for economic and social development, they should marry those imperatives to the inheritance of their own past.

Curricula in schools should be sensitive to the world of wild animals in Africa, to the realities of Africa's mineral resources, to the dangers of soil erosion and desertification, and to the dynamic relationship between population growth, social distribution and ecological balance. The precise equation could mean the difference between Westernization and autonomous modernization.

Then there is the balance between egocentrism and sociocentrism. African cultures tended before the European impact to be heavily sociocentric, while Western systems of education tended to reveal a propensity towards egocentrism.

Educational institutions in Eastern Africa are already exploring where to draw the line between the promotion of individualism and the cultivation of social commitments. Places like Tanzania have found one solution in a national service for the Tanzanian youth. Those who obtain opportunities in educational institutions are also called upon to serve, on modest returns, in major areas of national need as technicians, or assistants, or professional types. National service could mean military service, but in the final analysis the vision is in the direction of developmental commitments. The educated are deemed to have extra responsibilities towards the wider societies.

Also as an aspect of the Tanzanian experiment is the revised system of

admission to the University of Dar es Salaam. Intellectual performance in pre-university examinations is no longer enough as a determinant of who goes to a university. Some sociocentric credentials, including service to the ruling party, are now included in the allocation of educational opportunities. These political criteria may sometimes shock Western observers, but they are part of the effort to moderate the individualist credentials of intellectual performance by considerations of wider social loyalties.

Also as part of the experimentation in marrying individualism to social commitment in Eastern Africa are courses that are sometimes devised to attract all students, regardless of discipline. Again the University of Dar es Salaam has experimented with a course about society and development in East Africa, open to a wider range of students regardless of their disciplinary specializations. Makerere University in Uganda has also agonized about a university-wide course on development, designed to expose not only students in the humanities and social sciences, but also students in medicine, the natural sciences and engineering, to the wider imperatives of social need and economic concern. Once again this seems to be one route of modernization which is not necessarily a process of Westernization.

As for the precise balances between the individual and God, or the individual and nature (egocentrism, ecocentrism and sociocentrism) these dynamics would be allowed to work themselves out in the process of historical change. The transition from dependent Westernization to autonomous modernization need not resolve all the dilemmas of interaction between man, nature and the ultimate.

Under the African sun, both Kemal Atatürk and the Meiji restoration have cast their shadow. As of now Africa is leaning towards Atatürk—tending to accept Westernization as the only road to modernity. But both Atatürk and contemporary Africa may be wrong. Nor need Africa follow the Japanese route. 'Look into thy soul and modernize.'

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Three decades of historical studies in East Africa: 1949–77

B. A. Ogot

The Makerere College Calendar of 1948 reveals that there was no History Department in existence. In 1949, a question was asked in the British Parliament as to why this subject was omitted from the curriculum of the new East African University College. In response to this question, Mrs Joyce Silby, wife of a Lecturer in English at Makerere, was hurriedly appointed temporary Assistant Lecturer in History. The history syllabus she introduced consisted of three papers: Europe and World Affairs, 1789–1870; Europe and World Affairs after 1870; and British Social and Economic History since 1783. This was a one-woman show, but it represented the first attempt by a professional historian to teach history at university level.

In 1950 I arrived at Makerere to study mathematics, history and English. In the same year Kenneth Ingham arrived as the first formally appointed Lecturer in History at Makerere and in East Africa. He had written a book on British activities in India, but as far as this continent was concerned he 'knew less about Africa than did Herodotus', to quote his own words.[1] Herodotus was, of course, a Greek historian of the fifth century B.C. who speculated frequently about Africa. In 1951 Ingham was joined by another professional historian: D. A. Low as Assistant Lecturer. It was in this year that we were introduced to African history for the first time in the revised syllabus which consisted of the following three papers: the History of the British Empire; History of Tropical Africa; and Social and Economic Development in Great Britain since 1783.

The History of Tropical Africa comprised, and I quote from the syllabus: 'The Arab and American Slave Trades; Abolition; African Explorers; Chartered Companies; Missions; Partition and Colonization; the First World War in Africa.' As Professor J. D. Fage, who was one of the pioneer professional historians in Africa has said, a few professional European historians at Legon, Ibadan and Makerere were obliged at this time to turn 'the Expansion of

1. K. Ingham, *It Started with Herodotus—An Inaugural Lecture*, p. 1, Oxford University Press, 1958.

Europe' inside out for the benefit of African students.[1] This is in fact what Kenneth Ingham, who had been made Senior Lecturer and Head of Department in 1953 and who had recruited two more lecturers, R. W. Beachey and Miss J. E. M. Bellord, was doing. By 1957 when he was appointed to the chair of History—the first Professor of History in East Africa—Ingham had succeeded not only in building up a strong team of professional historians at Makerere, but also succeeded in gaining academic respectability for African history. Indeed, by the time Ingham left East Africa in 1962, African history was already recognized in government circles in East Africa. For in that year, Ingham's book, *A History of East Africa*, sponsored by the East Africa High Commission was published.

The achievement of this recognition marked a momentous revolution in East African historiography in particular, and African historiography in general, with the founding of university institutions in Africa from about 1948. It was not an easy battle to win. The thinking of most European historians was still dominated by the Hegelian notion of the essential 'darkness' of the African past. The Inghams and the Fages had therefore to demonstrate that Africa had an important history by dedicating their lives to its study. They thus provided a powerful challenge to the armchair non-believers, such as Professors Egerton and Coupland of Oxford University.

Ingham and his team faced many practical difficulties. They had no text-books and no journals on African history. Very little research work had been done to provide students with adequate data for interpretation. Nevertheless, Ingham was convinced of the need for teaching African history. As he later admitted:

> When I think back on the early days of African history teaching at Makerere I marvel at the tolerance displayed by our own students towards our fumbling attempts to tell them something about their own continent. I marvel even more at the apparently satisfactory results achieved in examinations. . . . Yet I have no doubt whatsoever about the importance of teaching African, and more particularly East African history at Makerere.[2]

In 1959, I went back to Makerere to join Ingham and his team as a Lecturer in History—the first professional East African historian to teach in a university. Beacher and Low were now Senior Lecturers and the Lecturers were Mrs J. E. M. Khabaza, O. W. Furley, J. H. Whyte, Jennifer Jean Carter, Cherry Gertzel—a strong team indeed. By now our syllabuses were elaborate, though still largely Euro-centred. For those taking a general degree we had three

1. J. D. Fage, 'Continuity and Change in the Writing of West African History', *African Affairs*, pp. 236–8, 280, July 1971.
2. Ingham, op. cit., p. 19.

papers: English Constitutional History from 1558 to the Present Day; Modern European History from the Middle of the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day; and History of East Africa from 1850 to the Present Day. The Honours students took ten papers: English History down to the Middle of the Fifteenth Century; English History from the Middle of the Fifteenth Century to the Present Day; English Constitutional History from the Middle of the Fifteenth Century to the Present; Modern European History from the Middle of the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day; History of Tropical Africa from the Middle of the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day; History of Political Ideas; An optional subject selected from either (a) Diplomatic Relations of the Great Powers since 1815 or (b) The History of East Africa from the Middle of the Nineteenth Century to the Present Day. Two papers were to be taken on a special subject selected from (a) The Anglo-French Entente 1898–1912 and (b) The Evolution of British Policy in the Administration of the Tropical Dependencies in East and West Africa since 1884. The tenth paper was on Historiography, where a student was required to comment on selected passages culled from the works of great historians.

At that time this was regarded as a very progressive syllabus. But several members of the department—Low, Gertzel and myself—began to feel that the African component of the syllabus was weak and in any case dealt largely with the expansion of Europe in Africa. The dissident group—as we were called—demanded a more Afro-centred syllabus. With the departure of Low in 1960 and that of Ingham, in 1962, who on the whole had been liberal, our future in the department looked bleak.

Beacher succeeded Ingham as Professor of History at Makerere and he proceeded to introduce a syllabus that was even less Afro-centred. For the general-degree student he prescribed two papers: Europe and the Wider World from the Mid-eighteenth Century to 1870; and Europe and the Wider World from 1870 to the Present Day. The Honours students had to take eight papers: An Outline of African History; Medieval or Modern European History; History of Political Ideas; an optional subject chosen from: (a) History of the United States; (b) History of the USSR; (c) History of Islam; (d) History of Latin America. Two papers had to be taken on a subject chosen from: (a) History of East Africa or West Africa or South Africa; (b) English Constitutional History; (c) English Economic History; and (d) A Medieval or Modern European History Topic. The eighth paper was an essay on prescribed topics. Beacher's period at Makerere—1963–68—contrasted sharply both with Ingham's leadership, which preceded it, and with Professor J. B. Webster's, which succeeded it. The latter reorganized the department and gave it a sense of purpose and direction which it had lost. He came to East Africa from the University of Ibadan, where he had already published two major works: *The African Churches Among the Yoruba 1888–1922*; and (with A. A. Boahen) *The Growth*

of African Civilisation: the Revolutionary Years—West Africa since 1800. With dedication, he soon launched the History of Uganda Project, a co-ordinated and regional group research scheme centred at Makerere University, which he directed from 1969 to 1972. The project involved undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate research (especially field research) throughout Uganda, and the results are soon to be published in a two-volume *History of Uganda.*

When I moved to Nairobi in 1964, I found that the level of historical studies at the college was rudimentary. From 1957 to 1961, there were only two lecturers teaching advanced-level courses of the University of London—G. Mungeam and J. A. Kieran. In 1962, H. P. Gale, who had been my teacher in the Faculty of Education at Makerere and who had recently completed a Ph.D. thesis on the History of Mill Hill Fathers in Uganda, was appointed to the newly created chair of History. He was assisted by Mungeam and Kieran as Lecturers and J. Mangat as Assistant Lecturer. Their degree syllabus consisted of three papers: Modern English History From the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century; Modern European History from the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century; and the History of Africa from the Fifteenth Century. In 1963, Professor Gale was appointed Acting Principal of the College and J. N. Karanja joined the department, the first African member of the History Department. He remained in the department for less than a year before he was appointed Kenya's first High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

In 1964, A. J. Hanna was appointed second professor of the department. Hanna's book, *The Story of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland* had been published in 1960. In it he recorded the rise and fall of British supremacy, and its effects upon the African population, from the coming of the missionaries and traders to the dissolution of the Federation. He also recorded in the book his attitude towards African history. He refers to nineteenth-century Central Africans as 'these impulsive children of nature' who lacked prudence and forethought. He then concludes:[1]

> . . . although it would be presumptuous to pass moral judgement upon the Africans themselves, it is both legitimate and necessary to make a historical assessment of the conditions under which they were living when the first British pioneers came into their midst. And only by a wilful disregard of abundant evidence is it possible to evade the conclusion that, on the whole, the picture was one of brutality, callousness, suffering and futility, and that the situation did not include any factors which offered hope of improvement in the future . . . if it had not been for the coming of the British, or of some other people capable of playing a similar historic role, there is every reason to suppose that the tribes of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland would have remained, for centuries or perhaps millennia, sparsely scattered over a vast area, dominated by the immensity of the surrounding country and the capriciousness of

1. A. J. Hanna, *The Story of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland*, p. 40, 1960.

nature, without the art of writing or the use of numbers, with scarcely the slightest idea of the relationship of cause and effect, with no ideals higher than the pride of bloodshed, with their whole environment and conditions of life promoting an attitude of apathy, improvidence, and fatalism.

This is the man who was appointed to the new Department of History in Nairobi, and who attempted to reverse the trend of historical studies in East Africa back to the days of Coupland. He introduced a slight modification to the syllabus. The history student had now to take four papers: A Study of Europe and the Wider World in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries; History of Political Ideas; History of England; and History of Africa.

It was into this department that I moved from Makerere and in 1965, I appealed to the College Council to regularize my position. They regularized it by appointing me Chairman of the History Department and Senior Lecturer, a decision that led to the resignation of Hanna and the appointment of Professor K. O. Bjork as the third professor in the department. He was also the Rockefeller Foundation representative in Kenya.

Fortunately for the department, Professor Bjork was a humble and thorough scholar whose main interest was to assist the new department in establishing sound academic standards. With the assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation, he enabled us to transform the history section of the university library from a high-school-level library into a true university and research library. In formulating a new syllabus we laid down the principle which the History Department has adhered to up to the present, namely, that at least half of our courses should be African and the other half, of relevance to the African historical experience. Our first effort in the application of this principle yielded the following syllabus:

First year: History of Africa (two papers: Pre-colonial, and Colonial and Post-colonial).

Second and third years: The Emergence of Modern International Society since 1815; Constitutional Development of the Commonwealth; East and Central Africa since 1700; two optional papers chosen from the following: History of Political Ideas; History of Europe, Africa and the New World since 1492; History of the United States; History of the USSR; History of the Development of the International Economy 1750–1940.

We also prescribed a special subject—The Making of Modern Kenya 1884–1924—which was studied with original documents. These documents have now been published as *Kenya: Select Historical Documents 1884–1923*, edited by G. M. Mungeam (1979).

As far as research was concerned, we defined our priorities very clearly. We agreed that while the colonial period of our history was important, it did not carry the same urgency as the pre-colonial period. While we encouraged

some members of the department (e.g. Mungeam, Mangat and Kieran) to work on colonial themes, and they produced good Ph.D. theses, two of which were published (*British Rule in Kenya 1895–1912* by G. H. Mungeam (1966); *A History of Asians in East Africa* by J. S. Mangat); the thrust of our effort went into the pre-colonial field. The reasons for this decision should be made clear.

It was evident to us that historical consciousness and historical study are as old in Africa as Man himself. In nearly all societies, historical details were carefully preserved in one form or other and were transmitted from one generation to another. The past was seen as forming continuous strand with the present and the future. History was studied not for its own sake, but for its functional value. There was the all-pervading awareness that history had a purpose that had to be thoroughly understood and grasped by all members of the society. For this reason, history formed the central core in the overall socialization process of the individual from one stage of his life to another.

With the onset of colonialism in Africa, African history was dismissed as merely the history of Europeans in Africa, regarding African activity not as history but merely as pointless gyrations of barbarians. Although the study of history is universal, it is generally suppressed or deliberately distorted in colonial situations. This is because it is difficult to govern people whose culture seems equal to one's own, and whose historical experience seems equally valid. Hence, a colonialist must believe in the superiority of his own culture, scholarship and administration. His historical experience must be the only valid one.

This is what happened in Africa. The colonial powers found it desirable to teach their own version of history in preference to that of the subject people. They refused to believe that Africa had any history that antedated the colonial period. The African historical knowledge was thus devalued.

Of course, some colonial people were permitted to have a certain amount of history—in proportion to their value as collaborators. In East Africa, for instance, the Kingdom of Buganda which was the buttress of British colonial administration, was allowed to have history. The neighbouring Kingdom of Bunyoro, with a much longer history, but which was a constant thorn in the British side, had only mythology! In short, history was permissible to the extent that it validated the eminence of pro-colonial peoples, and vilified opponents of colonial authority.

As we have indicated in the cases of Makerere University and Nairobi University Colleges, the study of African history began to establish itself as a serious field of inquiry since the Second World War. There was an effort to apply standards and methods comparable with those which had already been generally accepted in the approach to the histories of other regions and systems. There was thus a correlation between the advance made in the treatment of African history and the process of political liberation of African peoples which was taking place during the same period. The coexistence of these two phenomena,

Renaissance and Risorgimento, is familiar in other contexts—Eastern European Arab, Indian, East Asian, Latin American, etc. The development of a demand for national independence in the present implies also a growing concern for the exploration of the national past. Colonial rule began to be seen in a wider historical perspective, not as the beginning and end of history, but as a decisive episode in a much longer story.

There were also, during the same period, other concomitant factors stimulating this new approach to African history, the most important being the establishment of African universities from about 1948; and the development, within and outside Africa, of institutions concerned with African studies.

Among the characteristics of this new approach one might list the following:

First, the attempt to use data from sources other than documents—particularly archaeological, linguistic as well as data derived from oral tradition; and to establish criteria in relation to which the value of evidence derived from these various types of sources can be assessed.

Second, there was an increasing attention to the use that could be made of archival material, including both the archives (public and private, metropolitan and local) of the various European states with African interests, and of African states.

Third, there was an effort to make more adequate use of the substantial body of Arabic material relating to the history of sub-Saharan Africa—by Arab and non-Arab African authors, both published works and manuscripts—and of documentary material in other African languages—Amharic, Swahili, Hausa, Fulfude, Zulu, Yoruba, etc.

Fourth, there was a revival of historical interest among social anthropologists, and the application of sociological methods of thought and inquiry to historical questions.

This was the historical context that informed our perspectives in the Department of History at Nairobi in 1965.

Up to about 1953, no historian thought seriously about the pre-colonial history of Africa. Most histories of Africa started from 1850, a practice that tended to confirm Hegel in his assertion that Africa was not a historical continent. But in that year the first of the School of Oriental and African Studies Conferences on African History and Archaeology was organized. It brought together Arabists, classical historians, sinologists, anthropologists, linguists, archaeologists, ethnobotanists, musicologists, astronomers, theologians, art historians—in fact anybody who had anything to say about the history of Africa. In December 1961, the International African Institute in London organized a seminar at the University of Dakar on the Pre-colonial History of Africa, which also brought scholars from different parts of the world and with different back-

grounds together to discuss the feasibility of producing such a history.[1] I was privileged to attend this meeting and to present a paper. African scholars present emphasized the point that African history had a long time-span—perhaps the longest of any history; that it should be studied on its own merit; and that the methods to be applied were not dissimilar to those used to study the histories of other societies. Moreover, we could only explode the racist myths of the imperialists by producing works that could stand rigorous historical scrutiny. But one question haunted all these international conferences: could it be done? Although the pioneer professional historians had achieved a great measure of recognition for African history, most people, including some Africans, were waiting for demonstration. As T. O. Ranger, who was involved in this task, has correctly observed, 'Historians of Africa everywhere were engaged in the same task of *demonstration* of the possibility and viability of the field.'[2] Archaeologists such as G. A. Wainwright, G. Mathew, J. S. Kirkman, G. S. O. Freeman-Grenville, M. Posnansky and N. Chittick had to demonstrate that it could be done; the oral historians had to show that it was possible to produce sound histories based on oral traditions; linguists such as Whiteley, Chris Ehret and B. Heine had to demonstrate the usefulness of the linguistic techniques for the historians. The aim of these demonstrations was, of course, to produce a historical synthesis—sometimes a very elusive goal.

In our enthusiastic endeavour to demonstrate the viability of the field, faulty methodologies were used; mistaken presuppositions were made; and some important aspects of history were ignored. Despite these shortcomings, it should be understood that this intensive process of demonstration led to the second victory in the fierce war against the historical rapists who were determined to deny Africa any historical past. At least it was now accepted that it could be done.

Besides pursuing vigorous research in selected areas, we were also determined in Nairobi to Africanize the staff as rapidly as possible. In 1966, we recruited two Special Lecturers—G. S. Were and A. G. Temu—although the latter left for Dar es Salaam after only two weeks! The localization of the teaching staff was intensified when I was appointed to the chair of History in 1967—thereby becoming the fourth Professor of History at Nairobi. Today, over 80 per cent of the teaching staff are Kenyans, most of whom are past students of the department. Also, the department has been producing an annual average of eighty graduates in history most of whom have become teachers in schools and in teacher training colleges. With regard to research, the depart-

1. J. Vansina, R. Mauny and L. V. Thomas (eds.), *The Historian in Tropical Africa*, Oxford University Press, 1964.
2. T. O. Ranger, 'Towards a Usable African Past', in Christopher Fyfe (ed.), *African Studies since 1945*, p. 18, Longman, 1976.

ment has supervised over forty M.A. and Ph.D. students, who have conducted research in various aspects of Kenyan history.

I have adopted an autobiographical approach to the subject of historical studies at Makerere and Nairobi because I was involved from within. In Dar es Salaam, however, I maintained connections largely through personal friendship with Professors T. O. Ranger, I. N. Kimambo and A. G. Temu, who up to 1977 directed the fortunes of that department.

For many years I was an External Examiner to the Department of History in Dar es Salaam, initially at the undergraduate level and from 1973 to 1977 at the postgraduate level. We also met at subject conferences organized originally by the now defunct University of East Africa and later by the Inter-University Committee. We also collaborated closely in producing works such as *Zamani*, *Emerging Themes of African History*, or *The Historical Study of African Religion*.

Fortunately, the Department of History at Dar es Salaam did not have to go through the stage of recognition that both Makerere and Nairobi had to undergo. When Terence Ranger arrived in Dar es Salaam in 1964 to establish the Department of History, the importance of African history was already recognized not only at the university, but even more so by the Tanzanian Government. Indeed, in 1965, the Tanzanian Government financed a major International Congress of African Historians which I had the privilege to preside over. It brought historians from Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa together to discuss two main topics: the methodology and assumptions of African historiography and the themes that were emerging as particularly significant in the study of African history. As Professor Ranger, who was its organizer, has put it:

> It was assumed that there was no longer any need to proclaim the possibility of African history. The need was rather to examine the directions research and writing on African history had taken; a stock-taking and reassessment of approach, method and result. And there was in this too an implied intention to examine whether African history was sufficiently African; whether it had developed the methods and models appropriate to its own needs or had depended upon making use of methods and models developed elsewhere; whether its main themes of discourse had arisen out of the dynamics of African development or had been imposed because of their overriding significance in the historiography of other continents.[1]

The fact that such an important conference—in fact the most important gathering of African historians that has ever taken place in East Africa—was organized by a department that was just over a year old is a reflection of the dynamic leadership that Professor Ranger brought not only to Dar es Salaam

1. T. O. Ranger (ed.), *Emerging Themes of African History*, pp. ix-x, EAPH, 1968.

but to East Africa. In his own department he quickly assembled a very able team of historians: John Iliffe, Isariah Kimambo and John Lonsdale—and under his able leadership the team proceeded to *demonstrate* the viability of the field of African history. Following the example of Nairobi where we had appointed B. G. McIntosh in 1966, Research Fellow and Co-ordinator of the Kenya Oral History Project, Ranger appointed A. D. Roberts—a former post-graduate student of ours at Makerere, to the position of Research Fellow in Oral History. Another of our postgraduate students at Makerere, J. E. G. Sutton, was appointed Lecturer in Archaeology to extend the time-scale of African history further back. Although the youngest, it soon became one of the most productive History Departments in East Africa, and in Africa.

What then can we learn from this somewhat simplistic survey of historical studies at the three university History Departments in East Africa during the last three decades?

First, it is evident that just as in the political field the 1960s are known as the decade of independence in Africa, in the historical field the decade witnessed a boom in African historical studies. There was, for example, a general change of attitude of foreign scholars towards our past: a friendly, almost affectionate attitude developed, as contrasted with the cynical, almost hateful one of earlier years. A practical demonstration of this changed attitude was the launching of the *Journal of African History* in 1960 by the Cambridge University Press. This was the first professional international journal wholly devoted to the study of African history and it symbolized the international recognition of the subject—a recognition for which historians like Ingham had worked hard. The decision of the Oxford University Press to publish a three-volume history of East Africa, with funds from the Colonial Development and Welfare Organization, and in the belief that 'the publication of a comprehensive history of the region is one of the essential contributions which United Kingdom funds could make to the future of the new East African states', was a clear manifestation of this recognition. Volume I of the series, entirely devoted to the pre-European history of East Africa, was published in 1963. This constituted a major reversal of the stand previously taken by professors at Oxford University that before colonialism there was nothing but darkness in East Africa.

Following this international recognition of African history, many of us in East Africa took to the field to practise the new historiography. The object of the new historiography was to produce Afro-centric, as opposed to Euro-centric, East African history. In the famous words of Terry Ranger we were urged to explore the extent of 'African activity, African adaptation, African choice, African initiative'.[1] We demonstrated that Mombasa, Kilwa, Lamu and Malindi, were not Arab cities—they were Swahili towns, and therefore African

1. Ranger, op. cit., p. xxi.

cities. We demonstrated that African societies had well-organized states, practised democracy, socialism, family planning and engaged in long-distance trade with properly organized markets. We proved to our satisfaction that Africans had religions, philosophies, military organizations, legal systems, medicines and technologies. In short, we tried to demonstrate that Africa in general and East Africa in particular had a rich and significant history.

We were fortunate to have had a ready and receptive audience in the East African public. Everywhere in the region there was special joy in discovering that East Africa had a rich history, a civilization. The African leaders developed a nostalgic affection for their past, a reconciliation with the present and optimism about the future. They dwelt rather nostalgically upon what was appealing or virtuous in the African past, and rarely on the darker, more violent, and tragic aspects of the African experience.

In the Departments of History at Makerere, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the number of students swelled. Historical associations were started in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, and their membership rose rapidly. The increase in membership was matched by a proliferation of activities, including publications. Scholars adopted the monographic approach, focusing on carefully defined themes that received exhaustive treatment. Most of these works concentrated on the pre-colonial period, resulting in a kind of emancipatory history, a refutation of the colonial myth that East Africa had no history. By about 1972, this honeymoon period of East African history was drawing to an end. Today, historical studies in East Africa are going through a very confused period. What are the causes of this confusion?

First, among East African scholars themselves, there is a major debate taking place at the moment about the approach we should adopt to the study of African history. The radical and younger scholars are arguing that the old distinction between Afro-centric and Euro-centric approaches was peripheral, if not artificial. Both of these are bourgeois ideologies, developed with the aim of making the exploitation of Africa by foreigners palatable to the African élite, who are, in any case, the beneficiaries of such an exploitation. These idealistic theories discuss African history in moral, ethical or racial terms, and this leads to no understanding of the subject. Moreover, they discuss African history in the context of a historical confrontation between Africa and Europe, and it is this context that distorts our history.

In studying colonization, for instance, we must get out of the Euro-Afro dilemma, and study the process of subjugation and exploitation as a historical phenomenon. This entails analysing our ideological presuppositions and a realization that colonialism was a worldwide phenomenon. An understanding of it in Africa therefore requires a global analysis. We must study colonialism in Asia, in Latin America and in the Middle East in order to understand colonialism in Africa. The core area in such studies, the radicals aver, is the

one dealing with production relations in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Africa.

The New Left African historians have also been critical of the attempts by bourgeois historians to recover local initiative in African history. The latter, they contend, see African initiative in terms of numbers, arguing that since there were few Europeans in Africa, there was ample opportunity for African initiative. But should we quantify initiative in this way?

What the proponents of African initiative should be doing is to analyse the nature of the colonial state, its dependence on the metropolitan state and the nature of capital penetration in the colony. If they were to do this, the radicals say, they would discover that the initiative the Africans claim to have had in missionary work, in colonial administration and in revolts, only helped to build a capitalist hegemony in Africa. They are thus confusing participation with control.

The concern of the New Left scholars in Africa seems to derive from the fact that despite all the aid the Third World has been receiving from developed countries, there is still little by way of development to show. Scholars are therefore turning to economic history for an explanation of the present economic and political malaise in Africa and for a guide to the future. Professor Walter Rodney's *How Europe Under-developed Africa*, published by the Tanzania Publishing House in 1972, is a powerful expression of this view. Other books of the same genre are: E. A. Brett's *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa* (1973), Colin Ley's *Underdevelopment in Kenya* (1975), R. D. Wolff's *The Economics of Colonialism: Britain and Kenya 1870–1930*, and Gary Wasserman's *Politics of Decolonization: Kenya Europeans and the Land Issue 1960–1965* (1976).

Two main schools have emerged within the radical group in Africa, namely the 'underdevelopment and dependency school' of American origin and the 'Marxist school' arising out of the mainstream of European Marxist tradition. Both of these schools are critical of the established Western liberal tradition of the Third World studies in the social sciences. Their main contribution lies in the theoretical models that integrate Africa into the universal history of the growth of the Western World economy, and their emphasis on conflict analysis of African societies. They must be seen primarily as value-based models for the analysis of contemporary relations between the rich and the poor countries. Applied to the whole period of Western/Third World relations since 1500, they fail to recognize and explain, for example, the tradition of African/European co-operation. The main causal questions are foreclosed through the assumption, built into the key concepts of the New Left scholars, that Western capitalism and colonial rule constitute both a sufficient and necessary cause of underdevelopment, dependency, non-industrialization, poverty, etc., in the Third World.

The second source of our historical discontent in East Africa today is that

in the view of many people—students, staff and the public—history has been reduced to popular sentimentality and nostalgia about the past. This is a product of the boom years when, as we have seen, it was assumed that Africa stood for certain values and it was the duty of the historian in his study of the past to discover, record and celebrate these values. We had therefore to seek a usable past. Our apparent inability to find this usable East African past has created cynicism among the radicals and disappointment among the conservatives. For most of them, history is not only ailing, it is irrelevant. They want to be emancipated from the tyranny of the dead past, they are seeking freedom to tackle present-day problems and face the future with confidence without constantly looking over their shoulder for precedents from the dead and irrelevant past.

They see history as confusion, an expensive pastime which can no longer speak in an important way to the contemporary world. The latest and the most eloquent expression of this view is Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Petals of Blood.* One of his characters, Karega, is seeking a vision of the future rooted in the past. He is, in other words, in search of a usable past. He wants to know why 75 per cent of those that produce food and wealth are poor and the non-producing minority wealthy. He turns to history books for answers to these questions. Ngugi then writes:

> But instead of answering these, instead of giving him the key he so badly needed, the professors took him to pre-colonial times and made him wander purposelessly from Egypt, or Ethiopia, or Sudan, only to be checked in his pastoral wanderings by the arrival of Europeans. There, they would make him come to a sudden full stop. To the learned minds of the historians, the history of Kenya before colonialism was one of the wanderlust and pointless warfare between peoples. The learned ones never wanted to confront the meaning of colonialism and of imperialism. When they touched on it, it was only to describe acts of violent resistance as murders; some even demanded the rehabilitation of those who sold out to the enemy during the years of struggle.[1]

Karega turned away from these history books in despair!

This problem is not new and it is not peculiar to East Africa. From the days of Herodotus and Thucydides, various individuals have always reacted in different ways to the questions: What is the use of history? What makes the subject legitimate? The answers to these questions have, in essence, reflected different levels of perception of the nature and role of history. 'History is bunk', say some. 'History is something that never happened, written by a man who wasn't there.' On the other hand, there seems to be a consensus in all human societies that no one can understand what he is or is likely to be unless he knows where he comes from. This is the justification of all historical studies,

1. Ngugi wa Thiongo, *Petals of Blood*, p. 199, Heinemann, 1977.

and historians in Africa would do well to concentrate on those studies that help them to know who they are.

On the other hand, we know for a fact that the Dar es Salaam historians tried to produce just such a history—*A History of Tanzania*, edited by I. N. Kimambo and A. Temu. They were severely criticized by Denoon and Kuper, who objected to the *nationalist* character of the work. They complained that the work represented a history of African national dignity and self-assertion.[1] Another important critic of the work was Saul who condemned the book for not raising issues of socio-economic differentiation and related subjects.[2] Other critics have pointed out that the Dar es Salaam school of historians did not pay much attention to issues relating to man and his environment, and to the economic basis of African initiatives. The important question is not whether one should write a nationalist history. The question is, what kind? Each generation of historians will answer this question differently. In the wise words of an old Arab proverb: 'Men resemble their times more than they do their fathers.'

In other respects African historiography is undergoing changes similar to those discernible in other continents and systems. For instance, the study of history has been democratized in most countries, and there is a general acceptance now that history can be made not only by kings and heroes, but by all kinds and conditions of man. The emphasis is therefore on a study of 'history from below' and not from above. Edward Thompson in his *Making of the English Working Class* (1968) has analysed in detail the development of consciousness among the English working class, showing how the English workers made themselves just as much as they were made by others. A more famous example of the broadening of the minds of historians may be seen in the French Revolution. Writing in the middle of the nineteenth century, the English historian Carlyle was satisfied that he could adequately explain the French Revolution solely in terms of the leading personalities of that time. Later scholars insisted that they must comprehend the nature of France's society, economy, and political and spiritual systems in order to understand the historical narrative. Today, French scholars have taken this point of view to its logical extreme. Not content with an overview of French society in 1789, each has carved out a speciality in which he burrows away, often using conceptual tools borrowed from other disciplines such as sociology, political science, psychology and economics.

The historiography of the French Revolution provides an illustration of

1. D. Denoon and A. Kuper, 'Nationalist Historians in Search of a Nation: The New Historiography in Dar-es-Salaam', *African Affairs*, Vol. LXX, 1970, pp. 329–49.
2. J. S. Saul, 'Nationalism, Socialism and Tanzania History', in L. Cliffe and J. S. Saul (eds.), *Socialism in Tanzania*, pp. 65–79, EAPH, 1972, 2 vols.

a general trend which has also affected African historiography. Historians are turning their attention away from institutions towards people, and from rulers towards the ruled. They are even beginning to write about the 'rise of the common people'.[1] Studies of the common people in Africa assume, and justifiably so, that all kinds of people have had opportunities to make history, and so we study all kinds of people through all manner of source material.

In conclusion, it is pertinent to say a few words about the need to develop a philosophy of history in Africa. The job of a historian is not simply to offer a chronological narrative account of what happened. He has also to interpret his data. African historians have worked hard since about 1948 to assemble and accumulate accurate historical data. We have spent many hours analysing these data with a view to getting the record straight. We shall continue to collect more data both from the old sources as well as from new ones. But this is not enough in history. What we need is a vision to show us what the exercise is all about. We have struggled hard to reject a conceptual framework which is Western both in its origins as well as in its orientations. But we have not yet succeeded in evolving an autonomous body of theoretical thinking. Here lies the root of our cultural dependence. It is also the biggest challenge facing African thinkers and universities. For although it is the function of a university to transmit knowledge and values from generation to generation as well as to discover *new* knowledge through research, we have to ask ourselves *whose* values? If African universities fail to produce an autonomous body of theoretical knowledge in the social sciences, they will have failed in one of their most crucial functions in the task of nation-building, and they will continue to be academic reflectors of foreign ideologies.

1. Marcia Wright, 'Agrarian Intervention and the Rise of the Common People. A View from South Rukwa, East-Central Africa', paper read at the American Historical Association Meeting, New York, 26–28 December 1979.

Problems of conceptualization and definition in African history with reference to some social and political institutions

Sékéné Mody Cissoko

Introduction

Every science has its own method and its own basic vocabulary, which enables it to preserve what has been established and explore the unknown in order to put it into words, i.e. incorporate it into its conceptual frame of reference. For concepts refer to socio-cultural facts, namely, the original or specific features of each culture or institution. They are of prime importance for the research worker in African studies and for the historian of Africa. So either concepts must be used that correspond to African facts, or else they must be adjusted to fit them.

In African historiography concepts are used somewhat loosely.[1] Often the vocabulary does not really fit the subject-matter. Terms such as 'clan', 'feudality' and 'empire', for instance, are often used to designate social phenomena to which they do not correspond. This use of unsuitable vocabulary falsifies the African situation and tends to identify it with foreign cultures, thus robbing it of its inmost character, its authenticity and its vital force.

This situation is attributable partly to the sources, partly to the authors and partly to the dearth of analysis and criticism.

Most written sources of African history are of foreign origin. Arab sources predominate for the medieval period, European ones for antiquity and other periods. In their accounts of Africa the authors use concepts peculiar to their cultures and ways of looking at things. Thus the Arabs speak of tribes, viziers, sultans, poets, etc., and Portuguese authors of lords, gentry, valets, vassals, etc. The result is a distorted picture of the African situation.

The European authors who wrote most about the African continent, and many African research workers, despite the commendable efforts of some,

1. That is why Unesco has organized this symposium. The subject I have been given for this article is: 'Problems of conceptualization and definition in African history (the concepts of "empire", "race", "tribe", "clan", "family", "*jemaâ*", "ethnic group", "kingdom", "theocracy", "feudality", etc., in the socio-political institutions of pre-colonial Africa)'.

fared no better. The tendency to see Africa in alien terms by using unsuitable concepts is still with us. It stems from the inability of foreign authors[1] to set aside their own cultural values and study African reality as a thing in itself; but also most commonly from lack of really thorough critical analysis.

The right method, then, is to re-examine the substance of African institutions, define them on the basis of a detailed analysis and suggest a suitable terminology. To do so, we must avoid the pitfalls inherent in sources and authors, reformulate the old concepts in specifically African terms, and suggest new concepts on the basis of African cultures and languages. Linguistic diversity is not a drawback. There is an analogy, or at least a certain unity, between the cultures of Black Africa. Words in different languages may very well denote similar social realities in areas a long way apart. Thus the word *lamane*, which has gained acceptance in the socio-political study of Senegambia,[2] perfectly renders the concept of 'master of the land' in all the societies of the Sudanic savannah. It is the equivalent of *farin*,[3] Mandingo for master of the land. The Mandingo *mansaya*, an oligarchical royalty, corresponds to a form of power in much of tropical Africa.

Thus a universalistic conceptualization that gives rise to distortion must sometimes be replaced by African terms each applicable throughout a main socio-cultural area.

Some African social and socio-political institutions

This document, prepared at the request of Unesco, raises the problem of a new conceptual approach to African institutions. The problem falls into three parts: biological facts, namely, race; social institutions, namely, clan, family, tribe, *jemaà* and ethnic group; and socio-political concepts, namely, kingdom, empire, feudality and theocracy.

Race

On our small planet the idea of race divides men and, still, subjects part of mankind to scorn and poverty. The concept carries an emotional charge which tends to stand in the way of scientific truth.

1. Many African authors, because of their training and the power of imitation are, unfortunately, not exempt from this criticism.
2. See *inter alia* the work of Cheikh Anta Diop, *L'Afrique noire précoloniale*, Paris, Présence Africaine, 1960; and Pathé Diagne, *Le pouvoir politique traditionnel en Afrique Occidentale*, Paris, Présence Africaine, 1967.
3. The *farins*, provincial governors in the days of the Empire of Mali, became in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries mere village chiefs, masters of the land.

The *Petit Larousse* dictionary defines 'race' as follows: 'a group of individuals whose biological traits are constant and transmissible by descent'.

Among these biological traits geneticists distinguish the genotype and the phenotype. The former means 'all the genes an individual receives from his parents at birth',[1] while the latter relates to external appearance—skin colour, hair, etc. The phenotype really represents what we call race, which may be black, white or yellow. The underlying reality, the genotype, relates to men with certain non-visible characteristics in common, such as the rhesus factor. At this level the concept of race almost wholly disappears.

Subject then to these reservations, there are two main races in Africa, the whites and the blacks, subdivided into many types according to geographical, historical and cultural factors. The dividing line between these two main races is often hazy because of intermixing since time immemorial. But the idea of a Hamitic race, with its racist and colonialistic overtones, has been demolished. The Fulani, the Ethiopians and the Somalians are 'black' racial types.

In Africa the white race consists mainly of Semites (Arabs and Berbers) and Indo-Europeans of various types. Among the blacks several types can be distinguished, such as the Sudanic, Bantu, Nilotic and Ethiopian types. Each of these types can be subdivided according to way of life and environment: thus within the Sudanic type Sahelian, Guinean and other subtypes can be distinguished.

The idea of race is thus more cultural than biological. Hence the idea of racial superiority or inferiority is a matter of socio-cultural prejudice. The Fulani, for instance, are not a separate race, and are not racially superior as was claimed by some historians of the colonial era. The degree of social development of the Fulani is not uniform: some of them, having adopted a sedentary way of life, have achieved complex socio-political organizations, while others have remained nomadic and still retain their ancestral institutions.

This shows that the development of human societies in general, and African societies in particular, is linked not to race but to certain factors that need to be identified. In other words, the concept is not a very meaningful one: it would be better to use a neutral term that describes the situation more accurately, e.g. human types characteristic of each cultural area.

Social institutions: clan, family, tribe, jemaà[2] *and ethnic group*

The societies of pre-colonial Africa vary widely in type according to their level of general development, their natural environment and their culture. Several

1. Beseat Kifle Selassie, 'Différence et solidarité au carrefour de la notion de race dans l'histoire', *La notion de race dans l'histoire*, Vol. 2, 1978.
2. A concept peculiar to Arab-Berber societies, which we shall not consider here.

forms of social and political organization may coexist in one and the same region. Concepts to designate them were usually laid down by anthropologists and ethnologists, and historians have simply taken them over.

Moreover, African social historiography is not well developed. In tropical Black Africa family or clan history is usually a matter for ethnologists rather than historians. There is even a certain tendency to debase African history by bracketing it with so-called ethnohistory, i.e. a minor branch based on non-written sources and dealing with 'uncivilized' peoples. This reactionary view is losing ground as historical science develops in Black Africa. Historians, applying their methods to what was the special preserve of ethnologists, are beginning to work out how African societies developed from their constituent nuclei such as clans, families, tribes and so on; and they are coming to realize that anthropologists' definitions do not often square with the historical reality, which is a process of movement and change. This is the angle from which we shall consider the ideas put forward.

The clan

Many research workers do not like to use this word, which they regard as vague and meaningless, covering all kinds of groupings, including even the Mafia and political cliques.

The clan is a community met with in the development of a number of human societies. The word is of Irish Celtic origin, and seems to have fundamentally characterized that society, which still retains some features of it. According to the *Larousse* dictionary it denotes a 'Scottish or Irish tribe consisting of a number of families'; there is also the 'totemic clan, a primitive tribe all of whose members have the same totemic affiliation'.

This definition, which defines clan as tribe, emphasizes what seems to us the essential feature of the concept, namely the real or imaginary common ancestry symbolized by a totem (animal or plant) which embodies the principle of life and power[1] and unites the group. The totem is revered as a sacred principle, and lays down taboos and prohibitions common to all members of the clan. Like the ancestor, it gives its name to the group, whose members all regard themselves as equal kin.

The clan was originally linked to a specific territory. It was run by the council of elders headed by a chief, who interpreted the wishes of the totem or the eponymous ancestor. Exogamy was the rule, with or without matriarchy.

In the course of history the clan broke up into family subgroups and scattered in every direction. It did not, however, die out, for its members did not forget their old family ties or their common totemic affiliation.

1. Alex Moret, *Histoire de l'Orient* (Histoire Générale, I).

This definition fits the social cell known as a clan in pre-colonial Africa. Many societies passed through this stage in the course of their development. We need not dwell on the well-known case of ancient Egypt.

The totem was not the ancestor himself, but tradition links it with him and attributes to it an almost sacred power. Among the Mandingo the totem is held to have saved the ancestor, who concluded a treaty of alliance with it which all descendants observe down the centuries in the form of taboos and prohibitions. In Western Sudan everyone is more or less linked to a totem, which is a reminder of the old clan structure. Let us take some examples from the history of the Mandingo, one of the major ethnic groups of West Africa.

At a time difficult to pin-point but in any case before the eleventh century, Mande country, the cradle of Mandingo culture, was inhabited by clans the most famous of which were the Mansaring (Keita, Konate and Culibaly), the Bula (Soussokho, Dumbia, Bakhayoko, etc.), the Traore, the Khonte,[1] etc. Each had a small territory, a totem (an animal) and an organization of elders run by the oldest in the group. Thus the totem of the Mansaring was a lion, that of the Bula an iguana.

This type of social organization, difficult to understand because of the shortage of source material, changed as time went on.

The clans took in new members—clients, prisoners and caste people—who joined the group out of self-interest. The new-comers admittedly took the name of the founder, but their ties of affiliation remained purely theoretical. The clans thus swollen formed a confederation led by the eldest member of one of them, in the event the oldest of the Keita Mansaring. This clan eventually usurped all sovereign power and united the country to its advantage.

In every period clan formations came into being and broke up. Many Sudanic and Bantu kingdoms thus arose out of clans. This is true of the Bambara clan in Khasso, which I dealt with in my thesis.[2] This non-totemic clan is descended from a Fulani shepherd who lived around the middle of the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century its members were a powerful group which absorbed clients and prisoners and founded an important kingdom in Upper Senegal. Unable to withstand the Bambara invasions, it split up at the beginning of the nineteenth century into four lineages, which were to found four new kingdoms claiming allegiance to the same clan. Likewise in the very recent past the Mbacke clan came into being around its founder, Shaykh Ahmadou Bamba, in Tuba (Senegal). All the Mbacke, descendants of a

1. See Djibril Tamsir Niane, *Soundiata ou l'épopée mandingue*, Paris, Présence Africaine, 1960; Charles Monteil, 'Les empires du Mali, *BCEHSAOF*, Vol. XII, 1929.
2. *Contribution à l'histoire des royaumes du Khasso dans le Haut-Sénégal, XVII^e siècle-1840*, doctoral thesis, Sorbonne, Paris, 1979.

little-known ancestor, grouped themselves around their relative from Tuba, who thus became the eponymous hero of a new clan out of which grew the powerful brotherhood of the Murides.

These examples show that the African clan does not altogether square with the dictionary definition given above. It is not necessarily totemic. It is essentially based on real or mythical common kinship. It is not clearly distinguished from lineage. The terms used to describe it are somewhat vague.

In Mandingo, *sio* means origin, descent; *bonsoo*, origin, genealogy; *Xabilo* (from the Arabic *qabīla*), tribe, clan. The word *sio*, which is in common use, may designate clan and lineage alike. Likewise in Wolof the word *geño* appears to have the same meaning. Thus the clan in Africa is not clearly distinguished from lineage. As for the totem, its real role in unknown. Nothing is known about the eponymous Mandingo heroes before Sundjata (thirteenth century) apart from their names. What is clear is that clan-consciousness still crops up among the Mande and Sudanic peoples. All the Soussokho regard one another as distant kin and have the same totem and the same prohibitions, derived from an ancient community.

In conclusion, the idea of the clan corresponds to a changing social phenomenon rather like the family, and this accounts for its vagueness. In a society characterized essentially by kinship ties, the idea of the clan provides an indication of the degree and nature of the organization. The word cannot be excluded from the conceptual vocabulary in African studies. It must, however, be brought into line with what it purports to express.

The family

The idea of the family is also not easy to define. The term covers a variety of communities. The family is almost never nuclear, but extended to several persons or groups of persons.

In African societies it may designate the mother's family or the father's. Under the matriarchal system, where rights inherited through the mother are dominant, the mother's family predominates: this is the *mene* family of the Senegambians (Wolof and Serer); under the patriarchal system the opposite is the case: this is the *geño* family.

As a result of polygamy, the family divides into subgroups that often compete with one another. Among the Mandingo, for instance, children of the same mother constitute the *bunda* (door of the mother's hut) family, which is more close-knit and shows greater solidarity than the father's family, the *lu* (concession, house). Thus in Mandingo as in other languages there are different words to convey the social nuances contained in the idea of family.

Anthropologists use the word lineage, which best defines the African family. A lineage is a group descended from an actual ancestor. Genealogical

lists show the various generations, which seldom exceed ten or so. In ordinary language 'relatives' means all members of the lineage, which thus constitutes the family. In Malinke Khasonke the word *luo* or *bunda*, preceded by the name of the ancestor, designates the lineage, which was originally a nuclear family. The same is true in Wolof, where the lineage is referred to by the same name as the simple family: the *mene* or *geño* of . . .

Africans thus seem to regard the lineage as on an equal footing with the consanguineous family.

Admittedly in the course of time the lineage becomes subdivided and produces new independent lineages. Thus as the original family becomes diluted it takes on the character of a clan. Hence there is a continual dialectical interplay between the clan, the lineage and the immediate family. When the clan breaks up it is often to the advantage of the heads of lineages, who acquire greater authority and independence. The power established by one of these lineages belongs to all the members, and is generally exercised by the senior member of the senior family.

In pre-colonial Black Africa the lineage usually formed the nucleus of the state and ran it in the interests of all its own members. So far as the ruling classes were concerned, it constituted the true family.

The concept of family is thus seen to be fairly complex. It must be designated by an African terminology applicable throughout a given cultural area.

The tribe

This is another word that is vaguely applied to different social entities. It is frowned on nowadays because of its connotations, i.e. because it is applied to societies regarded as backward and 'uncivilized'. The adjective 'tribal' and the noun 'tribalism' are pejorative.

The tribe is, however, an important feature in the development of most human societies. The *Larousse* dictionary defines it as: 'a group of families under the authority of a single chief', which highlights the kinship ties and the organic unity. The point is that the tribe is linked with a common ancestor and takes his name. Kinship ties are keenly felt, despite the conflicts that may arise between families. The tribe encompasses the clans and families. Exogamy gives it a link with the outside world.

The second feature of the tribal group is territoriality. The tribe lives in a territory, which it makes part of itself. This territory is generally in an area where the environment is hostile, e.g. desert, forest, etc.

Territoriality and kinship ties help to integrate the members of the tribe into a community of language and customs—in a word, into a culture. In this respect tribe is little different from nation, except that it usually has fewer members.

The 'nation' is headed by a chief assisted by a council of elders, who democratically discuss community problems in accordance with the rules of the palaver. Strictly speaking, there is no government or permanent administration. All the members of the tribe are equal and duty-bound to observe the customs that are the basis of the social order and to take up arms to defend the community when it is threatened by an outside enemy.

These social characteristics are found among a great part of African societies, namely, nomads (Berbers and Fulani) and forest peoples (Guineans and Bantu). Tribes are seldom found in open savannah, from which they disappeared at an indeterminate date. Various factors contributed to the development of the African tribe: migrations resulting from wars and famine, conflicts between rival factions, absorption into other groups through exogamy or the centralizing influence of the state, and contact with foreign trading operations.

Thus the concept of the tribe corresponds to something that existed in pre-colonial Black Africa.[1] The word has lost its sociological content. There is perhaps some research to be done on how to reinstate it by ridding it of prejudice against the values of African civilization.

The ethnic group

The ethnic group is another idea that has fallen into disrepute. It is defined as a group with a common cultural heritage or without writing.[2] Thus the discipline concerned with ethnic groups, ethnology, tended to study peoples regarded as 'backward', always in relation to civilization, i.e. supposedly Western European civilization. This discipline, which has produced some remarkable work, is fortunately now beginning to adopt a more universalist view of the plurality (rather than the hierarchy) of civilizations. The idea of the ethnic group has accordingly been upgraded, and is no longer a sociological idea peculiar to the Third World.

The essence of the idea of the ethnic group is in fact culture. An ethnic group is a higher unit which may include clans, families, tribes and a variety of human types united by a common language and culture. It may be not a primary notion but derived from the development of a clan or tribe that was its constituent core. It grows, and may disintegrate.

If we take the example of the Khasonke in Upper Senegal, we see that this ethnic group, formed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, comprises members descended from earlier ethnic groups—Malinke, Fulani, Soninke,

1. In Arab-Berber societies the *qabīla* is the equivalent of the tribe.
2. This meaning is given and criticized in *Dictionnaire des civilisations africaines*, Paris, F. Hazan, 1968.

Wolof and even Moors.[1] What binds the group together is language, custom and a particular attitude to life—in a word, culture. It is perhaps in this sense that the ethnic group is closer to the nation, especially in the Germanic acceptation of that word.

Ethnic groups seem originally to have meant small communities. In fact it often consists of thousands if not millions of people, as in the case of the Bambara, Mossi and Hausa. Its base is not necessarily territorial. An ethnic group is a cultural entity, and its members may be scattered with no other link between them but language and culture. Each ethnic group, however, has an area: historically it has settled in an area and become acclimatized there.

Ethnic groups are not necessarily governed by a specific form of power, although they have a marked tendency towards a particular form of organization. The Wolof live under a monarchical system in three major kingdoms. The Bambara are ruled as political organizations at different stages of evolution, from the confederation of clans (*kafoo*) to absolute monarchy (*faamaya*).

The problem of the concept of ethnic group is one of size. Can groups of several million people, such as the Hausa, be called ethnic groups? If so, why should the word not be applied to European peoples in similar circumstances?

The idea of hierarchy of cultures always seems to underlie the concept of ethnic group. It is time to give it back its original Greek meaning, namely, *people*. Admittedly the current development of the word, which emphasizes the cultural nature of the group, may help research workers to upgrade it.

Socio-political concepts: kingdom, empire, theocracy, feudality

Power and forms of political organization have become focal points for African research since the emancipation of the continent. The concepts considered so far concern human groups bound together by kinship and culture. With larger and more complex political entities such as 'kingdoms' and 'empires', it is the concept of territoriality that is decisive from the outset. Clans, families, tribes and ethnic groups may be incorporated into a territorial whole ruled by a single authority which unifies the group, either in the person of a sovereign or in the form of common institutions. Higher authority is exercised in various ways over all the people living in a given territory. It is not necessarily based on family, i.e. it has no kinship ties, real or mythical, with its subjects. It is organized, and it presupposes a minimum of political and administrative machinery, permanent methods of coercion (army, police and law courts), regular income (taxes), etc. It is therefore a permanent authority, whoever is exercising it. We speak of kingdom or empire depending on the size of the territory.

1. This is true of the Wolof ethnic group, which consists of Serer, Fulani, Mandingo, Soninke, Moors, etc.

The *Larousse* dictionary simply defines kingdom as: 'state governed by a king'. In Africa any monarchical structure can easily be described as a kingdom and its head as a king. Hence caution is needed when referring to an African kingdom as a state. Thus a tribal form of organization is not a kingdom.

Only political formations which meet the aforementioned criteria can be classified as kingdoms. Since there are several variants among these formations, we must use African terms to convey what is actually involved. The example of the Mandingo, who contributed greatly to the emergence of states in the Western Sudan, is instructive here.

The Mandingo language differentiates both as regards territory and as regards political institutions. The words *jamano* (country in the broad sense), *banxoo* (land, territory) and *noo* or *maraa* (command, territory commanded) are always preceded by the name of the country or province which is the seat of power. The language furthermore defines the institution, which may be absolute monarchy, *faama* (king), *famaaya* (monarchy), or moderate oligarchical monarchy, *mansa*, *mansaya*, or confederal monarchy, *kafoo*. Thus the vague English concept 'kingdom' becomes entirely meaningful when replaced by the Mandingo vocabulary. The same is true in Senegambia and other parts of Africa, where monarchical institutions have specific names according to the degree of political organization.

Between kingdom and empire there is a difference in territorial size, and often in the nature of the authority. According to the *Littré* dictionary, an empire is 'a large state governed by an emperor', 'a vast domain'. It generally presupposes the conquest of foreign territories by a conqueror, and the submission of peoples culturally different from the conqueror. It presupposes territorial extent and heterogeneity. Empires tend to cover vast expanses, plains and savannah, etc.

In Africa, where different peoples exist side by side, states often take on the form of empires. When one people imposes its will on its neighbours, it founds what may be called an empire. All things considered, the term does not at first sight appear absurd. This is perhaps why the term 'empire' is used all over Africa.

In actual fact, the criterion of territorial extent seems to be the only decisive one. The great and best known empires embrace kingdoms and entire regions. Thus the medieval Sudanic empires (Ghana, Mali, Songhay and Kanem-Bornu), the modern Sudanic empires (of the Omar Tukuloor, Samory and Rabat), the Bantu empires (Monomotapa and Chaka) and the Maghribi empires (Almoravid and Almohad) were vast regional organizations under the direction of a clan, a tribe or an ethnic group.

When we come to the case of states extending over a natural region but with a homogeneous population (Futa Jallon, Macina and Congo), the idea of empire gives way to that of kingdom. Thus homogeneity of population is

not a valid criterion; an ethnic group may be divided into several kingdoms or integrated into an empire, like the Wolof, whose sovereign bears the title of *Burba* ('great king', 'king of kings').

An empire is always a group of territories and peoples subjected to a sovereign authority, usually by force. In some parts of Africa empires were founded by Muslim clerics inspired by the universalist and integrationist ideology of Islam. Some people call them Muslim theocracies.

This theological term is defined as follows by the *Petit Larousse*: 'government in which authority (regarded as emanating from God) is exercised by his ministers'. In other words, the state is founded on religion and carried on by the marabouts. All human activity stems from religious principles, and God governs through the agency of men. Viewed in this light, theocracy in Africa is a matter for discussion.

Clearly political structures of an essentially religious character were the results of *jihads*, holy wars, led by holy men. These *mujāhidin* (fighters for the faith), supported by the marabouts and their *tālibs* (disciples), founded a Muslim order based on the precepts of religion, and governed as the servants of their God. Some, like Sekou Amadou of Macina (1810–43), placed the great marabouts at the head of the state and in all key government posts.[1] Both in Futa Jallon and Futa Toro the order of marabouts had supreme power, and shared out the administration of the various provinces between them.[2] They claimed to govern according to the word of God contained in the holy books.

In actual fact, theocracy here is limited by ancient traditions and by the governments' interests. The leaders of the *jihads* were often men of action like El Hajj Omar or realists like the Almoravid Yusuf Ibn Tashfin. They took great care not to entrust all the power to marabouts. Important confidential posts were given to members of their family, to loyal servants or to competent war leaders.

Thus from the outset the new Muslim order, despite its founder's title of *emir al-mu'minīn* (commander of the faithful), was equivocal both in its composition and its power structure. By the second and third generations the old traditions gained acceptance, especially in the new empires built up in the nineteenth century. El Hajj Omar's son, Ahmadou, reigned as an absolute monarch, and the order of marabouts had lost much of their prerogatives in the empire. In Macina a dynasty was founded, and the third ruler, Ahmadou-Ahmadou, shook off the control of the great marabouts and reigned as a monarch—a Muslim monarch, admittedly, but not an instrument of God's will.

1. Amadou Hampaté Bâ and S. Daget, *L'empire peul du Macina*, Paris, Mouton, 1962.
2. Thierno Diallo, *Les institutions politiques du Fouta Djallon*, IFAN, Initiations Africaines, 1969.

Even in the most thoroughly Islamized countries such as Futa Jallon, Futa Toro and Kanem-Bornu, the principle of religious government was never observed. The great Muslim chiefs governed according to their own interests. The real representatives of God were relegated to study and apolitical activity.

Thus the concept of theocracy does not really describe the political phenomenon to which the term should supposedly be applied. The systems in question are not true theocracies but quite simply Muslim states.

The problem of terminology arises also in connection with the concept of *feudality* as applied to some African societies. Much research by both historians and sociologists (mainly Marxists) has led to the limitation if not the elimination of the use of this word to designate African societies.

It is accepted that feudality means a society based on two factors: the fief and the resulting links between vassals and lords. Analysis has shown that the fief is non-existent in Africa. The close vassalic links of certain interpersonal relations in Africa are not necessarily based on the idea of a fief. The Balkanization of the political structure, the attachment to the values of the land, the organization of some political institutions, etc., have led some authors to use the adjective 'feudal' or the noun 'feudality' when there is no historical justification for it. Hence the word 'feudality' should only be used deliberately (and in inverted commas), by way of comparison with European feudal societies.

General conclusion

This very brief account shows that the conceptual vocabulary of African sociopolitical institutions is to a large extent either out of line with reality or discredited on account of Eurocentric prejudice. People engaged in African research thus have a duty to re-examine the tools they use to establish the true nature of the institutions; for this is the only way of progressing towards a thorough understanding of African cultures. They can decolonialize and reinstate sound concepts, replace others by suitable terms taken from African languages, or use phrases and definitions to give exact meaning to those that are ambiguous.

The development of education and training in Africa: an outline history for 1930–80

J. Devisse

The profound unease that runs throughout industrial society moves sociologists to catalogue the individual aspects of its overall crisis. This in turn leads to a radical criticism of its institutions, since such basic human activities as obtaining an education, food, medical treatment, communicating or travelling are more and more dependent on institutions that transform them into 'service products'. The public's creative impulses are increasingly stifled, and no one can now live without resorting to those 'services'. And the institutions that monopolize the 'services' also tend to act as instruments of social control.

This challenge to the agencies of social control destroys the confidence and certainties of the professionals or specialists whose job it is to run them. Their belief in their social value and the public's confidence in those institutions are broken down, giving way to doubts, confusion and questioning. Educators bear the full weight of this loss of confidence. Few today still dare to say what education consists of, or, in other words, to define their own position and spell out their social role.

The knowledge that is stored and handed out at school is only a commodity, which has become one of society's most valuable currencies. The more education an individual consumes, the more he enhances his potential and the higher he rises in the hierarchy of the capitalists of knowledge. Education thus gives shape to a new class pyramid, since big consumers of knowledge can subsequently claim to provide society with extremely valuable services.

. . . If to all this we add the self-evident fact that most of what we know is learnt outside school, informally and throughout life, it may well be wondered whether formal in-school education is anything but an immense deceit. . . . In which case, all those who had felt themselves to have a specific and useful part in society are brought face to face with a foreseeable question: if education is not the product of schooling, what is it then in fact?[1]

This passage raises almost all the issues confronting Africa today in the highly unsettled fields of education—using the word for the present in an extremely

1. Rosisca Darcy de Oliveira and Miguel Darcy de Oliveira, *Note sur une expérience en Guinée-Bissau: Les modes de transmission, du didactique à l'extrascolaire* [An Experiment in Guinea-Bissau: Transmission Techniques, from the Didactic to the Informal], pp. 161–2, Geneva, 1976. (Cahiers de l'Institut d'Études du Développement.)

broad and general sense. Some of them are very old, and have given rise to polemics and theoretical studies in Europe and the Americas for decades. Others are newer, more specifically African, and have to do firstly with the sharply contrasting, not to say antagonistic, relationship between the 'old' African form of education and training for the 'modern' world.[1]

The school is not the only and probably not the principal place of education—but it has enjoyed a growing monopoly of the transmission of a knowledge that purports to be 'modern' and pragmatic. Violently challenged by a number of theoreticians, and first and foremost by Ivan Illitch, the school has somewhat belatedly been attacked in Africa as the chosen instrument of colonial implantation; but at the same time it has been used as a convenient technique for increasing 'modern knowledge'. Meanwhile, new ideas about education and the importance of pre-colonial elements therein were springing up in every shape and form, and all kinds of 'cultural counter-currents' were emerging, designed to remedy the known disadvantages of the school as the transmitter of a loaded and directed form of knowledge. Today the problems are further complicated by the appearance of satellite and media techniques for mass information, which will probably render yesterday's discussions academic within ten years. Such are, in fact, the three phases to be analysed—phases which, moreover, to some extent overlap in time.

This topic may be studied from a technical viewpoint devoid of any evolving context. Here, however, we would prefer to give an overall political analysis: no part of education may be divorced from a blueprint for society.

The schools established by the colonialists

The colonialists' first concern, far more than to provide an education which, when it welds together colonized communities, presents an obvious threat, was to set up a system of schooling that met their own needs. The prime purpose was not—any more than it was in Europe, but in Africa, blatantly not—to give men a disinterested training in the full use of their intellectual and critical faculties. It was to provide staff to run economic and social development projects in the colonial countries as the need arose. Despite its self-seeking nature, this education was none the less presented as 'modern', 'new' and 'innovative', thereby discrediting all the 'traditional' training methods.[2] The school's monopoly of training was transplanted into Africa as a matter of course.

1. For a political approach to these problems, see Abdou Moumouni's now old but still up-to-date study, *L'éducation en Afrique*, Paris, Maspero, 1964. No general survey has since been written by an African.
2. In this regard, education at school clashes far more brutally with African education than does Christian, or particularly Muslim, basic religious education.

The institutions adopted varied greatly from region to region and period to period, ranging from the most rudimentary form of primary education[1] to the opening of universities modelled in almost every way on those in Europe, and from missionary-teaching[2] to the wholly non-religious school.[3] Every kind of educational institution may be found in Africa today. Until 1930, primary schools predominated, with 'secondary' schooling rare and even exceptional and a total lack of universities. A start was gradually made before the Second World War, but at levels that were, if the figures are any indication, still modest: the point was to supply the colonies with African middle-management staff.[4] By and large, of course, nothing of substance was achieved before the end of the Second World War, first in 'secondary' and then in higher education: universities were still few and far between in 1958.

Even then, however, the educating of a small minority of 'advanced' Africans had highly important cultural and political consequences: in more than one case, it was a tool that turned against the colonialists. And this initial investment in education, sometimes flaunted ostentatiously by the colonialists, is today the object of sharp and sweeping criticisms. Not the least of these is perhaps the scant provision that these schools made at every level for African girls,[5] but others relate to the low level of investment in these schools, the delay in making higher education available, and the mediocrity of the education provided—all constantly recurring topics in recent surveys.[6]

1. Zaire is an interesting case in point. See Moyesia Kondo-Gere's *L'enseignement missionnaire dans le développement du Congo belge* [Missionary Education in the Development of Belgian Congo], Paris I University, 1979, and Simon Gasibirege's *École, éducation et transformation de la société au Zaïre* [The School, Education and Social Change in Zaire], pp. 21–41, Genève-Afrique XVII, 1979.
2. There are many recent studies on the subject: see, for instance, Jean Ndoumbe Assebe's *L'enseignement missionnaire au Gabon: 1842–1960* [Missionary Education in Gabon: 1842–1960], a doctoral thesis for Paris I University.
3. Although divided by quarrels over religious education, France did not usually export them to its colonies, the priests' role in education there being too essential.
4. P. Furter, *Éducation extrascolaire: Les modes de transmission, du didactique à l'extrascolaire* [Out-of-school Education: Transmission Techniques, from the Didactic to the Non-formal], Geneva, 1976, contains a far-reaching analysis: 'While the educational systems established during and after the colonial domination were essentially designed to strengthen the bonds of dependence on the mother-country and to destroy indigenous forms of education. . . .'
5. Various examples are given in the studies annexed, in particular Lanza Edindali Doodoo's *L'éducation féminine au Congo belge, 1908–1959* [The Education of Women in the Belgian Congo, 1908–1959].
6. See J. Bony's recent *La Côte d'Ivoire sous la colonisation française et la méthode d'émancipation, 1920–1947* [The Ivory Coast under French Colonization and the Method of Emancipation: 1920–1947], pp. 375 et seq., a state thesis, Paris, 1980 (to be published shortly); Semi Bi-Zan's *Équipement public et changements socio-économiques en Côte d'Ivoire: 1930–1957* [Public Investment and Socio-economic Change

Indeed, the school system is often attacked on two very different, albeit sometimes convergent, grounds. These are firstly that it has jeopardized the old structures of African societies, and especially the *values* on which they were based; and, secondly, that it has infiltrated capitalist and 'industrialist' models into African societies, changing the Africans who go through it into alienated clients divorced from their own framework of reference,[1] who in the end cannot really take responsibility for the contemporary development of their own countries except by basing it on foreign models.[2]

At varying times between 1945 and 1980, a series of reforms of the educational system introduced under colonialism was undertaken virtually everywhere. These reforms have done nothing to blunt the principle invoked by the criticisms listed above as A. Moumouni expressed them in 1964. Sometimes they were designed as a far-reaching overhaul of particular disciplines—a case in point being history and geography in French-speaking Africa as from 1965[3]—sometimes to provide greater access to schools or universities, and sometimes again to 'Africanize' the subjects, techniques and staff. They long failed to call in question the idea of training an 'élite' along European educational lines, to tackle the problem of educating the rural masses, or to pose in clear terms the question of African languages. Literacy has become topical only because international bodies willed it so: the need to move on from an 'élite' trained to communicate if necessary in non-African languages has only recently, particularly in French-speaking Africa, become a government problem because of the divisions that it caused.

Much criticized and contested, the educational model evolved in Europe has undergone different degrees of change in various places, particularly in the

in the Ivory Coast: 1930–1957], a state doctoral thesis for Paris VII University, 1981; Joseph Gahama's, *Idéologie et politique de l'administration indirecte: le cas du Burundi, 1919–1939* [Ideology and Policy of Indirect Administration: The Case of Burundi, 1919–1939], a doctoral thesis for Paris I University, 1980.

1. In this respect, dispassionate but highly critical studies point clearly to the impasse to which 'advanced' or 'intellectual' Africans feel they have been led. See R. Colin, *Systèmes d'éducation et mutations sociales. Continuité et discontinuité dans les dynamiques socio-éducatives: le cas du Sénégal* [Educational Systems and Social Change. Continuity and Discontinuity in Socio-educational Dynamics: The Case of Senegal], Lille/Paris, 1980, 1,011 pp. See also P. Hountoudji, 2 vols., 'Distances', *Recherches, Pédagogie et Culture*, No. 49, pp. 27–33.
2. There is extremely sharp criticism of this area: see *Deuxièmes Journées Internationales de Technologie de l'Aupelf* [Second AUPELF Congress on Technology] (Yamoussoukro, 18–23 May 1981). AUPELF, 1981. (Mimeo.)
3. See Christian Harzo, *Histoire et devenir social. Étude rétrospective et prospective des manuels d'histoire utilisés en Afrique de l'Ouest* [History and Social Future. A Retrospective and Exploratory Study of the History Textbooks Used in West Africa], a doctoral thesis, EHESS, Paris, 1979.

English-speaking countries, but has not in general been wholly rejected.[1] Quite exceptionally, it was more or less completely dropped in Guinea as from 1958, and more recently in Guinea Bissau or Ethiopia, for instance. It is still too soon to judge the scope and worth of the alternatives adopted.

Most often the African states have displayed the will to correct the most detrimental effects condemned by their intellectuals, and to bring about a steep rise in enrolment rates. They have then found themselves beset by increasing and insoluble budgetary problems.[2] And yet how could they repudiate without thought for their own destiny what in every European country amounted to at least two centuries of efforts to structure the state and complete a blueprint for society? Education is only the visible part of an iceberg of imitation.

The impossible alternative: 'traditional' education

Wherever research teams are at work, they place on record a more or less formally worded complaint: the disappearance of the old African educational structures destroys contemporary societies. It has long been time to revive the core of those comprehensive systems of education that used to integrate African children with every area of their environment—whereas European schooling separates the two—and to revive the social training for initiation known as *poro*, *mbwiti*, etc. One state was even tempted to make the 'initiation' the cement of its future nation.

In building new structures, should consideration be given to a sometimes spectacular resistance to school attendance, as in the case of the Djimini in the Ivory Coast?[3] How can the 'traditional' forms of education be rescued without detriment to the modern forms of building nation-states or class societies?

Much praise over the past twenty years or so has been lavished on the *values* bequeathed by this old education: countless case-studies have been done by historians and ethnologists. But one must agree with R. Colin[4] that 'the attempts to analyse and construct theories of African education throughout these different phases, apart from the ideological images that each period

1. See Miala Diambona, *La réforme scolaire au Mali: essai d'analyse des facteurs qui atténuent ses résultats* [Educational Reform in Mali: An Analysis of the Factors that Attenuate Its Impact], Quebec, Laval University, 1980, 86 pp.
2. Lê Thành Khôi (ed.), *L'enseignement en Afrique tropicale* [Education in Tropical Africa], Paris, 1971. No general survey has yet been made of the host of private educational establishments born of this situation.
3. A case so important that the Ethnosociology Institute of the University of Abidjan has studied it in detail.
4. 'Heurs et malheurs de l'éducation solidaire [The Pros and Cons of Community Education]', *Recherche, Pédagogie et Culture*, No. 49.

thrusts on us, have not been sustained at the same level as the discussion of modes of production or systems of power', and that this has led to a dangerous contrast between descriptive romanticism applied to this kind of education and the dynamic growth of education science applied to European or North American society.

Research into African educational systems is still slight in comparison with the arrogant self-confidence of European education, which is

> caught up in the workings of a value system, ideologized, the image and measure of conformity with the standard pattern of society. This is one of those concepts which we surround with a protective 'halo' and which itself protects the social order, a concept that is not readily defined in the social dialogue. Education is self-evident, one of the things that are assumed.

African educators cannot afford to relax in the 'certainty that time is on their side'; they have to explain, and in order to explain they must describe—which often amounts to betraying—identical mechanisms that are in their case suitable for the defence of a society that the dominant economic models seem already to have condemned beyond repair. In a direct competition with the European educational system, Africa's educational values had little chance of an out and out victory over their rival, even if they did present a nostalgic model of a threatened past.[1]

This does not, of course, imply any condemnation of the African educational systems, which, indeed, in many respects appear remarkable: they have, however, until recently been condemned by a disastrous balance of socio-economic forces to become museum pieces or, at best, the object of intelligent studies.

Today—and this is their opportunity—they are seen as a way of resisting the threat of universal automation and of cultural re-rooting—but they are then obliged to go hand in hand with legitimate loans from other value systems, including other educational systems, in the positive reconstruction of cultural identities. Only this can overcome the tragic conflict between a fascinating 'modernism' allegedly imparted by the educational system that started with colonialism,[2] and the old-fashioned, outdated, retrograde and thus historically condemned 'tradition'.

In the final analysis, however, the chief contemporary historic weakness of the old African systems is that they apparently fail to match the dimensions, spirit of enterprise and social blueprints of the modern nations and states of Africa.

1. The famous novel by Sheikh Hamidou Kane will be remembered: *L'aventure ambiguë* [The Ambiguous Adventure].
2. Africans have none the less brilliantly proven their ability to assimilate this system and distinguish themselves in it.

Towards other educational solutions?

Educational studies and analyses often end in deadlock, and Africa is no exception to the rule. Critics have agreed in condemning out-of-school education, apparently another misadventure of European education. P. Furter dismisses it as 'only a way of pursuing the same educational policy under another form':[1] it was not, he says, 'the suggestion of new development models that prevented the devising of new educational strategies—as international hagiography would have us believe; out-of-school education appeared to be a practical way of escaping from the deadlock into which the persistent spread of the Western educational model had plunged us'.[2] In the final analysis, then, what is criticized is not technical choices in education, but, foreseeably, the lack of an overall change in the thrust of education, the need to choose a different type of educational policy to match a different development system. Criticism of this kind very clearly separates those who wish to reform or adapt, even fully, the system inherited from colonialism, from those who wish to replace it by another system logically derived from different economic options. Clearly, 'educational quarrels' reflect wider debates.

Even literacy training, the linchpin of ambitious international and national programmes, comes in for its share of criticism when it is not adequately followed up and made 'functional': few now see it as an end in itself or an effective guarantee of increased welfare.

In reality, however, it seems hard to abandon past achievements and sweep the board clean for a fresh start. Most Africans who have achieved distinction in 'modern' educational systems—meaning virtually all those now in very senior national or international posts—are fully on the side of the reformers. The problem for them appears to be to reconcile the incontrovertible achievements of an increasingly international scientific community and to share in the information contained in data banks and data bases while preserving the strength of African cultures, rather than to espouse the past at the expense of the present. By and large, their cultural choices are a compromise, and are rarely based entirely either on the old cultures or on an imitation of worlds alien to Africa. Where research and training are concerned, Africans are more and more, in meetings at every level, demanding equality of opportunity through equality of equipment, the establishment of balanced research networks, a sharing of research subjects and the setting up of top-level research centres in Africa for the areas in which the continent is strategically placed,

1. Furter, op. cit., p. 20.
2. Ibid., p. 83.

such as biomass, solar research or pharmacology. At the same time, the movement that draws African intellectuals closer to the basic and educational needs of their peoples is gaining momentum. And for them, these two demands no longer appear to be totally contradictory.

That being so, emerging and convergent trends show that the coherence of demands and projects can win support from the former colonialists and other quarters that long refused or begrudged it.

1. The idea that just one development model, more especially represented by the 'developed' world—which is thus self-endowed with a chronological divine right to say who is ahead and who behind—is more and more being widely rejected. Hand in hand with this goes a demand for new forms of development rooted in non-Western cultures and designed for other purposes than private profit. As a result of the slowly growing consideration for the wants and needs of the rural masses, long viewed as silent and backward agents of an external development, greater value is now being placed on new methods of 'non-formal' education that can mobilize the people, making them partners in their own development by making their own cultures and the search for their specific balances integral parts of it.[1] This offers an easy escape from the worldwide imitation of the European educational model, while extracting from it every transferable element of use.
2. The growing awareness both inside and outside Africa of the very imminent dangers inherent in the establishment of world satellite information networks, or on a simpler level, of the power of television, is opening eyes to the fact that only a more ambitious form of education can protect cultural identities against the air-borne deluge of uniformity. 'Traditional' education thereby gains new opportunities, and rather than a 'gratuitous' quest for nostalgic intellectuals, the study of it again becomes 'functional'. At the same time, it is becoming clear that formerly antagonistic structures which none the less correspond to complementary needs may be superimposable and mutually supportive—the structures being those of the village, those of the economic or social function, and that of receptivity to other cultures of the world.
3. Similarly, a different light than that of the old unequal relations is cast on intercultural relations between equally estimable identities, and those relations are fast becoming a fundamental part of a reciprocal education

1. Philip H. Coombs and Ahmed Manzoor, *Attacking Rural Poverty—How Non-formal Education Can Help*, World Bank Publications, 1974. And by the same authors: *Education for Rural Development—Case Studies for Planners*, New York/Washington, D.C./London, World Bank/Unicef Publications/Praeger Publishers, 1975.

that is essential.[1] And the borrowing of useful values from other cultures regains its legitimacy and its fruitfulness because it is now voluntary.

Be that as it may, as R. Colin further emphasizes,[2] the theory of transcultural education is still no more than tentative. 'The main thing that remains to be done' is to transform the unequal relationships in the economic order for all this to become a real possibility.[3]

1. R. Preisweick, 'Relations interculturelles, nouvel objet des sciences sociales [Intercultural Relations—A New Field in Social Science]', *Recherche, Pédagogie et Culture*, No. 17–18, pp. 3–9.
2. 'Heurs et malheurs de l'éducation solidaire', op. cit., p. 9.
3. For optimistic viewpoints and constructive projects, see Unesco's *International Yearbook of Education*, Vol. XXXII, 1980, particularly useful for comparing educational systems. For the prospects, see Y. Mignot, Lefebvre and J. M. Mignon, *Éducation en Afrique: alternatives* [African Education: Alternatives], ACCT-INEP, Privat, 1980, which reflects a good deal of current experience.

African history in training programmes for secondary school teachers

J. Pliya

Introduction

The colonization of African countries led directly to the installation of an educational system that determinedly steered Africans away from a detailed study of the history of Africa, and inculcated in them the history of the colonizing country. In extreme cases, the latter was taught as a surrogate for African history, leading to such absurdities as telling the African that his ancestors were Gauls. As long as the colonial system of education was run by European teachers, supervised by European inspectors and formed part of the political system of domination and cultural assimilation, it ruthlessly caricaturized the rudiments of African history that training colleges taught the future teachers. And in order to win respect and achieve an honourable career, those teachers had to repeat what they had learnt in the best possible way. The colonial teaching of African history was a major part of the system of cultural alienation of future generations. Not surprisingly, then, the cultural reaction in the shape of the negritude movement, and subsequently of the nationalist movements that sprang up in the 1940s and 1950s, culminated in a challenge to the educational system and, above all, to its alienating content. Independence was to make it possible to give concrete shape to this reaction, to change school curricula and to adapt teacher training programmes accordingly, at least in the training institutions located in Africa.

The first phase was the Africanization of curricula, which was concurrent with the concept of a Euro-Afro-Malagasy cultural community. This proved rather that the influence of the former European teachers was still predominant, despite obvious concessions.

The establishment and growth of African universities, which were to bring progress in both research and training, and the birth of teacher training academies, improved the situation. Of course, in the English-speaking countries that had first-generation universities, the state of affairs seemed better than in the French-speaking countries.

Now that, thanks to the impulse given by Unesco, books can be published locally and autonomous teacher training policies can be defined, there

is every prospect that teachers will be soundly trained in the proper teaching of African history. It is important, however, that African states should act together to remedy whatever harmful influences may still remain, and to standardize programme content in the light of the latest findings of history. This is where co-operation among Africanists of every shade of opinion may be beneficial, as is now the case with respect to the production of the *General History of Africa*.

The situation before 1960

Before 1944

The staff who taught African history in the higher primary schools, which corresponded to the first stage of modern secondary education, were trained in federal institutes of which, in French-speaking West Africa, the prototype was the École William Ponty in Senegal. The training was given by French staff brought up in the grand tradition of assimilationist colonialism. The programme was confined to the major African empires, studied in outline form, and included a hefty slice of the history of colonization, the dominant trend in which was the glorification of Europe's civilizing mission, exaltation of the role of French explorers and scholars in the progress of mankind and, lastly, a systematic denigration of Black African cultural values.

The situation was little better in the countries colonized by the British, where the bulk of the texts used for teaching history were written by European teachers. There were, however, the beginnings of historical research in the teacher training colleges, where students were sometimes encouraged to write papers during the holidays. The results were sociological, ethnographical or historical studies that were used as the basis for plays or published in news-sheets of 'African Education'. This was an early opportunity for the students to take an interest in the heroes of their history, in famous resistance fighters, but the events shown in the theatre never found their way into the history curriculum. Encouraging the collection of stories, legends or traditions did not imply that African civilizations were seen as valid. Picturesquely portrayed in schools, African history was built on the contributions of colonial researchers, administrators, missionaries and travellers. The part played by the French Institute of Black Africa was limited, and its research findings had little influence indeed on the content of history curricula.

There is nothing surprising in this watchful supervision of history curricula if it is seen in the context of the colonial system of education as defined by Georges Hardy. The purpose was to instil in blacks the notion that the white race was superior and the black race inferior, and to foster in the

colonial peoples a feeling of admiration and gratitude towards colonialization. For instance, the content of the history programme used to train higher primary school teachers had the result of negating the black personality and rejecting black civilizations and the African languages, which were pejoratively baptized vernacular languages—meaning those of slaves. Thus the black was offered a substitute civilization, the 'advanced' culture of Europe, and a rational, effective mentality, since the world was organized in terms of Western cultures with their claims to primacy and universality.

The staff trained in the federal training colleges were for the primary rather than the secondary level. Some of them, however, were selected to teach in the higher primary schools and even in the first stage of secondary education. They taught several subjects together: history, geography, literature, drawing, music, grammar, and so on. The share of their training devoted to African history was slight in comparison with general history, or the history of Europe and Western civilization. And that small quantity of African history was carefully supervised to guarantee cultural alienation. Additionally, knowledge of history was based above all on memorization, and was seen as a sterile test in which there was no room for creativity. Thus history came under the general conditioning inherent in the colonial system of education, and made no provision for the balanced training of young people's minds and personalities.

The reaction against cultural alienation

But wider events that related both to the growing awareness of the black peoples and to the international political situation were to trigger changes between 1944 and 1960, especially in the countries colonized by the French.

The black peoples' march towards nationalism was hastened by the failure of the French policy of assimilation, by the growing strength of Negritude, an intellectual movement for the regeneration of the black personality through its culture, by the search for an effective ideology, by the impact of the Second World War which—as was brilliantly proved by Aimé Césaire, himself a history teacher, in his famous 'Discussion of Colonialism'—demonstrated the fragility of European civilization and led to a decisive breakthrough at the first Conference of Brazzaville in 1944, and lastly by the influence of the ethnographical research done by such men as Léo Frobenius and Georges Balandier.

The outcome of all this was that the content of history education, and hence of the teacher training programme, was increasingly called in question.

Secondary schools were introduced in most colonies around 1946. Where there were none, pupils were sent either to schools in the federal capitals or to France itself. In either event, the teachers were mainly if not

wholly French, with no specialist training in the teaching of African history. What is more, the curricula were in every way identical with those of France itself, since the examination papers were marked by the appropriate French academies.

The first qualified black teachers to graduate from the French system were to reach African secondary schools only around 1955–57. They could be counted on the fingers of one hand in Senegal, Upper Volta, Mali, Cameroon and Dahomey. In schools dominated by white teachers, the appearance of these pioneers caused a sensation, and the pupils saw them as the heroes of a full-scale cultural reconquest.

And yet these first teachers had hardly been given special training in African history in their French universities. Like their French counterparts, they were compelled, according to university, to study curricula laid down by French teachers whose specialist knowledge of African history varied greatly. There were more specialists in the history of colonization than in African civilization or the history of the black peoples. But the first black teachers had mastered the principles of historical research, and almost to a man they were imbued with the ideas of Negritude or the cultural and even political aspirations of the African world. Whether or not they had been in contact with the principles of Marxist analysis, where their research was concerned they were all to react as nationalists challenging the history that their European teachers had taught them. There was a marked ferment in the countries colonized by the French, from Senegal to Madagascar. It was more intense in the English-speaking countries, since nationalist feelings were also aroused among the peoples of the great African states—in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanganyika or Cameroon, to cite only those.

The historical research done in the first-generation African universities such as Ibadan or Makerere was reinforced by that emerging in the new universities of Dakar or Yaoundé. New findings made by serious researchers called in question from a scientific standpoint the African history written by foreigners imbued with colonialist ideology. With the help of certain Europeans sympathetic to the emancipation of the black peoples and to objective research, Africa's teacher-researchers laid down new curricula in history and geography, particularly since their work was done in the context of political independence.

The reform of the 1960s

Through concession after concession, the European teachers were finally reconciled to the idea of a recasting of curricula, which was labelled the 'Africanization of curricula'. It took many negotiations among history and geography teachers, stubborn arguments among French teachers viewed as fully-fledged

Africanists and African teachers with their knowledge of the languages and cultures and ability to consult the oral traditions at source, before the first versions of the new curricula could be drawn up with due account for archaeology, African prehistory, ancient and medieval history and modern history seen through African eyes.

Once defined, the application of these curricula depended on the hasty retraining of secondary school teachers. This was done in each state by seminars at which educational documents could be brought together, maps drawn and the raw materials supplied, until such times as textbooks were brought out. The results could only be patchy, disparate and unsatisfactory. It was in fact too early for a proper and thorough-going reassessment of the historiographic heritage of the colonial period. That was, however, an essential prior undertaking, since that heritage had passed on unacceptable errors and an unacceptable ideological slant: it was, furthermore, seen by a large section of the public as definitive, having been produced by authoritative writers whose information was widely considered sound and had the advantage of being enshrined in writing. It mattered little that it was the fruit of oral inquiry of a selective and distorted inquiry that emphasized the 'role of dynasties, sovereigns and heroes to the detriment of the history of societies'.[1] In the secondary schools, however, African pupils were delighted to discover the authentic sources and events of the rich history of Africa. They marvelled at the treasures of African history displayed to them with an abundance of slides, maps and all kinds of illustrative materials.

The fruits of the growing quantities of historical research in African universities, the increasing numbers of African teachers of history and the schools' demands for qualified teachers led to the establishment of teacher training academies in several countries—Senegal, Cameroon, Togo, Nigeria, etc.—with Unesco helping to produce textbooks, publish historical documents and train the teachers.

The Société Africaine de Culture played a decisive role in publishing major works of African historical literature in the review *Présence Africaine*. This work of regeneration was also encouraged by congresses of black African men of culture and by festivals of art and culture. In France as in the major universities of the developed countries—the United States, the USSR, and the United Kingdom—incentives, encouragement and finance were provided for research into African history. Publishing firms vied with each other in bringing out new textbooks. Of course, commercial considerations often dominated scientific requirements, so that African teachers or researchers had to count

1. F. de Medeiros, *Guide des études historiques du département d'histoire et d'archéologie de la FLASH* [Guide to the Historical Studies of the History and Archaeology Department of FLASH], National University of Benin.

rather on national or regional facilites for their publications. When countries became independent, the French Institute of Black Africa had to restructure whatever sections it had in the various states in response to the needs of the teacher-researchers.

In the final analysis, secondary-school history teachers are now trained in the African universities and teacher training academies, or in some European universities where Africanists of repute have become established, in accordance with programmes adapted to the cultural objectives of national independence or of socio-economic and political development.

The present situation of and outlook for African history in teacher training programmes

Historical research at African universities

For more than twenty-five years impressive results have been achieved that can be used to overhaul completely the context of history studies and history teaching in universities. Such studies have been done by several generations of teachers and students up to master's or doctorate level. The outcome is the publication of a large number of works on Africa's past. Serious scientific consultations are periodically sponsored by associations of African historians or by Unesco as part of its work on the *General History of Africa.*

In both universities and teacher training colleges, training is organized to meet objectives that are clearer and better matched to the contemporary requirements of history as a discipline both in Africa and around the world, so that curricula are everywhere rooted in national history but also open to African civilizations and the past of other peoples.

The number of young people interested in learning history with a view to teaching it is growing constantly, and their teachers are more and more aware of the historian's responsibility in complex circumstances that he 'can help others to understand and master, using the analytical techniques, power of interpretation and conceptual equipment at his command'.[1] The discipline of history is now seen as 'a logical thinking about the past of men and societies, based on a structured reasoning'.[2]

Furthermore, the cultural landscape of Black Africa, furnished with stories, legends and proverbs, is extremely favourable to an awareness of history associated with life, as a continual process from the past to the present, from

1. De Medeiros, op. cit.
2. Ibid.

the traditional to the contemporary world, from the European exploration of the continent, the seizure of the coasts of Africa, the slave trade, to colonial conquest and imperialist domination.

Basic features of a training programme

The features of a training programme in history derive from this interest in history and the specificity of history. For that reason, the prime objective is 'to give the future historian a chronological reflex' by demonstrating that dates are mnemonic landmarks that separate significant intervals, rather than props for a purely descriptive history of events biased towards the deeds of major personalities or heroes. It must, above all, be understood that even outstanding events can only be explained through the living context of societies and civilizations. Consequently, the major states or empires are not alone in meriting attention: consideration is due to all societies regardless of size or organization, not to speak of human trends, the mentalities that underlie historical developments. The result is a new concept of the critical function which is the hallmark of the historical discipline, with emphasis on positive discernment for purposes of interpreting and explaining.

History programmes are also designed 'to overcome the feelings of guilt born of the cultural alienation of the colonial era', which led to doubts as to the soundness of an African history, especially as weight was then placed on the scarcity of written evidence and the limitations of the oral tradition. It is now acknowledged that African historiography exists and is determined to develop and gain strength in every area, particularly that of *prehistory* and man's appearance on earth. This will automatically affect the approach to so-called historical periods and the traditional divisions of time based on European sources, and the threefold division of history into Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Modern Era, which gained acceptance through a deliberate standardization and now is seen as artificial and arbitrary.

A chronological division of Africa's past will have major implications for such traditional areas of study as metallurgy and the principal centres of the diffusion of, for example, iron, the relationship between the countries of the Nile and Western Africa or the Great Lakes region, the movements of populations, food production, in relation with economic history, technological developments and the links with modern states. Such instruments of historical research as the oral tradition and archaeology clearly merit great attention.

In most universities,

> new conditions have been established for the study and teaching of history. The critical points are: the contribution of the writers of the colonial period, since it is realistically acknowledged that there can be no question of wholly ignoring the material they accumulated: it must rather be put to good use; especially, the work of local

researchers who often contribute aspects or evidence of civilizations seen from the inside, without overlooking all the knowledge contained in other branches of the humanities and social sciences: anthropology, sociology, linguistics, literature, law, economics and geography.

In African universities and some teacher training academies, the 'training' of secondary school teachers 'culminates in the defence of a Master's dissertation in history' that must be based on field research and draw on the available written evidence and archives and on that resulting from oral inquiry. This aspect of training does much to balance the teaching of the future secondary staff member and involve him in research into the national environment.

The specialist fields chosen by university professors show that their real interests, as betrayed by their own doctoral theses, lie both in national history and in that of African regions or of Africa as a whole in all periods. They are now increasingly participating in integrated research or pluridisciplinary research programmes involving several African universities.

This being so, the current training programmes for history teachers are certainly not comparable in any way with the old ones. Even the Africanized programmes of the 1960s have been updated in most countries, particularly those that have put through radical educational reforms.

In the initial stages of curriculum reform, training college lecturers were asked to compile teaching dossiers until such time as appropriate textbooks were produced. It is symptomatic that in most countries that have kept to the Africanized or Malagasized curricula, the textbooks jointly put together for that purpose by French and African teachers are still in use.

The contents of the schoolbooks are a sound guide to the training given secondary school teachers in training academies, since they are taught to use those books. In fact they use them even before leaving their training colleges as part of their teaching practice. Teachers who have not had an opportunity for further training are often obliged to use only the information or summaries contained in such textbooks.

At the national level, many countries place great emphasis on history because of its educational value. In Benin, it is classified as a developmental discipline that can train the imagination and lead to an understanding of sociopolitical realities and even to a reawakening of national feelings. Depending on what is expected of history, curricula are structured to enable it to play its traditional role in the knowledge of the past and the critical analysis of contemporary events, or to do a political job of educating the citizen and participating in the solution of the society's developmental problems in every area.

Whatever the case, the chief requirement of history teaching is that it should produce a science based on a rigorously rational method that is not locked away in an ivory tower, but aware of the imperatives of the harmonious development of man and society in Africa.

Objectives of training programmes for history teachers

On this basis, training programmes for secondary school teachers in Africa now pursue virtually the same goals: to give the student a general culture; to develop his critical faculties; to give him the chronological reflex; to provide sound historical knowledge of Africa and the state concerned, while opening the student's mind to the non-African world; and to provide a professional training suitable for the teaching of history, this being chiefly done in teacher training academies.

The content of training programmes varies according to the teachers who run them, but there is general resort to foreign staff to secure a balanced and all-round training.

The university first level is an initiation course usually lasting two years, while the second stage provides in-depth training leading to a first degree and a master's diploma.

The courses are organized in credit units that are standard and self-contained, some being compulsory. The flexibility of the course and the nature of the programme enable the history student to prepare, should he feel the need, for careers requiring a sound general culture; in teacher training academies, conversely, the programmes are stricter and are designed for careers in teaching, with stricter supervision.

It would be interesting to compare the programmes of the universities and training academies in most of the African states that have such institutions. We shall here confine ourselves to the instance of Benin, which has carried out a far-reaching reform under which history teaching is biased towards safeguarding national authenticity.

At the Teacher Training Academy, history teaching may be chosen by students who wish to teach history as their main subject with a secondary literary or social subject. This is then their dominant option. History may be chosen as a secondary option by those who prefer to make another field their main subject. In either case, the programmes are differentiated by a few subjects.

Students specializing in history do eleven hours a week in the first year, and twelve hours in the second year of level I, followed by ten and a half hours in the first year of level II and eight and a half hours in their final year.

A comparison of the university programmes with those of the Teacher Training Academy shows that the chief difference is the methodology of the history teaching provided in the first years of levels I and II and in the final year. During the last year of training, students at the academy continue to study national history, the problems of decolonization and the history of a Great Power. It is clearly wished that they should master the syllabus for the final year of secondary education. Moreover, the two levels of training cor-

respond to the wish to train staff for the two stages of secondary education.[1]

The emphasis placed on geography in training history teachers has declined markedly. At the university, for instance, the historian is only required to complete one credit in reading maps and aerial photographs, and one in regional geography, out of a total of twenty credit units. Finally, it should be noted that in the two years of level I, the academy student is required to study the English language, which is invaluable in research.

Conclusion

The African peoples' irresistible advance towards the assertion of their cultural identity has resulted in decisive victories over the colonial system of education, and has more especially led to a complete change in the content of history curricula and the teaching process. Old programmes have had to be reformed and disalienated, and teachers trained with unsuitable programmes have had to be retrained. Political independence, the establishment of African universities and teacher training academies, the decisive progress of African historiography and Unesco's assistance have enabled a qualitative shift to be achieved which can be clearly seen in current training programmes for secondary-school history teachers, angled as they are towards a knowledge of the region and the country but open to that of other peoples and civilizations. History programmes are designed to meet a need to arouse the citizens, and to promote national awareness and the acquisition of a science that lets the critical faculties come into play.

A teacher so trained seems well equipped to provide a proper education. He is certainly a new type of teacher, capable of meeting the requirements of historiographical progress and the rigours of a science whose area of investigation has grown and whose thrust has changed.

Certainly, history teaching today has many assets, but it should desirably be given more adequate teaching facilities and greater access to teaching aids, above all to textbooks based on the achievements of the *General History of Africa* that Unesco has now started to publish. It should also be given wider circulation, so that the soundest history of Africa should everywhere provide the core for the training of teachers and pupils, thereby enabling history to regain its rightful place in our societies as a lever, a reason for hope and a locomotive in their development.

1. The programme of the Teacher Training Academy and the outline of the first stage programme for secondary education are given in the Appendices to this paper.

Appendix 1: Teacher Training Academy history programme for 1981

Level I

First year (N 1–1) (11 hours)

		Hours
	Introduction to archaeological research and a general survey of prehistory	1
(SD)[1]	History of the peoples of Benin (before colonization)	2
(SD)	Introduction to historical science	1
(SD)	Ancient Africa	2
	History of civilizations: Asia	1
(SD)	History of science and technology	1
	Methodology of history teaching	2
	Modern language: English	1
	Practice	

Second year (N 1–2) (12 hours)

	Graeco-Roman Antiquity	1.5
(SD)	History of the peoples of Benin (from colonization to the present)	2
(SD)	Historical research: investigation of the scope of history and introduction to economic history	1.5
(SD)	History of revolutions[2]	
	One bourgeois revolution	2
	One socialist revolution	2
(SD)	Sub-Saharan Africa in the seventh to sixteenth centuries	2
	Modern language: English	1
	Practice	

1. SD= students taking history as a secondary subject.
2. Students taking history as a secondary subject study only one revolution.

Level II

First year (N 2–1) (10.5 hours)

		Hours
(SD)	Prehistory and antiquity: the revolution of the Neolithic period	1.5
(SD)	The slave trade (sixteenth to seventeenth centuries)	2
	The colonial world (nineteenth to twentieth centuries)	2
(SD)	International relations (nineteenth to twentieth centuries)	2
	European economies and societies (sixth to seventeenth centuries)	2
	Methodology: oral tradition and archives	1

Second year (N 2–2) (8.5 hours)

(SD)	National history: the resistance movements against the European invasion (1876–1920)	2
(SD)	Decolonization	2
(SD)	The United States (nineteenth to twentieth centuries)	2
	Colonial economies (or Latin America)	1.5
	Methodology (thinking and supervision)	1

Appendix 2: History curriculum for level I of intermediary general education in Benin (first stage of secondary education): major topics

I. *From pre-history to the start of the Christian era*

Introduction: History: definition, uses, sources, concept of chronology. The major divisions:

1. Pre-history
2. African and Asian civilizations.
3. The Graeco-Roman world.
4. The birth and expansion of Christianity.

II. *Africa and the rest of the world from the seventh to the early sixteenth centuries*

1. The birth and expansion of Islam.
2. The great trans-Saharan and Oriental commerce.
3. The states of the forest.

III. *Facts about the history of the peoples of what is now Benin*

IV. *The world from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries*

1. The turning of the sixteenth century and the new relations between continents.
2. The three-way trade.
3. The former states of Benin and their reactions to the slave trade.

V. *The world from the eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries*

1. European dynamism.
2. The European presence and its influence on art.
3. The political and socio-economic development of Madagascar and Africa from the eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries.
4. Upheavals in the Americas and Europe.

VI. *World development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*

1. Europe in transformation in the nineteenth century.
2. The Americas, Asia and Africa from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries.
3. Imperialist expansion in the world.
4. The world in the early twentieth century.
5. Decolonization.

VII. *The resistance offered to imperialism by the peoples of what is now Benin*

1. The colonial penetration.
2. From colonization to nominal independence.

African history and African studies in the Black Diaspora

L. Edmondson

Scope and approach

When invited by Unesco to prepare a paper on 'The History of Africa in the Black Diaspora', two interpretations of my mandate sprang to mind.

One approach would be to use the Black Diaspora as the point of departure and as an extension of Africa analysing its historical processes and related historiography in their own right. The other approach would envisage continental Africa as the point of departure for analysing the academic/intellectual treatment within the Black Diaspora of the continent's history and historiography.

Both approaches inevitably overlap and in some areas necessarily merge. Thus this paper while planned essentially in terms of the latter approach at times encompasses the former.

In order to render this vast topic more manageable, and also restrict myself to areas of my own competence, I have delimited this consideration of the Black Diaspora to the United States and Caribbean sectors. The attendant biases are, however, mitigitated somewhat by two factors:

The fact that traditionally within the Black Diaspora, Black American and Afro-Caribbean intellectual/academic (and related political and cultural) interests in continental Africa have been more developed than elsewhere.

The Caribbean, being comprised of anglophone, francophone, Spanish- and Dutch-speaking subregions, in principle may help to modify the disproportionate emphasis on the anglophone Black Diaspora which seems inevitable, both because of the commanding presence of Black America and the overall comparatively greater thrust towards Africa emanating from the English-speaking Caribbean followed closely by the francophone Caribbean, which both out-distance the other Caribbean cultural and linguistic subregions.

Having found it impossible to confine attention exclusively to African history and historiography within the Diaspora, I have broadened my mandate to include at times wider aspects of 'African Studies'. But African history and historiography constitute the essential underpinnings of this exercise, which

conforms to the realities of the overwhelming dominance of historical foci and inputs surrounding Black Diasporic intellectual and academic interests in the African continent.

After examining certain relevant trends in African history and studies within the Diaspora, this paper concludes by positing some reminders to Africanists in the present and some challenges (especially to Black World scholars) in the future.

Trends in African history/studies in the Black Diaspora

Traditionally, scholars or other spokesmen from the Black Diaspora have been prominent among the revisionist schools and trends bearing on the study of Africa, beginning in a period long before African history and culture began to be accorded less unfavourable and fairer treatment in academic and intellectual circles.

For illustrative purposes we may (with reference to the appendix to this paper) cite the cases of black Americans such as W. E. B. Du Bois, William Leo Hansberry and Carter Woodson, or West Indians such as C. L. R. James, George Padmore and Joel Rogers as early to mid-twentieth-century representatives of that tradition.

That tradition, especially as concerned with the need to highlight black achievement and potential, racial dignity and cultural pride, has continued through a later generation of scholars in or from the Black Diaspora. Referring again to the appendix to this paper, one can cite black Americans such as Joseph Harris, Frank Snowden and Chancellor Williams or scholars of Caribbean origin like Ben-Jochannan, Walter Rodney and Ivan Van Sertima.

Such illustrations barely begin to scratch the surface of the numerous writings on Africa proper, or on relevancies in the Black World at large, which have emanated from the Diaspora over time.

Black American scholarly writings on Africa up to the late 1950s or mid-1960s have been surveyed or assessed by Porter (1958), Lee (1958) and Hill and Kilson (1969*b*), Porter's being an especially comprehensive listing up to that time.

Such Black American scholarly interests were from the outset facilitated by the existence of predominantly black higher educational institutions, a product of historical American racism. While there were varying degrees of commitment among these institutions to the systematic study of Africa, some of these at least provided an academic base for those black scholars wishing to develop such concerns.

Wider American environmental 'pressures' contributed significantly to the development of such scholarly missions. Black American minority status in a racially oppressive environment with in-built low evaluations of African

history and culture furnishes a historical clue. A related consideration has been the constant threat to the authenticity of that minority's historical cultural origins posed not only by the controlling myths of the dominant society but also arising from the dynamics of the majoritarian culture. In such circumstances the mission among certain black American scholars to rehabilitate and project African history and culture has been dictated not simply by scholarly curiosity but by self-interest and group-interest in the struggle for dignity, equality and freedom.

Racial consciousness-cum-cultural assertiveness as a tradition underpinning certain black American scholarly interests in Africa received a new boost and experienced an expansion beginning in the 1960s as an accompaniment first of the Civil Rights Movement and subsequently as an outgrowth of the Black Power 'revolution'. These more recent political developments associated with higher degrees of black American activism and nationalism, which in turn gave rise to certain transformations among black scholars, were in part catalysed and boosted by transformations on the African continent itself associated with the decolonization movement and the projection of the 'African personality' into the international arena.

Newer directions in black American scholarly and intellectual outlooks have been best exemplified by the rise in the late 1960s of the Black Studies movement which in turn has spawned research and professional organizations such as the African Heritage Studies Association (which broke away from the United States-based African Studies Association, which was then accused of being too traditional academically and too establishment-oriented), the Institute of the Black World founded in 1970 in Atlanta with a mandate for 'defining, defending and illustrating blackness' (see *IBW*, 1973) and the National Council for Black Studies (founded in the mid-1970s) and various state affiliates.

The motivations and rationale underpinning the Black Studies movement include the following: (a) blacks should play the central role in defining the educational tools and objectives bearing directly on their heritage experiences and needs; (b) Afro-American studies should be linked more systematically to African studies while the latter in turn should be challenged to embrace concerns of the former; (c) as an expansion of the immediately foregoing consideration, the boundaries of inquiry should wherever possible be broad and flexible enough to accommodate Pan-African or Black World concerns simultaneously, within the various parts of the Diaspora and between the Diaspora and the continent; (d) so-called value-free and neutral academic stances are irrelevant and indeed dangerous when confronting the realities of Black World subordination, so Black Studies concerns should be consciously directed toward enhancing the search for dignity, equality, justice and liberation; and (e) the traditional divorce between 'town and gown' must be reversed with Black Studies striving on the one hand to draw inspirations from the

grass-roots while committed on the other to contribute skills and knowledge beyond the classroom to the wider black community.

Quite a few Black Studies programmes that emerged overnight in the late 1960s have since been weakened or dismantled and the black nationalist exertions of that era which fuelled the Black Studies movement have certainly waned. What is more, an entrenching political climate of radical conservatism in the United States supportive of a retreat from civil rights and racial equality commitments superimposed on an economic climate catering to financial retrenchment in higher education pose real threats to the continuing viability of Black Studies programmes.

On the positive side, however, is the fact that the Black Studies movement has increasingly become more professionalized, manifested for example in a wide network of committed Black Studies professionals; a more advanced and more widely shared awareness of disciplinary boundaries and needs; an established range of professional journals; and ongoing steps to standardize a core curriculum and enhance educational materials and techniques.

The following ongoing attempts to enhance Black Studies professional goals through curriculum development projects will suffice for illustrative purposes. The National Council for Black Studies in 1980 approved a model core curriculum recommended by a committee it set up for that purpose (and, as would be expected, it identified African history, in particular African prehistory through reconstruction, as being of central concern in the history area). In that same year the Institute of the Black World, in Atlanta, launched a 'Black Studies Curriculum Project' including *inter alia* the establishment of a clearing-house for Black Studies curricula. In 1981 two Illinois-based programmes, the Chicago Center for Afro-American Studies and Research and the University of Illinois (Urbana) Afro-American Studies and Research Program launched curriculum development projects.

As will be discussed at a later stage, certain curriculum gaps or research underemphases need to be corrected. But despite a few such weaknesses, the Black Studies movement on balance remains significant not only in its own right but also as a reminder and challenge to the more conventionally organized African Studies programmes to assume their responsibilities.

Arising within or from the Caribbean have been some comparable academic and intellectual experiences, past and present. However, owing to some differing environmental conditions, in educational as well as wider societal contexts, there have been some variations in African Studies interests and orientations within the various Caribbean subregions and between the Caribbean and Black America.

Within the Caribbean the tradition of African Studies (or, for that matter, Black Studies) has been much less institutionalized than in Black America. One reason surely has been the lack of a university tradition until comparatively

recently in many parts of the Caribbean. To take the anglophone Caribbean as an example, only in 1948 (well after the establishment of Black America's network of universities and colleges) was the University of the West Indies created and not until the early 1960s did the university succeed in firming up its regional mission and identity. Perhaps another factor has been the fact that the regularity and pervasiveness of a racial emphasis that naturally arise as constants in the Black American experience, reinforcing the African Studies movement, do not always carry the same force in the Caribbean where, for example, nationalist sentiments need not always necessarily embrace race as the primary variable, significant though it is in the Caribbean setting.

This is not to say that African Studies concerns are objectively less relevant to the Caribbean; it is rather to provoke consideration as to the lower level of institutionalization of such concerns in comparison with Black America. As part of these considerations it may be profitable to compare the dynamics of Black Studies (as developed in Black America) and Caribbean Studies (as being developed in parts of the Caribbean) in terms of their respective connections with the area of African Studies as conventionally defined. It may be submitted that explicitly recognized interconnections of Black Studies and African Studies flow logically from the psycho-cultural and race-intensive dynamics of the former. Caribbean Studies on the other hand, which in their fullest development encompass not only black-related concerns, have at least implicit connections with African Studies at the Third World systemic (politico-economic) level coexisting with the more explicit racial and cultural variables.

But a warning is now in order, which is that one cannot generalize about the Caribbean region (comprised of different nations, races, linguistic and cultural subregions) in a way that is more permissible in uni-cultural and uni-racial Black America. Indeed, as I have analysed elsewhere (Edmondson, 1978), there are differing socio-educational commitments to African Studies in the Caribbean region—due to historical, ethno-demographic, educational-institutional and international positioning—ranging from the weakest commitments in the Hispanic Caribbean (with Cuba possibly excepted) to the least weak in the anglophone (especially Commonwealth) Caribbean.

Regarding the latter subregion I have elsewhere, on the basis of the University of the West Indies experience in the 1970s, documented the nature of research and publications relevant to African Studies on which basis I concluded that (Edmondson, 1980):

(i) research and writing about the African continent proper 'has been infrequent and in most instances has not been sustained', the most important reason being that 'without the availability of a specialized institutional base for Africa-related research and with limited access to research funds (which would be available primarily for Caribbean-oriented research), it would be difficult for UWI scholars to develop a sustained research interest in continental Africa';

(ii) not unexpectedly, the main research/publication emphases have been on (a) African cultural survivals in the Caribbean; and (b) cultural, political, ideological and other links between the Caribbean and Africa developed over time.

But in examining Caribbean interests in African Studies it is especially in that instance short-sighted to focus attention exclusively on Caribbean academia or academicians. Especially in the era before the university tradition became more widespread in the region, relevant intellectual and scholarly pursuits were the province not of trained black academicians but of men of intelligence, experience, knowledge and commitment who more often than not (as about to be illustrated) did not even have the opportunity to benefit from a university education.

Back in the nineteenth century, for example, we see the Caribbean producing an Edward Wilmot Blyden who spent most of his life directly serving in Africa as an educator and a leading intellectual of his time, evidenced for example in his *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, published in 1881. Haiti's Antenor Firmin's *De l'égalité des races humaines* (Paris, 1885) included analyses of ancient Egyptian civilization and Sudanese city organization to demolish racist arguments. Haiti's Hannibal Price's *De la réhabilitation de la race noire par le peuple d'Haïti* (Paris, 1900) and Trinidad's J. J. Thomas' *Froudacity* (London, 1889)—a devastating attack on a distinguished British professor's racist work, *The English in the West Indies*, by James Anthony Froude—were both designed to rehabilitate the race very much including Africans on the continent then suffering escalating racist indignities accompanying the 'new imperialism', of the late nineteenth century. Then there is the case of the Jamaican, T. E. S. Scholes who, exercised over the dynamics of the 'new imperialism', produced *The British Empire and Alliances or Britain's Duty to Her Colonies and Subject Races* (London, 1899) as a prelude to two other significant works, *Chamberlain and Chamberlainism: His Fiscal Proposals and Colonial Policy* (London, 1903) and his two-volume *Glimpses of the Ages or the 'Superior' and 'Inferior' Races, so-called, Discussed in the Light of Science and History* (London, 1905–08).

This tradition of the scholarly and academic achievements of Caribbean non-academicians continued into the present century as exemplified (with reference to the appendix to this paper) in the works of George Padmore, Joel Rogers and C. L. R. James (the latter, who never attended university, becoming such a powerful intellectual and scholar that in later years he came to occupy a chair of History in the United States).

Yet another consideration needs to be entered here in any exploration of Caribbean orientations to African Studies, which is that such concerns should not be pitched only within the Caribbean. A significant body of Caribbean intellectual and scholarly activity surrounding African Studies has been based

and pursued outside the Caribbean. Referring to the appendix to this paper for illustrative purposes, Padmore, Rogers and James and, more recently, Ben-Jochannan and Van Sertima, all pursued their major studies outside the Caribbean. Many Caribbean scholars have indeed now merged into the foreign (especially American) intellectual and academic scene and some have played important roles in the initiation and furtherance of the Black Studies movement.

Returning to trends within the Caribbean region itself, it is to be noted that over the past decade or so, there has been a greater momentum towards expanding and firming up Africa-related interests within the respective educational systems, especially within the English-speaking subregion.

For example, as a result of initiatives by the Association of Caribbean Universities and Research Institutes (UNICA), a seminar on African Studies was held in Jamaica in 1976 involving a dialogue between Caribbean, American and African scholars (see 'U.S./Afro/Caribbean Dialogue' in the bibliography). The activities of ASAWI (the African Studies Association of the West Indies) based in Jamaica, which *inter alia* has sought to deal with the issue of 'An African Studies Programme for Schools in the West Indies' (the theme of its 1974 annual conference), is another case in point. A survey of Caribbean resources, interests and needs in African Studies sponsored by UNICA which formed the basis for the recommendations for developing African Studies in the region adopted at UNICA V (Curaçao, 1977); preliminary thinking about introducing a certificate and/or diploma programme in African Studies in the University of the West Indies system which would be especially sensitive to a need for developing some expertise among pre-university teachers; the establishment in the 1970s by the Jamaican Government of the African Caribbean Institute of Jamaica (to highlight mainly cultural links with Africa)—these are all symptomatic of the momentum towards the strengthening of African Studies, especially manifested in the anglophone Caribbean through the 1970s.[1]

Two interrelated factors serve to explain that phenomenon. A rising sense of racial consciousness fuelled by and manifested in the Black Power movement in the region in the late 1960s is one such consideration. A developing sense of Third World consciousness which inevitably reinforces attention to the international relations with the African continent as a significant presence in the Third World, is another. In short, an interplay of national and international racial, cultural, political and economic variables have all been brought to bear on the evolving situation.

1. These developments in which I was actively involved (e.g. as twice president of ASAWI; co-chairman of the UNICA Committee on the Survey of Caribbean Resources, Interests and Needs in African Studies; author and main researcher of the UNICA Survey; involvement in attempts to establish at or through the UWI relevant teacher training programmes) are reviewed and analysed in Edmondson (1977, 1978).

It was argued previously that in examining earlier Caribbean orientations towards African Studies it would be 'shortsighted to focus attention exclusively on Caribbean academia or academicians'. This is worth reiterating with reference to these more recent developments. Significantly a host of cultural, political and ideological/intellectual organizations or movements concerned with the African Studies or Black World connection developed outside of and beyond the confines of formal educational systems, so much so that the view of one Barbadian academician that with respect to Barbados 'one can truthfully say that the initiative for African Studies has come from individuals and groups outside the University' (Edmondson, 1978, p. 18) is of wider regional validity.

My 1976/77 survey of the situation in eleven Caribbean territories (Barbados, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Puerto Rico, Suriname, United States Virgin Islands, Trinidad and Tobago) concluded (Edmondson, 1978, p. 4):

> While there exists a respectable body of Caribbean-born scholars (residing within or without the region) with advanced Africa-oriented interests, and while within most Caribbean Universities may be found courses (and in a handful of instances developing teaching programmes) relevant to Africa, nowhere in the eleven territories surveyed is there even a hint of the possibility of the development of a systematized African Studies teaching *cum* research programme of the kind available in many North American and European Universities.

But the survey also concluded that 'throughout the region there is an increasingly felt need and "demand" for a more systematic development of courses and programmes relevant to African Studies'. Caribbean educational systems thus remain challenged to convert objective interests and subjective needs pertaining to African Studies into some type of institutional reality.

Reminders and challenges[1]

From the foregoing analysis of Black Diasporic educational interests in African Studies there emerge some essential reminders which might continue to inform contemporary and future undertakings within the Diaspora and throughout the continent. Posed in summary form these include:

1. Continual reminders of the inherent racial content and implications of African history and historiography, for while a race-pervasive approach has concrete limitations and while African and Black World complexities

1. The issues raised here were presented in summary form for purposes of stimulating discussion. This concluding section thus would require substantial expansion.

and challenges are not all reducible to racial interpretation, we always need to remember the racial advancement and liberationist functions that education ought to fulfil.

2. The permanent significance of the cultural dimension in African history and studies—which in a sense assumes a relatively greater significance from the point of view of Black Diasporic spokesmen whose black cultural roots are on the whole less secure than applies in the case of continental Africans—embracing past to future perspectives ranging from the rehabilitation of historical cultural experiences to development of the cultural supports for liberation and nation-building.
3. Reminders of the intellectually creative consequences and functions of redefining and reshaping Black World outlooks and indeed inviting attention to a rich tradition of intellectual history in the Black World, which has not been accorded the comprehensive attention it deserves.
4. Reminders of the need to move beyond the formal structures and systems to the wider non-formal educational processes, since not all the significant contributions need (or should) be sought or expected from academicians, nor should ideas and knowledge be communicated only through the formal educational system.
5. Reminders that Black World scholars through their actions or non-actions cannot escape some responsibility in the processes of societal nation-building in which educational orders figure so prominently.
6. Reminders of the still dynamic issue of establishing the legitimate boundaries and the ideal interrelationships of African Studies and other Black World-related studies.

Regarding some continuing challenges, first with respect to Black American academic orientations, we may take note of Tom Shick's observations (derived from his recent review of various African history course syllabi used in Black Studies programmes) that (a) interests beyond 'Black Africa', i.e. concerns with other parts of the continent, are literally non-existent, and (b) the approach, overwhelmingly cultural in emphasis, is not sufficiently interdisciplinary. To these may be added a third challenge which I have developed elsewhere (Edmondson, 1981*b*), namely the need for Black American scholars while concentrating on Black (Pan-African) World matters to extend their concerns to the wider Third World and the even wider international system; for, despite the lack of the realities or prospects of statehood, Black American international roles are relevant at the 'transnational' level, in the 'interstate' arena (involving the operative influences on United States foreign policy processes) and even in the 'intrastate' context, given the possibility that efforts to humanize the domestic American system could have a beneficial spill-over effect on the wider world.

In the Caribbean the essential challenge is to develop some systematized

African Studies programmes, which, depending on place and need might be linked to Caribbean Studies and Third World Studies. One consideration arising from the area of Caribbean Studies as a catalytic framework is that there is a high degree of proximity and overlap with some fundamental continental African concerns, not only at the racial or cultural levels but also at the international systemic level involving the dynamics of imperialism, neocolonialism and dependency which have actually shaped and affected the Caribbean even more than Africa.

Continental African educational systems are challenged, at least implicitly, to reach out to the Black Diaspora as a reciprocal act.[1] An institutionalizing of Black Studies or Caribbean Studies in such systems would serve not only to enhance some relevant academic and intellectual concerns on the continent but in a spill-back effect might further reinforce within the Black Diaspora higher levels of educational interest and understanding regarding the African continent.

One recent development which may come to have profound bearing on this consideration is the proliferation of African-born scholars over the past decade or so in North America, Europe and (to a more limited extent) the Caribbean. Their presence has enhanced the opportunities of scholarly interaction between the continent and the Diaspora. This has aided the furtherance of African Studies programmes and interests in the Diaspora, the best example being the contribution of African-born scholars to the rise and consolidation of the Black Studies movement in the United States. This in turn has a longer run potential in terms of a spill-over effect, through the agency of such scholars, of diasporic-based academic interests and developments to the African continent. But instead of hoping that the latter may eventually materialize, opportunities like these are now available for existing institutions to exploit.

It is relevant here to reiterate Ali Mazrui's call, in 1975 (see bibliography), for 'a more systematic use of Caribbean and other Diasporic material in African schools as well as of African material in the other black areas of the world'. Supplemented with teacher exchanges, such innovations 'in the educational systems of countries ranging from Ghana to Trinidad, Kenya to Black America' would, Mazrui concludes, aid significantly in the search for 'black cultural liberation at the global level'.

Mazrui's suggestion provokes two concluding observations. The first is that educational ties between the African continent and the Black Diaspora should be consolidated not simply because of residual (racial and cultural)

1. A partial step in this direction was hinted at in the joint agreement of the Governments of Haiti and Senegal in the mid-1970s to establish in Haiti an Institute of African Studies and Research.

links between those areas but also because of developmental necessities and black liberation at the global level.

The second observation is that the considerations which have been developed in this paper should lead us to consider the yet wider challenges of the needs of international education in the late twentieth century era of globalism—but this could be the subject of another paper in its own right.[1]

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1. When presenting this paper I shall introduce orally some relevant 'international education' considerations pertaining to Black/Third World educational systems which have been broached in two earlier papers (Edmondson, 1981*b*, 1981*c*). In particular I shall use the November 1979 report of the (United States) President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (chaired by James Perkins) and related developments as a point of departure, in terms of relevant lessons emerging and challenges posed.

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Appendix: selected bibliography of Afro-American and Afro-Caribbean writings on African history

This very selective bibliography, introduced for illustrative purposes, covers only books that have a primary continental African focus. Numerous studies treating African cultural diffusion, Pan-Africanism and other such themes bearing on relations between the African continent and the African Diaspora, although very relevant in the context of African history and historiography, are not included.

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* Writers of Caribbean origin (some of whom permanently reside in the United States); those listed without asterisks are originally of Black American ancestry.

Final Report of the symposium

I. Convened by the Director-General of Unesco in pursuance of the plan of action adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-first session (paragraph 4050), the symposium resulted also from the request made by the International Scientific Committee at its meeting in Ibadan (20–31 July 1981). The Committee's purpose was to facilitate the drafting of Volume VIII and more especially of its Chapter 22.

The symposium brought together the following experts: Professors J. F. Ade Ajayi (Nigeria), S. M. Cissoko (Senegal), J. Devisse (France), L. Edmondson (Jamaica), J. E. Harris (United States), A. Irele (Nigeria), A. A. Mazrui (Kenya), B. A. Ogot (Kenya), J. Pliya (Benin), R. Verdier (France), T. Wagaw (Ethiopia) and N. Mfaxa (representative of the Pan-Africanist Congress). The following observers were present: Professors T. Obenga and B. Traoré (Society of African Culture) and E. Apronti (African Cultural Institute).

The Unesco Secretariat was represented by: Mr M. Glélé, programme specialist, Chief of the Section of African Cultures, representing the Director-General of Unesco; Mr M. Elliott, Division of Translations; and Miss M. F. Lengué, Division of Cultural Studies.

II. The opening meeting was held on 25 January in the presence of Mr B. A. Haidara, Director of the Regional Office for Education in Africa, Dakar, and Representative of the Director-General. Welcoming and introductory addresses were delivered by Mr Haidara and Professors Ogot and Mazrui. Mr Glélé spoke of the current state of progress of the different volumes, pointing out that the English-language edition was poorly distributed in Africa. The Chairman of the Committee, Professor Ogot, called for representations to be made to the publisher, Heinemann, on this matter, since the publication was not available for sale in Kenya. The next meeting of the Bureau would be held in Paris from 5 to 9 April 1982.

The meeting observed a minute's silence in memory of the late Abbé Alexis Kagamé, who had been a member of the International Scientific Committee.

III. The symposium appointed the following officers: Chairman: Professor B. A. Ogot; Vice-Chairman: Professor J. F. Ade Ajayi; Rapporteur: Professor J. Devisse.

After taking cognizance of the Guidance Note prepared by the Secretariat, the symposium adopted—in a form amended by the Volume Editor—the agenda suggested by the Secretariat and the following timetable of work:

Monday: The triple heritage in African education: an introduction (introduced by Ali A. Mazrui and T. Wagaw).

Tuesday: Education and changing social needs (introduced by J. F. Ade Ajayi and B. A. Ogot).

Education, language and conceptualization (introduced by S. M. Cissoko and R. Verdier).

Wednesday: Education and the search for authenticity (introduced by J. Devisse and J. Pliya).

Thursday: African education in the global context (introduced by L. Edmondson).

Friday: Drafting and adoption of the final report.

At Unesco's request, the African Cultural Institute (ICA), represented by its Deputy Director, Mr Apronti, provided participants with information on its activities.

IV. *The triple heritage in African education: an introduction*

This topic had been accepted by the experts only as a basis for discussion, on condition that it could be criticized and if necessary exceeded during discussion.

Professor Mazrui considered firstly that development meant modernization without dependence and that Africa was suffering from a high degree of cultural Westernization without any comparable economic or industrial modernization.

Professor Wagaw reviewed and explained his approach based on the three educational heritages—the Western-derived, the Muslim and the African.

Both speakers, for various reasons, considered the 'modern' educational model to be contaminated by its colonial origins, but none the less useful when adapted as necessary, either because it had enabled a measure of economic progress—inadequate but none the less positive—to be made, or because it had opened the Africans' eyes to the need for revolutionary struggle.

Professor Mazrui also explained that both for him and for Professor Wagaw, this triple heritage had given rise to four foci of educational orientation. The 'sociocentric' focus in education emphasized the needs of society; the 'theocentric' focus was oriented towards God and spirituality; the 'egocentric' approach sought to draw out individuality as the primary goal of education, and the 'ecocentric' focus paid special attention to the quest for understanding nature and the ecology. Islamic, Western and indigenous systems of education differed in how they balanced the four concerns. But each tradition sought to

fulfil the three main functions of education—the transmission of *skills*, *values*, and *information*.

Some of Mazrui's categories were sharply criticized by several experts, who requested a more flexible typological classification to be adopted. Also controversial was Dr Mazrui's definition of development as meaning 'modernization minus dependency'.

(i) *Chronological development:* it was not fundamentally disputed that there were three types of education; but although they had to some extent succeeded one another, none of them had as yet disappeared. They had influenced each other dialectically down the centuries; and if the 'Afro-modern model', which stemmed from colonization and had been perpetuated in post-independence Africa, had acquired such a force of expansion, the reason was largely that it was sustained by an industrialist economic 'model' that made it an indispensable factor of economic development and social advance. But it had not led to the demise of any of the other forms of education, if only because the 'modern' educational institutions had not affected the bulk of the continent's inhabitants. For various reasons—through resistance or resignation—that population had therefore fallen back on other forms of education. And so contemporary Africa had four types of training, of which only one made full use of the African languages as a medium. That situation was scarcely reflected in the classification adopted by the speakers.

(ii) For that reason, attention was frequently drawn to the indigenous educational system. It had been far less studied than the others and deserved close consideration by researchers.

It was neither backward, nor anarchical nor 'pre-scientific'. On the contrary, there were many instances to show that it generally met the Africans' social, economic and cultural needs. Great emphasis was placed on the fact that, drawing chiefly on the role of the mother during the child's early years, it constituted an irreplaceable form of language-teaching while also promoting integration within the social group. Even though, in the eyes of some observers, the indigenous system tended to be repressive in the first six or seven years because it held the child's curiosity in check, it had been found not to reduce his chances of developing his learning capacity to the full, for instance in a higher course of formal education. It was even emphasized that despite its socialized and integrated nature, it increased the individual's scope for independence.

Although that system had not turned to abstraction and objectivization in order to constitute separate sciences relative to the techniques it embraced, it had proved its moral, juridical and technological worth: several participants offered instances from the most varied of fields ranging from pharmacology

to astronomy, from mathematics to metallurgy or from individual codes of conduct to the most sophisticated social rules. No new education could, then, overlook it, both because of its own value and because of its intimate relationship with the languages spoken by the overwhelming majority of Africans—an additional reason being the numbers of them who remained faithful to it. Disregarded by the schools, that model remained one of the living foundations for any new departures in education. How should it be integrated—if it should be integrated—with the school?

Finally, none of the African experts present, even those who had been brought up on the colonial or post-colonial model, was avowedly hostile or indifferent to the survival of indigenous education.

A little-studied aspect of that education, which should be accorded great attention, was its ability to assimilate every kind of external element, grading and incorporating them successively in the global education that gave them their social utility.

(iii) On this first item of the debate, the authors of Volume VIII were asked to beware of too systematic an approach and to place considerable weight on description, which, particularly in the case of indigenous education, was so much needed before over-hasty conclusions were reached. The authors were strongly advised to draw on the wealth of evidence assembled during the 1977 FESTAC, and to provide a comparative study of, for example, the fairly similar case of India. With regard to the FESTAC, the African Cultural Institute had published extensive excerpts from the proceedings of the festival in a special edition, which was made available to participants.

Similarly, the author of Chapter 22 was advised to consult the extensive documentation collected by Unesco on the problems studied at the current symposium, and also to consult the recently published French-language bibliography which had made a major contribution, more particularly with regard to the 1935–60 period. Lastly, the findings of the experiments currently being held in many African countries, which rooted the child's education in African languages, should be considered and studied in that chapter.

V. *Education and changing social needs*

(i) The relationship between education and changing social needs should not be over-schematized. They were made one in the person of every African, who was trained by several successive or simultaneous, concurrent or relatively convergent types of education from childhood to maturity, and who was also caught up in contradictory socio-economic trends depending on whether or not he participated in the industrial and technological type of development. In each case, furthermore, his education and his thoughts about it stemmed from the interplay of seldom coherent influences of the family, the 'age-group', the

school, the elders, the media and political speeches. That being so, it was difficult to establish through dry analysis, for example, what the African saw as derived from Christianity or Islam, and what he saw as derived from colonization.

Nor could there be any question of abandoning attempts to identify chronological sequences. Even though the secondary divisions were debatable, the 1960s marked a turning-point in the thrust of education.

Before 1960, reduced by the colonizers to schooling alone, education's chief purpose was to train, as cheaply as possible and as the need arose, auxiliaries for colonization, and young women were rarely affected by this policy.

After 1960 a few—very few—states posed a radical challenge to the structures and objectives of the education provided in the earlier period. Usually it was only the objectives that were changed, either radically in the wish to extend schooling to all on a democratic footing, or sometimes, more restrictively, to direct that training towards the development planned by the nation-state. The changes rarely resulted in a deliberate break in the organization and functioning of educational establishments, and that was particularly obvious and probably more paradoxical at university level. That ambiguity was a vivid illustration of the difficulties of identifying clear demarcation lines between colonial and post-colonial education.

(ii) Be that as it might, the limitations of all sorts which existed in the matter of resources had virtually everywhere frustrated the desire for complete democratization; Africa's entry into competitions of every kind had brought in its wake the same contradiction as elsewhere between education of the majority and selection of the best. Academic failure had gone hand in hand with institutionalization, and had had the same social consequences as elsewhere, while elimination by failure was theoretically unknown in indigenous education.

Selective methods made for a technical nature and a kind of development that brought big social differences in its wake: they ran counter to the general wish for a kind of education and social progress that left intact the old cultural units that were the guarantee of solidarity.

Although education was invariably based on a blueprint for society, social options were extremely varied, often contradictory and sometimes confused, juxtaposing very different educational solutions. Chapter 22 would have to take account of that great diversity of objectives, manpower and financial resources in the different African countries.

It would also have to address itself to a question that arose several times: did education crystallize and make for social change—which was the belief of few experts—or did educational transformations result from social changes themselves?

The answer was important since it was a matter of choice of the nature

of society and forms of education. Examples were given of educational policies arising from social options that would have to be reflected in the chapter —instances being Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique.

(iii) The very nature of the current social changes in Africa had to be studied carefully in the volume, its relationship with all the issues of education having been brought out in the discussion.

It was clear that colonial education was not designed to meet the African's wish for social change, even though it had, in practice, opened up many prospects for change. A study should likewise be made of the role played after their return by those Africans who were in a 'provisional Diaspora' situation for training outside Africa.

It was more difficult to see how provision could be made for that wish in formal, non-formal or indigenous education, or indeed, in other forms that were yet to be tried, and equally so to see how the goals of the various kinds of contemporary education could converge to form a new African society. Nor was the basis on which that society should be built—the restricted group, the nation, the subregion or the continent—clearly defined. It further appeared that there could be tensions and contradictions stemming from the manipulation of education by a public that desired to *preserve its identity*, a state that wanted to *build a nation* and by intellectuals who placed the emphasis on African cultural unity, the need for which was sometimes felt by the basic societies.

It remained, however, true that 90 per cent of Africans were still relatively unaffected by the school, and that the problems involved in teaching them literacy as a minimum had not always hitherto been given the necessary hard-and-fast solutions. In any case, how were they to be educated in the future, assuming that the indigenous education vested in them was to be taken into account and associated in a new definition of development?

VI. *Education, language and conceptualization*

The topic was introduced by Professors Cissoko and Verdier.

The former emphasized the need to encourage historians, firstly African scholars and then those of the rest of the world, to use terminologies derived from African societies and cultures, and to discontinue, except for purposes of comparison, the use of concepts borrowed from European cultures. Specific instances of success in this area were adduced. The use of African languages should become the instrument of political and cultural liberation, but the possible social and cultural consequences of their transition from the condition of oral languages, the keepers of the oral memory, to that of written languages must not be overlooked: it was not certain, incidentally, that the loss of cultural substance was any greater in oral memory systems than it was in written systems.

Other questions related to the concepts applied to Africa by the outside world, and the words meaning education in various African languages; some of these were very close to the original Latin meaning of *escape from ignorance*, while others—such as 'the house of paper'—were more metaphorical. The area deserved systematic study.

Professor Verdier showed that beyond the various categories of Western law that had been grafted very spectacularly onto African societies, the latter contained their own 'societies of law', a set of legal rules, codes and rites that strictly governed individual behaviour, relations among all kinds of groups and the more abstract relations between territories: the concept of territoriality of those codes and rites deserved study.

(i) Two different trends emerged in the area of conceptualization. One sought to identify the few words of foreign origin that might still be valid and useful if their uses were clearly defined, and to phase out all the others. The second sought to define the utility of conceptualization itself, with some writers considering it to be the conceptual constitution of a separate body of knowledge that was removed from practice, the hallmark of science as opposed to technology, which made possible the decisive human revolutions. Hence the procedures proper to historical or educational conceptualization in Africa should resolutely turn their backs on imitation and static mimicry and look to the future. But they also had the essential job of making the African fields of knowledge explicit rather than implicit, and of making them a separate science.

Be that as it may, only a genetical analysis of the concepts as they arose and evolved in African societies was admissible.

There was more detailed discussion of the concepts of nationality and nation in Africa, but all that emerged was the complexity of their widely diversified usages. Equally, of course, as is everywhere the case, the current and sometimes totally aberrant usages differed widely from the learned usages of many of those concepts—just as the practice of law is remote from its principles.

(ii) The role of languages was decisive for the future. An example was taken from Ghanaian educational experience: it had been established in Ghana that pupils found it easier to acquire scientific concepts in African languages than in English, even when they were of great complexity and foreign origin.

But languages posed serious problems in respect of cultural substrata and of unity. Could the African states be multi-ethnical and multilingual, and if so should they? Conversely, is national unity dependent on linguistic unity, as nineteenth-century Europe believed? Does linguistic plurality, despite the profound kinship, impede cultural unity as experienced, felt and desired? Does it bring out the differences between groups rather than their cultural relationships?

The attention that Christianity and Islam paid to African languages as a

medium for religious expansion posed problems: in the case of Islam in particular, it was, for instance, suggested that the Koran and Muslim culture should be taught directly in African languages, although that might mean making light of a long debate that had divided Muslims for centuries! In any case, the fact that certain African languages—Hausa, Kiswahili or Dyula—had historically become the languages of Islam in Africa gave rise to major cultural difficulties in a number of African countries.

Once again, then, there were deep and complex links between language and all kinds of education.

(iii) Law existed on different organizational levels of the African societies. Only exceptionally was it a 'positive' state reality, as the classical Marxist analysis puts it. The difficulty of studying it resided in the fact that it was not explicit, that it was not formulated, interpreted and kept by specialists, but by the whole of the group whose submission to its content alone defined the juridical 'territory', of very variable size.

Thus there were communities of law of every dimension in Africa, and their integration with abstract entities of theoretical or monistic law proved difficult at every stage. The unicity and indivisibility of Islamic law and colonial law alike had encountered limitations in that area.

But that vision and vitality of the law, which probably originated in consent through the palaver (just as the latter was the place where oral contracts were made) was certainly among the most irreducible features of African oral cultures.

VII. *Education and the search for authenticity*

Professors Pliya and Devisse introduced the topics that they proposed to discuss. Both placed emphasis on history: the Chairman, Professor Ogot, asked for discussions of the quest for authenticity to relate to all the issues before the symposium, including science and technology.

Professor Pliya emphasized that the colonial school system, which had been particularly alienating in matters of history, had thereby provided the grounds for opposition. The demand for African history had thus sparked off the search for authenticity, and had become one of the chief weapons in the continent's campaign for liberation. After independence, curricula and methods had slowly changed, resulting thanks to the research carried out over the past twenty years in radical change by the early 1980s. Professor Pliya showed how history could be used to arouse civic and national consciousness.

Professor Devisse noted that there had been temptations to counter European ethnocentrism, enclosed in its consciousness of historical superiority and the mediocrity of its techniques in respect of African societies, by an ethnocentric concept of the history that belonged to those societies. The dynamism

and success of 'oral history' after 1960 had sometimes suggested that it was a specific kind of history incompatible with any other. This idea had been condemned by many European historians as a distraction leading the search for authenticity into deadlock. None the less, no methodologically exacting history could overlook the fact that African societies live their history by incorporating it in memory and education. An enormous area of African cultures—the vision of history—has as yet barely been studied.

It was now important, the hardest clashes having probably been overcome, to know what history should be emphasized, at what levels and by what methods: for the basic group, the 'ethnic groups', for the new state-based nations, for the continent, or in connection with world history?

(i) The first part of the debate concerned the universities. They were generally viewed as the supreme agents of the penetration of Western influences in Africa, as representing 'cultural transnationals'. Some experts even asserted that they thereby ran counter to the authenticity that was vested in the peoples, while others held at least that they were paralysed by a shortage of funds, by various kinds of censorship and programme decisions that constricted the freedom and power of research, and by external dependence for the evaluation and publication of findings. It was probably unhealthy to oppose the universities, the stronghold of 'the scientific mind', to 'ethnicity', the refuge of authenticity; the best solution seemed to be to unite the scientific method of the university with the content of the indigenous cultures, and on that basis to reconstruct an authentic African knowledge. To achieve that symbiosis, the universities themselves should shake off the weight of knowledge transmitted from the outside, the 'mandarin' mentality, and follow the example of the young researchers gripped by their field work. In that way, the Western heritage could stop impeding the construction of an authentic body of knowledge and, being Africanized, help conversely to build up this knowledge.

(ii) Some disciplines such as philosophy or sociology, supposedly alien to Africa and thence suspect for very variable reasons, have been excluded from research and education programmes in many countries. It should be emphasized that the introduction of philosophy and sociology could not be the lazy transmission of foreign academic knowledge. If Africanized and applied to their vocation as disciplines of reflection on the present and future of African societies, both could help the latter to escape from the present deadlock and contradictions. To be sure, their past dimension was not negligible. And their constant application to the scientific, political and technical development of the continent could render great future services. They should therefore no longer be excluded from African training courses.

(iii) Even assuming that the university could in the foregoing circumstances play a part in the search for authenticity, the fact remained that it had no monopoly of that research and that research findings, regardless of their origins, should if seriously established be made public through a policy of popularization in the African languages—as Unesco intended to do in the case of the General History—as well as in foreign languages, and with great emphasis on accuracy.

(iv) Some participants were inclined to the view that the peoples had a sense of the continuity of their history while intellectuals seeking to establish how far this had been an unbroken process of development were perplexed by the contradictory theories of scholars of different origins. The symposium discussed these ideas without taking up a clearly defined position on the matter. Be that as it might, the symposium constantly emphasized that without the study of the indigenous cultural traditions and their modes of transmission, there was little chance of restoring authentic and living African cultural identities, including their capacity for innovation and absorbing the new contributions they would need.

A more serious question, which was taken no further than its formulation, was whether in the reconstruction of those authentic identities, preference should be given to peoples with long cultural and linguistic traditions, to the nations born of independence, or to wider communities. The discussions in this vein, while essential, had obvious political implications as shown by many cases analysed.

(v) Two forthcoming meetings would probably provide important matter for the structuring of Chapter 22.

The first, to be organized by the OAU in July 1982, would be the first African Congress of Scientists and would be asked to take stock of what was known about scientific developments throughout African history.

The second, to be held in December 1983 by the Congress of African Studies, would be concerned with 'African education and cultural identity', interpreted very broadly.

(vi) Some members of the symposium expressed the wish that the author of Chapter 22 should not omit the names of the African historians who, over three generations, had been the creators of the African historical consciousness.

VIII. *African education in the global context*

In commenting on his paper, Professor Edmondson raised a large number of new issues. These gave rise to discussions which are reported below case by case.

(i) The Black World—meaning, for the author, the blacks of the United States of America, the Caribbean and Africa—should itself assume responsibility for the evaluation of its needs, its values, and the studies of all kinds devoted to it.

(ii) Drawing on past and present academic and intellectual trends in the Black Diaspora (in particular Black America and the Caribbean) the author concluded that while much remains to be done, certain significant contributions to the study of African history and the furtherance of African studies had emanated from the Diaspora. Such experiences furnished important reminders to contemporary scholars about the nature of their continuing academic and societal responsibilities.

(iii) The right to history and historical studies must be restored to all blacks. In the three regions to which the author devoted his analyses, blacks had been denied that right; in other quarters, they had also been offered a history which had no relation to their own. Mutual assistance should thus be organized among those three regions to achieve the complete reconquest of their history. As things currently stood, the processes of research and liberation were unequally developed. Exchanges among the regions and comparative studies should therefore provide highly stimulating effects. On such subjects, there could be no question of scientific neutrality: the matter had an international political dimension.

Where that historical solidarity was concerned, Professor Edmondson hoped that the exchange of publications and the inclusion of courses on the other regions in curricula at every level might be an immediately feasible first step.

Those suggestions gave rise to diverse reactions. One, of immediate support, was to call on African universities to take account of the research, particularly in respect of literature, that was so advanced in the Caribbean world: many participants expressed the wish to see physical links—in the form of transport—and cultural links established between the Caribbean and Africa. Some experts noted that the suggestions made involved problematical political developments, especially as regards the future of American blacks. One expert defined the latter as 'a part of the Third World in the Northern Hemisphere which, together with the Third World, was expecting the future to improve their plight'. This discussion, important but with implications for other chapters of Volume VIII, was not fully developed. The symposium felt it wise not to distinguish this aspect of things too radically from two others. A global view must be taken of Africa's relations with all branches of the Diaspora, including, in addition to the three regions studied by Professor Edmondson, those in Central and South America, South-East Asia and the south of the Arabian peninsula, for instance, and that insertion of the Blacks in the context of the 'South', broadly understood, also confirmed their insertion in the 'Third World'. That being so, the task for Africa was to identify the role it meant to play beyond its own frontiers, taking account of all those areas

of presence; and it should also seek, throughout the North, to change the qualitative image of the Black World and its cultures, since that image was still in many cases a very mediocre caricature. That image might even require considerable improvement in the Third World: the case of Indian textbooks was adduced. The symposium hoped that African researchers might be enabled to present, especially in the North, lectures and publications designed to rectify all the past mistakes.

The fact remained that, where the blacks of the United States were concerned, it was felt important:

to take account of the research done in the country's black universities;

to assess the value of that research in relation to the search for authenticity, and to inquire whether that search had the same meaning there as in Africa. Professor Harris placed emphasis, for information purposes, on specific examples:

1. Edward Blyden, Edward Jones and others at Fourah Bay College and the migration of their graduates along the West African coast.
2. Medical training for Africans at Howard University and Mehary Medical School and the evolution of those schools as centres in tropical medicines and diseases affecting Black people.
3. African universities (twelve) teaching Afro-American history and literature as Black American schools have long taught about Africa.
4. The Phelps-Stokes Fund Educational Mission to Africa in the 1920s leading to the establishment of Ashimoto and Kabete schools in Ghana and Kenya and influencing Fort Hare in South Africa.

to use the highly interdisciplinary methods adopted by researchers in those universities to open new methodological horizons to research in Africa. Where Chapter 22 was concerned, there was as yet no question of anything more than that initial synthesis.

(iv) Subjected to comparable historic circumstances of dependence, the black communities of the different regions of the world had probably preserved to some extent their own educational processes. A comparative study would be useful.

(v) As emphasized by Professor Edmondson on the basis of specific examples, the importance of non-university research as a stimulant and complement to that done in official institutions was immediately acknowledged in view of the large number of comparable instances in Africa—as was the benefit to be gained from the constitution of non-formal research networks.

(vi) There was a case for a searching discussion of the potential role of the media—and their satellite transmission—in view of the probable profound repercussions of that role on training and education modes throughout the world. The symposium did not embark on that discussion.

IX. *Address by Mr Mfaxa, representative of the Pan Africanist Congress (Azania)*

Mr Mfaxa apologized for having been unable to take part in the symposium as an expert. As the representative of the PAC, he delivered that body's message to the assembled experts. The message is annexed to this report.

Thanking him, the Chairman, Professor Ogot, expressed the hope that a similar meeting might shortly be able to be held in what was then Johannesburg, after its liberation.

X. *Meeting of the Bureau of the International Congress of African Studies*

Within the framework of the symposium the Bureau of the International Congress of African Studies, with Professor J. F. Ade Ajayi in the Chair, held working meetings with Unesco's assistance for the purpose of organizing its next congress.

XI. *Adoption of the report*

The final report was adopted on Friday, 29 January.

Appendices

1. Agenda

1. Introduction to the *General History of Africa*: Presentation of the project by Professor B. A. Ogot, President of the International Scientific Committee. He will explain to the experts *viva voce* what the International Scientific Committee expects from this symposium.
2. Introduction to Volume VIII of the *General History of Africa* by Professor Ali A. Mazrui, volume editor of this volume. It will be for him to set out the problems that arise from the drafting of the chapters on educational problems and historiography in Africa.
3. Consideration of the six points selected by the International Scientific Committee.
4. Any other business.

2. Guidance note

I. In connection with the preparation of Volume VIII of the *General History of Africa*, 'Africa since 1935', the International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa recommended to the Director-General of Unesco that a symposium be held on the theme 'The educational process and historiography in Africa'. The present symposium is convened by the Director-General of Unesco in implementation of the plan of action adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its twenty-first session (paragraph 4050).

II. In accordance with the recommendations adopted by the International Scientific Committee at its Ibadan session (20–31 July 1981), the symposium should be 'mainly devoted to Chapter 22: Education and Social Change'. The Committee considered that the following points should be given special attention:

1. The indigenous traditions of education, socialization and training.
2. Language and education in Africa.
3. The triple heritage in Africa's educational experience: indigenous, Islamic and Western-derived traditions (religious and secular).
4. A study of French, British, Belgian, Portuguese and other colonial approaches to education in Africa.
5. Comparative studies of the different educational systems in Africa and an evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses.
6. Relations between education, cultural reform, economic change, social needs and the political process.

III. The papers presented and the conclusions of the participants will be made available to the authors responsible for drafting Volume VIII, and will then be published in the Unesco series 'General History of Africa—Studies and Documents'.

IV. To give the experts food for thought and enrich their discussions, the Secretariat of Unesco has had some specific studies prepared. Appended is a list of these studies, and a selective statement of work done by Unesco in the field of education in Africa.

Working documents

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/2: *Towards Decolonizing Modernity: Education and Culture Conflict in Eastern Africa*, by Ali A. Mazrui and T. Wagaw.

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/3: *Problems of Conceptualization and Definition in African History with Reference to Some Social and Political Institutions*, by S. M. Cissoko.

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/4: *Critical Reflections on the Ideas of Law and Power in Precolonial Africa—Terminological and Conceptual Problems*, by R. Verdier.

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/5: *Three Decades of Historical Studies in East Africa: 1949–77*, by B. A. Ogot.

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/6: *The Educational Process and Historiography in Contemporary Africa: Background Paper*, by J. F. Ade Ajayi.

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/7: *The Development of Education and Training in Africa: An Outline History for 1930–80*, by J. Devisse.

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/8: *African History in Training Programmes for Secondary School Teachers*, by J. Pliya.

No. CLT-82/CONF.801/9: *African History and African Studies in the Black Diaspora*, by L. Edmondson.

Selective list of studies prepared by or for Unesco in the field of education in Africa

BEBBE-NJOH, E. *School Reforms and Educational Research—Reflections Based on a Case-study: the Trend of Educational Reform in Cameroon.* Yaoundé, Centre National d'Éducation.

Directory of Research on African Languages in Sub-Saharan Africa (Symposium on the Co-ordination of Linguistic Research on African Languages of Regional Inter-Communication With a View to Its Application to Teaching).

'Experiments and Innovations in Education', series published by the International Bureau of Education: No. 8: *An Experiment in the Ruralization of Education: IPAR and the Cameroonian Reform*; No. 20: *Postgraduate Teacher Training: A Nigerian Alternative*; No. 40: *Outdoor Primary Education in Bangladesh.*

Final Report of the Meeting of Experts on Language Teaching in a Bilingual or Plurilingual and Multicultural Environment, Paris, 19–23 December 1977.

Final Report of the Symposium on the Co-ordination of Linguistic Research With a View to Its Application to the Teaching of African Languages of Regional Intercommunication, Ouagadougou, 11–15 September 1978.

Final Report of the Symposium on the Problems of Education in the Mother Tongue in a Sub-region of Africa, Dakar, BREDA, 14–18 June 1976.

Guidance Note: Expert Meeting to Review the Worldwide Position as Regards the Results of Activities Relating to the Use of the Mother Tongue as Medium of Instruction, Unesco, Paris, 30 November–4 December 1981.

INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN INSTITUTE (comp.). *Provisional Survey of Major Languages and Language Use in the Independent States of Sub-Saharan Africa—October 1981.*

Non-formal Education and Education Policy in Ghana and Senegal. Paris, Unesco. (Educational Studies and Documents, No. 35.)

The Preparation and Reform of School Programmes (General Report of the Training Seminar on School Programmes for French- and Portuguese-speaking African Countries. Dakar, 30 October–17 November 1978).

Proceedings of the Meeting of Experts on the Transcription and Harmonization of African Languages, Niamey, Niger, 17–21 July 1978.

Proceedings of the Meeting of Experts on the Use of the Regional or Subregional African Languages as Media of Culture and Communication With the Continent, Bamako, Mali, 18–22 June 1979.

Reports and studies of the Division of Educational Policy and Planning, Unesco.

Some Reflections on Language Planning Problems. Paper prepared by Z. Zachariev for the Regional Training Seminar for the Preparation of School Curricula for French- and Portuguese-speaking African Countries, 30 October-17 November 1978.

Sow, Alfa Ibrahim (ed.). *Languages and Language Policies in Black Africa—Unesco's Experience*, Nubia.

Training Seminar on the Problems of Language Planning in Bilingual or Multilingual Context, Lomé, Togo, 2–11 September 1980.

3. The Pan Africanist Congress's message to the symposium

Mr Chairman,
Distinguished participants,
The topic before us is the Educational Process and Historiography in Africa. However, in the view of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, true custodian of the genuine aspirations of the oppressed, exploited and discriminated-against Azanians, a fruitful and constructive discussion of this topic must be based on objective realities and a future continental perspective.

The objective fact is that the educational process on the continent was deliberately hampered and distorted with the advent of colonialism. Colonialism then introduced an educational system for the colonial subjects. By and large this depended on development with the colonial country itself. For instance, there was uneven development in education in the different '-phone' countries, Anglo-, Franco-, Belgo-, Luso- and Hispano-. Since Portugal itself was backward in Europe, it could hardly be expected to have provided an educational system beyond its own development. Moreover, the colonial educational policies of these colonizers did not aim at providing education for the colonial subjects so that they might better themselves, but rather at facilitating the exploitation of the wealth, resources and labour of the continent in a more intensified way. The colonial subject who was being trained, say, to become a policeman, had to be educated to understand the laws he was to enforce but not to question the law. In other words, the education process was designed to create a subservient human being who serve the interests would of the colonial power rather than the interests of his own people.

Equally, the curricula were so framed that in history the child was taught the supposed 'benefits of colonization. Colonization was portrayed as a civilization mission'. In the specific case of South Africa (occupied Azania) the colonial history books even go as far as to say the arrival of the white man (the beginning of physical colonialism) brought about 'peace' in the country by implying that the African people were, at the time, engaged in 'tribal wars'. This deliberate distortion of history and systematic praise of the colonial presence, too, was designed to create a subservient human being and was, therefore, a tool in the hands of the colonialists.

However, the most important aspect of the colonial education policy should be viewed in the light of the *raison d'être* of colonialism itself. Colonies were acquired not to 'civilize' the subject peoples, but rather to exploit the territory's raw materials and use it then as a dumping ground for finished products. This very process, it goes without saying, had a profound impact on the formulation of the colonial education

policy. It meant that no industrial development was envisaged for the colonies. The colonies were to be the markets for finished products and were not to compete with the colonial metropole. Science and technology—the accumulated experience of mankind as a whole—were to be the exclusive property of the colonial masters. The conscious deprivation of education in the scientific and technological field has been the corner-stone of underdevelopment of Africa, Asia and Latin America—*and not because we are 'lazy' or 'unintelligent'*.

Consequently, with the attainment of political independence, it was incumbent upon the elected independence government to draw up a completely new educational policy—a policy that would provide basic education to the broadest possible spectrum of its society. At the same time the newly independent state had to cope with the urgent task of establishing institutes of higher education so as to ensure the independent development of its society. In addition to this, the new state had to cope with the inherited illiterates and the need to launch a literacy campaign.

The major problem faced by all emergent nations was the already existing ties between the educational institutions in the country and the educational institutions in the former colonial country. The question we have to ask ourselves is: *Have we succeeded in cutting off or reducing this dependency?* It seems not.

In twenty-one African countries French is still the official language and it goes without saying that this keeps the door wide open for the penetration of French influence into the educational system. This is also the case in other African countries where the official language is that of the former colonial master. This being the case, it will be extremely difficult for Africa to evolve a cohesive educational process if the languages adopted are going to act as avenues for strong outside influence. However, that does not mean that we should totally reject any of the European languages—but rather they should be studied as languages and not become a vehicle for our thought process! In this respect we of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania strongly urge that in Sub-Sahara, indigenous continental languages be accepted and widely encouraged. The two languages that come to mind and which could act as the lingua franca for Africa are Kiswahili and Hausa.

Now coming to occupied Azania, which the racists call the Republic of South Africa, we of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania face a formidable task. First and foremost, education for black children in racist South Africa is neither free nor compulsory. For the whites it is both free and compulsory. The added disadvantage is that even if parents are able to pay for the education of their children, the type of education—specifically designed under the name of 'Bantu education'—clearly aims at creating a wage slave rather than a self-respecting human being.

The uprising by the students, popularly known as the Soweto Uprising, had its roots and origin in the imposition of Bantu education.

Our struggle, therefore, is not just to demand the right to education but also the correct type of education. Given the fact that we shall not get the desired type of education for our children as long as our country remains in the clutches of the fascist-colonialists, we have no option but to formulate and put into practice a completely new education process. This new process must: (a) eradicate the subservient complex indoctrinated into the black child by the racist system; (b) expose the African child to the rich heritage of accumulated knowledge which is the property of mankind

as a whole; (c) lay emphasis on those aspects of education which require priority; (d) take into account the fact that occupied Azania is an industrially developed country and needs highly trained technical manpower; and (e) introduce a strong bias towards combining theory and practice.

Finally, it is therefore necessary to make an exhaustive analysis of all the educational and training facilities that are offered in a community.

The Pan Africanist Congress appeals to all the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations and all African states to see that a start is made on an all-round and complete reform of the educational system with the effective participation of the oppressed masses in Azania.

Delivered by: E. N. Mfaxa
(Director of Education,
Manpower and Development),
Pan Africanist Congress
(Azania)

4. List of participants

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