A window open on the world

The UNESCO Courier

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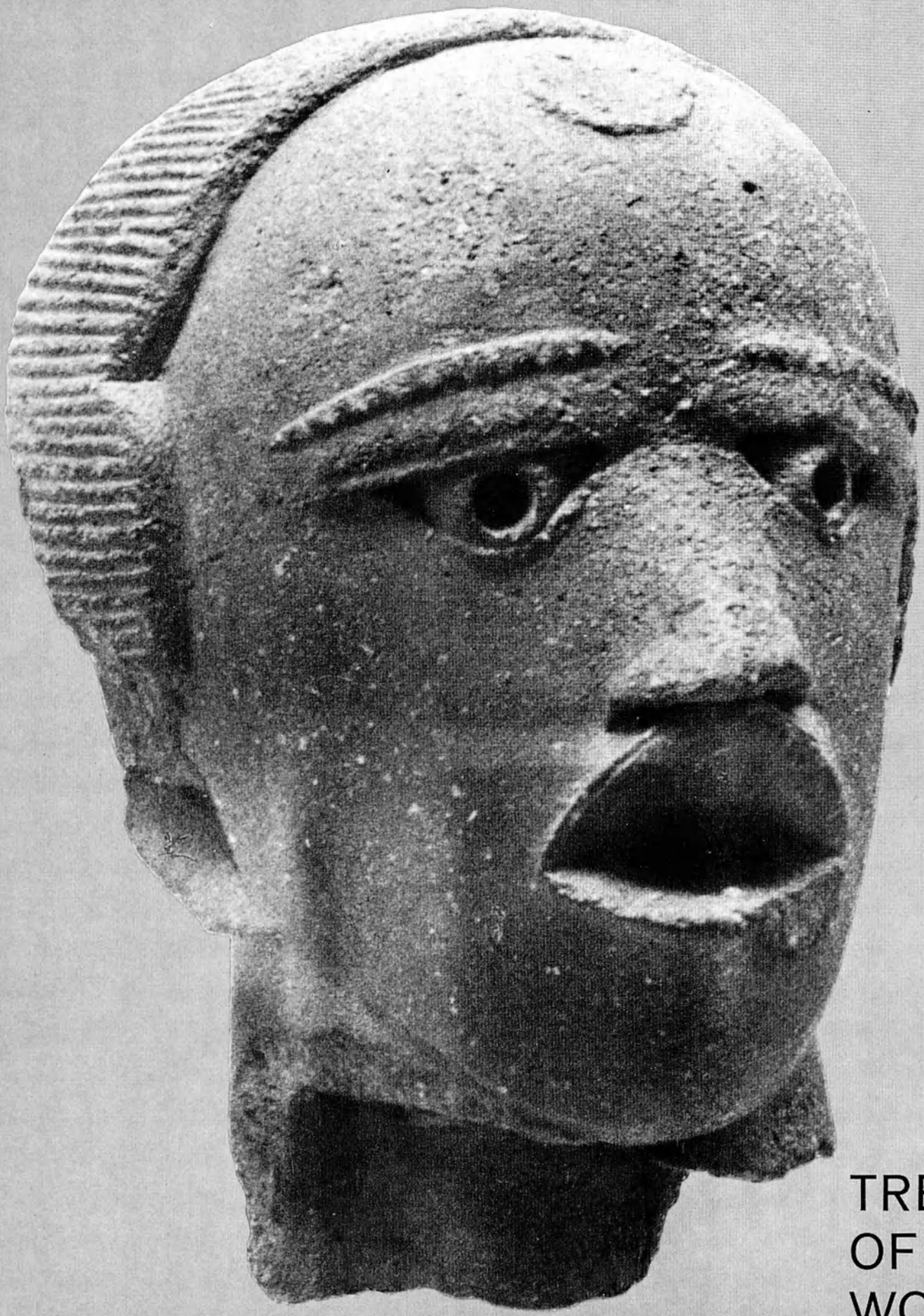
Africa and the African genius



TREASURES OF WORLD ART

17

From Africa's ancient past

This striking, nearly life-size terracotta head was fashioned by an African sculptor some 2,500 years ago. It was discovered in a tin mine in northern Nigeria and is now in the Jos Museum (Nigeria). Excavations have revealed hundreds of heads, animal figures and fragments of statues—the art of a vanished civilization, today known as the Nok Culture from the name of a village 150 kilometres (100 miles) from Jos.

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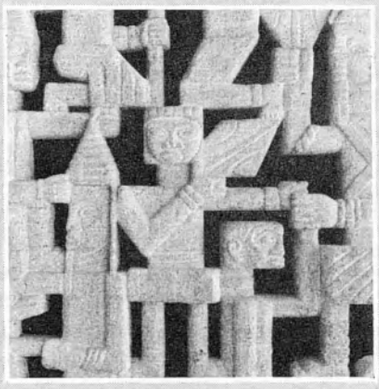
Africa and the African genius

Photo © Paul Almasy



N° 6 - 1967 MC 67-1-225 A

Cover photo

This concrete high relief in Lagos is the work of a 39-year-old Nigerian sculptor, Festus Omo Idehen. The son and grandson of the noted artists of Benin —his grandfather decorated the famous palace of Benin—he studied art and architecture in Nigeria. His works have been exhibited in Europe and the United States. Some of his sculptures adorn buildings in Nigeria and Great Britain.

In the course of the past sixten years no fewer than thirty-five independent states have emerged in Africa (see colour map, centre fold). The transformation of the political and economic map of Africa has been accompanied by unprecedented changes in education, science and culture and a new awareness of its people to the growing role that this vast continent is destined to play in the comity of nations. This issue of the Unesco Courier is devoted to only a few of the crucial questions pre-occupying the leaders and thinkers of Inter-tropical Africa today. All the articles have been written by prominent writers and authorities from Africa itself: Gabriel d'Arboussier (Senegal), K. Onwuka Dike (Nigeria), Ezekiel Mphahlele (South Africa), Pathé Diagne (Senegal), N. C. Otieno (Kenya) and Ekpo Eyo (Nigeria). Each author has attempted to examine his subject in the perspective of the newly-independent states of Africa as a whole, and in the light of the new ferment of ideas and attitudes and the renaissance which characterize the genius of African thought and culture today.

BIRTH OF A NEW AFRICA

by Gabriel d'Arboussier

EIGHT years ago the Unesco Courier published a special issue on Africa's past (Oct. 1959) which drew aside the curtain of ignorance that history had apparently draped around this continent, calling it *Terrae Incognitae*—just before it emerged onto the international stage in the 1960s.

The number was a timely incursion into the past for Africa was becoming "fashionable" and everyone was talking about it though not always with the best of knowledge.

One thing that strikes me today in comparing the 1959 issue with the present one is the difference in authors. Those who wrote on Africa's past were Europeans. In this number every article is by an African.

GABRIEL D'ARBOUSSIER *of Senegal is an Under-Secretary of the United Nations and Executive Director of the U.N. Institute for Training and Research. Jurist, statesman and diplomat, he was Senegal's Minister of Justice (1960-1962) and helped to draw up his country's Constitution. In 1960 he headed Senegal's delegation to the United Nations and while ambassador to France (1963-1964) was Senegal's permanent delegate to Unesco. He is a member of the Executive Council of the Institute of Studies for Economic and Social Development at the University of Paris. He is the author of many studies, including* L'Afrique vers l'unité *(Towards African Unity).*

One's first reaction on looking at the immense platform that constitutes the African continent is surprise at its extreme diversity, but in my opinion this is only a first impression. Constrasting with it is the other factor, the transformations which have swept 300 million inhabitants forward in a movement which, though it may take different forms in different places, is nevertheless a general one.

In his treatise on peace and war among the nations (1), Raymond Aron says: "...every social science problem should be examined from three points of view:

- the arrangement of the data available,
- the selection of the problems bearing on the social factor studied,
- distinguishing between constant and accidental factors.

It is from this threefold point of view that I should like to try to present the African continent, which a French geographer, Jacques Weulersse, has described as "a giant question mark on the flank of the Old World."

The oneness of our world means that nowadays we can no longer examine the problems arising in one part without first taking the facts of the international scene into account. And there are four international facts that concern Africa very closely.

First in importance is the world situation, which is such that two great powers, the "Big Two", seem to have an almost decisive influence on world events.

The second is the European situation, and this undoubtedly is the one that concerns the whole of Africa more particularly.

The third, which perhaps does not yet seem to have a very definite effect on the destiny of Africa, is China, with its 700 million people, who in a few years will be 1,000 million; the African continent has only 300 million, in an area of 30 million square kilometres.

The fourth international fact is the appearance of the "Third World", a fundamental factor in world evolution today.

To these primary factors several others must be added, which are not simply matters of fact, for they may perhaps be said to introduce a new political concept into the relationships

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(1) "Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations", Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.

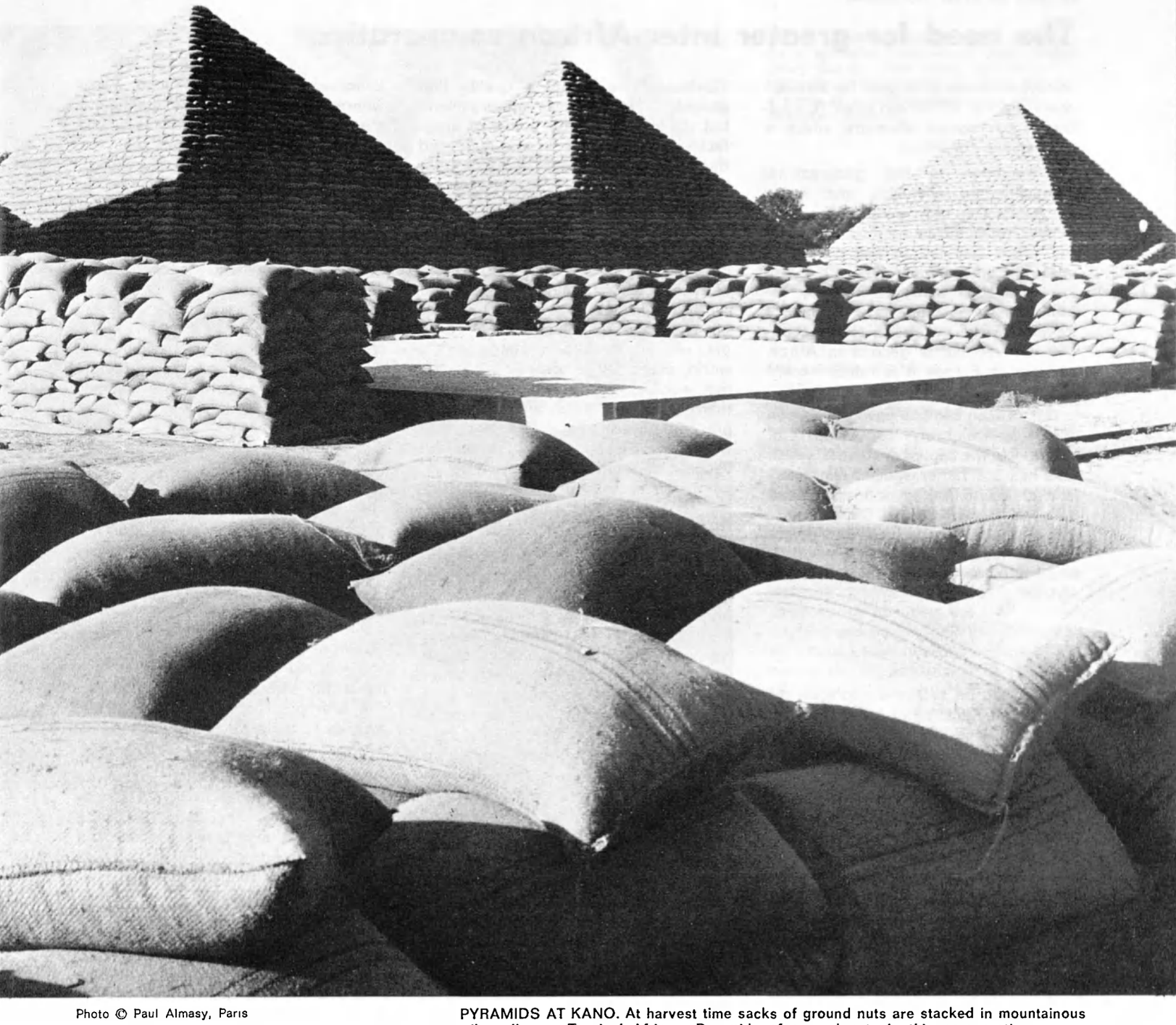

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

PYRAMIDS AT KANO. At harvest time sacks of ground nuts are stacked in mountainous piles all over Tropical Africa. Pyramids of ground nuts in this co-operative depot at Kano, Nigeria, symbolize not only prosperity but also Africa's dependence on foreign trends and foreign trade. Because the major part of Africas's work has been devoted to producing export crops, to the detriment of its own food production, it now depends for almost 80 per cent of its subsistence on imports.

between peoples. One is the vast wave of decolonization that has swept over Africa in the past few years. Broadly speaking, the end of the colonial system began after the Second World War. Only a few years ago Africa was almost entirely under colonial rule, and now it has become a continent of independent states in search of their own future. This fact entirely changes the concepts of relationships between peoples.

Those relationships may be established either on the basis of the rivalries we knew in former times, or on that of essential co-operation between all the existing states. The policy of hegemony formerly applied to the African continent is now being transformed into a policy of co-operation, a new factor of the greatest importance.

In my opinion, these are the essential facts on the international scene that we must keep constantly in mind when we are considering this immense continent.

But within this general context there are other more specifically African factors. First, there is the great size of Africa which, no doubt because it is a clearly defined unit, appears smaller on the map than the vast spaces we see on maps showing Europe and its prolongation towards Asia.

Then there are the 300 million people, lost, one might almost say, in Africa's 30 million square kilometres. In company with South America, Africa is no doubt one of the continents with the lowest population density. Not only has it a low density but also a striking inequality of distribution. In the desert regions there are 0.4 inhabitants per square kilometre, whereas

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The need for greater inter-African co-operation

in certain areas of Nigeria for instance there are 40, 50, 60 and even 70 inhabitants per square kilometre, which is outstanding for Africa.

In addition to this geographical inequality, an economic and social inequality has now arisen. The now familiar exodus from the countryside to the towns has led to the growth of sprawling cities in countries with a very low population density. Recently established states often have capitals of inordinate size in relation to the country. I think this is general in Africa, whereas in Europe it is rather exceptional.

Our African capitals have often been compared—relatively speaking, of course—to the capital of Austria, which also has the rather special characteristic of being like an enormous head on a rather small body. The combination of these geographical and demographic facts leads one to wonder whether there is one Africa or several Africas.

AFRICA'S geographical zones do in fact differ very greatly. There is a vast difference between the Mediterranean coast and the Guinean coast (Guinean in the sense of the Gulf of Guinea and not the country of Guinea), and between the savanna countries, even in a group like West Africa that has nevertheless come to be considered as a single entity.

There are great differences, too, between northern Niger and southern Nigeria, between the Djerma and the Somono of the Niger and the Ibo of Nigeria, between the Malinke, the Fan and the Ashanti. Differences too between the Fula herdsmen and the Sarakolle, the Battutsi of the Congo and the forest men of the Gabon.

So we see the outlines of very different Africas, different in their geography, their peoples and their civilizations. Differences of civilization exist between the men of the Sahara and the men of the Sahel, bordering the desert, between those of the savanna and those of the forest. Yet we should not let these differences, real though they are, prevent us from perceiving the great unity, or rather several major unifying factors, that exist in this vast continent.

First let us come back to the economic and social factors and look at the important unity Africa possesses because it is a developing continent. Obviously this is not a quality that should be stressed as an argument, but we are looking for points of unity, factors of unification in this huge and diverse continent with its extraordinarily varied countryside and its great variety of peoples.

There is a second factor. Africa is a developing continent that was under colonial rule for a very long time and its communities have only quite recently acceded to a modern way of life and statehood. Apart from Ethiopia, one of the oldest states in the world, and a few embryonic kingdoms that were able to subsist in the northern part of Africa, almost all the present sovereign powers are new ones, and almost all the states are "apprentice states". That is a factor permitting some generalization in talking of the African continent.

There is one last point which seems to me extremely important. Africa, which except on the outer fringes had little contact with the outside world, had developed internal civilizations based on a community way of life that is the most outstanding feature of the social structure of these countries as a whole. So we find that civilizations which appear very far removed from one another because of differences in their geography, climate or historical past, are very near to each other as regards the community way of life adopted by their peoples.

Indeed, when we speak to a farmer from Senegal, or from Ubang-Shari, or Chad or the Congo (Kinshasa) and see how he lives, how the various age groups in his country are organized, how the land is divided or the income from collective production distributed among the different members of the group, we find everywhere the same community basis, which, incidentally, is reflected in the cultural life that is itself one of the great unifying factors in this continent.

The cultural aspect is perhaps one of the most important that we should consider. Alongside the considerable variety of agrarian civilizations and social structures, there has emerged a concept of life and of the future of man and his relationship to cosmic forces, that is one of the essential characteristics of the cultural outlook of the African, in spite of the striking differences in colour of skin between the Berber, the Moor, the Fula or the Sara and the Malinke.

They all hold to the same concepts as their ancestors. This provides an extremely important background, expressed in religions terms by the animism that is to be found everywhere, at any rate below the line of the Sahara. Where neither the Islamic nor the Christian religion has yet penetrated, we find a set of religious beliefs that are all related to, all branches of, this animist conception.

Broadly, these are the few basic factors that give us a more exact view of the African continent; a continent in which the immense variety of ways of life and the extraordinarily different concepts of social organization that characterize it do not preclude the existence of a few fundamental factors binding all together in a common destiny.

WITH this view of Africa in our minds, how are we to make a selection from among the problems—the task which now faces both the leaders and the peoples themselves in African countries? I think we must classify the problems as political, economic, social and cultural. This is in line with the dominant ideas now coming to the fore in these young states. The first great objective for each of them is to build up national cohesion.

Most of these states have been formed on territories that were not national territories and had not constituted nations. That is perhaps the greatest difference between Africa and Europe. In Europe the State sometimes emerged from the cohesion that a group of peoples had already been able to achieve among themselves and had then wished to express, first in their relations with the outside world, by constituting themselves as states; in Africa the situation is exactly the reverse.

Africa has states that have been constituted without any national basis and states that are trying to achieve national cohesion at the very time when, throughout the world, national sovereignty is confronted with the movement towards the constitution of large economic groupings, made necessary by the new international division of labour, the expansion of markets, and all the new functions that economics obliges the State to perform.

The second consideration is that these states, wishing to achieve nationhood, are faced with the fact of the absolute necessity of inter-African co-operation, for they have very quickly realized that modern economic laws and the requirements of economic

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

African technician adjusts studio lighting for a television transmission from Abidjan (Ivory Coast). Five years ago Africa had only six television transmitters. Today a score of countries operate national television stations.

development make it impossible for them to attain their objectives within the narrow framework of their own states, and that they must therefore agree among themselves and set their course towards inter-African co-operation.

The third consideration is that nowadays everyone, the world over, is talking of economic development. This idea seems to be new but is perhaps in fact not so very new. Economic growth has often been confused with economic development. I think that when, for some etymological reason, people try to classify countries into developed and developing, they should recognize that all countries, whatever their level of development, are constantly developing; each is always trying to do better.

The largest states, the largest economic groups are formed nowadays precisely because of this desire to achieve a still greater degree of economic development. But Africa entered modern life at the very time when this problem and this notion of economic development were elevated to the rank of theories. The notion of economic development was immediately taken over by all these states and made the *leitmotif* of all their claims.

After the claim for independence has come the claim for economic development; having claimed the right to speak on equal terms with others, states are now claiming the right to live like others, to have the same means of social, economic and cultural development, and economic development is obviously one of the most important problems affecting these countries today.

Economic development brings all these states face to face with the necessity of international co-operation. For today it is absolutely essential for them to have understandings with each other, to regroup themselves, to have inter-African co-operation. They have understood that they cannot develop if they do not have relations with the outside world.

After an initial tendency to turn inwards, after showing a certain desire to break away from all its past foreign relations, Africa is now perhaps being swept forward by a new movement. But there is a danger of abandoning the concern that is expressed in the old proverb: "God helps those who help themselves". It may well be true that Africa's development depends on international relations, but it will depend above all upon the work of her citizens and on the "will to economize" as Arthur Lewis has termed one of the essentials of economic development. Work is the basis of development in any country. The world's highly developed countries reached their present state only after years and centuries of suffering, patience and hard work.

At the political level the problem facing the African states today is that of independence and the need for international co-operation. They first need to understand that the best way of assuring their independence is not to isolate themselves. Independence is not only the independence of a few leaders, a few families or a few social classes, but of the whole population. Today this independence is exercised in an atmosphere of world interdependence.

As regards internal organization—and here we have another common factor—It is noteworthy that African countries have been entirely free from the conflicts that occurred in Europe in former times between the written and the unwritten law, between the written constitution and the absence of any constitution. Today there seems to be a general movement leading all the African states first towards the achievement of a written constitution designed to establish authority.

Why this concern with a written constitution and why such a reaction against custom? In Europe the law, by its form, seemed to be the force that operated most strongly against

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the imperative social evolution that was taking place, whereas custom, seemed more fully to meet the need for evolution. The disadvantage, it may be said, is that the desire to evolve is so great that the constitution is changed rather too often. This is, admittedly, a fairly serious danger lurking on our path, but I think we should not exaggerate its importance.

Another problem is foreign policy. Immediately after attaining independence, African countries were tempted by neutrality and neutralism to the point where a series of different terms was invented, ranging from negative neutralism to positive neutralism. This was simply an expression of the desire to avoid being tied to one bloc or another.

Today that attitude is being somewhat reversed. Neutralism is gradually losing ground. Africa is realizing that her fate is bound up with that of every part of the world, that there cannot be an isolated African island. In its foreign relations, instead of being a stake in the rivalries between the Great Powers, Africa would like to be a place where the international co-operation that has become necessary in the world of today is practised,

Concerning economic, social and cultural factors, I should like to point out that Africa is in the process of making an inventory of her own economic resources. She is trying to find out whether, by her own means, she can bring her traditional economy up to the point of "take-off", so as to embark on a modern economic system or whether she needs fairly substantial assistance from abroad to reach this stage.

Africa realizes that both these things are necessary. Intensive work must be done by the Africans themselves, and above all some thinking is called for on the subject of Africa's economy, so as to free her economic development from complete dependence upon foreign trends and foreign trade, as has been the case so far.

Photo © Hoa-Qui, Paris

8 This imposing monument in the main square of Lomé, capital of the Republic of Togo, commemorates the country's accession to independence on April 27, 1960.

ONE of the characteristics of Africa is that the visible and calculable part of its national income is largely made up of receipts from exports abroad. A consequence of this state of affairs, which is extremely dangerous for Africa, is that the major part of Africa's work has been devoted to the production of goods destined for sale abroad. The share of food production necessary for subsistence has been sacrificed, with the paradoxical result that a continent that could be almost self-supporting, today depends for almost 80 per cent of its subsistence on imports from abroad.

We need only recall that Senegal, which could produce rice and millet for its subsistence (and formerly did so) now imports huge amounts of rice from Burma, Siam, Cambodia and South Viet-Nam each month, and at the same time is compelled to sell its groundnut oil abroad because its population consumes only a very small part of what is produced! A reversal of that trend would help to constitute internal economies and internal markets that would provide backing for Africa's foreign trade.

In my opinion, this building up of internal markets is the best means of attracting capital investments. Of course, political declarations and legal guarantees for capital investments can be given, but the best safeguard for

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Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

Numerous scientific institutions are helping to prepare the General History of Africa, particularly the network of institutes of African studies set up with Unesco's assistance in ten African countries. Their contribution to the historical studies will include the recording and analysis of the oral tradition. This work has a high priority since the keepers of these traditions are probably the last generation which can provide the data needed by historians. Above, interior of an ultra-modern library building at the University of Ibadan (Nigeria).

Photo © "Abbia", Yaoundé

KENNETH ONWUKA DIKE, *the Nigerian historian and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan (Nigeria), is Scientific Director of the Unesco project for a General History of Africa. Professor Dike was chairman of the International Congress of Africanists which held its first meeting at Accra (Ghana) in 1962 under the sponsorship of Unesco. A distinguished authority on historical research and on higher education in Tropical Africa, Professor Dike has written many studies, including "Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885" (Oxford University Press, 1956) and "Origins of the Niger Mission" (Ibadan University Press, 1957).*

Last month the Unesco Courier reported on the Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind now in course of publication in various languages under Unesco's auspices. Another international publishing project of unprecedented scope and importance will be the General History of Africa. Unesco's General Conference approved the idea in 1964 and the preliminary stage was completed last year with the appointment of Professor K. Onwuka Dike, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, to be Scientific Director of the project.

The preparation and publication of the History of Africa is scheduled to take ten years (1965-1975), for which Unesco will contribute $ 500,000. Work will be undertaken in collaboration with the International Congress of Africanists (an organization created in 1962 with Unesco help) and many other international and national scientific and historical institutes of African studies.

The General History of Africa will comprise several volumes and will represent the most comprehensive work on Africa's past ever attempted. An abridged edition designed for a wider readership is also planned. This unique venture will mobilize the combined research of historians, archaeologists, linguists, ethnologists and other scholars from Africa and other continents.

The History of Africa will be not only an account of events and political institutions, but also of countless other aspects of Africa's past: the spread of techniques, the migrations of populations, the influence of caravan routes and trade, and the various other cultural, commercial and social interrelations between North Africa and Tropical Africa.

The emergence of independent African states has awakened everywhere in the world (including Africa itself) a need to know and understand the peoples of Africa and their contributions to universal culture. The General History of Africa, it is hoped, will help to fill an important gap in our knowledge of this great continent and thereby foster better international understanding between the peoples of all countries. Here, Professor Dike reviews recent developments in the study of African history.

THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF AFRICA'S HISTORY

by K. Onwuka Dike

IT is something of an irony that, although written sources on the history of many parts of the African continent antedated the Christian era, African History as an academic discipline, is largely a post World War II development.

This statement is particularly true of Africa South of the Sahara. Written sources abound on Mediterranean Africa from the days of the Carthaginians, the Romans and the Byzantines, on Ethiopia since the introduction there of Christianity in the fourth century A.D., on Africa north of the tropical forest since the eleventh century, on the coast of West Africa since the fifteenth century and on the larger part of the continent since the beginning of the nineteenth century, through the accounts and journals of geographers, explorers, missionaries and colonial administrators.

This is not to say that scholars paid no attention at all to Africa before the Second World War. Academic interest in Egyptian and North African civilization is of long standing, but North African history was looked at mainly as part of Asian history and its important links with Africa South of the Sahara were hardly ever studied and assessed.

Indeed, individuals and organizations had scholarly insight into the languages and ethnography of the southern portion of the continent. But none of these organizations was primarily concerned with African history, which until recently, remained beyond the intellectual horizons of the universities. Nor were the considerable writings of administrators and social anthropologists between the Wars generally prompted by the necessity for the administration to understand the African way of life and to investigate the root-causes of African discontent and riots, geared to African history.

Although in the last century Russian explorers like Eduard Ivanovich Eykhval'd and A. V. Yeliseyew contributed to our geographical knowledge of Africa north of the Sahara, it was not

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Vast untapped source material

until after 1952 that African Studies, generally, began to receive serious attention in the Soviet Union. As late as 1956 none of the one thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven historical associations and agencies in the United States and Canada was remotely concerned with the study of any part or aspect of Africa.

In Britain a few years ago, the authorities of the University of London were very sceptical when a degree course in African History was first mooted and waited until 1963 before establishing a Chair of African History. Perhaps in the academic world today, Professor Trevor Roper of Oxford University is not alone in his view that African History is no more than "the unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe."

THE great majority of the three hundred million inhabitants of this continent are descendants of those who have lived on it for several thousand years. The story of these peoples and the vast land they inhabit represents a very considerable part of the history of human society. The actions of Africans have not only shaped the pattern of human history on this continent, but have also played their part in the development of the civilizations of the New World, Europe and Asia.

The real scientific study of history in the modern sense of that term may be said to have started in Africa with the work of the famous Tunisian historian of the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldun. He emphasized the great importance of sociology to history, describing the past largely by observing the interaction of state and society and by analyzing the development of the various elements of society.

Unfortunately, his work has, until recently, had too little influence on the study of history, for the medieval world was little concerned with history, preferring theology, law and rhetoric. It is true that since the eighteenth century Europe has paid a great deal of attention to the study of history. But because of the abundance of written documentary evidence, her scholars adopted, not the sociological method of Ibn Khaldun, but the legal and the biographical, concerning themselves mainly with the decrees, wars and politics of kings.

When, in the nineteenth century, this approach began to be broadened to take account once again of social and economic factors, documentary evidence had become so overwhelmingly important for the European scholar that he tended to equate written documents with history. He began to take the absence of documents to mean the absence of history, the absence of any events worthy of historical study.

Under the colonial regimes, this view of history flourished in Africa. It bolstered up the colonial ruler's propaganda that the African had no history worthy of record and that the history of the European rulers constituted the sum total of African history.

Needless to say that this view of history greatly hindered the development of African historiography, for undoubtedly, there is a dearth of documentary material on African history. And as long as African historians were brought up in the traditions which regarded documentary evidence as the sole material for historical analysis, they were working in a difficult circumscribed position. Either they produced only what may be called chronicles or they got carried away by flights of fancy and wrote polemics in place of history.

Fortunately, the writing of African history has made some progress in the last few years. The identification of history with the abundance of records has been proved false. There is now no need to belabour that Africa has a history worthy of study at all levels of intellectual discipline.

More than that, it is now generally accepted that the history of Africa must be the history of the African peoples themselves—that their actions, not the actions of the invaders, must be the focus of African history. Each new work, each new edition of older works, shows increasing consciousness of this point of view.

EVEN now that we have become more conscious of the proper subject matter of African history, we are still faced with the problem of the material at our disposal. The written material gathered so far on African history is not only scanty, it also consists largely of evidence by outsiders either in the European languages or Arabic. The bulk of it exists in the metropolitan archives of colonial powers, and the material tells us much more about the actions and intentions of the invaders than of the action and intentions of the Africans themselves.

Because this external evidence is still the principal source, the proper writing of African history continues to be inhibited. In spite of the increasing desire of many historians to describe properly the role of Africans, the actions of the invaders still remain disproportionately large in African history. Outmoded and untenable myths continue to dominate the interpretations of the African past. I need to give only two examples of these myths.

First, there is the Hamitic hypothesis, the disreputable theory that Negroes have made no contribution to human progress, that "the civilizations of Africa are the civilizations of the Hamites." This theory, based largely on the scanty Arabic sources and a dubious interpretation of some legends of origin in Africa, continues to be canvassed in spite of the criticism of scholars like Greenberg, in spite of the clear evidence of Negro contributions to civilization, including some of the best known plastic arts in the history of the world.

Secondly, there is the attempt at a pseudo-economic interpretation of African history, which sees all social and political movements in Africa from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century as motivated solely by the slave trade. It is, if you like, another Hamitic theory, that nothing went on inside Africa in those centuries that was not connected with European trade along the coast.

ETHIOPIA'S

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

ANCIENT CIVILIZATION

There is evidence that a protohistorical Ethiopian civilization existed several thousand years before the Christian Era, though it left no monuments. About 2,000 years ago travellers from Egypt who penetrated to the Abyssinian highlands found a flourishing civilization and large cities. One of Ethiopia's best preserved monuments is the giant obelisk at Aksum. Standing 24 metres (nearly 80 ft.) high, it dominates the tombs of the kings of Ethiopia's Axumite Kingdom founded over 2,000 years ago. Ethiopia's ancient legends are still told graphically in brightly coloured paintings. Among the best known is the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and the birth of Menelik, first Emperor of Ethiopia, whom Ethiopians believe was the son of Solomon and the Queen. Painting, left, depicts the court of Emperor Menelik.

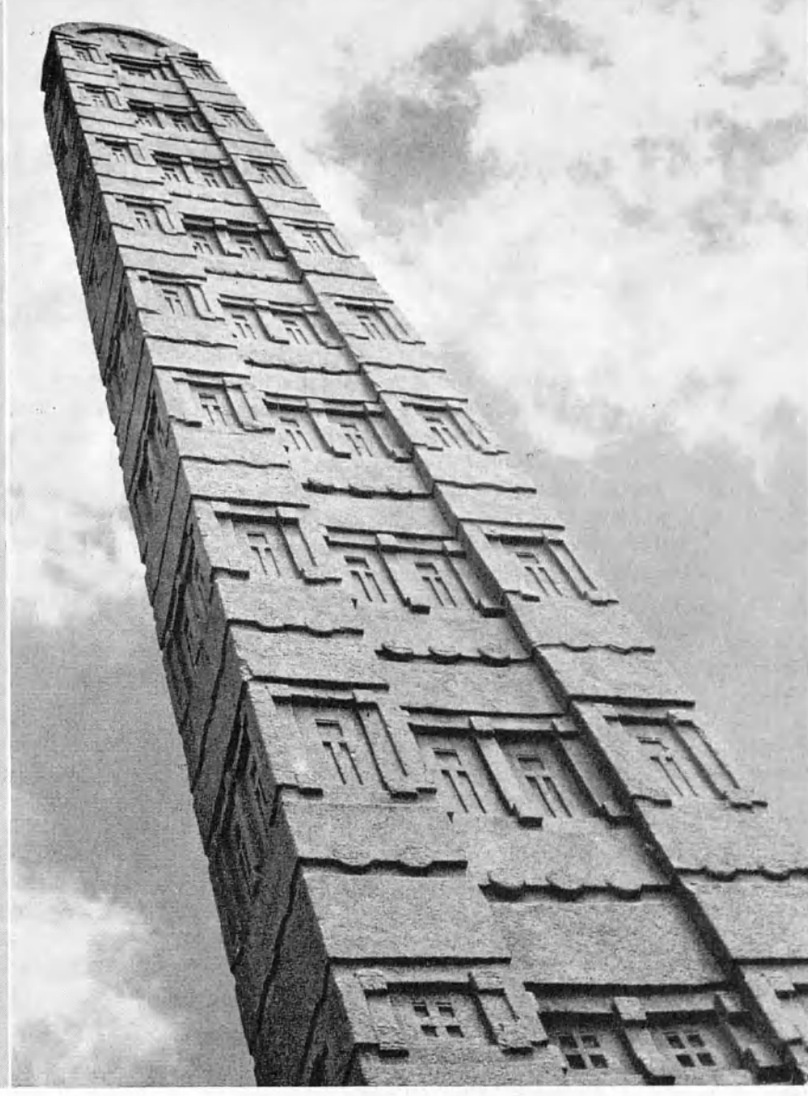


Photo © Holmes-Lebel, Paris - A. Howarth

To get behind those myths, to tackle seriously the writing of African history despite the scantiness and the nature of the written sources, is the problem of African historiography today.

My first suggestion is that we must accumulate at different centres in Africa the bulk of the existing documentary evidence on African history. In the past, the study of African history has been held up by the quite remarkable dispersal all over the world of the relevant source material. This material includes important African works taken out of the continent by colonial rulers and other visitors.

The centralization of this material, in Africa, will relieve scholars of the enormous trouble and expense involved in so many unnecessary journeys from one end of the world to the other, in quest of material for the study of our own land. Fortunately, we now live in the age of the microfilm and the zerox process, and what I am suggesting is therefore practicable.

But of course the accumulation of source material does not merely mean the recovery of documents at present preserved overseas. It means also, and most important, the recovery and organization of material at present lying disregarded and disorganized in Africa. This is a task of almost frightening immensity. On the side of written documentary material alone we are only just beginning to appreciate the size of the problem.

ONLY now is it being realized, for example, that colonial government, missionary and commercial records in European languages are not the only written sources for the history of the continent outside the North African coastlands. We have hardly yet begun to take into account the fact that many of the peoples of Subsaharan Africa have for several centuries been using Arabic as an official and literary language for many different types of written intercourse.

We have really only just learned also that the Swahili and Hausa languages (to name only two) have been written down extensively in the Arabic script, and may therefore, for all we know at present, have produced a further unsuspected source of written material.

Again how many of us also realize how far private African citizens such as the Efik Chief, Antera Duke, were using European languages for writing in their private intercourse as far back as the eighteenth century? The private papers of African families are a potential source of historical material which to date has hardly been investigated at all.

But private papers tend to be kept by their owners under even worse conditions than one finds in government offices, and their long-term preservation will undoubtedly depend on their deposit in proper archive repositories. Private owners of documents must therefore be persuaded to allow governmental or learned institutions to preserve their papers for them.

There is, again, I am sure, an overall lack of attention to the question of Arabic archives, both public and private. We are recovering material dating from the seventeenth century onwards in Northern Nigeria; but it is noteworthy that we are also recovering important private material in areas not usually associated with Arabic documentation such as southern Yorubaland.

At the same time we are conscious that we are only just beginning to exploit this field which holds out great promise for the future. I strongly suspect that all over West Africa it will be found that Arabic material exists in private hands on a scale hitherto quite unknown. Collection of written material in such languages as Kanuri,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

70 centres now exploring Africa's past

Hausa, Nupe, Fulani and so on, which have long used the Arabic script, has also to be attended to.

Yet the accumulation of written material is only a small part of the task which faces us, and it is perhaps the easiest to encompass if sufficient effort is made. There are many different types of unwritten sources which we have to study before we can hope to come near to an understanding of the African past. More and more attention is being paid to the value of oral traditions and social anthropological studies of African countries. But the importance of this material to the historian is vitiated by a lack of proper analysis.

There is need for a more systematic approach to the question of oral tradition. The anthropologists who pioneered this field of research are not themselves agreed on the proper interpretation of oral history. What is more they have worked too much in isolation from the written records and from the historians who have the information and the analytical training to make substantial contributions in this field. The same, of course, is true of the historians. Both in our training and in our research we have not always made enough use of the work of the social anthropologists.

RESEARCH into the African past has made tremendous strides in the last twenty years and in the learned circles African History has come into its own. For Africans historical research into their past was necessarily a concomitant of the political emancipation of a substantial portion of the continent.

African scholars are bringing to bear upon their investigation the vital background knowledge of their culture, their language and their institutions, they are in a position that enables them to fathom the documents beyond depths attained by non-African eyes, selecting those portions relevant to Africa and its peoples rather than concentrating on materials bearing only on European activities in Africa.

European and American scholars have lost no time in the quarrying and processing of the mines of information unveiled by archives in many parts of the world. By 1964 there had been founded sixty Centres and Institutes of African Studies in fourteen European countries and the United States. In the Soviet Union African Studies had been ably inspired by Professor D. A. Olderogge, an outstanding philologist whose works include *The Peoples of Africa* (1954), *The Hausa Language* (1954) and *Western Sudan in the 15th - 19 th Centuries* (1960).

In December 1959 an African Institute was organized within the Department of Historical Science in the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Between 1959 and 1961 alone, no less than four hundred and thirty-three Soviet publications on Africa appeared. Thanks to the late Professor Potekhin, first Director of the Africa Institute, interest in African Studies increased in the Soviet Union.

In the United States, where African History was not catered for in the *American Historical Review* until 1963, the African Studies Association was formed in 1957. At first dominated by linguists, ethnologists and social anthropologists, it has begun to inspire historical scholarship. In 1964 there were no less than twenty-five Centres of African Studies in the U.S.A. American Africanists have achieved much, particularly in Linguistics and Political Science.

In Britain the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, blazed the trail. This institution has accomplished a great deal in Linguistics and the history of Bantu Africa, under the leadership of Professor Ronald Oliver. A specialist approach was lately adopted in the University of Birmingham where the Centre of West African Studies concentrates on West Africa, under the direction of Professor John Fage.

In Africa, naturally, African and non-African historians in the universities are giving pride of place to African History more than anywhere else outside the continent. Learned journals devoted to local historical studies have multiplied and publications stepped up.

There are now at least sixty-six centres, all of which have the aim of studying some aspect of African society, history, law and culture. Scholars engaged in the task of rediscovering the African past know that African History has passed the stage of experiment, indeed in some regions of Africa the field is ripe unto harvest; the information unearthed is already enormous and the possibilities for further investigations are almost infinite.

It must be admitted, however, that there are still important gaps in our knowledge of African peoples and that in some regions, particularly in East and Central Africa a lot of work remains to be done before a definitive history of these areas can be comprehensively written. What is needed is not only the writing up of the history of those areas where research has progressed, but also the launching of planned research in regions where our knowledge is scanty. The two must go hand in hand. The future Unesco *General History of Africa* intends to lay emphasis on both aspects.

IT is gratifying to note that some of the problems raised have been surveyed by the International African Institute, which summoned a Conference of Africanists at Ibadan University in April 1964 to discuss some of these problems, and by the First International Congress of Africanists which met in Accra, Ghana, in 1962. The tasks before us are great, but not insurmountable; their solution will entail considerable financial outlay, time and the close co-operation of scholars of all disciplines.

If organized along the right lines the planned Unesco *General History of Africa* will serve to bring together scholars of all the disciplines relevant to the study of the African past. To achieve this objective it is imperative that a body of scholars should be set up, designed to channel the energies of the historians of Africa in tackling urgent problems of African historiography and in correcting erroneous assumptions about that past.

Take for instance, the general tendency of historians to isolate Africa north of the Sahara in a manner quite unhistorical. Indeed, rather than being a barrier the Sahara has from time immemorial been a bridge linking the north to the south. Although Mediterranean Africa has had contact with Mediterranean Europe and the Middle East for a very long time there has been cultural cross-fertilization, as well as economic and political connexions between Africa north and south of the Sahara. Both areas share some common problems, their distinctiveness in many respects notwithstanding. Any scheme for the writing of African history should be within the framework of the entire continent.

This is not to say that a regional approach to African history is undesirable or should be abandoned. In fact the most practical and most fruitful way of achieving maximum results is to consider the problems of African historiography in their regional context. But whilst these units are to be treated fully in their own right, they

Photo © Siegfried Sammer

The graceful hull of this fishing boat from Morondava, on the western coast of Madagascar, is an outstanding example of marine design. The craft is fitted with outriggers, traditionally used as stabilizers by many boat builders of Oceania. Though considered geographically as part of Africa, Madagascar has close ethnological, linguistic and cultural affinities with Oceania.

should be conceived as units within the organic whole of the African continent. I suggest the division of Africa into the following regions: North Africa including the Nile Valley, Ethiopia, The Sudanic Belt, West Africa, Central and East Africa and South Africa. Africanists within these regions would be able to compare notes on matters of common interest.

Perhaps the most important methodological problem posed by African historiography is the inevitability of a multi-disciplinary approach, particularly for the pre-colonial period in which written documents do not exist for the greater part of the continent. The historian of Africa cannot afford to work in isolation; he needs the aid of several other disciplines related to his subject. He should take seriously oral tradition and work hand in hand with linguists, archaeologists, social and physical anthropologists, orologists, and artists. And yet although the historian of Africa is fully aware of the vital value of other disciplines he still tends to ignore them. Until recently, it must be admitted that Africanists have tended to work along independent lines.

Up to now, then, no historical work on a massive scale has been attempted on a multi-disciplinary basis. One of course is aware of efforts in the Soviet Union to adopt this strategy, and of the Benin and Yoruba Research schemes in Nigeria. A carefully planned programme of the continental history of Africa on interdisciplinary lines is the need of the hour.

Much credit is due to the well-seasoned and understanding Africanists of the United States, Europe and the Soviet Union. But is has to be emphasized that the problems posed by African history are largely African, and therefore demand an African solution. The themes and emphasis of the researches of African historians show clearly that it is mainly from within Africa that the mainspring for the study of Africa can come.

This is as it should be. Africans have a special responsibility which outsiders cannot discharge. They are psychologically and emotionally more drawn than foreigners towards their continent and heritage. In the understanding of documents on African culture and institutions, in historical appreciation and use of oral tradition, in analysis of human drama in African society, African scholars have an advantage over others and are more likely to get at the root of the problem than non-Africans.

It is not implied that non-Africans have no major part to play in the rediscovery of Africa's past. Their resourcefulness and skill are required in the disciplines of Archaelogy, Linguistics and Art, in which they are pre-eminently qualified, for the elucidation, illumination and enrichment of our knowledge of African society and human drama in Africa over the last three thousand years.

Photo © Naud - Afrique Photo

AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE OLD AND NEW

Town planning and architecture are two fields in which the transformation of African ways of life is now being unmistakably revealed. Many countries already have the services of young African architect-planners whose work associates the most modern building techniques with working methods, resources and social needs of their regions. Until now home building in Africa was a "family affair" and produced a building which corresponded to the crafts and skills, needs and tastes of those who would occupy it. Village homes, in fact, are often models of architectural and aesthetic excellence. Today, as new forms of society develop, Africa's architects are called upon to evolve a style and an approach to housing and urban development that not only reflects tradition but has a functional modern utility.

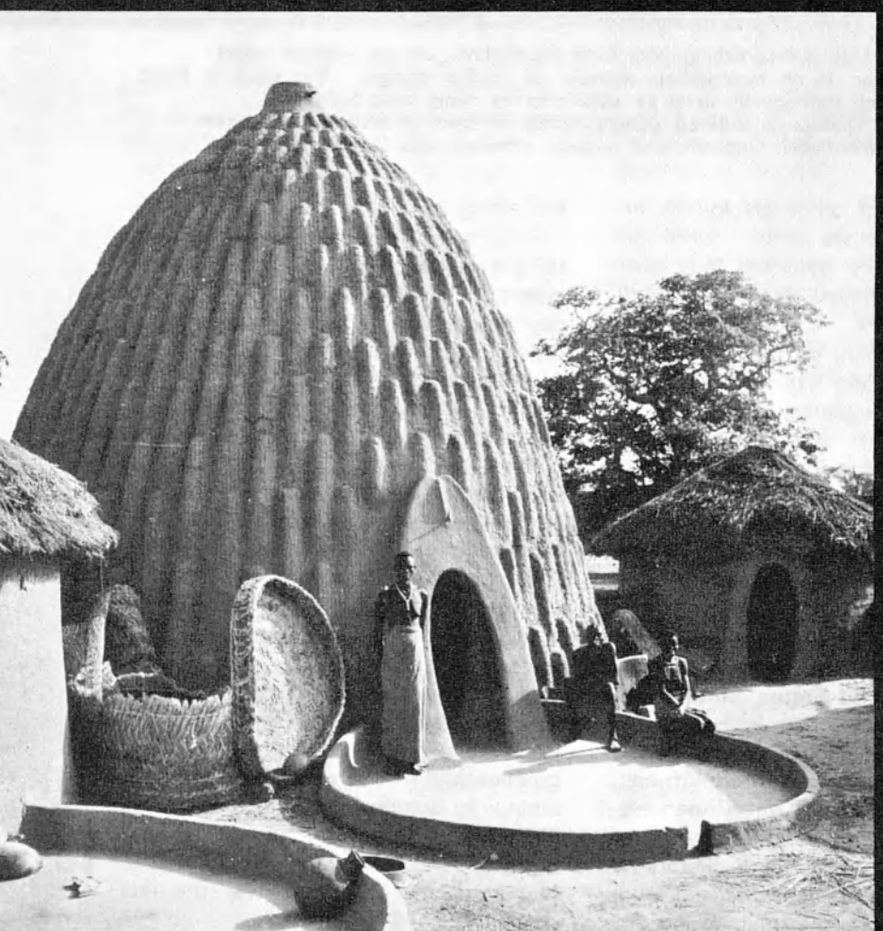


Photo © Hoa-Qui, Paris

Left, an ogival-shaped house in a Northern Cameroon village. The harmony of its lines and proportions reflects an architectural skill refined over many years and exploiting to the full the simple local materials.

Right, a clay-built arcade at a house in Lahinde (Cameroon). Here the traditional builder is revealed as an artist whose manipulation of light and shade creates harmonious compositions that change throughout the day.

Left, the imposing mosque at Djenna (Mali). It is built in the Sudanese style which characterizes the architecture of a vast area bordering the south of the Sahara and crossing the breadth of Africa.

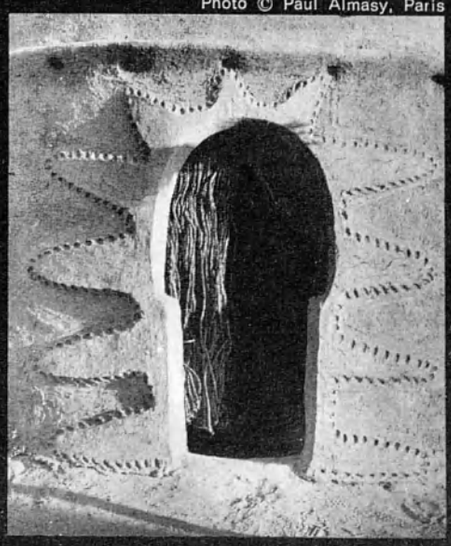
An administrative building in Lagos (Nigeria) designed by a young Nigerian architect, Oluwole Olusegun Olumuyiwa. After studying in Europe and several African countries, he set up his own agency in Lagos, and has since become co-director of Africa's first architectural review "The West African Builder and Architect". He has designed many of Nigeria's new buildings, particularly schools.

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

Photo © Griaule, Goldner

Below, doorway to a village house in the museum at Niamey (Niger). A typical example of the ultra-simple architectural techniques of the past, it is preserved as part of Africa's cultural heritage.

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris



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ARCHITECTURE *(Continued from page 15)*

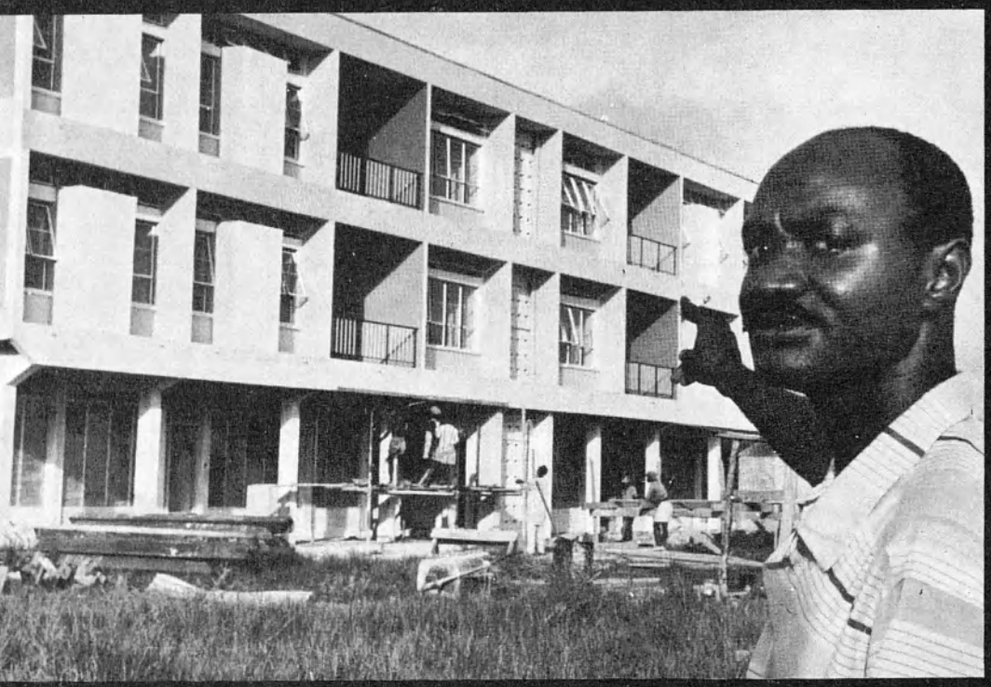

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

MORE SCHOOLS BETTER HOUSING

An African architect, H. Ekwuene of Nigeria (above) inspects final work on a new school for Lagos. Top, modern lines and traditional designs harmonize on another of his schools. Left, the architect and his staff study an apartment building project. It has been estimated that to put every child in Tropical Africa into primary school by 1980, at least 450,000 new classrooms will be needed. With this immense task in mind, Unesco in 1961 set up a regional educational building centre in Khartoum (Sudan) to advise African countries on school construction suited to their different climates, topography and population patterns.

EKPO EYO *is director of the Federal Service of Antiquities, Nigeria. He was formerly director of the Department of Archaeology, Jos Museum, Nigeria. Dr. Eyo's text was originally presented at the Dakar Symposium organized under Unesco auspices in connexion with the first World Festival of Negro Arts (April 1966). It is to be published by "Présence Africaine", Paris.*

WHY should we preserve our African works of art and craft? Why should we not spend whatever money we have on improving our living standards rather than on the preservation of works of art and craft which after all do not bring us any material benefit?

The answer is that the need for the preservation and study of works of art and craft cannot be over-emphasized in countries where written historical records are rare and recent. It is precisely because these things had not been done that the African has often been regarded as a man without a past, and as one still living in primitive savagery.

In Western countries, protective measures have long been taken for the preservation of works of art. In many countries national bodies have been created for this purpose and public museums opened whose functions include the collection and preservation of the cultural heritage. The British Museum, for instance, was opened to the public as early as 1795.

In Africa certain unavoidable circumstances militate against the natural preservation of works of art and craft. About 80 per cent of African works of art and craft are wood which does not survive the ravages of fire, fungus, termites, weather and worms. The oldest wood carvings are probably the ancestor (Ekpu) figures from Oron in Eastern Nigeria and yet they are said to be only 150 to 200 years old.

William Fagg, the British ethnologist, attributes the continuity of African art to the high rate at which termites eat up carvings as soon as they are made, so creating the need to produce new ones. But perhaps that is not the only reason, for continuity originates in families of carvers who train the younger generations as they come along. Yet it is true that a countless number of good works of arts and crafts which we may never know anything about have already perished in this way.

The most ancient and best preserved of African works of art are those that were made in metal, but even here cases are known where old brass

THE PROTECTION OF AFRICA'S ARTISTIC HERITAGE

by Ekpo Eyo

works have been melted down and recast.

In some cases where the owners of these works have tried to take care of them and save them from destruction, they have been ignorant of the scientific means of doing so. The people of Tada for instance have badly damaged their famous bronzes by frequently scrubbing them with sand.

But this is not the greatest danger to the preservation of works of art and craft. Such danger comes from the disintegration of the old social structure which was based on indigenous religion and a subsistence economy.

Africans are extremely religious people whose lives are marked at every point with rituals and ceremonies. Whether they live in highly organized kingdoms or in simple communities, individuals, families, lineages, villages and kingdoms have their own gods whom they consult in time of crisis. These gods which are intermediaries between them and the High God are usually sculptured in wood. In this way, millions of pieces of sculpture were produced.

But new converts often demonstrate their faith in the new religions by destroying those objects which were associated with their old faith.

In 1951, in the Western Region of Nigeria, a spiritualist movement known as Atinga crossed over from Dahomey and persuaded the chiefs and elders of the neighbouring Yoruba villages in the Egbado Division of Abeokuta Province to allow them to "clean up" their villages.

The Atinga priests claimed that they had the power to detect witchcraft and those who practise bad medicine. In this exercise, thousands of carvings, calabashes, metal objects and carved ivory, which were associated with various indigenous Yoruba religions were brought out and set on fire.

Only part of them was saved, thanks to the British District Officer who happened to be there and sent word to the Department of Antiquities which was able to rescue certain important pieces. Today the Atinga collection forms the largest single collection of works of art in the Nigerian museums.

If Africans have done little to preserve their works of art and handicraft, the awareness in Europe and America of the beauty of African art has drained the African Continent of most of what is left over from the ravages of white ants and other factors. From the time of the Punitive Expedition to Benin in 1897 and the visit of Leo Frobenius, Europeans and Americans have not ceased to collect any African works of art that have come their way.

It is of course not desirable that a nation should keep to herself all her works of art. Some of them should also be seen in other countries, not only for the enjoyment of the people in those countries but also to make possible the understanding of the culture which inspired such works and to confer prestige on their country of origin. But such transfers ought to be carried out legally, which is not always the case.

THE first thing that we must do, and some African states are already doing it, is to collect and preserve in museums, works of art and craft which are exposed to the dangers I have just outlined. And a museum is not only a place in which these objects will be safe, but also where they will be studied.

The preservation of works of arts and craft from countries undergoing rapid development has been discussed at three international conferences during recent years. At Neuchâtel in Switzerland in 1961, a meeting of museum experts from many parts of the world was held with Unesco's assistance to discuss the problems of museums and the conservation of museum objects from these countries.

The experts noted "the accession to independence of many countries has brought about increased awareness of the importance of the national heritage and the need for preserving it and turning it to account... At the same time the developing countries have seen the rapid disappearance of their cultural property to the benefit of foreign museums and even more to that of the antique market... More often than not these countries do not as yet possess legislation adapted to the circumstances, or the scientific personnel required for cataloguing, collecting and preserving the cultural property they want to prevent from being exported."

The experts also noted that the large scale construction works in the developing countries resulting from rapid economic and industrial expansion, entail the destruction of cultural and particularly archaelogical sites of national importance and the suppression of traditional cultures over wide areas, such as at the Kariba, Volta and Niger Dam areas.

They therefore recommended that each country should establish a national service which should draw up a list of objects of special value that warranted preservation, and should try to improve the legal standing of such objects which would ensure their physical conservation and prohibit their export, although the prohibition of export should not preclude the lawful circulation of these objects.

In August, 1964, Nigeria played host to a seminar on "The Role of Museums in Contemporary Africa", which was jointly sponsored by Unesco and Nigeria. The late Dr. Paul Coremans, the noted Belgian authority, in his paper on the physical and chemical conservation of museum objects in the tropics pointed out that various types of climate in Africa have a rapid and damaging effect, and that the ancient objects kept in Africa, which are mainly organic, are very sensitive to climatic factors. He therefore suggested that each country should create a national service for the preservation of its cultural heritage, including monuments, sites and museum objects.

He also suggested that within this national organization, a technical section should be set up, comprising primarily a "cultural laboratory" and one or more conservation workshops attached to this laboratory.

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The emergence of new forms of art

Finally, the Unesco General Conference which met in Paris in 1964, noting that "cultural property constitutes a basic element of civilization and national culture", stressed the fact that every state should protect cultural property within its territory against illicit export, import and transfer of ownership.

It recommended the adoption of appropriate measures to improve international co-operation in tackling this problem. Member states were advised to take steps to see that no import of cultural property is authorized until such property has been cleared from any restrictions in the exporting state. Museums were asked not to purchase works obtained through illicit export or transfer of ownership.

Among the measures recommended by the Unesco Conference were:

- That each state should set up a national service for the protection of cultural property.
- That each state should set up a fund or provide other means for the repurchase of important works of art.

Member states were called on to collaborate in facilitating the return of cultural objects which had been illicitly exported.

Here are some of the steps we in Nigeria have taken in the preservation of our works of arts and crafts.

In Nigeria, a law exists to check, and if need be to prevent, the export of antiquities. One of the definitions of an "antiquity" is "any work of art or craftwork, including any statue, modelled clay figure, figure cast or wrought in metal, carving, housepost, door, ancestral figure, religious mask, staff, drum, bowl, ornament, utensil, weapon, armour, regalia, manuscripts or document, if such work of art craftwork is of indigenous origin and:

- was made or fashioned before the year 1918; and
- is of historical, artistic of scientific interest, and is or has been used at any time in the performance and for the purposes of any traditional African ceremony."

This definition which may soon be modified, is embodied in the Antiquities Act of 1953.

Those who intend to export an antiquity must apply in the first place to the Director of Antiquities. If the object is found to be an antiquity but not very important, the Director of Antiquities is authorized to issue a permit for its export. All antiquities are photographed and listed so as to provide an accurate record of what works have left the country.

For more important antiquities, the Antiquities Commission or its subcommittee must see and determine by agreement whether or not to allow export. A would-be exporter is required to submit his objects at least three months before the date on which the antiquities should leave the country. In the case of an object for which a permit is withheld, the Department of Antiquities then offers to purchase it at a reasonable valuation. If this offer is refused the owner may be asked to declare what his intentions are concerning its subsequent custody.

The Department is also engaged in a campaign of acquisition of antiquities by purchases, loans and excavations. In addition, an intelligence system has been built up to deal with attempts organised overseas to export antiquities through local agents.

ALTHOUGH most African sculptured objects are religious in content, a good percentage of them are household, farming and fishing equipment based on a subsistence economy. With the introduction of Western science and technology, the economy has become diversified and Western products have become the new status symbols.

So a new art has emerged; art which is different from the old one both in concept and quality. The constant demand by the insatiable European appetite for exotic art has not produced more traditional artists; rather it has produced a lot of plagiarists who are cashing in on it by unauthorized copying of the old forms. The result is what Frank Mc Ewen has christened "airport art" and what Elsy Leuzinger refers to as "works without cultural roots or artistic content."

There are signs however that we may yet rise to the occasion. At Jos three years ago, a pilot project was jointly established by Unesco and Nigeria for the training of African museum technicians. Students from ten countries attend courses in English and French, which include documentation, photography, chemical conservation and mechanical repairs of museum objects.

Already three groups of technicians have been trained. Technicians, on returning to their respective countries, not only carry out preservation of works of art and crafts, but also stimulate the interest necessary for their appreciation.

Equally as important as the preservation of old works of art is the fact that African art can be preserved by encouraging and patronising contemporary artists. There is a tendency among art connoisseurs to regard earlier works of art as better than contemporary ones, but the latter are often equally good.

There are two categories of contemporary artists in Africa today. First, there are those who work in the traditional style though not necessarily from the same religious inspiration. This category includes, among others, the wood carvers of Nupeland and Yorubaland, the cement sculptors of the Yorubas and Ibibios and the Oyo calabash carvers.

The second category comprises those young artists who have had training at schools and colleges of fine art, therefore making use of European techniques and tools but deriving their inspiration from their traditional surroundings. They produce what might be called popular art.

It is not therefore surprising nowadays to find both the sophisticated and the ordinary Africans decorating their homes with works of art and crafts. There is no doubt that with this kind of appreciation and patronage the future holds out some good promise for African works of art and craft.

The future lies in the awareness that our culture and tradition are as rich as any other in the world. Since the present generation of adult Africans appear to have already grown away from their tradition and culture our only hope rests in the education of our children in the African ways of life.

Ministries of Education should introduce African studies into the school curricula and the universities should intensify search for more knowledge of the African past. More museums should be established where only a few or none now exist and craftsmen still at work should be encouraged and protected. This alone can save the African past from obscurity and preserve our ancient works of arts and handicrafts for posterity.

This strikingly modern African bronze figure, a work by the Nigerian sculptor Ben Enwonwu, adorns the façade of the museum of Lagos, federal capital of Nigeria.

Photo © Paul Almasy

The Unesco Courier

AFRICA 1967

Independent States

● Capitals

1 MOROCCO
● Rabat
Ind. 2.III.1956
12,960,000 inh.

2 ALGERIA
● Algiers
Ind. 5.VII.1962
12,300,000 inh.

3 TUNISIA
● Tunis
Ind. 20.III.1956
4,565,000 inh.

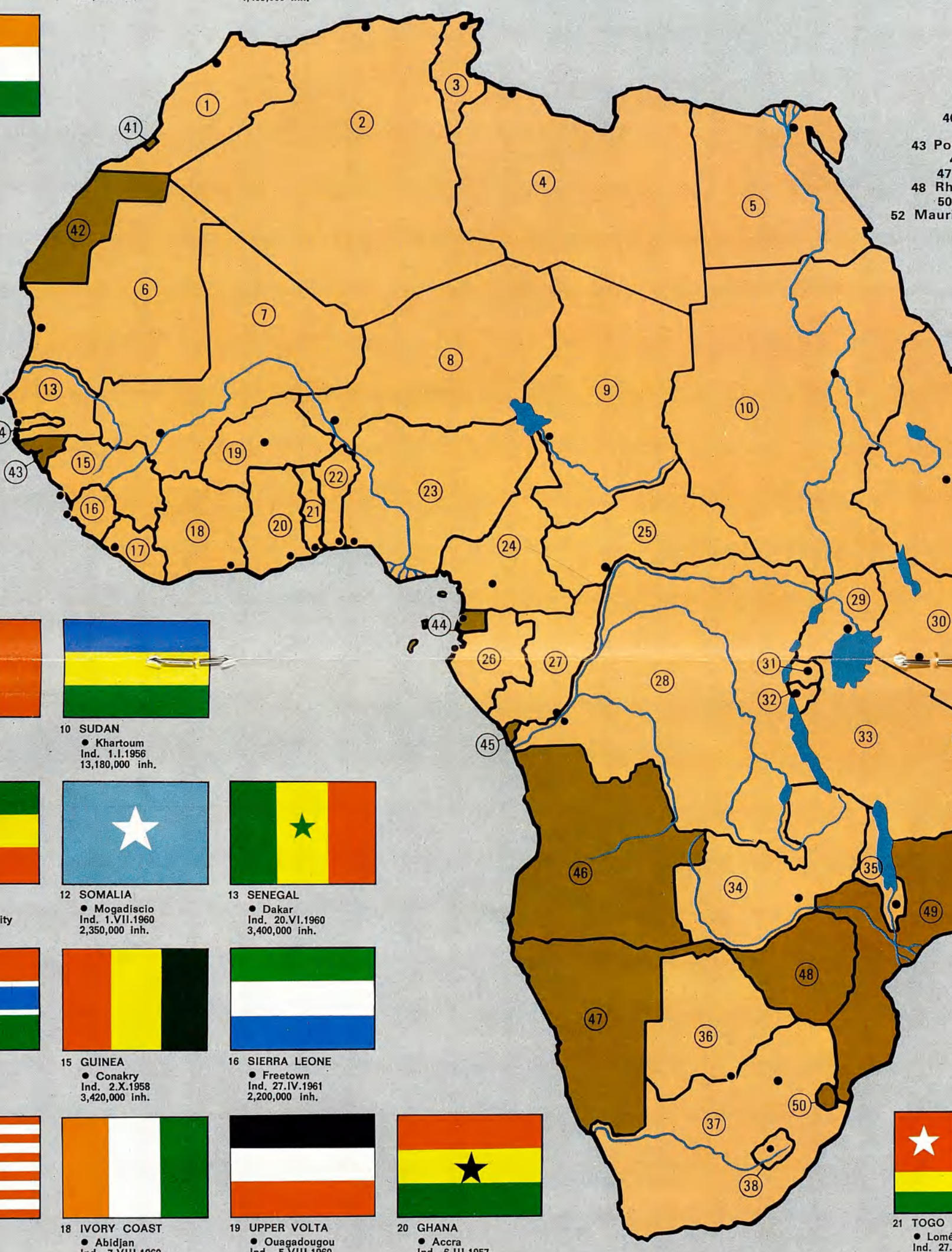
4 LIBYA
● Tripoli
Ind. 24.XII.1951
1,560,000 inh.

5 UNITED ARAB REP.
● Cairo
Ind. 28.II.1922
28,900,000 inh.

6 MAURITANIA
● Nouakchott
Ind. 28.XI.1960
780,000 inh.

7 MALI
● Bamako
Ind. 20.VI.1960
4,485,000 inh.

8 NIGER
● Niamey
Ind. 3.VIII.1960
3,250,000 inh.



Other territories
(in dark brown on map)

40 French Somaliland 41 Ifni (Sp.)
42 Spanish West Africa
43 Portuguese Guinea 44 Spanish Guinea
45 Cabinda (Por.) 46 Angola (Por.)
47 South-West Africa (Mand. of S.A.)
48 Rhodesia (Br.) 49 Mozambique (Por.)
50 Swaziland (Br.) 51 Reunion (Fr.)
52 Mauritius (Br.) 53 Comoro Islands (Fr.)

9 CHAD
● Fort-Lamy
Ind. 11.VIII.1960
3,300,000 inh.

10 SUDAN
● Khartoum
Ind. 1.I.1956
13,180,000 inh.

11 ETHIOPIA
● Addis-Ababa
Ind. since antiquity
22,200,000 inh.

12 SOMALIA
● Mogadiscio
Ind. 1.VII.1960
2,350,000 inh.

13 SENEGAL
● Dakar
Ind. 20.VI.1960
3,400,000 inh.

14 GAMBIA
● Bathurst
Ind. 18.II.1965
324,000 inh.

15 GUINEA
● Conakry
Ind. 2.X.1958
3,420,000 inh.

16 SIERRA LEONE
● Freetown
Ind. 27.IV.1961
2,200,000 inh.

17 LIBERIA
● Monrovia
Ind. 1847
1,041.000 inh.

18 IVORY COAST
● Abidjan
Ind. 7.VIII.1960
3,750,000 inh.

19 UPPER VOLTA
● Ouagadougou
Ind. 5.VIII.1960
4,750,000 inh.

20 GHANA
● Accra
Ind. 6.III.1957
7,600,000 inh.

21 TOGO
● Lomé
Ind. 27.IV.1960
1,603,000 inh.

22 DAHOMEY
● Porto-Novo
Ind. 1.VIII.1960
2,300,000 inh.

23 NIGERIA
● Lagos
Ind. 1.X.1960
56,400,000 inh.

24 CAMEROON
● Yaoundé
Ind. 1.I.1960
5,103,000 inh.

25 CENTRAL AFRICAN REP.
(form. Ubangi-Shari)
● Bangui
Ind. 13.VIII.1960
1,320,000 inh.

26 GABON
● Libreville
Ind. 17.VIII.1960
459,000 inh.

27 CONGO
● Brazzaville
Ind. 15.VIII.1960
826,000 inh.

28 DEM. REP. OF CONGO
● Kinshasa
Ind. 30.VI.1960
15,300,000 inh.

29 UGANDA
● Kampala
Ind. 9.X.1962
7,367,000 inh.

30 KENYA
● Nairobi
Ind. 12.XII.1963
9,104,000 inh.

31 RWANDA
● Kigali
Ind. 1.VII.1962
3,018,000 inh.

32 BURUNDI
● Bujumbura
Ind. 1.VII.1962
2,780,000 inh.

33 UTD. REP. OF TANZANIA
● Dar-es-Salaam
Ind.: 9-XII.1961 Tanganyika. 10.XII.1963 Zanzibar
Union: 26.IV.1964
10,325,000 inh.

34 ZAMBIA
(form. N. Rhodesia)
● Lusaka
Ind. 24.X.1964
3,600,000 inh.

35 MALAWI
(form. Nyasaland)
● Zomba
Ind. 6.VII.1964
3,900,000 inh.

36 BOTSWANA
(form. Bechuanaland)
● Gaberones
Ind. 30.IX.1966
543,000 inh.

37 SOUTH AFRICA
● Pretoria
Ind. 31.V.1910
17,474,000 inh.

38 LESOTHO
(form. Basutoland)
● Maseru
Ind. 4.X.1966
733,000 inh.

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Certain shades of colour may not conform exactly to the official specifications of these flags.

Trends in present-day African literature

by Ezekiel Mphahlele

Photo © Irmelin Lebeer

EZEKIEL MPHAHLELE, *taught English and Afrikaans in a Johannesburg high school until 1957 when he emigrated to Nigeria. There he taught English language and literature in the Department of Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Ibadan. He now lectures in English Literature at University College, Nairobi (Kenya). His short stories include two volumes "Man Must Live" (Cape Town 1947) and "The Living and the Dead" (Black Orpheus, Ibadan, 1960). His autobiography, "Down Second Avenue" (Faber and Faber, London, 1959) has been translated into eight languages.*

IN June 1962 a conference of African writers of English expression was held at Makerere University College in Kampala, Uganda. The conference had been called by Mbari Writers' and Artists' Club of Ibadan, sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Paris. This was the first get-together of its kind ever to be held anywhere in the world.

Top on the list of questions posed and examined about the African authors' practical problems was the not-so-practical one: what constitutes African writing? There was an atmosphere of general surprise, just as if the phrase we had used, tossed about, identified certain things by, had suddenly got out of hand and turned against us with a vengeance.

Had the phrase "African writing" been misused or abused, after all? Some participants tried to dismiss the question as academic; others felt annoyed; others again tried to laugh it off or explain it away. But even after the more serious attempts to define African writing, it stayed on like a stubborn white spot on black linen.

It was generally agreed, rather implicitly than explicitly, that we were defining such writing in its simplest, because emotional, terms: as writing produced by black Africans. On reflection, certain questions leap up with irritating insistence: what about writing produced by white Africans? What distinguishes so-called African writing from non-African? What, for example, distinguishes a work by Joyce Cary (not African-born) from that by Dan Jacobson (African-born) or a work by Nadine Gordimer (white South African) from one by Thomas Mafolo (South African Negro)? Is it theme or style or both, or tone or point of view that one goes by?

Joyce Cary was a greater writer than any of these whites using the African scene, and it is quite clear that he identifies himself with neither the whites nor the blacks in his novels. He writes with a masterly detachment. There is a degree of identification in which a white writer in Africa like Mr. Paton or Miss Gordimer stands in relation to the characters and setting of his or her stories which indicates whether either of them is African.

In both cases, one can distinctly tell that they are on the white side of the colour line. For their identification is stronger with the white characters than with the black.

This identification is a much closer and more intimate relationship than the mere espousal of a cause which one's characters uphold in the context of a story; in other words, it is not just sympathy. It is a matter of belongingness in relation to the group represented by one section of characters one is portraying and the habitat of that group. What holds good for the white writer is true in the case of the black one in his segregated world.

This is the distinction between a non-African white writer and a white African writer on the one hand, and between a white and a black African writer on the other.

When we talk of African English writing then, I suggest we cannot help but discuss literature coming from both black and white in the continent. And by "black" I am including African Arabs. But if I insist on the *cultural* context in which we use the phrase, I should then take in writing by black Africans south of the Sahara, leaving out both whites and Arabs.

It is in this context that Mbari summoned the writers to Makerere. For the artistic problems facing the South African Negro—just to take a country that has a plural society—are not the same as those confronting the white South African: there is little intercourse between them, although the paint from the one has rubbed off on to the other.

But there are certain sets of values common to so many African ethnic groups that some South African Negroes, say, would not find it difficult to enter into the feeling and mood of Chinua Achebe's story in *Things Fall Apart*. I say *some* with hesitation because I cannot say for sure that the most urbanized African in South Africa would easily appreciate the story.

But even if, because of the diversity of our colonial experience in Africa, and because of our ethnic differences, we often find that we do not speak on the same wave-length, this very colonial experience, the common feeling among African Negroes that we are saying things for ourselves about ourselves which used to be the monopoly of the white missionary, the anthropologist, the white explorer, and even the white administrator—these things are sufficient to make all African Negroes respond to the sound of a bell that calls "African writers" to an assembly.

And the phrase "African writing" still has a strongly emotional content. A white writer might respond intellectually, not emotionally, as the blacks do to the bell: he is most likely to argue himself into such a meeting by saying that he is African. Again, there are two distinct streams of literary culture

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

Left, "flying fish", two modern metallic sculptures by M. Calka which stand close to the Haile Selassie Theatre, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

PRESENT-DAY WRITERS OF TROPICAL AFRICA

We present below brief notes on the leading writers of today from Tropical Africa. See "African Bookshelf", page 37 for a short bibliography on African writing.

Photo Gouvern. Sénégal

LEOPOLD SEDAR SENGHOR

(Senegal)

President of the Republic of Senegal since 1960. Born in 1906, this prominent intellectual and political leader is also a distinguished poet. Among his collections of poems are "Chants d'Ombres" (1945); "Hosties Noires" (1948); "Ethiopiques" (1956); "Nocturnes" (1961) all published by Editions du Seuil, Paris. Leopold Senghor is the principal African advocate of "Négritude", which has inspired many of his writings on language, poetry and esthetics.

SYLVAIN BEMBA

(Congo)

His story "La Chambre Noire" won first prize in a contest organized in 1964 by the Paris magazine "Preuves" for the best African short story in French. Sylvain Bemba is chief editor of the Congolese News Agency in Brazzaville.

Photo Unesco-Bablin

AMADOU HAMPATE BA

(Mali)

Born in 1901. A linguist, historian and specialist on oral tradition, he did research at the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire. He later became Ambassador of Mali to the Ivory Coast, and a member of Unesco's Executive Board. His two most important works are: "L'Empire Peul du Manina, 1818-1853", with J. Daget (Mouton, Paris, 1962) and "Tierno Bokar, le sage de Bandiagara", an essay, with M. Cardaire (Présence Africaine, 1957).

OLYMBE BHELY-QUENUM

(Dahomey)

Son of a teacher at Cotonou, he was born in 1928. He became a teacher, but left teaching for journalism. He is editor of "La Vie Africaine" and has written several novels including "Un piège sans fin" (Stock, Paris, 1960) and "Le Chant du Lac" (Présence Africaine, Paris, 1965).

Photo Faber and Faber

AMOS TUTUOLA

(Nigeria)

Born in 1920 in Western Nigeria, where his father is a cocoa farmer, he was trained as a blacksmith. He now works in the Labour Department of the Nigerian Government. In his novels and stories he recreates Yoruba myth and legend. His best known novels include "Palm Wine Drinkard" (1952); "My Life in the Bush of Ghosts" (1954); "The Brave African Huntress" (1958) and "Feather Woman of the Jungle" (1962)—all published by Faber and Faber, London.

JAMES NGUGI

(Kenya)

Born in 1936 at Limuru. He studied at Makere University College, Uganda, and Leeds University, England. In 1963 he became administrative secretary of the Kenya National Assembly. Three of his novels "Weep Not Child" (1964), "The River Between" (1965) and "A Grain of Wheat" (1967) are published by Heinemann Educational Books (African Writers Series), London.

Photo Ed. Plon

CAMARA LAYE

(Guinea)

Born in 1924 at Kouroussa. He was educated at Conakry and Paris. His autobiographical "L'Enfant Noir" (Plon, Paris, 1953) quickly established him as one of the great stylists among African writers, and was translated into several European languages. In 1955 he published "Le Regard du Roi" (Plon). English translations—"The African Child" (1959) and "The Radiance of the King" (1956)—have been published by Collins, London. Camara Laye's most recent book is "Dramouss" (Plon, 1967).

Photo © I. Lebeer

BERNARD DADIE

(Ivory Coast)

Born in 1916 near Abidjan, he was educated in Dakar where he worked at the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire before joining the Ivory Coast Information Service. Collections of his poems "Afrique Debout" (1950) and "La Ronde des Jours" (1956) have been published by Editions Seghers, Paris. His prose works include "Légendes Africaines" (Seghers, 1954); "Le Pagne Noir" (Présence Africaine, Paris, 1955) and "Patron de New York".

A. AGOSTINHO NETO

(Angola)

One of Angola's leading poets, he was born in 1922. He practised medicine in Angola and became prominent in the movement for the "rediscovery" of Angola's culture and traditions. Was later president of the Movement for the Liberation of Angola. A collection of his poems, "Colectanea de Poemas" appeared in 1961 (Edicao de Casa dos Estudantes, Lisbon).

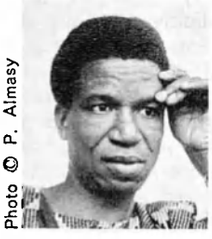


Photo © P. Almasy

CYPRIAN EKWENSI

(Nigeria)

Born in 1921. He is now Director of Information with the Nigerian Ministry of Information. Among his books and short stories are "People of the City" (Heinemann, London, 1963); "The Drummer Boy" and "The Passport of Mallam Ilia" (both published in 1960 by Cambridge University Press); "Beautiful Feathers" (Hutchinson, London, 1963) and "Burning Grass" (Heinemann, 1962).

Photo Ed. Seghers

(Madagascar)

JACQUES RABEMANANJARA

Born in 1913. He was active in Madagascar's movement for independence and after the 1947 uprising was arrested and condemned to death. He was later reprieved and exiled to France. After Madagascar gained its independence in 1960 he returned as Minister of Economic Affairs. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the "Société Africaine de Culture". Jacques Rabemananjara has written several plays, which mostly deal with the Malagasy past: "Les Dieux Malgaches" (Ophrys, Paris, 1947); "Les Boutriers de l'Aurore" (Présence Africaine, Paris, 1957);"Agape des Dieux-Tritiva" (Présence Africaine, Paris, 1962). Among his collections of poems are "Sur les Marches du Soir" (Ophrys, Paris, 1942) and "Antsa" (Présence Africaine, Paris, 1956.

Photo © I. Lebeer

SEMBENE OUSMANE

(Senegal)

Writer and film producer, he was born in 1923. He has travelled widely in Africa and Europe and studied film production in the U.S.S.R. Last year he was awarded first prize for novelists at the World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar. His books include "Le Docker Noir" (Nouvelles Editions Debresse, Paris, 1956); "O Pays, Mon Beau Peuple" (Amiot Dumont, Paris, 1957); "Les Bouts des Bois de Dieu" (Le Livre Contemporain, Paris, 1960) published as "God's Bits of Wood", (Doubleday, New York, 1962) and "Vehi Ciosane" (Présence Africaine, Paris, 1965).

Photo © I. Lebeer

JOHN PEPPER CLARK

(Nigeria)

Poet and playwright, he was born in 1935. While at the University of Ibadan he founded an influential poetry magazine, "The Horn". His first play, "Song of a Goat", was produced at Ibadan in 1962 and published by Mbari, Ibadan. John Pepper Clark has also published "Poems" (Mbari, 1962) and "America, their America" (André Deutsch, London, 1964).

DAVID DIOP *(Senegal)*

Born in 1927 at Bordeaux, France, of a Senegalese father and a Cameroonian mother. He became a regular contributor to "Présence Africaine", the cultural review published in Paris. With the publication of 17 poems, "Coups de Pillon" in 1956 (Présence Africaine) he won recognition as an outstanding African poet. He died in a plane crash in 1960.

Photo © I. Lebeer

WOLE SOYINKA

(Nigeria)

Born in 1935. After studying at the University of Ibadan and Leeds University, England, he worked at the Royal Court, London, where his play "The Lion and the Jewel" was produced. His second play, "Dance of the Forests" (1960), won a competition organized by the London "Observer". Editions of both plays were published by Oxford University Press in 1964. Three other plays by Wole Soyinka, "The Swamp Dwellers", "The Trials of Brother Jero" and "The Strong Breed" were published by Mbari, Ibadan, 1963. Wole Soyinka's poetry has appeared in many journals.

Photo Buchet-Chastel

MONGO BETI

(Cameroon)

Mongo Beti is the pseudonym of Alexandre Biyidi. His first novel, "Ville Cruelle" was published in 1954 (Editions Africaines, Paris) under the pseudonym of Eza Boto. His prize-winning "Mission Terminée" appeared in English in 1958 as "Mission Accomplished" (Macmillan, New York) and as "Mission to Kala" (Muller, London). "Le Roi Miraculé" was published as "King Lazarus" by Muller (1958).

Photo © I. Lebeer

FELIX TCHICAYA U'TAMSI

(Congo-Kinshasa)

Born in 1931. He studied in France and has published four books of poetry: "Le Mauvais Sang" and "Feu de Brousse" (Caractères, Paris, 1955) and "A Triche-Cœur" and "Epitome" (Oswald, Paris, 1960). Félix Tchicaya was awarded the first prize for poetry at the World Festival of Negro Arts, Daker, 1966. He is now a member of Unesco's staff.

Photo © I. Lebeer

BIRAGO DIOP

(Senegal)

Born in 1906 at Dakar. Much of his work is devoted to the re-telling in French of tales from African oral literature: "Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba" (Fasquelle, Paris, 1947); "Tales of Amadou Koumba" (Oxford University Press, 1966); "Les Nouveaux Contes d'Amadou Koumba" (1958) and "Contes et Lavanes" (Présence Africaine, Paris, 1963).

Photo © W. E. Bell

(Ghana)

EFUA SUTHERLAND

Born in Cape Coast, Ghana. Her writing as a poet and playwright has earned her an outstanding place in African literature. Efua Sutherland's "Playtime in Africa" has been published in Accra (Ghana) and by Atheneum Publishers, New York (1962). Her plays include "Fowra" and "Adufa" (Ghana Drama Studio, Accra, 1962).

Photo Ed. Julliard

(Cameroon)

FERDINAND OYONO

Ambassador of the Cameroon to Belgium. His novels have been translated into several languages. Julliard, Paris has published "Une Vie de Boy" (1956), "Le Vieux Nègre et la Médaille" (1956)—"The Old Negro and the Medal". (Heinemann Educational Books, London) and "Chemin d'Europe".

CHINUA ACHEBE *(Nigeria)*

Born in 1930. He became Nigeria's first Director of External Broadcasting in 1961. His first two novels, "Things Fall Apart" and "No Longer at Ease" (Heinemann, London 1958 and 1960) have been widely translated. He has published "The Sacrificial Egg and other Short Stories" (Etudo Ltd., Onitsha, Nigeria, 1962) and "Arrow of God" (Heinemann, 1964).

'Committed' and 'Uncommitted' writers

and consciousness in Africa representing black and white respectively.

Our contact with whites has given birth to a neo-African culture. We can really only speak of neo-African culture to define the content arising from the contact between Western and African cultures, rather than the quality or intensity of expression; or, as someone suggests, the degree of passion in it. It expresses itself in many voices and modes, as can be seen in South African writing and music as distinct from those of West and East Africa. Vernacular writing in Africa is unequivocally African in the present context.

African literary forms in English and French should in fact be studied in the relevant language department. John Pepper Clark's, Efua Sutherland's and Gabriel Okara's poetry, Wole Soyinka's plays, Richard Rive's and Alex la Guma's fiction and so on should be part of the normal English course. So should Birago and David Diop's, Senghor's, and Tamsi's poetry, Camara Laye's, Mongo Beti's and Ferdinand Oyono's fiction be studied side by side with Flaubert, Baudelaire, Rimbaud and so on in the department of French. Here African writing is meant to be treated simply as literature in Africa, and each work will be judged on its literary merits.

It is common for the sociologist to disregard literary merit when he is doing research into creative writing. As a scientist, he rightly argues that it is not his business to give an opinion on the literary qualities of a book, any more than is Wordsworth's interest in dissecting flowers reflected in his poem, *Daffodils*.

In his scholarly book *Culture and Society, 1780-1950,* Raymond Williams does not enlist the tools of literary criticism for its own sake and then go on to establish incidentally the place in the tradition of English culture of Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold, T. S. Eliot and so on, on the basis of their creative work. And yet he is, as he puts it, "committed to the study of actual language: that is to say, to the words and sequences of words" used by the writers and thinkers to express themselves on culture. Mr. Williams's samples are either prose statements or talkative verse.

It is significant that there is much more creative writing than scholarly prose by Negroes in Africa. Perhaps it is because a poem or short story or a novel are so close to individual experience, and therefore more natural modes of expression than argumentative prose; and, further, because intellectual systems and the arguments involved are not native to Africa. Discussion for its own sake or to formulate systems of thought in Africa are a derivative occupation.

It is because one learns so much about the African from his poetry and fiction, e.g: traditional culture and culture conflicts and their reconciliation or consolidation, that a few over-enthusiastic Africanists often sneak into the realm of literary judgments through the back-door. An African novelist or poet is often raised shoulder high for what is taken for literary excellence, when all a sociologist wants to say of a particular work is that it is illuminating or revealing in social comment.

Especially is this the case where a non-African views an African work; what begins as a natural and perhaps even reasonable humility in the contemplator ends up in self-abasement and woolly thinking. Often it is a self-abasement that is symbolized with such devastating irony by Camara Laye in his brilliant novel *Le Regard du Roi* (translated into English under the title *The Radiance of the King)* when he portrays Clarence, the white man, trembling before the African king, afraid to approach, out of a misplaced European sense of sin and shame.

But there is much in African writing to inform the sociologist who has a feel for language: especially so because there are no literary modes set by a local tradition. The modes are still as foreign as can be expected of a tradition that has originated in the metropolitan centres of the former colonial authority, or is originated by a foreign educator. There is, for example, a clear distinction between South African Negro and West African writing on the one hand, and between the literature of the English-speaking and French-speaking communities on the other: the diction, rhythms, and themes found in one region are not common in another.

In a short story, *The Bench* (1), Richard Rive, a Cape Town coloured writer, tells us about a young man, Karlie, who wants to defy the law by sitting on a bench marked "Europeans Only". He has been listening to a political speech and is fired with the zeal to challenge the system that segregates people according to colour. He will sit on the forbidden bench as an act of challenge and therefore one of becoming a man.

Abioseh Nicol, the Sierra Leonean short-story writer. tells in his *As the Night, the Day (2),* of a student who breaks a thermometer in a laboratory. Another student is made to bear the blame and is punished. In his bedroom in the night the student writes in shame and resolves to confess the deed to the teacher. For him, also, this will be an act of becoming a man.

Here are the relevant extracts, the first from Rive's story followed by Nicol's:

> *Here was his chance,* the bench. *The railway bench with the legend 'Europeans Only' neatly painted on it in white. For one moment it symbolised all the misery of the plural South African society. Here was a challenge to his rights as a man . . . That bench, now, had concentrated in it all the evils of a system he could not understand. It was an obstacle between himself and humanity. If he sat on it he was a man. If he was afraid he denied himself membership as a human in a human society. Here was his chance . . . He seemed perfectly calm when he sat down on the bench, but inside his heart was thumping wildly. Two conflicting ideas throbbed through him. The one said, 'I have no right to sit on this bench'; the other said, 'Why have I no right to sit on this bench?' The one voice spoke of the past, of the servile position he had occupied on the farms, of his father and his father's father who were born black, lived like blacks and died like oxen . . .*
>
> *Suddenly, in his little room, under his thin cotton sheet, he began to cry. Because he felt the sharp lancing pain already cutting into him. Because of Basu and Simpson and the thermometer. For all the things he wanted to do and which would never happen. For all the good men they had told them about, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, and George Washington who never told a lie. For Florence Nightingale and David Livingstone. For Kagawa, the Japanese man, for Gandhi and for Kwegyir Aggrey, the African. Oh-ee. Because he knew he would never be as straight and strong and true as the school song said they should be. He saw, for the first time, what this thing would be like, becoming a man. He touched the edge of an inconsolable eternal grief. Oh-ee, oh-ee; always, he felt, always I shall be a disgrace to the nation and the race.*

It is a fact of social history that the South African character's field of reference in the story has a concrete physical meaning, and evokes a sense of immediacy: "That of his father, his father's father who were born black, lived like blacks and died like oxen." The West African character's field of reference is not so immediate, and is conceived in abstract terms.

In the South African case, there is the ever-present condition of oppression which releases acute mental and physical agony. The writer feels committed. Through his impressionistic style, in his anger, impatience, through the sensuous imagery that he evokes,

(1) *From Darkness and Light,* ed. Peggy Rutherford (Faith Press, London).

(2) *African Treasury,* ed. Langston Hughes (Gollancz, London).

From "Ibrahim El Salahi" © Mbari Publications, Ibadan, 1962

In Africa, an ancient world of the arts, painters and sculptors in every country are creating new forms of expression in the visual arts. In many cases these artists succeed in combining traditional African styles with the latest research and techniques in art. This drawing is by Ibrahim Salahi, a young Sudanese artist who, after studying at London's Slade School of Art, settled in Khartoum. Characteristic of his work is his use of two traditional art forms: Arab calligraphy and the decorative pattern designs on Sudanese baskets and calabashes.

and the rhythm that reveals a sense of urgency, he is trying to come to terms with himself and his environment, to reject the *status quo* even while he has often to relent in order to allow the load to sit easier on his shoulder. And this attempt to reconcile disparate emotions helps him, paradoxically enough, to retain his sanity, to survive.

On the West African side, things are much easier, more leisurely, there is more sky, no claustrophobia, and the writer can conceive his fictional characters within the broader context in which less immediate and less urgent thoughts operate. The rhythm, tempo and texture of the prose and the writer's mood do not display any sense of urgency, nor sensuous intensity. This is no value judgment but a statement of fact. For Abioseh Nicol is one of the best prose writers in Africa, certainly the best in West Africa, using English.

In West Africa alone, English and French writing move along different tracks, particularly in the realm of poetry. The Nigerian poet talks about things as they affect him personally and immediately. He is not protesting or trying to vindicate his blackness. The French-speaking poet, however, particularly of the *negritude* school (I do not know any who is not of it or influenced by it) uses broad symbols in which immediacy of individual experience is not the important thing. These are symbols of Africa, of blackness, of what is regarded by the poet as African traits which are expected to be a unifying force—not only for the people of the continent but for the Negro world in general.

Let us look at Leopold Sedar Senghor's, *Prayer to Masks (1):*

Masks! Oh Masks!
Black mask, red mask, you black and white masks,
Rectangular masks through whom the spirit breathes,
I greet you in silence!
And you too, my pantherheaded ancestor,
You guard this place, that is closed to any feminine laughter, to any mortal smile.
You purify the air of eternity, here where I breathe the air of my father.
Masks of maskless faces, free from dimples and wrinkles,
You have composed this image, this my face that bends over the altar of white paper.
In the name of your image, listen to me!
Now while the Africa of despotism is dying,—it is the agony of a pitiable princess
Just like Europe to whom she is connected through the navel,
Now turn your immobile eyes towards your children who
Have been called
And who sacrifice their lives like the man his last garment
So that hereafter we may cry 'hero' at the rebirth of the world being the leaven that the white flour needs.
For who would else teach rhythm to the world that has died of machines and cannon?
For who else should ejaculate the cry of joy, that arouses the dead and the wise in a new dawn?
Say, who else would return the memory of life to men with a torn hope?
They call us cotton heads, and coffee men, and oily men,
They call us men of death.
But we are the men of the dance whose feet only gain power when they beat the hard soil.

(1) Translated into English for *Black Orpheus*, Mbari Publications.

There is nobility of tone and feeling in Senghor's poem. The masks are a jumping-off ground for him to point to the defects of Europe and its civilization and to the revered features of African culture. The poet's feeling is diffused over a wide area. The representative images in the poem are those that turn around "You purify the air of eternity". And we know when we read it that we shall never really grasp the prose meaning of the sentence: it leaps from our grip into the metaphysical world.

The individual is not important here, but the object of adoration as a broad symbol of what is often called "the African essence".

Efua Sutherland is the most outstanding poet in Ghana and almost the only highly individualistic writer in her country. The rest of the poets in Ghana express nationalist sentiments and revive old hurts like slavery, and so on. In a poem, *Redeemed,* Mrs. Sutherland shows a sense of urgency and individuality typical of the Nigerian poets. A man wants to bring to her knees a beautiful woman, and crush her as a poisonous snake destroys good things. He smells the Eve (woman's natural weakness) in her. But he is afraid and he recoils, overwhelmed by her beauty. The protagonist says:

Love I the pillar of your neck
Governing like a marvel
The balance of the load of your head,
Yet I must break it.
Love I the shine of your skin,
Yet I must dull it.
With leprous venom from my spleen.

He stops short in his designs:

She paused in a pace, and turned on me
A soul that speared my reptile frame
Until I writhed in a helpless coil
And the poison in me did boil
And clot in the glare
From the splendour of her redeemed [soul.

IT is a matter of interest that even after political independence, when colonialism has departed, some poets still hammer on the theme of African-ness and want to vindicate their dignity as Negroes. Are we never going to know what the peasant feels and thinks as he teeters on the edge of a revolution which demands a change in his whole mode of living because his subsistence economy is unproductive? Isn't there something to tell about that young man—pathetic and comi-tragic—who interprets the words of politicians letter for letter and thinks that he is called upon to strike an attitude of chauvinism, entangling himself in all its vocabulary in the process, never realizing that he is out of step with the aspirations of his government? How long are our poets going to continue bleating like a goat in the crisis of giving birth?

I have gone this far in order to show

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

that African literature should be treated as part of world literature, and not as something specially African; that there is in reality only good and bad and mediocre writing, whether African, Chinese, Mexican and so on; that there is a real danger in looking at African writing merely as the sociologist's gold mine. The danger lies in the fact that the number of "bleatniks" will increase when more of us turn out sociological verse and fiction, simply as fodder for the Africanist. It is a transitory phase, for sure, but it is depressing all the same.

But I have also said that even the best of our writing in Africa reflects a strong sense of social realism. If, as is happening already, African literature is used in African Studies because it affords the student a glimpse of an African's personality in a given social climate—a glimpse he cannot find elsewhere due to the paucity of scholastic writings by Africans—then the sociologist has to go through the motions of literary examination such as I have intimated earlier on. Rhythm, imagery, diction are just as relevant to his study as mere theme.

IN an ideal situation only vernacular writing belongs in a department of African Studies. In South African universities, even the ones regarded as entirely or predominantly "white", the three main Bantu languages and a fourth minority one have been subjects for research and teaching for at least thirty years, but have been media for creative and journalistic writing since the middle of the nineteenth century.

It is hoped that the department of African Studies in each university that has one will try to stimulate vernacular-literature in this way, among others. Above all, it is considered that vernacular writers should also take part in workshops for those writing in English or French. There are after all individual techniques in creative writing applicable to all languages. And if vernacular writers are brought into the workshops, they will realize that theirs is not an activity apart from the mainstream.

Furthermore, it is important that writers in our indigenous languages outgrow the school-book mentality by which they evidently regard a piece of writing as important only if it can be understood by school children. Why should we not produce a novel in Hausa or Swahili or Twi or Ibo or Yoruba which has adult ideas and can stand critical analysis side by side with the fiction of Western and Eastern languages?

There are South Africans like A. C. Jordan, whose Xhosa novel is a classic, Thomas Mofolo, whose Sotho novel, *Chaka*, is also a classic and has been translated into English and German; Makalo Khaketla and B. Vilakazi have done well in their languages. Even so, several other vernacular writers in South Africa are being published by a pro-government white press, which seeks to supply literature for school use: quite a lucrative racket. The first task of an institute of African Studies is to correct this senseless if understandable trend.

Before we were invaded by a money economy, by industries which claimed enormous migrant labour, the African's activities were guided by a moral or immoral purpose, depending on whether one deviated from the wishes of the group or not. Culture was not separate from anything, comprising processes which we could speak of as a "human court of appeal". Culture was life; each phase marked by initiation ceremonies was an organic part of man's education and moral growth. But now mass media like TV, the press, advertising, radio, political speechifying and pamphleteering, world literature—all these are battering at our sense of values. Folk cultures are giving way to urban cultures. And we find ourselves asking ourselves: where is the "human court of appeal" to help us avoid the awful blunders Europe has gone and is going through.

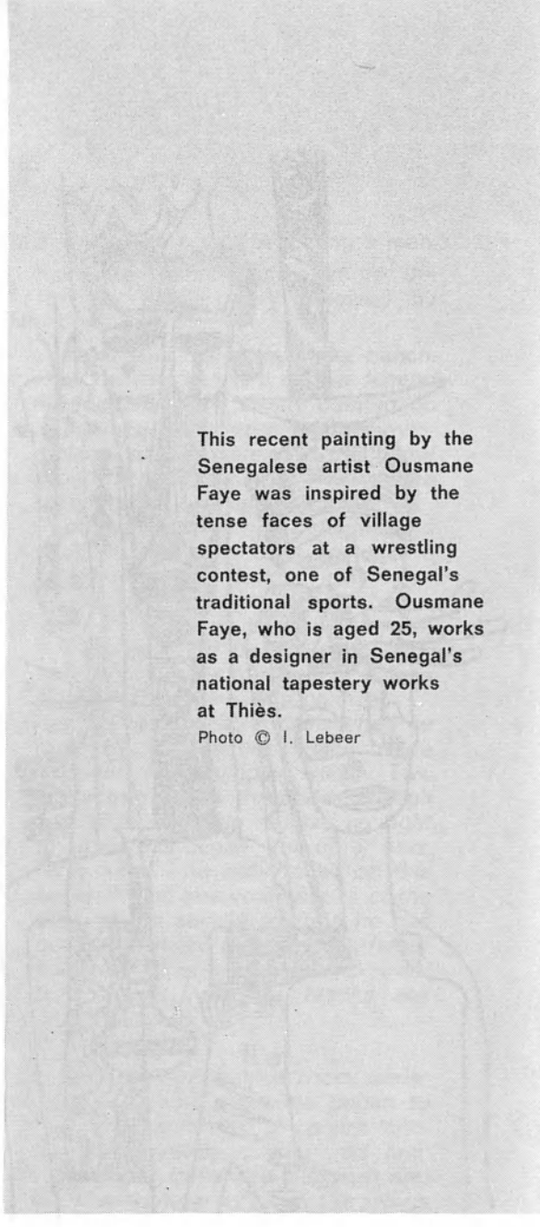
Some of us feel that we need to evoke the essence of human relations which is part of our African-ness. And some of us build up myths about traits in the African as a race. And we seem to be asserting features of a culture we are not *living* any more, asserting them even while we are in Western metropolitan centres taking part in their culture. We even refuse to see our literature as part of Western tradition, and like to believe that we are writing in a style that is peculiarly Negro.

We seem to be losing sight of culture as an interpretation of a whole way of life, of a common experience. We seem to forget that our neo-African culture, by its very nature, is going to absorb much more of European techniques—a process that should not worry us, really: our writing can only be valid if it interprets contemporary society in a mode of expression that hits on the intellectual, emotional and physical planes of meaning. What more can you ask of a writer, of an artist, of a musician?

In conclusion, it seems necessary to warn against the danger of thinking that because we are Africans, we should write about the same things and adopt the same styles or points of view. Culture interests itself in stimulating and promoting creative and intellectual impulses. It interests itself in individual and communal activity. For this reason we should allow culture to flourish out of the local needs of a community.

Culture should be something to be lived rather than merely talked about.

This article is abridged from "African Literature" by Ezekiel Mphahlele which appeared in "Proceedings of the First International Congress of Africanists", published with assistance from Unesco by Longmans Green, London.



This recent painting by the Senegalese artist Ousmane Faye was inspired by the tense faces of village spectators at a wrestling contest, one of Senegal's traditional sports. Ousmane Faye, who is aged 25, works as a designer in Senegal's national tapestery works at Thiès.

Photo © I. Lebeer

by Pathé Diagne

PATHE DIAGNE *of Senegal is a linguist who has taken part in numerous meetings held under Unesco's ten-year programme of African linguistic studies, including the standardization of alphabets for certain languages. He is the author of many studies on linguistics and African historical sociology.*

VERNACULAR LANGUAGES IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

LANGUAGE, in African culture, occupies a special place all its own. Nowhere else, perhaps, has the relationship between the vernacular and knowledge been accorded so important a place or been maintained for so long a time.

Local tradition in Africa has long accepted the vernacular as the sole means of communication, as the vehicle for the transmission of knowledge and the medium of thought. In fact, knowledge itself, has always been closely identified with the vernacular.

The African priest or any custodian of the wisdom and experience of the community who introduces the young to his store of knowledge, almost always initiates them at the same time into the practice of an unknown language. The blacksmith, the saddler or the fisherman, and the various trade corporations and guilds, in effect, operate no differently. Their techniques cannot be passed on to younger generations without the use of special formulas. Thus it has not infrequently happened that when an African sage jealously guarded his knowledge to himself or was estranged from society for one reason or another, his store of knowledge invariably died with him or else remained an impenetrable secret to those who lived after him.

The spread of knowledge suffered greatly in Africa from this notion which equated science with a special language and education with the transfer of secret intelligence.

For centuries the spread of the Islamic and Christian religions and culture amongst broad sectors of Africa's population was blocked by this esoteric approach to knowledge. And in the past hundred years the introduction of modern techniques and ideas as well as scientific thinking have similarly been seriously hampered. In both cases language has played a paramount role in the attempt to change or remould society.

Knowledge can only be understood, accepted and propagated if the vehicle of transmission is a known language. This has been repeatedly pointed out by African scholars in the past. Early in the 19th century, for example, a renowned scholar, Thierno Samba Mombeza, from Fouta Djallon (a mountain region in northern Guinea) stress-

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Any language is beautiful...

ed this point in the introduction to his translation into Pular of the *Vein of Gold*, one of the great masterpieces of Islamic literature. In reply to those who had scorned his undertaking the translation of such a great work into "a language without nobility", he wrote:

Whether Arabic or Pular
Or any other dialect,
All is noble
That facilitates human knowledge.

The Senegalese poet, Moussa Ka, who produced one of the major works of his time in the Wolof language, expressed the same idea as follows:

Arabic or Wolof,
Any language is beautiful
That expresses
The virtues and Science of Man.

These references to Arabic should not surprise us, for the prestige, science and cultural contributions of Islam were such that in many parts of Africa it was held to be the repository of all essential knowledge. Many an African generation was spared long, weary hours of reciting and chanting Koranic texts in Arabic, which they did not understand, when scholars and religious leaders bravely undertook to introduce education in the vernacular. The translation of the Bible into many African languages in the last century was inspired by the same understanding.

This is a very important point. It reflects the evolution in attitude towards modern ideas which took place in Africa after it came to be recognized that the crux of the problem was to introduce modern knowledge to the greatest number of people.

It also serves to explain why the vernacular languages were gradually adopted as indispensable tools for teaching in primary schools thus avoiding the emotional problems raised by removing the child from his linguistic setting. That is why, too, the use of the vernacular in literacy campaigns and community development schemes has been found to offer the best chances of success.

Experiments have long been under way in the use of the vernacular for technical education and science teaching, and these have recently gained new momentum.

The road to economic development may well lie along these lines. The experts have pointed this out; and Unesco has stressed it at recent meetings on the subject in Ibadan (1964), Accra (1965), Yaoundé (1966) and Bamako (1965). A meeting of African Ministers of Education at Ibadan in February of this year re-affirmed the idea, as did the Government of Tanzania which has made Swahili its national and administrative language.

The obstacles to such a programme are nevertheless tremendous. The non-specialist often points to them, particularly to the multiplicity of African languages, the need to adapt them to the modern world, and their so-called lack of "literary" and "scientific" vocabulary.

The multiplicity of Africa's languages would seem to be the major obstacle to their use for cultural and educational programmes. But in point of fact, the actual number can only be determined after a thorough study which clearly distinguishes between a language and its local or dialectal variants. Any figure based on present knowledge is more than likely to be in the nature of a guess.

WE have become so used to talking about Africa's countless languages that we have lost sight of the fact that Africa is, after all, a whole continent. A more than cursory examination of the languages of this continent reveals first, that the number has been vastly exaggerated, and second, that the situation is hardly different elsewhere. Europe posseses dozens of languages and dialects; and "Standard African" is as much of a misnomer as "Universal European" would be. French and Italian exist as separate languages, so why not Swahili, Hausa and Yoruba?

Despite the existence of local variations, the number of linguistic zones in Africa is really quite small. Within each zone there is a linguistic unity which is not only historical but also a living fact.

Let us take the case of the zone comprising the so-called Bantu languages. Here we find not various distinct and separate languages but different dialects of the same language. The common features are so extensive that one can pass quite easily from one dialect to the other.

To take one example. In the Congo practically everyone is multi-lingual. In addition to their local dialects, the Lari, the Vili, the Bateke, the Bangala and the Kikongo all speak Lingala, Monokotuba or some other language.

From the number of dialects the Vili of Pointe-Noire understand one might assume that they have a special aptitude for foreign languages. A Vili, for example, can easily understand or get along in Lari, Teke, Swahili and Chiluba. This is simply explained by the fact that they are all dialectal variations of one and the same language. The slight differences in these dialects is evident from the following renditions for the word TO EAT: KULIA in Vili; KUDIA in Kikongo; KUDIA in Lari; KOLIA in Lingala; KULIA in Swahili.

As can be seen, the differences are merely a matter of one consonant or vowel, and serve to illustrate the idea that the whole Bantu linguistic zone could today be unified around one of these dialects. As will be shown in a moment, this unification would affect some 100 million persons.

What is true of the Bantu linguistic zone also applies to other parts of Africa. In the Sudanese belt of countries stretching across Africa just below the Sahara, the same phenomenon can be observed with regard to Hausa, the Mandingo language group (Bambara, Dioula, Malinke), the Akan Baoule languages of Ghana and the Ivory Coast, and the Fulani (or Pular) languages.

All over the world a process of linguistic unification is now under way. In Africa the same thing is happening. Differences in speech are being worn down, and are giving way to a limited number of major languages of communication. This is occurring as a result of various factors. Urbanization, the cultural renascence and the development of great trading centres have enabled a few languages to unify whole areas.

This has completely transformed the linguistic map of tropical Africa so that many of the splinter dialects of the past are now being absorbed by about a dozen dynamic, hard-core languages today sweeping across the continent.

Some of these languages are now spoken by over 50 million people, but most are used by groups of 1 million to 12 million persons. For example, there is the Bantu group, spoken by 100 million people; Swahili, spoken by over 50 million persons in most of East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia) and the Kinshasa Congo; the Lingala - Kikongo - Monokotuba language family, spoken by about 30 million persons over most of Central Africa (Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville. Cameroon as well as Kinshasa Congo).

The establishment of a common language for those who speak Swahili, Lingala-Kikongo-Monokotuba, or even Shango and certain Bantu dialects of South Africa and the Cameroon, is

EFFIGIES AS EPITAPHS

This tomb of a chief in Tulear Province, south-west Madagascar illustrates the unusual funerary art of the Mahafaly. On their graves they place wooden posts (aloalos) topped by carvings of figures and scenes associated with the life of the dead person. Traditional carvings—family groups, craftsmen at work and animal figures—are increasingly giving way to modern subjects such as motor-cycles (left, background). Horns of Zebus (a symbol of wealth) are planted in the heaps of stone over the tomb.

Photo © Siegfried Sammer

a task that could well be accomplished within the reasonable future.

The languages of West Africa are more varied. Here, Hausa, spoken by some 40 million people in Nigeria, Niger and Chad, could become a unifying element for a vast area of Africa.

Yoruba (Nigeria), Malinke-Dioula (Eastern Senegal, Mali, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Niger), Fulani (Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Upper Volta, Niger, Nigeria), and Arabic are all linguistic groups spoken by from 10 to 15 million people.

Tamashek (Mauritania, Mali, Niger), Ibo (Nigeria), Akan-Baoule-Bulu-Fang (Ghana, Ivory Coast), Fon-Ewe-Mina (Togo, Dahomey, Ghana), More (Upper Volta), Wolof (Senegal), Sarakhule (Mali, Mauritania, Senegal), Kanuri (Nigeria, Niger, Chad), and Djerma-Songhoi (Mali, Niger) also form linguistic areas in process of unification and are spoken by 1 to 5 million people.

Thus we see that a veritable pyramid of languages exists in West Africa, with several languages spoken in the same country—in Nigeria, for instance, Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba and Kanuri are all spoken.

But it is clear that language unification, not dispersal, is the dominant factor in Africa today.

Efforts to try to adapt African languages to modern change have been in progress for many many years. These were given new impetus with the establishment of institutions of European origin.

In 1820, a French schoolteacher set up West Africa's first secular, bilingual school at St. Louis, Senegal, where both Wolof and French were taught. This pioneer attempt was followed by the missionaries who first used African languages to spread the Gospel and

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Einstein in Wolof, Shakespeare in Swahili

then gradually introduced them for the teaching of a few new techniques in agriculture and the crafts.

The bilingual school in the Congo was the outcome of this development. In the countries under British rule, a similar approach, based on the principle of "native administration", helped the spread of African languages. The status and influence of these languages can be observed today in the Congo (Kinshasa), Uganda and Tanzania. These countries, with a literacy rate of 45 per cent, have been able to establish an excellent political, social and technical infra-structure by using African languages for their newspapers, school books and other publications.

The interesting features, here, are the new possibilities thus opened. The development of a script in Swahili hastened the stabilization of the language and its literary growth which had begun long before colonization, as attested by the *Kilwa* dating from the 17th century as well as an abundance of other great works of great antiquity.

This is equally true of other African languages, particularly those of West Africa, where Fulani and Wolof literature, Hausa works (those by Dan Fodio are an outstanding example) and the writings of the Kanuri and Dendi chroniclers bear comparison with Swahili. Other languages like Lingala or Chiluba are entering the writing stage, thanks chiefly to contemporary efforts.

The adaptation of African languages to modern change is not yet very far advanced. In this sense most of them have not yet become languages of advanced scientific knowledge or vehicles of modern literature, reflecting either in original creative works or translations from non-African languages, the intellectual ferment of contemporary thought.

Although many attempts have been made along these lines, they are mainly isolated cases. Nevertheless, a number of notable examples by outstanding African thinkers can be cited.

The Senegalese writer, C. Anta Diop, has played a pioneer role here. The second part of his *Nations Nègres* contains a series of chapters which illustrate how Wolof can be adapted to modern scientific writing. Anta Diop chose literary as well as scientific themes and produced translations in his native tongue of extraordinary precision and clarity. His rendering into Wolof of Einstein's Theory of Relativity as interpreted and explained by the French scientist Langevin, is superb. He also offers us translations of poems and excerpts of plays from French literature that retain all the exquisite beauty of the original. The terminology of modern mathematics and physics which he uses opens the way for elaboration of a modern scientific culture in the Wolof language.

Wolof, it is true, is a language with a long literary tradition. C. Anta Diop makes this abundantly clear in his book with a judicious choice of texts. Nevertheless what he has done for Wolof can be done for any language, African or not. Even more recently, the President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, demonstrated the vitality of African languages by his series of literary works, including a translation of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

FOR all languages there is a problem of adaptation, but not of adaptability. Linguists know that no language lacks the ability to mould itself to a new environment. Every language has its own built-in system that meets the needs of its people. The integration of new knowledge is a matter of vocabulary; it does not affect the system, which is the structure of the language on which the vocabulary rests.

Moreover, the need for adaptation is not a problem exclusive to the languages of Africa. It is a world-wide problem.

Japan established its economic and scientific force by assimilating modern skills and knowledge into its own language, and by introducing new techniques into its culture to which it gave Japanese words or transliterated the original foreign ones.

No language escapes this process. Why is there a "Franglais" or a "Japenglish" if not because English has become the leading language of the world as a result of the contribution of American science and technology?

The best answer to the question regarding the adaptability of African languages to modern change is to remind ourselves how easily modern techniques are being assimilated into African languages. It is a truism that people do not accept all foreign words indiscriminately. Train, ship, television, mathematics, drugs—in a word all the elements of the new environment are spontaneously translated, especially by the women who often find graphic, picturesque equivalents for them.

In Wolof, for example, the word for train is *saxar*, for mathematics *wann*, for drugs *garab*, all terms drawn from the language itself. For words like television, radar or atom, commonsense operates in Africa as it has in Japan, Germany or India, and the same words are incorporated into the language with minor modifications or none at all.

Today the great problem in Africa is that of translation. School books from the primary to the university level must be translated to make them available to students. This will facilitate the broad diffusion of science and technology in Africa. It is easier, cheaper and will reach greater numbers.

A nation's linguistic policy is not decided by the individual. The individual can make known his suggestions, his desires and his needs; but the final word rests with the State. Specialists agree that the use of the vernacular for literacy campaigns and schooling is certainly the best way to show one's regard for the culture and traditions of a people, and the most effective for making the language the vehicle of modern change; but the politician does not always see things the same way as the specialist.

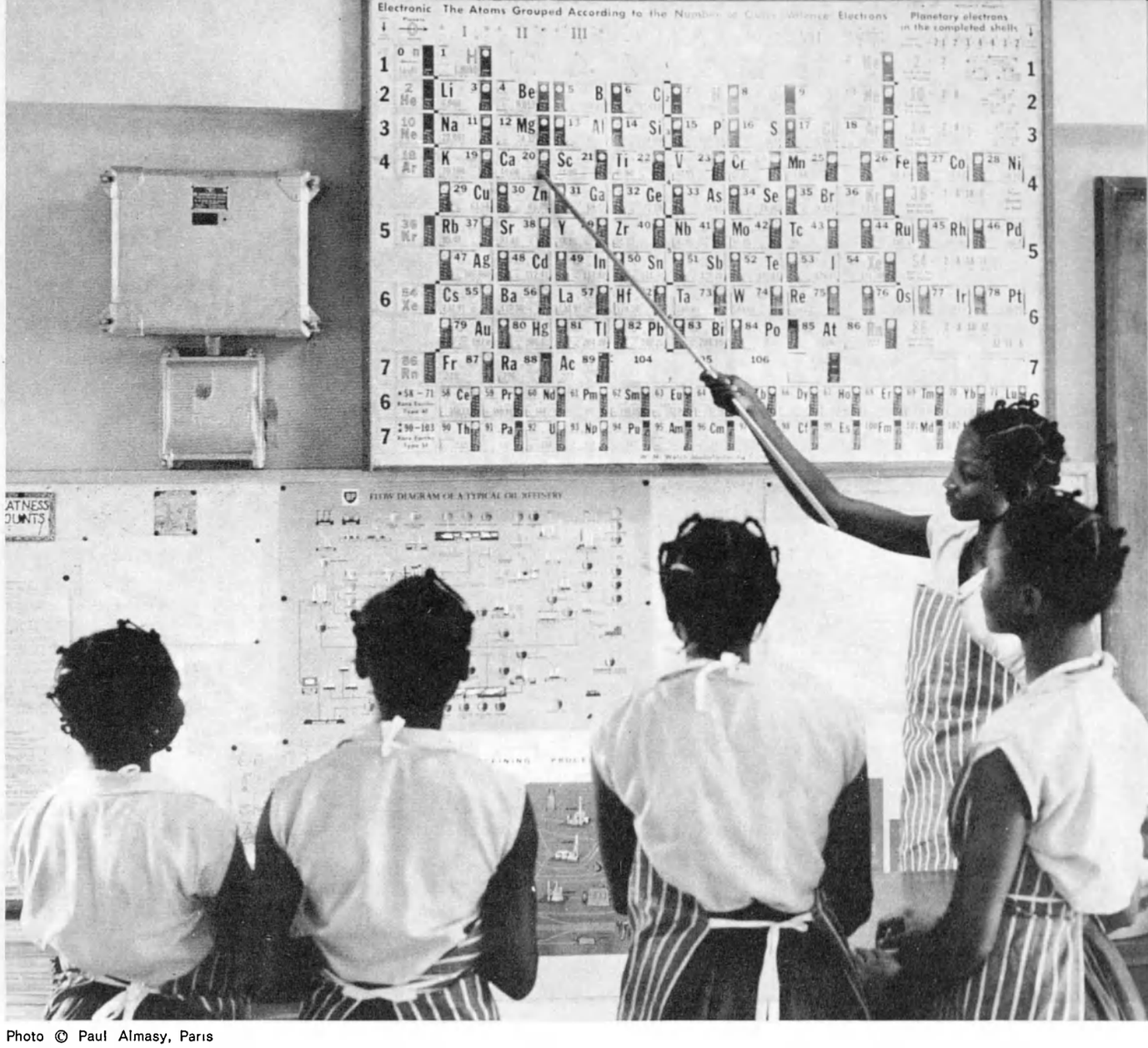
However, an increasing number of countries are exhibiting a refreshing degree of understanding in this matter, and this is encouraging. In addition to those countries of Africa that have traditionally practiced bilingualism based on the use of both an African language and a European one—such as Nigeria, Ghana, the Congo Kinshasa, Tanzania and Uganda, others like the Niger, Guinea and Mali have shown new interest in the question.

Unesco's programme in Africa which gives priority to the question of African languages, shows that Unesco is keenly aware of this problem and its effect on the continent's educational and development policy.

Many details have as yet to be worked out in agreement with Unesco's African member countries; but the proposals elaborated at the Unesco-sponsored Congress of Bamako in 1965 for the unification of certain African scripts is a step in the right direction.

But the big problem remains that of establishing an Institute of African Languages, for the training of linguists and the preparation of school textbooks in African languages.

Broader and more substantial international aid would of course be extremely valuable for pursuing this problem in greater depth, and should offer greater opportunities for Africa's scholars, Africa's statesmen and all of Africa's people.



Young women students studying the Periodic Chart of the Atoms, in a laboratory at Queen's College, Lagos (Nigeria). In Africa's secondary schools girls now represent on the average one pupil in four, and the proportion is rising at a rate that would hardly have seemed possible even a generation ago.

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

Today's schools prepare tomorrow's African scientists

by N. C. Otieno

NICHOLAS C. OTIENO *of Kenya is a senior lecturer at University College, Nairobi, where he teaches mycology and phytopathology. He is a member of the College Academic Board and of the Senate of the University of East Africa. Dr. Otieno was first president of the East African Academy and is vice-president of the International Congress of Africanists. He is the author of many scientific studies on botanical questions.*

A central figure in the drama of African development is the African scientist and the type of education he needs. It is not only the quality of the scientist—his ability to think critically and constructively; his intellectual qualities and trained capacities; his ability to seek and discover the truth —that counts. Equally important are the number of scientists that Africa can produce within the shortest possible time.

Until now, the number of scientists (including doctors, agriculturalists, engineers, science teachers and veterinarians) coming from African universities has remained relatively low.

More students seem to prefer an Arts degree, which can lead to a lucrative government job, to a degree in the sciences; many eschew agriculture which requires working in areas with fewer amenities than in the large cities; others fail to receive adequate scientific and mathematical training in their secondary schools; many are not attracted by secondary school science teaching as a career, thus perpetuating a vicious circle which results in a shortage of good graduate science teachers.

This appears to be an Africa-wide problem. In both Ghana and Nigeria, for example, education authorities are disturbed by the fact that the number of science students has lagged behind the numbers admitted to non-science courses. In East Africa the need for

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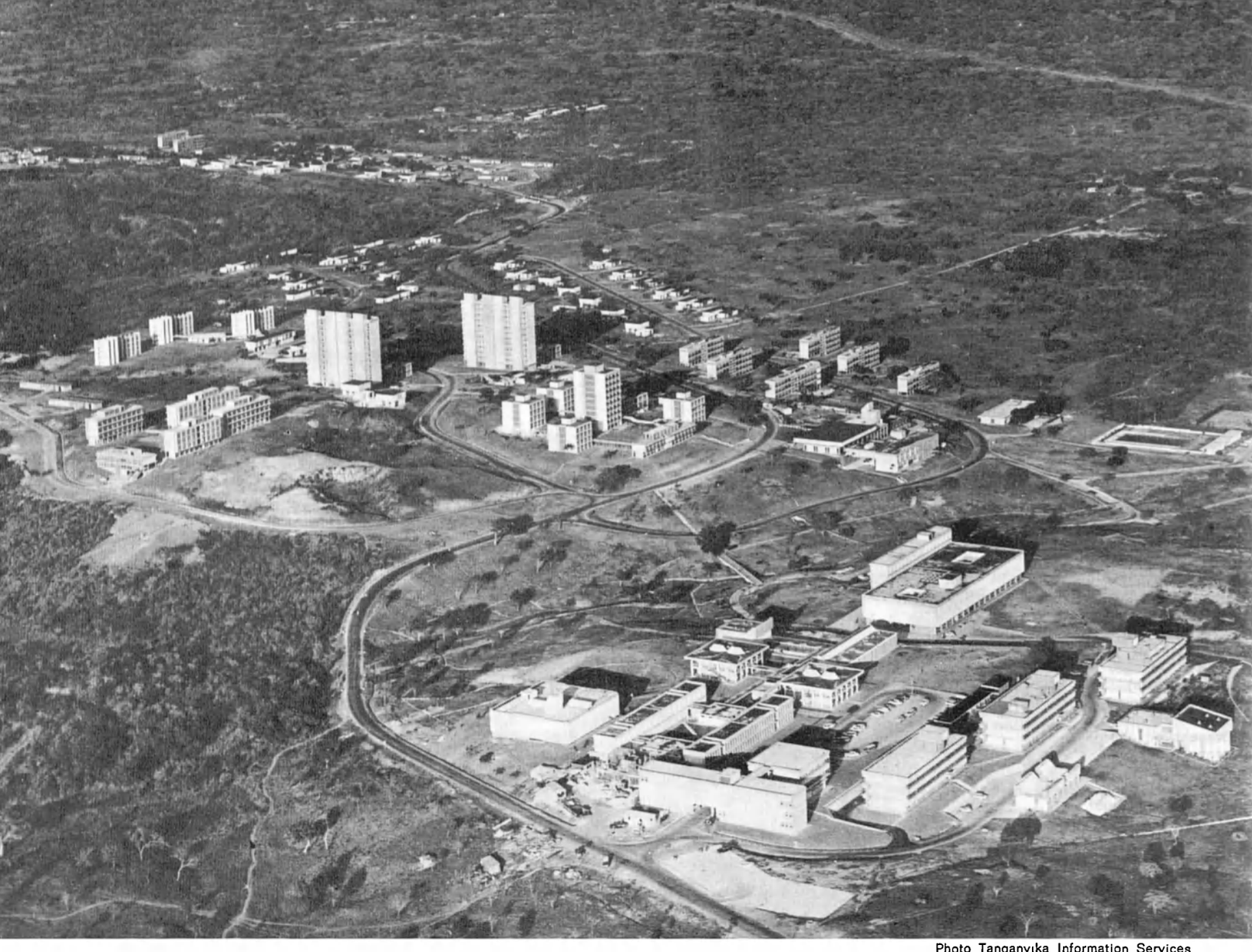

Photo Tanganyika Information Services

Air view of the impressive ensemble of buildings composing the new University College of Tanzania, now nearing completion close to Dar es Salaam. Unesco and the United Nations Development Programme are contributing to its operation and expansion. The College is part of the University of East Africa. Founded in 1963, this university is unique in Africa, being composed of three university colleges sited in three countries: at Makerere (Uganda), Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). All three colleges have full faculties of arts, social sciences and general science. Academic standards and examinations are unified and all degrees are awarded by the University of East Africa.

37 burgeoning universities

graduates in the sciences has been estimated at just over 50 per cent of all students graduating between 1967 and 1970. Yet for 1966-67, science student enrolment in East Africa is below 30 per cent of total university enrolment.

In 1962, African states meeting at the Unesco Conference on the Development of Higher Education in Africa, at Tananarive (Madagascar) proposed that 60 per cent of the estimated student population of 274,000 in Africa's universities by 1980 should be students of science and technology.

The 32 university institutions which existed at the time of the Tananarive Conference were considered adequate to supply Africa with the graduates it would need up to 1980.

Since 1962, however, five new universities have been opened which, if provided with sufficient funds, could enrol more students and completely alter the picture of total graduates that would be provided by African universities by 1980.

The five are: University of Lesotho and Botswana, University of Asmara (Ethiopia), University of Zambia Lusaka (Zambia), University of Malawi (Malawi), University of Njala (Sierra Leone).

Another proposal which came from Tananarive was that African universities should co-operate in teaching at expensive professional Faculties such as Medicine which had already been provided for in 11 universities by 1962.

To meet East Africa's urgent need for more doctors than those which Makerere College (Uganda) could produce, the intake at Makerere was increased from 60 to 90 students annually from 1966, and it was also decided to open a new medical school in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1967 with an annual intake of 30. Another medical school has been started in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), which is affiliated to the University College there, so that students are awarded a medical diploma of the University of East Africa.

The Veterinary Faculty in Nairobi, which also has students from Burundi and Nigeria, has increased its annual intake from 30 to 60. It is proposed to open a school of forestry at Makerere within three years, and a school of agriculture in Nairobi. The Engineering Faculty in Nairobi has also expanded from an intake of about 60 students per year to over 100. The expansions are made not for the sake of prestige, but because East African countries desperately need high-level manpower for their development.

The rapid educational expansion in East Africa helps to illustrate what is going on in other parts of the continent. Ghana and Nigeria, certainly, must be expanding at much faster rates than those that apply to East Africa.

The colonial legacy, whereby African universities had curricula adapted to those of the universities of their colonial masters, tended to produce scientists who were alien to their own backgrounds. With the coming of independence, English-speaking West African universities cut their ties with the University of London, and introduced the West African School Examination system which has been working out syllabuses for secondary schools as well as examinations suited to their environment.

This has increased the number of students going from schools to the universities and created a flexibility which enables university scientific curricula to be devised that take cognisance of the local scene. A similar situation has arisen in East Africa since independence, following which the University of East Africa severed its relationship with the University of London in 1963.

The University of East Africa is redesigning scientific courses and curricula to produce graduates with qualifications relevant to East Africa's requirements. Education options have been introduced into the B.Sc. curriculum so as to produce secondary science teachers which countries so desperately need. Ministries of Education are also giving more bursaries for students following an Education Course in the University. In Kenya, 60% of the bursaries go to students taking teaching as a subject within their B.Sc. course.

IT has been realized that an Africanization of the curricula will require research and the production of local textbooks and teaching aids. Moves are also being made to establish the University of East Africa Press to publish works produced by this research.

Although it is accepted that basic scientific methods are universal, their application in the new publications takes account of the resources and needs of East Africa. The University College, Nairobi is producing a "Flora of Highland Kenya" and a "Textbook of Tropical Phytopathology"—among other books.

It is realized too that Africans alone can effectively adapt the curriculum to their own needs and aspirations; and it is the policy of the University and the governments to Africanize academic staff as rapidly as possible. The Special Lectureship scheme, financed by the Rockefeller Foundation, is one major move to make this a reality. East African governments have further accepted the idea of providing postgraduate fellowships to promising students to enable them to carry out research that would enable them to join the teaching staff of the University. In all these moves, great stress is laid on science.

The training of laboratory technicians for laboratory departments of the Colleges also was started in 1965 (financed by the Ford Foundation). This is designed to put an end to the serious shortage of auxiliary staff, which places an extra load on the university teacher of science and tends to divert his energies from the essential tasks of teaching and research.

All these expansions have led to an expenditure of vast sums for the construction of laboratories and accommodation for staff and students. The University of East Africa, for instance, spent nearly £3,500,000 for capital construction between 1964 and 1967. This is expected to rise to £6.8 million within three years. A substantial proportion of this came from external sources.

Large sums have also been spent on laboratory equipment for teaching

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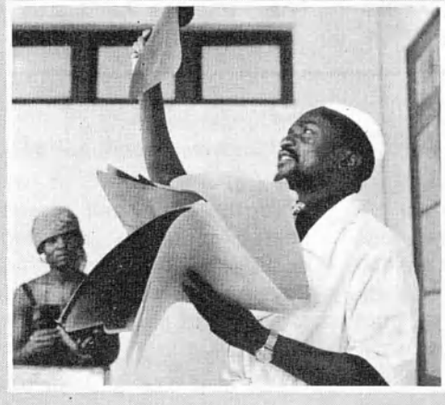
Photo © Naud, Afrique Photo



MODERN HEALTH SERVICES FOR AFRICA

To reach the modest goal of one doctor for every 10,000 people Africa will need to train 13,000 doctors in the next ten years. Nine countries (Congo-Kinshasa, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda) already possess a school of medicine. Three other countries (Kenya, Zambia, Cameroon) are setting up medical schools. Left, Dr. Essomba, head surgeon at Yaoundé Hospital (Cameroon) performing an operation and (above) studying an X-ray photograph. Right, incubator room in the maternity block, Dakar Hospital (Senegal).

Photos © Paul Almasy, Paris

and research. All three Colleges, however, are faced with the prospect of overcrowded laboratories and student accommodation before 1970 if more funds are not forthcoming.

It is evident that if current trends in East Africa are symptomatic of what is happening elsewhere in Africa, then the future of science education and the production of the scientists, on which Africa so much depends for economic development, is assured. The new universities, Zambia, Malawi, and Njala for example, which are setting off on their own without affiliation have a golden opportunity to produce curricula uniquely suited to their own environments. Universities like Dakar which maintain close teaching links with French universities are somewhat difficult to categorize with respect to Africanization of staff and curricula.

In addition to universities, there are several research institutes which employ large numbers of teachers from overseas, but these institutes look forward ultimately to filling their faculties with African university graduates.

The East African Agriculture and Forestry Research Organization is engaged in studies on water control and water use for crops, and its plant breeding section is trying to increase the resistance of crops to pests and disease.

The East African Veterinary Research Organization does research on major animal diseases such as rinderpest for which it has developed effective vaccines. It also works on bovine pleuropneumonia, tickborne diseases, animal physiology and genetics. The Pesticides Research Unit concentrates on eradication of the mosquito and the tse-tse fly as well as control of agricultural pests and diseases.

The Trypanosomiasis Research Unit is carrying out research to determine how sleeping sickness is transmitted from wild animals into man and domestic animals. There is also a Medical Research Unit and an Industrial Research Unit, both of which are engaged on research of great importance to East Africa. Many other kinds of research await the scientists whom we hope to produce from East African universities.

The whole question of communication needs engineers to conduct research into highway construction under tropical conditions. The Cape to Cairo Road, which is being constructed step by step, the road from East Africa to the Congo, and several intercontinental highways can be constructed through areas either of lateritic rock or the black cotton soil, whose properties and behaviour need to be thoroughly investigated by our scientists if we are to construct major roads to encourage trans-African trade. Similarly, engineers are needed for the construction of our rail system.

The great dam on the River Volta in Ghana is destined to produce vast amounts of electricity which in turn will generate new industries for which great numbers of scientists and technologists will be needed in Ghana. At present, there is a preponderance of technicians from overseas who have temporary posts. Ghana will have to produce scientists quickly if this remarkable construction, and the new harbour at Tema, are to change the lives of Ghanaians for the better.

At Kumasi University, the School of Pharmacy has conducted outstanding research on medicinal plants and has produced some unique drugs.

Other research, through of a different nature, has been carried out in the Biology Department at Haile Selasie University, Ethiopia, where scientists have discovered natural herbs capable of controlling water vectors of some of the worst tropical diseases.

In Ibadan (Nigeria), the Institute of African Studies collects information appertaining to all branches of knowledge in Africa including scientific works.

Then there are the Academies of Sciences in Ghana and East Africa which hold symposia and encourage members to conduct research on many national problems. The East African Academy might well become the National Research Council of East Africa, advising governments and enabling them to formulate co-ordinated research policies for the progress of East Africa.

There is also the International Congress of Africanists in which African scientists with their overseas counterparts meet every four years to read papers on research appertaining to Africa that has been conducted in any other part of the world. The last meeting in Accra was concerned with the deficiencies of textbooks in African schools and universities. It also focussed on the problem of the Sahara Desert moving southwards towards the Equator.

All these and many more tasks the African scientist must undertake if he is to contribute to the economic and social development of his continent. It may be hoped that the educational programmes and curricula in schools and colleges will produce scientists equal to this challenge.

BIRTH OF A NEW AFRICA *(Continued from page 8)*

invested capital is the assurance of lasting profitability. It is precisely because a market offers sure outlets for a product that the capital invested in that product brings in returns and goes on doing so—which is obviously the best security of all.

Great changes in social structures are now taking place in Africa. The traditional ways are changing under the impact of modern economy, new ideas and information techniques and in consequence of the desire to imitate other countries.

So far as social structures are concerned, the two most important problems are the rivalry between town and country and, in a different sphere, a certain conflict between generations. This conflict is liable to arise where the bulk of the population is still vastly out of proportion with the elite and when the elite itself stands somewhat apart, not fully realizing that its destiny is bound up with the general development of the generation coming after it, and so is in danger of becoming isolated.

There is also a clash of culture because the generation now bearing the greatest responsibilities is not the one that has been through the universities. On a level with that generation, new people are coming forward who have been brought up in contact with modern ideas, science and culture, and who do not always see the problems in the same way as their predecessors. Both sides bear a responsibility: the older generation should avoid a break with the younger people, and the younger ones must quickly learn where their responsibilities lie, and they must be given responsibility —practice, as the old saying goes, makes perfect.

In the training of staff, I think Africa faces a very great problem, perhaps the greatest of all its problems. There can be no political, economic or cultural development, in the modern sense of the term without the training of specialists and technicians.

All countries know this. Sometimes we move a little too fast and states start to compete with one another, each wishing to have its university, or its higher education centre, even though not always possessing the necessary means or the social and cultural infrastructure. This may be a fault but I think it is a good fault, merely indicating how very anxious all African countries are to train competent staff as quickly as possible.

GABRIEL D'ARBOUSSIER

AFRICAN BOOKSHELF

LITERATURE

■ **African Literature and the Universities**
Edited with an introduction by Gerald Moore. Ibadan University Press, 1965.

■ **Senghor: Prose and Poetry**
Edited and translated by John Reed and Clive Wake. Oxford University Press (O.U.P.). (A Three Crowns Book) 1965 (6/6).

■ **Swahili Prose Texts**
Edited by Lyndon Harries. O.U.P., 1965 (15/-).

■ **Tales of Amadou Koumba**
By Birago Diop. Translated by Dorothy S. Blair. O.U.P., 1966 (16/-).

■ **Agikuyu Folk Tales**
By Ngumbu Njururi. O.U.P., 1966 (13/6).

■ **African Writing Today**
Edited by Ezekiel Mphahlele. Penguin Books, 1967 (7/6).

■ **Seven African Writers**
By Gerald Moore. O.U.P. (A Three Crowns Book), 1962 (4/-).

■ **An Anthology of African and Malagasy Poetry in French**
Edited by Clive Wake. O.U.P. (A Three Crowns Book), 1965 (9/6).

■ **A Bibliography of Neo-African Literature**
(From Africa, America and the Caribbean). Compiled by Janheinz Jahn. Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1965.

■ **Modern African Prose**
Edited by Richard Rive. Heinemann Educational Books (African Writers Series), London, 1964.

ART, CULTURE AND HISTORY

■ **A Bibliography of African Art**
Compiled by L.J.P. Gaskin. The International African Institute, London (hard cover: 50/-).

■ **Africa's Contemporary Art and Artists**
By Evelyn S. Brown. Harmon Foundation Inc., New York, 1966.

■ **A Select Bibliography of Music in Africa**
Compiled by L.J.P. Gaskin. The International African Institute, London, 1965 (hard cover : 45/-).

■ **Education and Changing West African Culture**
By John Wilson. O.U.P., 1966 (8/6).

■ **Proceedings of the First International Congress of Africanists**
(Accra, December 1962). Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., London, 1964.

■ **An Introduction to the History of Central Africa**
By A.J. Wells. 2nd ed. O.U.P., 1967 (hard cover: 30/-; paperback: 18/-).

SOME UNESCO BOOKS ON AFRICA

■ **A Selection of African Prose**
1. Traditional Oral Texts
2. Written Prose
Compiled by W.H. Whitely. (Unesco Collection of Representative Works.) O.U.P., 1964 (21/.-each volume).

■ **Book List on Africa for Canadians**
(Bilingual: English-French). The Canadian National Commission for Unesco, 140 Wellington, Ottawa, Canada, 1965.

■ **Poems from Black Africa**
Edited by Langston Hughes. (Unesco Collection of Representative Works.) Indiana University Press, 1963.

■ **The Development of Higher Education in Africa**
1963. 340 p. ($ 7.00; 35/6; 25 F).

■ **The Planning and Organization of Adult Literacy Programmes in Africa**
By Peter de Sautoy. Manuals on Adult and Youth Education, 4, 1966.. 127 p. ($ 1.50; 8/-; 5.50 F).

■ **Books for the Developing Countries. Asia, Africa**
By Om Prakash and Clifford M. Fyle. 1965. 31 p. ($ 0.50; 3/-; 2 F).

■ **Science Teaching in the Secondary Schools of Tropical Africa**
By J. Cessac.
1963. 79 p. ($ 2.25; 11/-; 7,75 F).

■ **The Teaching of Sciences in African Universities**
1964. 112 p. (hard cover: $ 2.50; 12/6).

■ **A Review of the Natural Resources of the African Continent**
1963. 448 p. ($ 13.50; 67/6; 47.25 F).

■ **Outline of a Plan for Scientific Research and Training in Africa**
1964. 25 p. ($ 0.30; 1/6; 1 F).

■ **Scientific Research in Africa: National Policies, Research Institutions**
1966. 214 p. ($ 4.00; 20/-; 14 F).

■ **A History of Land Use in Arid Regions**
By. L. Dudley Stamp. 2nd imp. 1965. 388 p. (paperback: $ 10.50; 52/6; 37 F; hard cover: $ 12.00; 60/-; 42.00 F).

■ **Social Scientists Specializing in African Studies**
Bilingual: English-French.
1963. 375 p. ($ 11.50; 57/6; 40 F).

■ **Social Implications of Industrialization and Urbanization in Africa South of the Sahara**
2nd imp. 1964. 744 p. (hard cover: $ 11.00; 55/-; 27.50).

■ **Developing Information Media in Africa: press, radio, film, television**
1962. 57 p. ($ 1.00; 5/-; 3.50F).

* * *

The International Institute for Educational Planning (created by Unesco), 7, rue Eugène-Delacroix, Paris-16e, has published a series of 14 African Research Monographs dealing with educational planning and educational questions in the countries of Africa. Space does not permit us to name all of them. We list a few below.

■ **Educational Planning and Development in Uganda**
By J.D. Chesswas. 1966. 97 p. ($ 2.00; 10/-; 7 F).

■ **The Planning of Primary Education in Northern Nigeria**
By J.F. Thornley. 1966. 41 p. ($ 1.50; 8/-; 5.50 F).

■ **Integration of Educational and Economic Planning in Tanzania**
By G. Skorov. 1966. 78 p. ($ 2.00; 10/-).

■ **The Integration of External Assistance with Educational Planning in Nigeria**
By L. Cerych. 1967. 78 p. ($ 2.00; 10/-).

SOME AFRICAN PERIODICALS

■ **Black Orpheus** (A Journal of African and Afro-American Literature)
Published for Mbari Club, Ibadan, by Longmans of Nigeria Ltd., P.M.B. 1036, Ikeja, Nigeria.

■ **Présence Africaine**
Quarterly. French and English texts. Order from 25 bis, rue des Ecoles, Paris-5e. France and French Community: 22 F; Other countries: 25 F.

■ **Transition**
Bimonthly. P.O. Box 20026, Kampala, Uganda. Per copy: U.S. $ 0.75; U.K. 3/6; France 3 F. Annually: U.S. $ 4.50; U.K. 23/-.

■ **The New African**
Monthly. Order from 60 Paddington Street, Marylebone, London W.1. Per copy; U.S. and Canada $ 0.50; U.K. 2/6. Per year: U.S. and Canada $ 7.00 (air mail); $ 5.00 (surface mail). Rest of world: £ 2.10.0 (air mail); £ 1.10.0 (surface mail).

■ **African Forum**
A Quarterly Journal of Contemporary Affairs. Published by the American Society of African Culture, 401 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10013. Subscriptions: In the U.S. and all countries outside Africa: $ 4.00 per year, $ 1.25 per issue, or equivalent in local currency. In Africa: 20/- per year, 6/- per issue or local equivalent. Students (in U.S. and outside Africa): $ 2.00 per year, $ 0.50 per issue, or local equivalent.

Letters to the Editor

APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA

Sir,

The outstanding interest of your number on Apartheid in South Africa (March 1967) was enhanced by your choice of articles and authors which enabled us to view this social evil from the inside. The testimony of your contributors showed how the systematic policy of racial segregation exerts its influence on thought and expression, on work and religion and how it affects culture in general. Apartheid is the complete negation of the respect for human rights, including the universal right to education.

Michel Vial
Grenoble, France

Sir,

Thankyou for choosing Apartheid as the theme of your March 1967 issue. It is a major problem of our time and one of the most tragic. In my view the Unesco Courier is duty bound to tell its readers about the distressing situations in certain countries, whether the cause is underdevelopment or oppression.

G. Perra
Lyon, France

Sir,

After reading your number on Apartheid I am filled with indignation at the ideas you express and your biased allegations.

Naturally, all the plundering and massacres of white people in Africa count for nothing. But a riot which causes some Negro casualties is treated as a matter of major importance, though care is taken not to describe exactly what occurred.

Obviously it would be better for South Africa to follow the same road as the Congo...

To deprive Negroes of a university education is a crime. But you do not say how the percentage of illiterates in South Africa and Rhodesia compares with that of many European countries.

In all African countries the exodus of the whites marks a regression in living standards and civilization and a return to tribalism, savagery and corruption.

They wanted their freedom. Now they have it and they must accept the consequences. Those reduced to begging for their means of existence should not accuse the very people who have raised them up from nothing. Let them show some respect for those who have been good enough to help them when this has meant neglecting the welfare of their own countrymen.

In view of your attitude I am cancelling my subscription.

J. Gruault
Paris, France

Sir,

The subject for March 1967—Apartheid—would appear to be treated in a controversial manner by a publication which is issued by an organization sustained by governmental or international funds. Such organizations should be apolitical and avoid stirring partisan or racial prejudice.

Sufficient to say of the situation in South Africa that there would not be so large a number of black or white immigrants into that country if conditions were bad. Apartheid—separate development—enables the less well-equipped or endowed to find opportunity and training within spheres to which they are fitted instead of competing in spheres where they are at a disadvantage through no fault of their own.

South Africa, one of the most prosperous and stable countries in the world today, gives this opportunity denied to the citizens of many other countries in Central Africa.

The content of your March 1967 number appears to be a criticism and a provocation which could create discord and bad feeling. Such attempts are to be deplored, particularly in a publication sponsored by a supranational body. May I suggest that the Courier be confined to subjects of cultural and social progress?

Elizabeth de Bourbel
London, U.K.

Sir,

Bravo for your clear, firm and completely objective summing up of a situation about which the average person is generally ill informed.

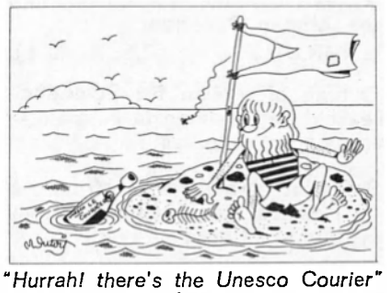
Raymond Vander Elst
Brussels, Belgium

READER-CARTOONIST'S THANKS

Sir,

As a cartoonist and a Unesco Courier reader of long standing, I enclose two sketches to express my thanks for the pleasure that your magazine has always given me.

Maurice Dutoit
Mulhouse Riedisheim, France



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SURVEY OF EUROPE'S STAINED-GLASS

Sir,

I read with great pleasure and appreciation the attractive pages devoted to the Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi (April 1967). Thankyou for the place you have given to this enterprise. It is to be regretted, however, that no mention was made of the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies which gave its full administrative and scientific support to the undertaking and served as its connecting link with Unesco. Apart from this, your pages pay an outstanding tribute to what has been achieved by this survey of Europe's medieval stained-glass windows.

Jean d'Ormesson
Assistant Secretary-General
International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies,
Paris, France

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

Sir,

The issue of the Unesco Courier on the promotion of cultural tourism throughout the world (December 1966) should offer considérable stimulation to the programme for the International Tourist Year in 1967, and we appreciate your reference to Colonial Williamsburg as an example of the economic impact of historical preservation on a community.

I would like to clarify, however, the financial background of Colonial Williamsburg as an educational, nonprofit, organization. Through the generosity of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Colonial Williamsburg has a unique opportunity to provide its visitors a significant travel and educational experience considérably beyond what they pay in return. One result is an annual operating deficit which makes an implication of "handsome profits" here rather far removed from our concepts and actual experience. A frozen endowment fund, the gift of Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., provides an annual investment income of over $2,000,000 with which we meet our deficit.

Carlisle H. Humelaine
Williamsburg, Virginia, U.S.A.

THE RAILWAYS AND TOURISM

Sir,

Your article on International Tourism (December 1966) has several pertinent references to the services rendered to tourism by different forms of transport. I am thus very surprised that the major role of the railways in developing tourism appears to have been completely overlooked.

Louis Armand
Secretary General
International Union of Railways
Paris, France

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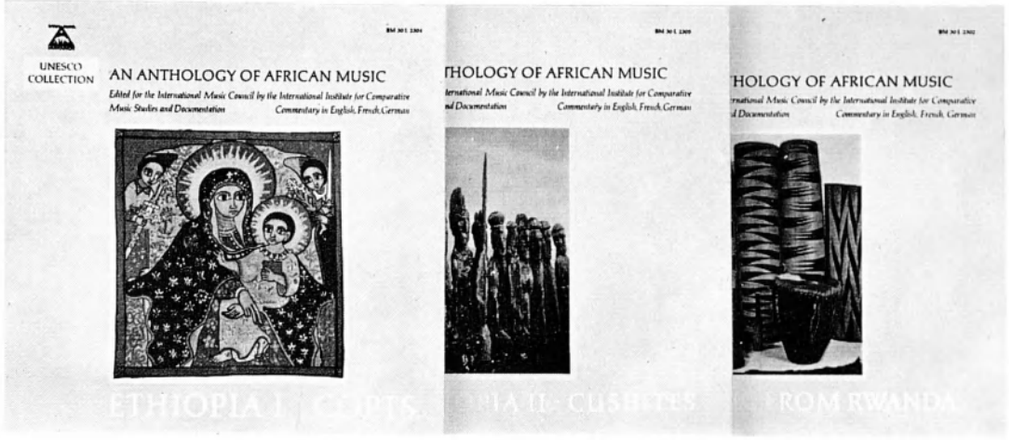

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NIGHT-TIME IN NAIROBI, KENYA

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