

Africa and the Second World War

Report and papers
of the symposium organized
by Unesco at Benghazi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,
from 10 to 13 November 1980

The general
history
of Africa
Studies and
documents 10

In this series:

1. *The peopling of ancient Egypt and the deciphering of Meroitic script*
2. *The African slave trade from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century*
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6. *African ethnonyms and toponyms*
7. *Historical and socio-cultural relations between Black Africa and the Arab world from 1935 to the present*
8. *The methodology of contemporary African history*
9. *The educational process and historiography in Africa*
10. *Africa and the Second World War*

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Unesco

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Preface

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

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

The present book, the tenth in this series, contains the papers presented and a report on the discussions that followed at the symposium held in Benghazi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, from 10 to 13 November 1980, concerning Africa and the Second World War.

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

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

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Introduction

Unesco has undertaken the task of preparing a *General History of Africa*. The first volumes published have already begun to change long-established methodological approaches to the study of the history of the African continent. By its very nature, scale and scientific character, the *General History of Africa* project will undoubtedly further the African peoples' quest to define and assert their cultural identity. Indeed, it will portray the African view of the world from within and demonstrate the unique character of the values and civilizations of the peoples of the continent as a whole.

The project was launched in 1965. The first five years were devoted to making a critical survey of the documentary sources, culminating in the publication of the series entitled 'Guide to the Sources of the History of Africa', which includes the following volumes:

1. *Federal Republic of Germany* (1970).
2. *Spain* (1971).
3. *France I: Sources Conserved in the Archives* (1971).
4. *France II: Sources Conserved in the Libraries* (1976).
5. *Italy I* (1973).
6. *Italy II* (1974).
7. *The Holy See* (1983).
8. *Scandinavia: Sources in Denmark, Norway and Sweden* (1971).
9. *The Netherlands* (1978).
10. *The United States of America* (1977).
11. *Great Britain and Ireland* (1971).

The following guides are in preparation: *Portugal, India*.

The first eight volumes were published by the Inter Documentation Company AG of Zug (Switzerland); Volume 9 was published by KG Saur Verlag KG Tostfach of Munich, and Volume 10 by the African Studies Association of Waltham, Massachusetts.

The work is being supervised by an International Scientific Committee with thirty-nine members, who represent all the major geocultural areas. The Committee decided to divide the *General History of Africa* into eight volumes, each of which consists of thirty chapters, covering African history from

prehistoric times to the present day. It may be viewed, among other things, as a statement of problems concerning the present state of knowledge and the major trends in research. In addition, it highlights divergencies of doctrine and opinion where these exist. Each volume deals with a particular period and examines the evolution of ideas and civilizations, societies and institutions during that time.

While aiming at the highest possible scientific level, the history does not seek to be exhaustive, but rather a work of synthesis which avoids dogmatism. It applies to African history the methods and techniques of a broad spectrum of disciplines, including linguistics, anthropology, archaeology, oral traditions, history of religions, arts, musicology, sociology, law and the natural sciences.

Three volumes—Volume I (*Methodology and African Prehistory*), Volume II (*Ancient Civilizations of Africa*) and Volume IV (*Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*)—were published in 1980 (French), 1981 (English) and 1984 (English). The Arabic version of Volume I was published in 1983 and the Arabic texts of Volume II and IV are now being prepared for publication. The other volumes will be issued as follows:

Volume III: *Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century* (1985/86)

Volume V: *Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (1985/86)

Volume VI: *The Nineteenth Century until the 1880s* (1985/86)

Volume VII: *Africa under Colonial Domination* (1985)

Volume VIII: *Africa from 1935* (1986/87)

Although the volumes are numbered in historical sequence, the order of their publication depends upon the completion by the authors involved.

The entire history is being issued first in English, French and Arabic. Translations into Italian, Spanish and Portuguese of volumes already published are under way, and other translations into European or Asian languages are planned, since one of the primary objectives of the *General History of Africa* project is to inform the broadest possible public about the cultures and civilizations of the peoples of Africa. This goal, in turn, is part of Unesco's mandate to encourage and develop communication among the peoples of the world through a better understanding of one another's cultures.

Abridged versions of the *General History of Africa* are now being prepared and will be published in Kiswahili and Hausa, and also in other African languages. An edition in the form of cartoon strips based on the abridged versions is also planned, as well as audio-cassette versions in African languages.

Scientific colloquia and symposia have been organized in order to make available to the authors as much documentary material as possible and to take stock of the most recent research on the subjects to be covered in each volume.

The papers prepared for discussion at these meetings are published in English, French and other languages in the series 'The General History of Africa: Studies and Documents'.

The following volumes have already been published:

1. *The Peopling of Ancient Egypt and the Deciphering of Meroitic Script.*
2. *The African Slave Trade from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century.*
3. *Historical Relations across the Indian Ocean.*
4. *The Historiography of Southern Africa.*
5. *The Decolonization of Africa: Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa.*
6. *African Ethnonyms and Toponyms.*
7. *Historical and Socio-cultural Relations between Black Africa and the Arab World from 1935 to the Present.*
8. *The Methodology of Contemporary African History.*

Volume 9, entitled *The Educational Process and Historiography in Africa*, is in press.

The present volume, the tenth in this series, contains the papers presented at a meeting on 'Africa and the Second World War', together with a report on the discussions that followed. The meeting, which was held from 10 to 13 November 1980 in Benghazi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), was organized by Unesco in connection with the preparation of Volume VIII of the *General History of Africa (Africa from 1935)*.

These papers examine Africa and the legacy of the Second World War by looking at the political, economic and cultural aspects; the impact of the war on North Africa; German attitudes and policy towards Black Africa during the war; the role of the Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa; and the Union of South Africa and the war.

Africa and the legacy of the Second World War: political, economic and cultural aspects

Ali A. Mazrui

The Second World War was an important divide in Africa's history. There is widespread consensus that the war contributed towards Africa's political liberation.

But what about economically? Did the war tighten the shackles of dependency or loosen them? Did it lay the foundations of economic self-reliance or prepare the way for greater external capitalist control of African economies?

What about the cultural impact of the war? How relevant was the legacy of the Second World War for subsequent cultural relations between Africa and the Western world?

Finally, there are the military implications of the war. This subject could be divided into at least two broad categories. One category concerns the actual military conduct of the war, and the role of Africa in the operational and strategic aspects of combat. These aspects of the war are treated more comprehensively elsewhere.

But in addition we must raise the question of whether the Second World War significantly influenced the future military history of Africa beyond the war itself. To what extent can the origins of civil-military relations in Africa after independence be traced to the creation of African combat units within the imperial armies between 1939 and 1945?

We cannot do justice to these comprehensive questions in this short article. But let us examine a few of these broad issues.

The Second World War and political liberation

The war facilitated Africa's political liberation partly by undermining Europe's capacity to hold on to its empires. Britain was exhausted and almost impoverished by the time war ended. France had been humiliated by Germany.

Related to this exhaustion and impoverishment of Western Europe following its own fratricidal war was the destruction of the myth of European invincibility in the eyes of the colonized peoples. Suddenly somebody noticed

in Bombay that the Emperor's clothes of modern technology were not clothes at all—the British Raj was naked! And when the Indians started pointing fingers and exposing the nakedness of their Emperor, other subject peoples elsewhere began to do the same. That is one reason why the precedent set by India in challenging British rule became an important inspiration to many African nationalists.

At a more individual level the war also cut the white man down to size in African eyes. The colonial situation until then had cried aloud for two processes of humanization. The colonized Africans had had their humanity reduced by being regarded as part devil and part monkey. They certainly had their adulthood reduced, for they were often equated with children. When I was growing up in Mombasa in the 1940s, the film censors declared some films as being 'not suitable for Africans and children under 16'. And since the population of Mombasa was in part racially mixed, and many Arabs looked like Africans, there were two kinds of identification tests at the door of the Regal Cinema. An African who wanted desperately to see a particular film could try and convince the ticket clerk that he was really an Arab. Secondly, the 15-year-old who was desperate to see the film had to convince the clerk that he was really 16. This equation of Africanness with childhood began to be undermined as a result of war experiences and the role of African soldiers, who fought as brave and determined adults.

On the other hand, Europeans had been portrayed as superadult and virtually superhuman. The war in turn humanized white men in the eyes of their African comrades as they fought together in the Horn of Africa, North Africa, Malaya and elsewhere. To witness a white man scared to death under fire was itself a revelation to many Africans, who had previously seen white men only in their arrogant commanding postures as a colonial élite.

So, while the image of the African was humanized by being pulled up from equation with devils, monkeys and children, the image of the white man was humanized by being pulled down from equation with supermen, angels, and the gods themselves.

The third effect of the war was to broaden the general social and political horizons not only of ex-servicemen who had served in the war, but of many Africans who had remained behind. The idea of listening to the radio for overseas news concerning the war gathered momentum during the war. Individual Africans in a township were, in terms of conversations among themselves, identified as being either pro-British or pro-German. My father, for his sins, was pro-British and I remember long debates he used to have with his friends, in a relaxed mood, debating the significance of the latest news item about the war abroad, and whether it was good news or bad news for the different fans of the British on one side and the Germans on the other. I was a child then listening with rapture to this kind of exchange. It was clear that the

grown-ups regarded the contending forces in Europe partly as soccer teams writ large, and the Africans were placing their bets on the two European powers at war with each other. We should remember that East Africa had once known both German rule in Tanganyika, Rwanda and Burundi, and British rule in Uganda and Kenya. The two actual and former colonial powers at war with each other were on one side ominous masters, and on the other frivolous soccer teams in deadly rivalry with each other.

But the very tendency of my father and his friends to debate the progress of the war almost as if it were the progress of a football match increased their interest in world affairs and broadened their vision of human possibilities. For millions of Africans all over the continent the Second World War was an important internationalizing experience. By the end of it many Africans were ready to agitate for freedom and independence.

The Second World War was also liberating for Africa because at the end of it the seat of world power was no longer Western Europe but had divided itself between Washington and Moscow. The two superpowers both had a tradition of anti-imperialism in at least some sense, though both superpowers were also guilty of other forms of imperialism. What is clear is that the rise of the Soviet Union and the pre-eminence of the United States after the Second World War created two pressures on European powers to make concessions to African nationalists struggling for independence. The West's fear of the Soviet Union sometimes retarded the process of liberation, but in the end facilitated that process, convincing Westerners that it was a good idea to give independence to moderate Africans while there was still time, and thus avert the threat of radicalizing Africans still further and driving them into the hands of the Soviet Union.

The Second World War and economic dependency

Although the Second World War was indeed politically liberating in the senses we have mentioned for Africans, that same war was an important stage in the incorporation of Africa into the world capitalist system. Partly in pursuit of war aims, African agriculture was modified to produce urgently needed supplies and food for Europe. In some parts of Africa there was a major depression later when the war demand for African-produced goods declined, but the structure of African agriculture had by then already entered a new phase of export bias. The trend towards pointing African agriculture in this direction continued unabated.

Some of the post-war schemes for African development initiated by the colonial powers were indeed failures. One of the most spectacular of the failures was the groundnut scheme in Tanganyika, flamboyantly conceived in terms of

large-scale groundnut development, and deemed to be an appropriate strategy of interdependence between Africa and Europe. The scheme was designed to help supply Europe with certain food oils while generating development in Africa. As it turned out, the scheme was ill-conceived, badly located, and disastrously implemented by the British authorities in East Africa.

But on balance the principle of developing African agriculture to serve European needs was already well entrenched. The war had simply helped to consolidate it.

Another way in which the war laid the foundations of further economic dependency was the manner in which it helped transform colonial policy from the morality of maintaining law and order in Africa (*Pax Britannica*) to a new imperial morality of increasing development in the colonies and pursuing the welfare of the colonized peoples. Britain established the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund as part of the machinery of this new imperial vision. It was not enough to stop Africans fighting each other. It was not enough to control cattle raids between different communities and tribes. It was not enough to make an example of political agitators in order to maintain the mystique of *Pax Britannica*. It was not enough to use the slogan of law and order. Imperial power was a kind of trust, a mandate to serve the subject peoples.

The vision itself was of course much older than the Second World War. It was even explicit in Rudyard Kipling's well-known poem 'The White Man's Burden', first published in *The Times* on 4 February 1899.

Take up the White Man's burden—
 Send forth the best ye breed—
 Go bind your sons to exile
 To serve your captive's need.
 To wait in heavy harness,
 On flattered folk and wild—
 Your new caught, sullen peoples,
 Half-devil and half-child. . . .

Take up the White Man's burden—
 The savage wars of peace—
 Fill full the mouth of Famine
 And bid the sickness cease; . . .

Take up the White Man's burden—
 No tawdry rule of kings,
 But toil of serf and sweeper—
 The tale of common things.
 The ports ye shall not enter,
 The roads ye shall not tread,
 Go make them with your living,
 And mark them with your dead.

The developmental imperative of service was certainly very explicit in this poem. But on balance it was not in fact until the Second World War that development as a major imperative of colonial policy became a genuine exertion. New projects for rural development were more systematically implemented, and new trends in educational policy were soon discernible. Virtually all the major universities in black Africa were established after the Second World War, many of them soon after the war in response to the new developmental imperative in colonial policy.

But these thrusts of development were themselves a further aggravation of Africa's incorporation into Western capitalism. The Colonial Development and Welfare Fund contributed in its own way towards deepening both Africa's economic dependency on the West and Africa's cultural imitation of the West.

Five distortions in African development

Important biases in the direction of development included, firstly, the export bias we have just mentioned. Cash crops for export were given priority over food for local people. A quarter to one-third of the total cultivated area in some of the more fertile colonies were devoted to the production of such export commodities as cocoa in Ghana, coffee in Uganda, groundnuts in Senegal and the Gambia, pyrethrum in Tanganyika, and tea in Kenya.

Another distortion which occurred in the development process was the urban bias. Much of the economic change subordinated the needs of the countryside to the needs of the towns. One consequence was the volume of migration from rural areas to urban centres. The crisis of habitability continued to be the lot of the country folk. Young men struggled for a while, then downed their tools, and set out on the high road towards the uncertain fortunes of the capital city.

A third bias within each country was subregional distortion. Some parts of the country were much more developed than others. This burden of uneven development had its own stresses and strains. By being more developed than its neighbours the Buganda subregion of Uganda, for example, acquired not only extra leverage, but also the passionate jealousy and distrust of other parts of the country. With less than one-fifth of the population of Uganda, the Buganda held sway and exercised undue leverage over the political and economic destiny of the country as a whole. Uganda is now very difficult to govern with or without the help of the Buganda. The chronic instability of this country is partly the result of ethnic confrontations and partly the outcome of uneven development among the different subregions and groups.

The fourth distortion in the history of development in Africa was the distortion which occurred in parts of the continent settled and, at least for a

while, controlled by white settlers. In 1938, out of a total of £1,222 million capital invested in Africa, no less than £555 million was invested in South Africa from outside. A further £102 million was invested in Rhodesia. These countries under white settler control acquired in addition considerable economic muscle in their own parts of the continent, with leverage over their neighbours. Rhodesia exercised economic influence over Zambia, Malawi, Botswana and Mozambique.

Kenya, while it was still a colonial territory, exercised considerable economic influence on the neighbouring countries of Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar. South Africa itself is now a giant in the southern African sub-continent, with considerable potential for buying friends or neutralizing enemies.

The fifth bias in Africa's development takes us back to capitalism. For in this case we are indeed dealing with the capitalist bias in Africa's recent economic history—absorption into international structures of trade and capital flows, belief in the efficacy of market forces, faith in the profit motive and private enterprise, distrust of state initiatives in the economy, and optimism about the developmental value of foreign investments.

It is partly the nature of these five biases in the history of economic change in the continent that has condemned the continent to the paradox of underdevelopment—a continent well endowed with mineral wealth and agricultural potential which is at the same time a continent of countries which the United Nations has deemed to be the poorest in the world.

Until the 1970s, the terms 'poor countries' and 'underdeveloped countries' were virtually interchangeable. Clearly countries like Democratic Yemen or the United Republic of Tanzania were both poor and underdeveloped.

But the emergence of oil power has shattered this easy equation. Virtually all Third World countries are still technically underdeveloped, but only some of them are now poor. Democratic Yemen and Tanzania are still good illustrations of the old equation. They are both poor and underdeveloped. But since the 1970s it has become difficult to think of Saudi Arabia as a poor country: on the contrary, it is one of the best endowed countries in the world with oil wealth and dollar reserves—while being at the same time one of the least developed.

What is true of Saudi Arabia as a country is substantially true of Africa as a continent. In terms of resources, Africa is one of the best endowed regions of the world, but it is still the least developed of the inhabited continents. This is *the pathology of technical backwardness*.

A related paradox is that, per head of each group's population, the richest inhabitants of Africa are non-Africans. The poorest in per capita terms are indigenous Africans themselves. That is one reason why the highest standards of living are among white people in southern Africa.

Of course, there are rich blacks as well as rich whites on the continent. But again, we find that there are more white millionaires per head of the white population of the continent than there are black millionaires in relation to the number of blacks. This is *the pathology of maldistribution*.

The third interrelated paradox is that while the continent as a whole is, as indicated, rich in resources, it is so fragmented that it includes the majority of the poorest nations of the world. The paradox here is of a rich continent which contains many poverty-stricken societies. This is *the pathology of a fragmented economy*.

Let us look at these paradoxes in greater detail.

Estimates of Africa's resources are on the whole tentative. Not enough prospecting for underground resources has taken place, but it is already fair to say that Africa has 96 per cent of the non-Communist world's diamonds, 60 per cent of its gold, 42 per cent of its cobalt, 34 per cent of its bauxite and 28 per cent of its uranium.

Africa's iron reserves are probably twice those of the United States, and its reserves of chrome are the most important by far outside the Soviet Union.

In the 1970s the United States imported 98 per cent of its manganese from abroad, nearly half of it from Africa.

The West's interest in Africa's oil has also significantly increased, partly in proportion to the political uncertainties surrounding the Middle Eastern suppliers. Had Nigeria joined the Arab oil embargo of the United States in 1973, the consequences for America would have been severe. In 1974—the year following the embargo—the United States' balance-of-payments deficit with Nigeria was already \$3 billion, rising to \$5 billion two years later. For the time being America's dependence on Nigerian oil continues to be critical.

There is also Africa's agricultural potential. The Sudan, Africa's largest country, may indeed develop into a major bread-basket for parts of Africa and the Middle East before the end of the century. More effective irrigation would facilitate full exploitation of the impressive fertility of this part of the continent.

Then there are Africa's water resources, with some of the greatest rivers of the world. Potentialities for building dams and generating hydro-electric power have only just begun to be exploited.

Solar energy for domestic and public purposes is still in its infancy. But it should be remembered that Africa is the most exposed of all continents to the sun. The equator cuts through its middle, and it is the only continent bisected by both the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. Tapping solar energy in Africa, once the technique becomes sophisticated, could be an additional source of power and energy.

With regard to uranium, Africa's resources may be significantly greater

than at present estimated. One country that became a uranium-producing state fairly recently is Niger, formerly a French colony.

Against this background of mineral, agricultural and other resources in Africa there is also the disconcerting fact that Africa has some of the least developed countries in the world. The overwhelming majority of the countries that the United Nations regard as the 'poorest' in the world are in fact in Africa. They range from Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso) to Rwanda and Burundi and from Somalia to Tanzania.

The continent itself seems to be well endowed with resources, but a disproportionate number of people on the African continent are undernourished and underprivileged. A situation where a continent is well endowed but the people are poor is a situation of anomalous underdevelopment.

A substantial part of the explanation lies in the nature of Africa's economic interaction with the Western world. And a major stage in that interaction was the Second World War and its distorting consequences.

The Second World War and cultural bondage

What about the cultural impact of the war? War-ravaged Europe could not rule Africa for ever, and a new timetable was needed for imperial policy, a new commitment to 'colonial development and welfare' emerged. It was no longer enough merely to maintain law and order in the colonies and let social change take its own slow course. A new sense of developmental urgency began to influence policy-makers at the Colonial Office in London.

It was partly out of this developmental urgency that the idea of accelerating higher education for the colonies was elaborated. In 1945 the Asquith Report was submitted to the British Government. It was a blueprint for higher education in the colonies. One of its basic assumptions was that the colonies needed the kind of indigenous leadership that had acquired Western skills and a 'modern' outlook. The stage was being set for new forms of cultural penetration into the colonies.

It should be emphasized, however, that the motives were often beyond reproach. It was true that Africa had been left behind in certain basic skills of the 'modern' technological era. Unfortunately the universities which were emerging were not primarily designed to help Africa close the technological gap between itself and those who were more advanced. On the contrary, the new colonial universities imported the same contempt for practical subjects that had characterized the academic ethos of the West for centuries. But while the West had evolved safeguards against this academic arrogance, and produced other ways of fostering technology and engineering, the colonies imported the academic arrogance without its safeguards.

The contradiction was not always recognized either by Britain or by the new spokesmen of African aspirations in the colonies. It was an often stated British imperial policy to offer Africans the education best suited to African conditions and needs. Educators such as Carey Francis in East Africa were most anxious not to de-Africanize youth through Western education. But as a result of the educators on the ground not being sufficiently innovative, they ended up doing what they probably knew best—duplicating what was offered in Europe. The Bishop of Masasi's more distinctive experiments in Southern Tanganyika stood out among the rare innovations.

In some cases the new post-war policy of 'universities for the colonies' partially diluted an earlier imperial commitment to vocational and practical training. In its pre-university incarnation, Makerere in Uganda was noted less for its liberal arts than for professional training in 'MAVE' (Medicine, Agriculture, Veterinary Science and Education). While these subjects continued to be a major concern of Makerere after it attained university status (Veterinary Science was later transferred to University College, Nairobi), the proportion of students taking them drastically declined. The appeal of the liberal arts deprived the Faculty of Education especially of its fair share of the brightest students for many years to come. In Makerere's pre-university days, Education as a professional faculty had a significantly higher proportion of the most gifted students than it later did. The most illustrious of this earlier batch of Makerere's trained teachers turned out to be *Mwalimu* Julius Nyerere, destined to become the philosopher-president of the United Republic of Tanzania.

What all this means is that the new welfare colonialism which followed the Second World War gave a new impetus to liberal arts and literary education, sometimes at the expense of earlier progress in more practically oriented educational policies.

In this connection, it is worth bearing in mind important differences between the Westernization of Africa and the modernization of Japan after the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Japan's original modernization involved considerable selectivity on the part of the Japanese themselves. The whole purpose of selective Japanese Westernization was to protect Japan against the West, rather than merely to submit to Western cultural attractions. The emphasis in Japan was therefore on the technical and technological techniques of the West, rather than on literary and verbal culture. The Japanese slogan of 'Western technique, Japanese spirit' at the time captured this ambition to borrow technology from the West while deliberately protecting a substantial part of Japanese culture. In a sense, Japan's technological Westernization was designed to reduce the danger of other forms of cultural dependency.

The nature of Westernization in Africa has been very different. Far from emphasizing Western productive technology and containing Western life-styles and verbal culture, Africa has reversed the Japanese order of emphasis.

Among the factors which have facilitated this reversal has been the role of the African university.

In order to understand this role more fully, let us examine it in relation to one special function of culture.

Dependent culture and derivative paradigms

One of the primary functions of culture is to provide a universe of perception and cognition; a societal paradigm, a world-view. Kahn's work on the structure of scientific revolutions has provided new insights into the process through which scientific paradigms shift, and how new alternative systems of explaining phenomena come to dominate scientific thought.

But what about shifts in *cultural* paradigms? And how are these related to shifts in scientific ones?

Religion is often a cultural paradigm in its own right. Copernicus and Galileo between them, by helping to transform scientific thought on planetary movements, in time also helped to change the Christian paradigm of the universe.

Charles Darwin, by helping to initiate a revolution in the biological sciences, also started the process of transforming the Christian concept of 'creation'. These are cases in which paradigmatic changes in the sciences have led to paradigmatic changes in religion. Historically there have also been cases where religious revolutions have resulted in scientific shifts. The rise of Islam gave the Arabs for a while scientific leadership in the Northern Hemisphere. Puritanism and nonconformism in Britain in the eighteenth century was part of the background to both a scientific and industrial revolution in that country.

But paradigmatic changes are caused not merely by great minds like those of Copernicus, Newton, Darwin and Einstein, or only by great social movements like Islam and the Protestant revolution, but also by acculturation and normative diffusion.

It is in this sense that colonialism constituted a major shift in the cultural paradigm of one African society after another. Traditional ideas about how rain is caused, how crops grow, how diseases are cured and how babies are conceived have had to be re-examined in the face of the new scientific culture of the West.

If African universities had borrowed a leaf from the Japanese book, and initially concentrated on what is indisputably the West's real area of leadership and marginal advantage (science and technology), the resultant African dependency might have been of a different kind. But the initial problem lay precisely in the model of the university itself—the paradigm of academia, with its distrust of direct problem-solving in the wider society.

There is much in our education system [in the United Kingdom] which makes it easier to define problems in terms of narrowly scientific objectives. The existing relationship between universities (with the unidirectional flow of 'experts' and advisers, the flow of overseas students to this country, etc.) have tended to transfer the same standards and expectations to the LDCs. . . . Technologies for the satisfaction of basic needs and for rural development have received little attention. . . . Curricula, textbooks and teaching methods are too closely imitative of practice in industrialized countries. This has spilled over from teaching into research expectations. Universities have aimed to achieve international standards in defining the criteria for staff recognition and promotion; in practice this means using the international scientific and engineering literature as the touchstone. However, applied work directed at the solution of local problems . . . can rarely be associated with publication in 'respectable' journals: a far better test is the local one of success or failure of the particular project in the LDC environment.

The one paradigmatic change which was necessary for the imported universities did not in fact occur. The missing factor was a change in the conception of the university itself and what its purposes were.

But the 'lack of change' in the conception of the transplanted university caused a lot of changes in the attitudes, values and world-view of its products. Since the university was so uncompromisingly foreign in an African context, and was transplanted with few concessions within African cultures, its impact was more culturally alienating than it need have been. A whole generation of African graduates grew up despising their own ancestry, and scrambling to imitate others. It was not the traditional African who resembled the ape; it was rather the Westernized one, fascinated by the West's cultural mirror. A disproportionate number of these cultural 'apes' were, and continue to be, products of universities.

Those African graduates who later became university teachers themselves have on the whole remained intellectual imitators and disciples of the West. African historians have begun to innovate methodologically as they have grappled with oral traditions, but most of the other disciplines are still condemned to paradigmatic dependency. This includes those African scholars who have recently discovered Marx. The genius of Marx did indeed initiate a major international paradigmatic shift in social analysis. But Marx's theories were basically Eurocentric, and his legacy constitutes the radical stream of the Western heritage. Those African scholars who have replaced a Western liberal paradigm with a Western radical paradigm may have experienced a palace coup in their own minds or a changing of the guard within the brain, but they have not yet experienced an intellectual revolution in this paradigmatic sense. The ghost of intellectual dependency continues to haunt the whole gamut of Africa's academia for the time being. And the legacy of the Second World War, and the ensuing 'welfare colonialism', are part of the origins of that cultural bondage.

Conclusion

In this article we have examined the strange and paradoxical role of the Second World War in the history of the different forms of dependency in Africa. Politically, the war weakened imperial control and prepared the way for the disintegration of the empires of France and Great Britain. But economically it helped to integrate the colonies more firmly into the global capitalist system as the economies of the periphery were made to serve more systematically the war needs of the centre. As for the cultural impact of the war, it broadened Africa's exposure to alien influences, and later resulted in the new imperialism of building higher educational institutions for the colonies. Militarily the war initiated more firmly the idea of recruiting African soldiers and setting up African armies equipped with modern weapons—with all the consequences that process has had for both military dependency and the tensions of civil-military relations in the former colonies.

Our focus in this section is on the impact of the Second World War on cultural dependency. But that requires some understanding of the other effects of the war.

Politically, imperial control was being weakened, partly because of the weakening of the imperial powers themselves. France had been humiliated and occupied by the Germans—putting a strain on the old mystique of imperial invincibility and the grandeur of France which had been propagated in the colonies. Great Britain was becoming exhausted and impoverished as the war dragged on. British India was restive, though loyal, while the Japanese played havoc with Burma and the Malayan peninsula. The British Empire in Asia was not going to last long after the war even if Britain won.

African nationalists like Awolowo, Nkrumah, Kenyatta and Azikiwe were watching these developments in the old empires with rising hopes and aspirations for Africa's own liberation. Even for those Africans who had not been abroad the war was helping to broaden their international horizons in the effort to follow the fortunes of the different battles on the radio and in 'vernacular' newspapers. Never before had so many ordinary Africans tried so hard to understand conflicts in such remote places as Dunkirk and Rangoon, Pearl Harbor and even El-Alamein.

In addition there were the African servicemen themselves who experienced combat thousands of miles from their villages, who learnt new skills and acquired new aspirations, and who witnessed the white man in a new light, both as an enemy on the other side and sometimes as a frightened comrade in the trenches.

But while the war was thus undermining the political control of the old empires, it was also increasing temporarily Europe's need for the products

of the colonies. There was rationing throughout the empires—and a continuing effort to make the colonies produce what Europe most needed. New food products were cultivated with Europe's hungry mouths in mind, new raw materials were produced in the periphery with Europe's industries as the intended market. There was a war boom in the colonies, to be followed later by a new depression. The very dialectic between this kind of boom and depression in Africa was a symptom of Africa's new level of economic integration into the international capitalist system. The same war which was weakening Britain's and France's political control over their colonies was at the same time deepening Africa's economic dependency upon the Western world as a whole.

What about the cultural impact of the war on Africa? This was partly related to the other processes we have mentioned. The new guilt complexes of the Western world following the struggle against Nazism and Fascism resulted in a more responsible form of colonialism. But this responsibility in turn led to a more determined transmission of Western education and its cultural appendages. At the top of this new structure of cultural dependency were the new colonial universities.

We have sought to demonstrate in this article that the African university is part of a chain of dependency that continues to tie Africa to the Western world. African perceptions, models of communication, structures of stratification, rules of interaction, standards of evaluation, motives of behaviour and patterns of production and consumption have all been undergoing the agonies of change partly under the disturbing impact of Western culture.

African universities have been the highest transmitters of Western culture in African societies. The high priests of Western civilization on the continent are virtually all products of those cultural seminaries called 'universities'.

On balance, the African university is caught up in the tension between its ambition to promote genuine development in Africa and its continuing role in the consolidation of cultural dependency. If genuine development has to include cultural decolonization, a basic contradiction persists in the ultimate functions of an African university. It may generate skills relevant for modernization and development. But it has not even begun to acquire, let alone to transmit to others, what is perhaps the most fundamental skill of them all—how to promote development in a post-colonial state without consolidating the structures of dependency inherited from the Second World War and its imperial context.

North Africa and the Second World War

Idris S. El-Hareir

This paper attempts to trace and analyse:

1. Why North Africa was involved in the Second World War.
2. The military struggle between the Allies and the Axis forces over control of the region.
3. The impact of that colonial conflict on North Africa.

The North African countries (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco) were all under foreign domination before the Second World War broke out. Egypt had been under British control since 1882. Libya was invaded by Italy in 1911. France occupied Algeria in 1830, Tunisia in 1881, and Morocco in 1912.

When Britain and France declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939, after the latter had invaded Poland on 1 September,¹ their colonies in North Africa (as well as in other parts of the world) were drawn into the war. The North African colonies supplied manpower and war materials to the war effort, as well as battlefields for a colonial war which did not concern them.

Mussolini, who had bound himself to give full moral and material support to his ally and friend, Hitler (according to the Pact of Steel, 22 May 1939),² was encouraged by German *blitzkrieg* attacks and early victories over Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France to declare war on France and Britain on 10 June 1940.³ Thus North Africa was drawn closer into the European imperialistic conflict and a turning-point in the history of the region was reached.

Following the declaration of war against Britain, Italy began a military build-up on the Libyan-Egyptian frontier, to launch an offensive against the British in Egypt.

In the Second World War, Mussolini saw prospects of victory and spoils in Africa and the Mediterranean areas, especially in annexing Egypt and the Sudan to Libya and the Italian colonies in Ethiopia and Somaliland. Therefore, he ordered Marshal Graziani, with an army of about 80,000 Italians and conscripted Libyans, to invade Egypt on 13 September 1940.⁴

Graziani's army forced the ill-armed and vastly outnumbered troops of General Wavell to withdraw to Marsa Matrûh. The Italians advanced as far

as Sidi Barrāni (Egypt), which they occupied on 16 September. Mussolini was 'radiant with joy', because he had taken the entire responsibility for the offensive on his own shoulders, despite the opposition of his generals.⁵

The Italians halted their advance at Sidi Barrāni, a decision which proved disastrous for them. It gave their British enemies precious time to reinforce their troops and positions, and eventually, on 8 December, to launch a counter-attack which led to a humiliating defeat for the Italians.⁶

It is not the purpose of this article to describe and analyse the complicated and dispersed military battles and actions from a military point of view, but rather to provide a survey in order to show the great losses in manpower and material resources that North Africa suffered in a European war, fought on African soil, with European weapons against a European enemy.

Attacking Graziani's forces at Sidi Barrāni, the British captured the town and its whole garrison and wasted no time in forcing the Italians back into Libya. The Italian Tenth Army was completely lost at the Battle of Sidi Barrāni.⁷ The Italians, stunned by their defeat, retreated to their fortifications in El-Bardiyya and Tobruk, where they waited for the next step to be taken by the advancing enemy.

General Wavell, exploiting his success, wasted no time in destroying all of Graziani's army. On 19 December 1940, his forces laid siege to El-Bardiyya. After heavy bombardment from the air, sea and ground, the garrison of 45,000 surrendered. On 8 January 1941, the British rolled on to Tobruk. The great fortress was besieged. Despite its strong defences and a garrison of 30,000 men, it succumbed to the British in two weeks.⁸

From Tobruk, the British forces moved on in two major columns, one westward towards Derna, along the road, and the other to the south-west to El-Makhili and then to Masūs, reaching a point about 80 kilometres west of Benghazi. The purpose of this move was to outflank the Italian forces which were withdrawing westward to Tripoli. The British succeeded in surprising the retreating Italians west of Benghazi and 10,000 were taken prisoner.

The second British column, advancing through the Green Mountain, reached Benghazi on 7 February 1941. Within only three months they had destroyed ten Italian divisions and taken 113,000 prisoners with arms. They also inflicted heavy losses on the Italian navy and air force.⁹ Thus, the British eliminated the threat to the Suez Canal and the Nile valley, and also put an end to Mussolini's colonial dream of dominating the Mediterranean and reviving the former Roman Empire.

Mussolini had turned down several German offers to help him militarily. The Germans had wanted to send squadrons of planes, as well as modern tanks and guns which the Italian army needed. He had feared that the Germans might have had interests in the Mediterranean, which he considered Italian 'living space and [within the Italian] sphere of influence'. He once told Marshal

Badoglio: 'If the Germans set foot in Italy we shall never get rid of them.'¹⁰

When the Italian offensive against the British forces in Egypt ended in a stunning defeat (a consequence of which was the loss of control of eastern part of Libya), the Germans were forced to support their ally. The German leadership was alarmed by numerous reports from their embassy in Rome and called for immediate military assistance, without which the outcome would be disastrous for Italy and the Southern Axis front, in view of the military setbacks in Egypt and Greece.

On 3 February 1941, Hitler met with the supreme command of the German armed forces (OKW) and a decision was taken to send squadrons of their bombers to Sicily immediately, to defend Italy against British attacks. The OKW also decided to dispatch a German fighting force to North Africa. This operation was coded Directive No. 22 under 'Operation Sunflower', then under the command of General Erwin Rommel.¹¹

The German African legion (Afrika Korps) began arriving in Tripoli from Palermo, Sicily, on 10 February 1941. On 20 March Rommel met Hitler in Berlin and both agreed to the launching of an offensive against the British as soon as the German troops had all arrived in Tripoli.¹² The Germans surrounded their plan with complete secrecy so that the British were unable to estimate the size of the force or when and where it would strike.

On 31 March, Rommel launched his offensive against the British forces in North Africa's Gulf of Sirt area. At the same time, German aircraft heavily bombed and mined the city of Benghazi and British positions.¹³ The British, who had transferred some of their fighting units from Libya to Greece, could not withstand the German attack and retreated eastward. Al-'Aqila and Agdabya were captured by the Axis. Rommel put Wavell's tactics into reverse. One section of the German army fell unexpectedly upon Benghazi; the other crossed the desert in a south-easterly direction, following a route south of the Green Mountain from west to east, reaching El-Makhīli and capturing its British garrison.¹⁴

The suddenness of the German assault spread confusion among the British troops. In Benghazi, General O'Connor and General Neame, the British commanders, ordered evacuation of their forces after destroying the city's military installations. Because of German air strikes against British units, communication broke down and O'Connor and Neame were taken prisoner.¹⁵

From El-Makhīli, the Axis forces flung themselves headlong at Tobruk. There they met severe resistance from the British units defending the city. Rommel left a contingency force around it and swept through El-Bardiyya and Sallum, which he captured, and from there sent his reconnaissance forces eastward to Sidi Barrāni.¹⁶

Upon Tobruk, which the British decided to defend, Rommel turned the

full power of the German air force and there began a series of violent raids. Heavy guns were drawn up to pound the outer perimeter, and tanks and armoured cars were turned upon the perimeter itself. Attack after attack was launched against the city garrison, but the British continued to hold out. Then Rommel decided to lay siege and continue his drive into Egypt.¹⁷ In thirteen days, he recovered what had been lost to the British forces by the Italians.

In an attempt to check Rommel's advance on one hand, and to break the siege on Tobruk on the other, General Wavell launched a counter-attack. A fierce battle known as Battle Axe took place on 16–17 June, around Sidi 'Umar, Kambüt, Musa'ad and Halfāya Pass, ending with another defeat for the British forces.¹⁸

On 5 July 1941, General Wavell was replaced by General Auchinleck, who chose General Cunningham as commander of the Allied forces in the Western desert. These were reorganized and named the Eighth Army.¹⁹ The Allied command in Egypt seized upon a moment when the German forces in the USSR had been badly defeated and scheduled an assault on the Axis troops in Libya on 18 November 1941. Rommel was expecting such an attack and a series of fierce tank battles, known as the 'Crusader Battle',²⁰ culminated in a victory for Rommel's forces.

The Allies launched another attack on the Axis forces on 25 November, defeating Rommel's troops and lifting the siege of Tobruk on 10 December. Exploiting their victory, the Allies pushed the Axis forces back to the 'Ayn al-Ghazāla Line, where they again defeated Rommel's troops. Rommel then ordered a complete withdrawal to the Al-'Aqaila Line. Benghazi fell for the second time into the hands of the Allies on 14 December 1941.²¹

When Rommel received new supplies and reinforcements in January 1942, he launched a sudden attack on the Allied forces, which hurriedly retreated eastward as far as the 'Ayn al-Ghazāla Line. Benghazi was once more occupied by Rommel on 24 January 1942.

At 'Ayn al-Ghazāla, the Allies stopped to fight but were badly defeated; consequently Tobruk, which had withstood Rommel before, could no longer resist and succumbed with its 45,000-man garrison on 21 June 1942.²² About the news of Tobruk's fall, Churchill wrote: 'This was one of the heaviest blows I can recall [receiving] during the war.'²³

Following victories in 'Ayn al-Ghazāla and Tobruk, Rommel advanced with little difficulty as far as Marsa Maṭrūḥ and El-Alamein, which he captured on 30 June 1942. The Axis forces were only 100 kilometres away from Alexandria, which was to be the next target.

Because Hitler and his high command had given the Russian front first priority, Rommel did not get the supplies and reinforcements he had asked for. When some supplies were sent to him through Italy and the Mediterranean, the Allied air force (operating from Malta) destroyed them. Rommel repeatedly

urged the German high command to occupy Malta, but it kept deferring this move because of its involvement on the Russian front.²⁴

It was from Malta that British bombers, submarines and warships caused great losses to German and Italian ships carrying supplies to North Africa. In August, some 35 per cent of Rommel's supplies were lost; in October, 63 per cent. On 9 November, Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, wrote in his diary:

Since 19 September we had given up trying to get convoys through to Libya; every attempt had been paid for at a high price. . . . Tonight we tried it again. A convoy of seven ships left, accompanied by two ten-thousand-ton cruisers and ten destroyers. . . . All—I mean all—our ships were sunk. . . . The British returned to their ports in Malta after having slaughtered us.²⁵

Therefore, the Germans bombarded the small island day and night for weeks, by air and sea. As a result, the Axis supplies got through and Rommel was able to advance as far as El-Alamein. However, Malta was soon back in business and contributed a great deal to Rommel's defeat at El-Alamein.

On 15 August 1942, the British once again changed their military commanders in the Middle East. General Auchinleck was removed from his post and replaced by General Alexander, who assumed the command of the British forces in the Middle East, while General Montgomery took over the command of the Eighth Army.²⁶

Rommel, the Desert Fox, as he was called on both sides of the front, had resumed his offensive at El-Alamein on 31 August, with the intention of occupying Alexandria, the Nile valley and the Suez Canal.²⁷ There a series of fierce battles took place along the 40-mile-long desert front between the sea and the Qaṭṭāra Depression.

The Eighth Army succeeded in repelling the first Axis assault at 'Alam Halfo, and shortly after this setback Rommel returned to Germany on sick leave on 3 September 1942. However, events at El-Alamein forced him to cancel his leave and go back on 24 October. In Rommel's absence, Montgomery launched a general attack on the Axis positions on 23 October. By the time Rommel returned to his headquarters on the 25th, the battle which Montgomery had launched was already lost.²⁸

The British had arms superiority over the Axis forces, which were suffering from lack of tanks and fuel. Despite Rommel's attempt to launch counter-attacks, he realized that the situation was hopeless and decided, after a sharp argument with Hitler, to withdraw to Libya.²⁹ Within two weeks, Rommel had fallen back 1,100 kilometres west of Benghazi.

The Battle of El-Alamein was the most decisive victory of the Allied forces in North Africa. It was also a major turning-point in the course of events

of the Second World War, as well as in the history of the region. It was the beginning of the end for the Fascist regime in Italy and the Nazis in Germany.

When the news of Tobruk's fall to the Axis forces came on 21 June 1942, America's President Roosevelt and Britain's Prime Minister Churchill were meeting in Washington. It was decided to shift the American arms which were going to the Far East to the Middle East and to open a new front in North Africa in order to ease the Axis pressure on the Eighth Army.³⁰ Other objectives for the Washington Conference decision were: (a) establishment of bases and encampments along the North African coast; (b) vigorous rapid exploitation of these bases (in order to acquire complete control of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia); (c) complete annihilation of the Axis forces; and (d) relief of the Russian front.

On 8 November 1942, Anglo-American forces, commanded by General Eisenhower, landed at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers.³¹ The Anglo-American invasion of North Africa met with no serious resistance from the Vichy French forces. The Allied troops moved on to various major cities and strategic positions in Morocco and Algeria and marched eastwards to Tunisia.

Upon hearing of the Allied landing on the North African beaches, the German high command ordered immediate occupation of Tunisia on 10 November 1942, in order to use it as a bridgehead and to prevent the crushing of the Axis forces in Africa.³²

Rommel's forces retreated from Benghazi on 18 November 1942, after blowing up its harbour, docks and military installations.³³ At Al-'Aqaila, the Axis forces stopped with the intention of fighting, but Montgomery gave them no time to regroup. There the Eighth Army scored another victory over the Axis forces, which withdrew to Tripoli. Unable to hold on to Tripoli, Rommel evacuated it after demolishing its harbour and vital facilities. By 4 February 1943, the Axis forces were driven out of Libya.³⁴ Thus Mussolini's vaunted African Empire was no more.

While the Anglo-American forces were advancing on Tunisia from Algeria, the Eighth Army kept pushing the Axis forces into south-east Tunisia. On 3 March 1943, Rommel launched an offensive against the Eighth Army, ending in a defeat for the Axis forces, which then withdrew to the fortifications behind the Mareth Line.³⁵ The Mareth Line was a series of strategic fortifications in south-eastern Tunisia built by the French in 1936 to defend Tunisia from any Italian assault that might be launched from Libya. By 17 February, the Eighth Army had arrived at the line.³⁶

At the same time, on 20 February, a series of Axis offensives were launched against the Allied forces through the Qaşşrine pass. The pass was retaken five days later by American forces. In the north, the Axis forces launched an offensive designed to give them elbow room, occupying the coastal area between Ṭabraqa and Māṭer on 3 March.³⁷

In the south, the Allies won a number of victories. General Patton occupied Qafsa on 17 March, on his advance eastward towards the sea. The Eighth Army began its assault on the Mareth Line on the 19th. On 30 March, it crumbled, and the Allied forces broke through. Qabes fell on the same day and Sūsa on the 12th.³⁸

In the north, the Allies occupied Māter and thus controlled the strategic railway junction. On 3 May, communication lines between Tunis and Bizerta were cut, a step that practically decided the fate of the Axis forces. At this time, Rommel was recalled to Germany. The Axis forces were now cornered in north-eastern Tunisia. The Allies ordered a blockade of the Tunisian shores to prevent an evacuation by sea.³⁹

On 7 May, the British took Tunis and on the same day the American forces occupied Bizerta. Two days later, General Krause surrendered with 25,000 German soldiers south-east of Bizerta. From 7 to 13 May, the Allies were mopping up remaining pockets of resistance. General Arnim, commander of all Axis forces in North Africa, Marshal Messe, commander of the Italian First Army, and 250,000 troops were taken prisoners.⁴⁰

Thus, the agony of the colonial war imposed on North Africa finally came to an end. 'The loss of Tunisia was considered by the Germans to be a catastrophe second only in magnitude to that of Stalingrad.'⁴¹ From Tunisia, the Allies crossed over to Sicily to begin their invasion of the Italian mainland.

The impact of the Second World War on North Africa can be viewed in two major ways: first, the destruction of economic resources during the war, and, second, the rise and revival of national movements' struggles for liberation and independence from European colonialism.

From the above survey of military operations, one can see the great horror and destruction inflicted on North African cities, towns and countryside, especially the territories of Libya, which were major battlefields in the war. For example, the city of Tobruk was completely destroyed by gunfire and air strikes which at one time totalled one thousand raids. General Rommel, entering Tobruk on 21 June 1942, noticed that 'every building was levelled to the ground and was just piles of debris'.⁴² Benghazi, control of which had been exchanged five times during the war, suffered great destruction. Rommel confirms in his memoirs that on 18 November 1942 the German forces blew up the port and the docks, and destroyed ships carrying military supplies in its vicinity after withdrawing from Benghazi. He added that 'confusion and horror spread among the civilian population of the poor city'.⁴³

Tripoli experienced the same fate. Its harbour and its facilities were demolished, as well as other military installations, by the retreating Germans.⁴⁴

Roads, bridges, power stations, water-supply facilities and even hospitals and schools were damaged or destroyed by the warring parties. Farmers and

peasants fled to safe places and, consequently, a food crisis developed, resulting in mass starvation.

Above all, the Italian government drafted able young Libyans to fight for its colonial adventure, and many were killed. The loss of human life and property during the Second World War is inestimable.

In addition to the damage inflicted on North Africa during the war years 1940–43, a major problem related to that war concerns the mines planted during the fighting. Among these famous minefields are the ones in the Western desert in Egypt, in the area between El-Alamein and the Qaṭṭara Depression, in vast areas south and south-west of Tobruk, at Al-'Aqaila in Libya and the Mareth Line in Tunisia. Moreover, scattered, unexploded bombs, gunpellets, hand grenades and other war materials which may still be active can all be found on Libyan territory.

These live minefields, which were left behind in Libya, caused great damage to its people and economy. From the following statistics, taken from a preliminary study in 1972, one realizes the seriousness of the problem.

During the period 1952–75, a total of 1,890 people were killed by mines or bombs left over from the Second World War, according to cases reported to the Ministry of the Interior. As for the casualties between 1940–52, these remain unknown, but undoubtedly the figure might be double. According to the same report, 1,645 persons were permanently handicapped, 2,723 camels were killed and 59 cars were destroyed.⁴⁵

When oil exploration began in 1957, many oil companies refused to accept oil concessions in the mined or suspected mined areas. Those companies which did accept rights in the mined areas spent 57,266,500 Libyan dinars to clear the area of their concessions, and half that sum was paid by the Libyan Government. The loss of revenue from the agricultural areas has been estimated at 386,656,430 dinars. A sum of 2,042,221 dinars was spent by the Ministry of the Interior to finance two departments to deal with the problem of mines. The costs of the damaged roads, bridges and ports totalled 2,449,462 dinars. The Libyan Government paid in compensation to the families of persons killed or those handicapped by explosives from the Second World War a sum of 13,873,950 dinars. In order to clear all mines from Libyan territories, a total of 41,918,750 dinars were required, at 1972 prices—a cost of 2,500 dinars per square kilometre. All that Second World War succeeded in inflicting on Libya was an economic drain totalling the staggering figure of 605,003,199 dinars.⁴⁶

Since 1972, Libya has repeatedly called on the states responsible for placing mines on Libyan territories during the Second World War to make available the maps which show the location of these mines, but, unfortunately, no serious response has been received.

On 9 December 1975, the United Nations called upon the belligerent states in the Second World War 'to make available forthwith to the affected

States all information on the areas in which such mines were placed, including maps, and to compensate for any material and moral damage, and to provide technical assistance for the removal of such mines'.⁴⁷

Despite all this, the belligerent states in the Second World War did not respond and thus the problem remains unsolved.

With all the horror and devastation the Second World War brought to the world, however, it paved the way for independence in many countries. Firstly, it put an end to the Fascist regime in Italy, which led to the independence of Ethiopia, Libya, and Somaliland. Secondly, it weakened economically and militarily two major colonial countries, Britain and France. Thirdly, the war encouraged national movements in North Africa to renew their struggle against France and Britain, which culminated in the independence of the whole region from colonial rule.

Notes

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Developments in North Africa during the Second World War

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Today, perhaps, it takes an effort of imagination to recall that in September 1939 North Africa was considered by the French and most Europeans as an extension of France and the jewel of her Empire, whereas in 1945 French domination was already being seriously called into question and the independence of the Maghrib regarded by reliable observers as only a matter of time. It would be futile, however, to ponder over what many contemporaries saw as an incredible mutation. Could North Africa which, through some of its native sons, had clamoured for independence during and after the First World War, fail to take advantage of the Second World War to renew and press harder its claims for independence? And could France, which in the years 1937–39 had resolutely repressed the various nationalist movements in the Maghrib, now yield to them, when its sovereignty over North Africa was, following the defeat, one of its last cards against the German occupier and the springboard for its liberation?

Such questions in themselves indicate the fundamental significance that the Second World War had for North Africa; what was at stake was her future and the future of France, and it was therefore a period of decisive confrontation between the colonizer and the peoples who were colonized. For the peoples of the Maghrib, the outcome of the World War was of less importance than their desire for national liberation.

There is no doubt, however, that one of the factors that quickened the anti-French national consciousness of the Maghrib populations was the long list of sufferings and hardships they had undergone. Mobilization, requisitions, the miseries of the war on top of the blockade hardened their animosities and their hopes. Those sombre days that enveloped the colonial night in still greater darkness were nevertheless to usher in a dawn of hope: it is symbolic that some Algerian nationalists should have decided in advance that Victory Day should be used to try to kindle an insurrectional movement for liberation.

To retrace the evolution of the Maghrib during the years 1939–45, when the course of history suddenly accelerated its pace, especially from November 1942 onwards, it seems advisable, in view of the variations in tempo and chronology of the national protest movements, to examine them from the standpoint of each of the three states which today make up the Maghrib.

Developments in Tunisia

Between 1881 and 1939, when the French were tightening the political and administrative control over their Protectorate, a new Tunisia was born. The economy, whose modernization was at first rapid, began stagnating in 1920 when French capital began to be diverted from Tunisia to Morocco. Impatient or rebellious, the Tunisian bourgeoisie from the early years of the twentieth century sought to take over the management of a state that had been appropriated by the 'preponderant' French.

At the time when war was declared, the nationalist movement had just been subjected to severe repression as a result of the disturbances of April 1938, and its principal leaders, Habib Bourguiba among them, were still in prison. The Neo-Destour, the party of modern nationalism, was by no means crushed, however; the arrival of a new Resident General, Eirik Labonne, and the provisional lifting of the state of siege had made it possible to set up a new Neo-Destour Political Bureau headed by Bâhî Ladgham. The latter even called on the people to boycott the visit of the French Prime Minister Daladier, and later to refuse the mobilization order. Few heeded these orders, however; the masses were above all concerned by the proclaimed ambitions of Fascism; was Tunisia to become an Italian colony like Tripolitania or Cyrenaica? The Neo-Destour Political Bureau was soon to fall under the blows of the police, as well as the militants of a 'Resistance Committee', whose few acts of sabotage were hailed by Radio Berlin in its Arab-language broadcasting service. The older Destour Party led by Sheikh Thaalibi, despite its nostalgia for the East and its opposition to Western modernization, had meanwhile come out in favour of France and Great Britain and asked its sympathizers to refrain from hindering the war effort.

When the news came of the French military defeat, which stunned all Tunisians, a few Neo-Destour militants distributed tracts announcing that 'France, stripped of its former power, would soon be forced to yield'. They demanded, with more than a touch of irony, an end to the Protectorate, since the state which was supposedly the protector had been unable to protect itself. Anti-French demonstrations took place in a number of localities, in Ksar Hellal (24 July) and Dégache (1 November), among others. The Neo-Destour, led at the time by Habib Thameur, tried to get the Bey to intervene on behalf of its leaders who were imprisoned in France. It was not long before Dr Thameur and his deputy Tayeb Slim were arrested, while attempting to flee to Tripolitania, and sentenced to twenty years of hard labour. The new leaders who took over issued the same orders: 'the Protectorate is dead, drowned in the waters of Dunkirk'; the French Government must be forced to free the leaders of the party and allow them to form a free national government.

Such propaganda was interpreted by the Tunisian masses as an invitation to rally to the enemies of France. But Habib Bourguiba, the uncontested leader of the Neo-Destour, more acutely aware of the Italian danger, cautioned his friends against any collaboration with the Axis powers. Despite his warnings, most Tunisians, at first partisans of a wait-and-see policy, soon began to believe in the victory of the Germans and manifested clearly their sympathies. German propaganda incited them, in particular, against the Jews, which led to anti-Jewish disturbances in the Kef Region in August 1940 and in Gabès where, on 19 May 1941, several hundred Tunisians stormed the Jewish quarter leaving behind several dead and wounded.

The accession to the throne on 19 June 1942 of a new Bey, Sidi Muhammad al-Moncef, who had revealed his nationalist sentiments as early as the 1922 crisis, reinforced the opposition to France. The 'Destourian Bey' tried to stand up to the French Resident General, Admiral Estéva, by demanding a programme of reforms. The clash between the two men was in fact a reflection of the clash between two policies. However, in November 1942, Tunisia became a battlefield. With the withdrawal of the French forces on the order of the Vichy Government and the arrival of the German troops, was the wait-and-see policy of the Tunisians still possible?

From his prison in France, Bourguiba denounced the naïve belief of those who expected that a victory of the Axis would bring independence to Tunisia. 'It is crystal clear', he wrote to Habib Thameur, 'that Germany will not win the war', and he gave orders 'to support the Allies unconditionally'. That stand astonished the members of the Neo-Destour Party who, on the contrary, were determined to take maximum advantage of the almost total disappearance of the French authorities.

During those six months when the Germano-Italian armies were in control, the intellectuals and the masses believed that the time of independence had come. The Germans authorized the Neo-Destour leaders who had been released from prison in Tunisia by Admiral Estéva to reconstitute their party and youth movements and turned over the city administration to them. Nationalist newspapers reappeared, papers like *Ifriqiya al-Fatat* (Young Africa) and *Al-Cha'ab* (The People), the second of which was resolutely pro-German. In return for these concessions, the Neo-Destour agreed to the requisitioning of workers, which provided the Germans with 'valuable economic support and a well-disposed labour force' (Rudolf Rahn).

Bourguiba, released by the Germans and installed in Rome by the Italians, was invited by the latter to come out publicly in their favour. He cleverly refused to do so and the Italians decided to negotiate with the Bey. However, the latter, who was practising a wait-and-see policy on the advice of the older Destour Party, was intractable, much to the astonishment of the Germans and Italians. The Tunisian people, on the other hand, were happy

to throw their weight behind the national movement and were grateful that a government had been formed without the consent of the Resident General Estéva.

When the Allied forces entered Tunis on 7 May 1943, the Tunisians gave them a particularly cool reception: the 'reconquest of Tunisia' spelt for them the end of their hopes. A few days later, General Giraud ordered from Algiers the dismissal of Bey Moncef on the pretext that he had collaborated with the enemy. 'That unwise act perpetrated at the expense of a sovereign who had always been loyal' (Marshal Juin) crystallized the nationalism of the people around the heroic memory of the Bey martyr.

Habib Bourguiba, who had refused to go along with the Germans, was exonerated. And although he called on the Tunisians to join up with the Fighting French, the latter rather had it in mind to liquidate the Neo-Destour. General Mast, the new Resident General, set about arresting 10,000 Tunisians who were suspected of having collaborated with the Germans or of having betrayed and mistreated the French colonists. Finally, the Comité Français de Libération Nationale issued a number of edicts reinforcing French authority in Tunisia, which drained the Protectorate of all its substance.

Such measures discouraged Tunisian political circles who expected anything but this sudden stiffening of the Protectorate. At the death of Sheikh Thaalibi, political opinion was unanimous in demanding internal autonomy for the Tunisian nation: this claim was clearly asserted by a *Manifesto of the Tunisian Front* in November 1944. Political and trade-union associations were formed, the most powerful of which was the Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT).

Losing all hope of obtaining the liberation of his country from the Provisional Government of the French Republic or from the Anglo-American authorities, Habib Bourguiba turned towards the Arab States. On 26 March 1945, he arrived clandestinely in Egypt and during a long four-year exile he travelled about championing the Tunisian cause.

The Tunisian land and its people had been hard hit by the war, which failed to bring any concrete encouragement to the nationalist hopes of the country. But national feeling, which before 1939 was the concern of a small bourgeois élite, had spread. With Bey Moncef the dynasty had become the symbol of Tunisian unity and Moncéfism had contributed to the popular spread of nationalism which was to be strengthened and given further impetus by the trade-union activity of the UGTT.

Developments in Morocco

Even though Moroccan historians assert that nationalism was an active force in their country before European penetration, it would seem that nationalism

as it is known today had generated little enthusiasm among Moroccans before the War of the Rif or even the Berber Dahîr affair (1930). But since that time, it had steadily gained strength, not only among the young intellectuals connected with the Jeunes Marocains, but also in urban circles. A number of nationalist political parties came on to the scene—two in the French Protectorate and two in the Caliphate under Spanish Protectorate. The first urban and rural popular demonstrations broke out in 1937 and were put down without violence. The arrest and exile of the principal leaders in October 1937, followed by the banning of the nationalist press in the French zone, brought the agitation to a halt.

'Order reigned' in Morocco in 1938 and 1939 in so far as certain moderate nationalists rallied to the innovative action of the Resident General, General Noguès. Allal el-Fasi's National Reform Party even sent a delegation to the Residency on 26 August 1939 'to offer its support in the face of the threatening danger'. France was able to mobilize around 47,000 Moroccans in its army in 1939/40.

But the prestige of the colonizer was not destined to withstand the military defeat of France. The German radio was broadcasting news of the demise of French power and the forthcoming liberation of Morocco. The nationalists in the port of Tétouan echoed the news by organizing the funeral of France in ceremonial parody. In the Spanish zone, the Nationalist Defence Bureau of Brahim al-Ouazzani and the National Reform Party (Islâh) of Abdalkhaleq al-Turris now came out openly in support of the Axis powers. Only the National Unity Party of al-Mekkî Naciri displayed greater discretion and opposed the fusion of the three nationalist parties which had been recommended by an emissary of the Third Reich dispatched to Morocco in 1942.

In the French Protectorate, too, the nationalists were stirring, and their influence spread to the countryside where the population was restive because of the economic slowdown. In the medinas their demands for equal treatment and their protests against the preferential treatment accorded to Europeans in the matter of food supplies found a favourable echo, particularly among the poorest sections of the population. Anti-French and pro-German feelings gained ground among all strata of the population. It is not excluded that the Sultan himself—although it was more likely someone who was very close to him—passed on information to the Germans regularly. Matters of a confidential nature discussed by General Weygand with the Sultan were in fact transmitted to German agents on 7 June 1941. And again in January 1943 a delegation, claiming its authority from the Moroccan Palace, transmitted a message allegedly from the Sultan offering his collaboration in the case of German intervention. At that date the message could not possibly have come from the Sultan.

The Sultan, who had already manifested his independence towards the

orders coming down from the Vichy Government, particularly in his refusal to apply the special laws against the Jews, and who, despite the order of General Noguès, refused to leave Rabat at the time of the American landing, had no need whatever to make overtures to Germany. As a matter of fact, he had met President Roosevelt on two occasions at Anfa and the latter had promised to help Morocco emancipate itself from French tutelage.

According to Walter B. Cline, the head of the American Secret Service, 'it was thereafter believed, on the Moroccan side, that the Americans would prepare the country for independence, transform Morocco into a second California and establish schools and universities for training Moroccans in the art of self-government'. Emissaries of the Makhzan travelled over the Berber highlands to announce that 'thank God the country would soon be delivered from Christian domination'. The example of Lebanon, which had acceded to independence thanks to Anglo-American pressure, encouraged those who lacked conviction.

In the absence of Allal el-Fasi who, though banished to Gabon, had made his allegiance to Gaullism and his return to Morocco contingent on a formal pledge concerning the independence of his native land, the nationalists, led by Ahmad Balafrej and Muhammad al-Yazidi, prepared to take action: on 10 December 1943, the creation of the Independence Party (*Hizb al-Istiqlal*) was announced. In a manifesto signed by fifty-eight personalities, the new party, which united the two former rival movements, informed the Sultan and the Allies of their fundamental demands on 11 January 1944; the independence of Morocco in its territorial integrity and recognition of the latter by the international community.

The new Resident, Ambassador Puaux, naturally refused to accede to these demands as well as to the proposals made by the Sultan in support of the movement. While the popular masses could not contain their joy, R. Massigli, the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the French Committee of National Liberation, arrived and demanded a public repudiation by the Sultan of two of his ministers who had too overtly sided with the Independence Party. The Sultan had no choice but to dismiss them. Not content to leave the matter at that, the Rabat Military Security authorities cooked up a plan for decapitating the nationalist leadership in an effort to provoke a Moroccan reaction that would provide a pretext for dissolving the *Istiqlal*. Falsely accused of preparing an insurrection in league with Germany, four nationalist leaders including Balafrej and al-Yazidi were arrested. The Director of Political Affairs, Boniface, had given the green light to this terribly risky operation during the Resident's absence. However, the popular reaction was much more violent than had been anticipated by the military. Bloody riots broke out in Rabat, Salé and, particularly, in Fez, the most violent incidents that had occurred since 1912. The repression that followed left dozens of dead and hundreds of wounded;

1,800 arrests were made and 1,063 convictions; the sanctions were severe: civil servants ousted, viziers dismissed, schools and university closed down.

Instead of bursting the abscess, the French military had spread the infection. The magnitude of the unrest was proof that nationalism was no longer, as it had been in 1937, the manifestation of a thin layer of the bourgeois intelligentsia. Not only the urban proletariat was infected by it, but the remote Berber tribes were restive; Azrou College, instrument of the 'Berber policy' of imperial divide-and-rule, where the teaching of Arabic was banned, also threw itself into the national movement. The Protectorate had now lost its last chance of being accepted by the Moroccan people.

The Istiqlal, strengthened by a large number of new members, was strong enough to refuse to take part in the Reform Commissions hastily set up by the Resident General. Whenever such minor administrative reforms were announced, the Istiqlal condemned them as a matter of principle: 'The pre-condition of any discussion with the protecting power being independence, no reform should be pursued within the framework of existing institutions.' Such a policy of all-or-nothing could have played into the hands of a rival party: the Communist Party tried to turn it to its advantage, but because it had condemned the January 1944 demonstrations as 'untimely', it was unable to get a foothold among the urban masses and failed to do so at a later date by drawing closer to the Istiqlal.

In the months that followed and despite the gradual release of the prisoners, nationalist public opinion, tempered by the ordeal, stuck to its demands and its 'refusal of all reforms within a colonial set-up'. And even though the reforms that had been put into effect—peasant modernization sectors, ten-year plan for school development, among others—were in line with the nationalist programme, the Hizbiyin considered them a drop in the bucket and rejected them.

The prestige of the Sultan, notwithstanding the public humiliation he had suffered by yielding to French pressure to disavow his ministers, grew stronger and was further enhanced. In February and March 1945, the crowds in Marrakesh acclaimed him feverishly. In reply to cries of 'Long Live the King! Long Live the Nation! Long Live Independence!', Sidi Mutammad ben Yusuf declared: 'Whatever your hopes, I too share them.' Thenceforth, the Istiqlal Party and the Sultan acted in concert, but each in their own way.

Inaugurating a new policy, Muhammad al-Yazidi, who had become the sole leader of the Istiqlal following Balafrej's banishment to Corsica, launched an appeal to international opinion. On 8 March 1945, he addressed himself to the President of the San Francisco Conference and to the Governments of the Great Powers seeking to obtain for Morocco the right to a seat in the United Nations. The Istiqlal also drew closer to the Arab States of the Middle East and the birth of the Arab League on 22 March 1945 appeared to him to open

up at least interesting prospects. But for the Moroccan people as a whole, the creation of the Arab League was seen as the dawn of a new age.

As for Sultan Sidi Muhammad, who could not break with the protecting power, he tried to ingratiate himself with the Government of liberated France. In the spring of 1945, he went to Paris to inform General de Gaulle that he hoped to obtain the end of the Protectorate which exercised sovereign authority and, as an immediate step, the replacement of the Resident. Even though de Gaulle believed that the Sultan 'to be on the safe side had not been deaf to certain suggestions proffered by Germany during the time of its military successes', he received him as a Companion in the Order of Liberation on 18 June 1945. He promised him 'a contractual association between France and Morocco in the economic, diplomatic, cultural and military spheres'; the opening of negotiations, it was agreed, would take place after the French people had adopted a new constitution.

At that date it seemed possible that a diplomatic solution might be found to the Franco-Moroccan crisis, but at the same time it was not clear whether Morocco, proclaimed as an associate or federated state, would join the future French Union. Moreover, the large number of Europeans (around 450,000) who lived and had deep roots in Morocco had not been consulted and had not made their voices heard. The majority of them were jealous of their privileges and were by no means ready to sacrifice their predominant position. Indifferent to the fate of the Moroccans and deaf to their demands, many Europeans did not believe that the nationalists were representative of the nation as a whole. As for the nationalists, they were prepared to treat the colonists well only as 'temporary guests'. In the minds of the best informed French civil servants, the Istiqlal was just a small party with 3,000 militants in 1944, 5,000 in 1945, which, though it had gained the broad sympathy of the city dwellers, had not won over the world of the tribesmen.

The Residency was mistaken in its belief that the growing feeling of national solidarity had not yet affected the Berber tribes, for whom the group or the tribe represented the true homeland. This amounted to underestimating the growing prestige of the Sovereign, the resurgence of loyalty to the monarchy which had for a long time been forgotten in Morocco, and minimizing the rise of independence aspirations among the people. The truth of the matter was that the Moroccan nation, united under the red flag with the green star, was ready for the decisive battles to recover its independence.

Developments in Algeria

In French Algeria, with a European population of close on a million, some 'advanced' Algerians had been attracted by the policy of assimilation, but after the Blum-Violette project for the naturalization of the élite was abandoned, their disappointment was as great as had been their original hopes. However, the reformist *ulamâ* and the supporters of the Algerian People's Party (PPA) were proclaiming themselves as nationalists and demanding more or less openly the rebirth and independence of an Algerian state. In 1939, that dream seemed unrealistic to the majority of cultured Muslim Algerians and to all the French in Algeria. The partisans of the Fédération des Élus outnumbered the supporters of the *ulamâ* ten to one, while the reformists outnumbered the PPA nationalists three to one.

Although the Algerians felt rather deeply that the war that had broken out in September 1939 over Poland did not concern them, mobilization was accepted, without much enthusiasm to be sure, and was carried out without serious difficulties. The French authorities, who were aware of the PPA's call for insubordination, even expressed their satisfaction—a little too vociferously, it should be said—over the affected loyalty of the Algerian troops.

The announcement of the French defeat brought other sentiments to the fore. Many Algerians were prosecuted for having declared publicly: 'France is lost' or 'Let's not pay taxes to France; tomorrow we'll be paying them to the Germans'. Some, heartened by German propaganda, even awaited hopefully a landing of German troops in the ports of Algeria. When, however, only a few officers of the Germano-Italian armistice commissions showed up, they swallowed their disillusionment. However, the subsequent military successes of Germany confirmed the feelings of the Algerian population that the Third Reich would triumph over all its adversaries and deliver the Arab nations from the colonial yoke. Not only the most aggressive nationalists but the common people also put faith in the ambiguous promises and mendacious rantings of the Nazi radio. They were unaware that the Germans had refused in 1939 and 1940 to supply the arms that the militants of the Comité d'Action Révolutionnaire Nord-africain (CARNA) had requested of them. That explains why the Führer was unquestionably popular: the audiences in the Arab cinemas applauded his picture on the screen; pro-Hitler songs circulated in Kabylia glorifying 'Hitler the magnanimous, Hitler the victorious who would deliver the hapless peoples from oppression'. The devout called him 'Hajj Hitler, *Qiyûm's* [Kaiser Wilhelm's] instrument of revenge'. In August 1941, Zenati, an Algerian francophile publicist, had no qualms about writing in *La voix indigène* that '80 per cent of Algerians are pro-Hitler at the present time'. The idea of a plebiscite that would enable Algerians to accede to inde-

pendence under the protection of Germany seemed gradually to have gained ground with the masses in 1942.

The hour of the nationalists had come, or so it seemed. However, the PPA militants had been disarmed by a series of arrests, and the very severe sentences that were meted out to their leaders in March 1941 caused consternation among their supporters. The *ulamâ*, weakened by internal dissension, kept silent. After the death of Sheikh Ben Bâdis, Sheikh el-Uqbî, who had broken with the diehards, adopted a loyalist stand while, at the same time, demanding equal rights for Muslims in all spheres.

Vichy had no policy to propose to the Algerians and merely rejected all the demands for reforms put forward by elected Algerian representatives or the *ulamâ*. The Europeans in Algeria, pleased by the repressive action taken against the Algerian nationalists and communists, were naïve enough to believe that nationalism was dead. Colonial Algeria witnessed without displeasure the persecution of the Jews who, though French citizens for the past seventy years, were suddenly reduced to the status of natives. It also took solace in Vichy's National Revolution which, in the eyes of the colonists, appeared as a kind of revenge for their fears of yesteryear. The communists alone—but only between 1939 and 1941—reverted to the old Comintern slogan: 'The chains of bondage that French imperialism put on the Algerian people must be broken. The Algerian Communist Party raises the flag of Algerian independence.'

In this climate of regimentation and degradation of the standard of living the Allied landing took place. For the Algerians, the fact that the Americans had forced the French to open the way to them confirmed the abdication of France: 'This is the first major defeat of the French Colonial Army', observed the PPA. The spectacle of American wealth and power, which forced the respect and admiration of the Algerians, the frightened volte-face of the Vichy authorities, and then the dissension between rival military and political cliques wiped out the last vestiges of French prestige.

And yet Admiral Darlan and General Giraud talked about mustering 300,000 men without even promising to satisfy the Algerians' demands for equal rights. The time was ripe for a dozen prominent Algerians to address to the Allied authorities a message in which they declared that Muslim participation in the war effort was contingent on the development of a new political and social status. When the French authorities dragged their feet in convening a simple reform commission, Algerian elected representatives went into action and appealed to the Allies, publishing on 12 February 1943 the *Manifesto of the Algerian People*.

According to Ferhat Abbas, the author of the Manifesto, the text had been sent earlier to President Roosevelt in the form of an appeal before being reworked and signed by eighteen prominent figures. The Manifesto demanded

the condemnation and abolition of the colonial régime: 'the time has passed when an Algerian Muslim will ask for anything but to be a Muslim Algerian'. Algeria had to be provided with a constitution, Algerian nationality and Algerian citizenship. In the *Addendum to the Manifesto* of 26 May 1943, countersigned by twenty-one Arab and Kabyle financial delegates, Abbas set forth concrete proposals: at the end of the war Algeria would become an Algerian state governed by a constitution drafted by an Algerian Constituent Assembly elected by universal suffrage; the state could enter into a federation with the other states of the Maghrib. 'As a provisional measure' Algerians would participate in a government in which they would have equal representation with the French, presided over by a French Ambassador.

General Catroux, the new Governor of Algeria, had no intention of yielding to these extreme demands. He ordered the dissolution of the Arab Financial Commission and the internment of Abbas. After the members of the Financial Commission had made a due apology, Abbas was released. None the less he continued to oppose French policy and, in particular, the promises of political reforms made by de Gaulle on 12 December 1943. They conferred on only several tens of thousands of Algerians (around 65,000) the same voting rights as enjoyed by French citizens.

In a declaration of 3 January 1944, Abbas pressed again for the formation of an Algerian government, merely leaving open 'the possibility forming with Tunisia and Morocco a Federation of North African States under the aegis of France'. The *ulamâ* made it clear once again, through their spokesman Sheikh al-Ibrahimi, that the Algerians intended to remain Arabs and Muslims and become Algerian citizens, and that they rejected French citizenship.

As for the Algerian People's Party (PPA), which had been decimated but clandestinely rebuilding itself since 1942, it remained categorically opposed to the policy of assimilation. Its leader, Messali, released in April 1943 after three years of imprisonment but still confined to house arrest, thought of only one thing, the spreading of nationalist propaganda. He nevertheless went along with Abbas's idea of creating a legal political movement known as the Friends of the Freedom Manifesto (AML), whose programme advocated, for the first time, the creation of an autonomous Algerian republic 'federated to a remodelled, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist French Republic'. Messali, who had a considerable popular following, ordered his supporters to join the AML.

Thanks to the vehemence of their propaganda, the Friends found an audience in the urban and rural masses; they served above all as a legal cover for the clandestine PPA. In their journal *Égalité*, the AML denounced the Gaullist reforms that were supported by the communists and the socialists, but in their speeches and tracts they placed particular emphasis on the idea of a Free Algeria and the need for the fight for freedom. One of the clandestine journals of the PPA, *L'action algérienne*, invited the young people to get

organized 'to lead the people in their fight' and refuse any federation of Algeria with France. A pre-insurrectional climate prevailed in some regions: 'the time had come', the anonymous tracts proclaimed, 'to exterminate the imperialist beast'.

Shortly after the creation of the Arab League and before the San Francisco Conference which, the Algerian leaders felt, would proclaim the independence of their country, popular opinion flared up. The French administration expected 'an insurrectional movement coinciding with the end of hostilities'. It was believed that Messali, hailed by the AML Congress as 'the indisputable leader of the Algerian people', had agreed, in early April 1945, to a plan for insurrection that would coincide with the proclamation of an Algerian government near Sétif. The plan could not be put into effect because the French again arrested Messali and deported him to the French Congo.

The nationalists protested against this arrest by demonstrations throughout Algeria on 1 May, and on 8 May, Victory Day, they organized new massive demonstrations. Following the serious incidents at Sétif and Guelma, spontaneous insurrectional movements broke out in the neighbouring *douars*. In order to placate the regions in revolt that had been the victims of military repression, the PPA leaders ordered a general insurrection for 23 May. But the order was finally rescinded in the face of the unexpected scope of the French military action.

The rebellion attempt of May 1945 that culminated in massive repressive action (5,000–8,000 dead according to reliable sources, 1,500 only according to the administration and 45,000 according to the PPA) is not widely known. But it had decisive consequences for the future.

Condemned by the communist parties and the Algerian conservatives as a 'fascist provocation', the rebellion set the Algerian nationalists and communists irreparably against each other. The PPA never forgave the 'imperialo-communists' for having made common cause with the French administration. It likewise caused a split in the national movement: Abbas and his friends severed their alliance with the PPA and had no desire to rebuild the AML movement. As for the revolutionary nationalists of the PPA, the only thing they now counted on was the help of their Arab brothers and the reconstitution of their forces.

The May 1945 insurrection above all else opened up a gulf of hatred and rancour between the French and Muslim communities of Algeria, a gulf that would never again be filled in. For the Algerians, the abortive attempt of 1945 would lead to the war of national liberation that began in 1954.

Conclusion

The Second World War acted first as a brake and then as an accelerator in developing nationalist feelings in the Maghrib.

During a first period covering the years 1939 to 1942, political demands were rather easily thwarted by police action, and the apparent success of this policy of repression was enough to make the colonizers oblivious to the growth of hatred and rancour among the colonized.

But the loss of France's prestige, the influence of foreign propaganda and the awakening of national consciousness among the untutored masses made such an unrealistic attitude at once illusory and dangerous.

This was revealed with striking clarity when the Maghrib was caught up in the war and was occupied by different foreign powers. The new defeats suffered by France, which culminated in the presence of German troops and then the British and American armies, whipped up nationalist hopes.

While 233,000 North African soldiers, incorporated—often against their will—into the French army were participating in the liberation of Europe and France, other peoples of the Maghrib were dreaming of one thing only—their liberation from French domination. The incoherence of American policy which encouraged the liberation movement while giving assurances to the French that their sovereignty would be maintained, the appeal of Arabism and the violence on the part of the French authorities prevented the national movements from being directed into specific channels but provoked in the three states of the Maghrib tests of strength which themselves were to generate future confrontations.

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Black Africa and Germany during the Second World War

A. Kum'a Ndumbe III

Introduction

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, virtually every country in Black Africa was still under colonial rule. As in the First World War, Africans were destined to take up arms in order to defend the 'mother country', i.e. the colonial European state and its overseas possessions, against the ambitions of one or several other European powers. The aim of the Second World War was to reshuffle the cards between traditional European powers, the Soviet Union, the United States of America and Japan. The role of the colonized peoples was confined to support for the colonial power upon which they were dependent in its war effort. Thus, when they declared war and called upon the colonized population *in general*, and the peoples of Black Africa *in particular*, the colonial countries sought to strengthen their hold over the colonies they already dominated and to extend their influence in the European or colonial regions which they did not yet dominate. As Great Britain and France were the major colonial victors of the First World War and were thus able to consolidate and extend their territories, Germany's challenge to the established world order could not be otherwise than prejudicial to them. The Treaty of Versailles had wrested all Germany's colonies away from it and placed them under mandate to the advantage of France or Great Britain. Thus, Germany became a purely continental European power, deprived of its sources of raw materials and its colonial markets, even though some German companies did manage to maintain commercial activities in African countries, as was the case of IG-Farben and other smaller firms. Banished from its colonies, and reduced to the level of a medium-sized power, Germany was to experience political and economic developments which led to Fascism and the total challenging of the world order. It was in this context that the problem of the future relations between Africa and Germany was posed.

World war—a way of restructuring the world

The major consequences of the First World War

The October Revolution in Russia was without doubt one of the most decisive elements in the First World War. With the birth of the Soviet Socialist Republic, the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Germany's exclusion from important spheres of influence throughout the world, the balance of strength within the European continent was fundamentally changed. Before 1914, most of the major world decisions were taken by the colonial powers, i.e. in Paris, London, Berlin, Brussels, Lisbon and Madrid, but this centre of gravity for world decisions was to shift markedly away from the European capitals following the signature of the Treaties of Versailles and Saint Germain in 1919. Thereafter, the United States of America and the Soviet Union emerged as major new powers to be reckoned with and with which it was necessary to reach a compromise in the settling of both European and world affairs. In fact, the colonial powers lost influence in international affairs because they had to come to terms with new powers, even though those powers showed no direct interest in colonial affairs and claimed no colonial territories at the expense of European colonial states. Even the setting up of the League of Nations, which was to concern itself with major international problems and the new status of mandated territories which was attributed to the former German colonies, underlined the collapse of this centre of gravity of world decisions, hitherto monopolized by colonial Europe. This shift of balance did not, however, bring any direct benefit to the colonized peoples despite the fact that they had fought in the war. The good intentions outlined in Wilson's Fourteen Points did not materialize into self-determination for African countries, as they were not considered sufficiently mature to run their own affairs. The Africans were not to be taken in however. Both those who had chosen anti-colonial resistance, as was the case in Cameroon in the struggle led by Rudolf Duala Manga Bell, and those who fought in order to defend the mother country, came out of the war as they had gone into it—as colonized peoples. The main difference was that certain Africans had changed masters, as was the case in Togo, Cameroon, Tanganyika, and South West Africa. But the Africans had at least realized that they had not been fighting for better living conditions or in order to free themselves from the colonial yoke, but rather to enable the colonial power to strengthen its hold over them. During that time, antagonism between the European powers gradually worsened, and the Germans, opposed to the Treaty of Versailles which they denounced as a *diktat*, dreamt of consummate revenge which would enable them to change the worldwide balance of power in their favour.

The conditions in Germany that were conducive to war

The evolution of political regimes in Germany, the repercussions of the economic situation in the inter-war period and ideological propaganda campaigns weighed heavily in creating conditions on the German side that were conducive to the outbreak of war.

The 1918 revolution had been crushed in Germany, through the collaboration between a monarchist army and Social Democrat leaders who managed to reach a compromise, but the monarchy itself crumbled and the Weimar Republic was established. This attempt at democracy in Germany came to a halt, however, in January 1933, when Hitler took power and installed a Fascist regime. During the entire duration of the Weimar Republic, no party had been able to impose a clear majority, and every democratic government was a coalition marked by permanent instability. The average life of a government during the Weimar Republic did not exceed eight-and-a-half months and the constant conflict between parliament and governments encouraged the growth of extremist tendencies, left-wing and right-wing alike. The Fascist right stepped up its propaganda to exploit government instability and permanent parliamentary conflict, representing them as the failure of democracy itself. It seemed to be the right moment for calling in a strong man who cared little for the parliamentary system and was capable of bringing political parties and trade unions to heel, along with industrialists and businessmen. When Hitler took power in 1933, he did indeed ban all political parties, except his own, the NSDAP, which thus became the sole party in Germany. All organizations, including unions, were either dissolved or run by NSDAP members and supporters. This enforced obedience was total and neither overt nor covert resistance was tolerated. Propaganda campaigns on a mass scale found fertile soil and constituted a formidable weapon for the Hitler regime, which thus managed to convince Germans that war was not only inevitable, but represented the only way out for the German people. Unlike the various governments of the Weimar Republic, which had attempted to resolve the deadlock in Germany through negotiation and a policy of peace, the Hitler regime set about proving to the mass of the people that only the 'power of the sword' would erase the shame of Versailles and restore Germany to its rightful place in the world.

The critical economic situation was not in itself a favourable factor for war, but industrialists, financiers and politicians not only adopted solutions that encouraged the outbreak of war, but they also regarded it as the best way of solving economic difficulties and establishing a new world economic structure. The economic crises of the 1920s had indeed inflicted a heavy toll on Weimar Germany; inflation had reached record levels and by 1932 over 6 million workers were unemployed. A number of firms had gone bankrupt, but—a vital point—the structure of the German economy, which had changed since the end of the First

World War, remained intact. Two features characterized the structure which had been built up since the early 1920s. Firstly, since the end of the war, the German economy had undergone a process of rationalization. This had been followed by industrial and financial concentration, leading ultimately to the creation of large monopolies such as IG-Farbenindustrie, Vereinigte Stahlwerke, Krupp, AEG, Deutsche Bank, etc. This monopolistic system was not affected by the economic crisis, but strengthened by it. Secondly, this was a type of structure that provided the various companies with a very high production capacity. At the same time, as unemployment rose to considerable proportions, the purchasing power of consumers was severely curtailed. The German domestic market was, thus, one of low demand, well below the actual capacity of German industry, and Germany's international status did not permit it to export its products on a massive scale either. This also gave rise to another problem, that of the foreign currency which Germany dearly needed for its purchases on the world market. Consequently, in the early 1930s, Germany was in a paradoxical situation: it had large production facilities, but was obliged to operate its machines below their capacity—sometimes at only 30 per cent of their potential—since it was unable to sell its industrial products. To resolve this deadlock, the solution adopted by common accord between the magnates of heavy industry, the electrical and chemical industry monopolies, etc., the major private and state-owned banks and Hitler's political team, was war. The state was indeed to place considerable orders with industry in order to set it in motion again. However, it was only the fact that preparation for war was under way that enabled such sizeable orders to be placed over such a short period of time, so that industry might operate at full capacity and absorb the unemployed in under two years. When Hitler took power in 1933, his economic policy had already been agreed upon with the leaders of industry and finance, and he set about bringing all branches of activity into line, with a view to implementing this economic policy.

Political developments and the country's economic and social situation were not the only factors conducive to the unleashing of war on the German side. The psychological and ideological element also played a far from negligible role. Germany had only grudgingly signed the Treaty of Versailles, and particularly since the emergence of Fascism, the idea of revenge was firmly rooted in people's minds. It was not only a question of revenge against the hereditary enemy, France, but also against all those who had helped to reduce Germany's power, particularly the Soviet Union: advocate of the class struggle, champion of communism, and Fascism's greatest enemy.

One of the main goals of the Hitler regime was to eradicate communism not only from the Soviet Union, but also from the face of the earth. In opposition to the class struggle, Fascism proposed solidarity between all sections of the population working for the good of the nation, each person assigned to his

own work and to his own place. In opposition to democratic principles, National Socialism set up the 'principle of the Führer', that of the leader who alone should decide, whether surrounded by advisers or not, and who should command and be obeyed in a hierarchical pyramid where orders came from above and obedience from below. Since the leader emerged as the 'best' through the processes of natural selection, the supreme leader embodied the superman, the Aryan in all his splendour. This is why there could be no question of equality between all men or of proletarian internationalism. A racial pyramid existed which was dominated by the Aryan, the embodiment of supreme values. It was therefore the responsibility of the Aryan people—in this instance the German people—not only to direct German affairs, but also to rule the universe for the good of all mankind, since the world would thus be governed by the finest examples of the human species. As world order as a whole was affected by considerable disruption created by plutocrats and Jews and fostered by Marxists, war was necessary so that the Aryan might claim the place which was his, and at last rule over all those who were his inferiors.

Germany's war objectives

What were Germany's fundamental objectives in the Second World War? We should pause to consider this aspect in order to gain a better insight into the role that Africa in general, and Black Africa in particular, was to play.

For Germany, the essential objective of this war was to bring the centre of gravity of world decision-making back to Europe, more precisely to Berlin. Thus the power which the Soviet Union and the United States of America had acquired in international affairs had to be wrested from them and brought back to Europe. Division in Europe and rivalry between European nations on the international scene were at the origin of Europe's declining influence, particularly after the First World War. For the Hitler regime, France bore a heavy responsibility for this, but so did Great Britain and even the Second German Reich. Berlin therefore considered a policy of uniting Europe under the leadership of Germany. A Europe such as this would be sufficiently strong to impose its will on the rest of the world.

The German war objectives were to create a 'Grossgermanisches Reich' at the centre of which would be a 'Grossdeutsches Reich' comprising, apart from Germany, Austria, the Sudeten territories, Bohemia, Moravia and the Neman region. The immense 'Grossgermanisches Reich' was, for its part, to stretch from northern and western France to the Urals, incorporating Germany, Poland and the Ukraine, and southwards from Belgium to Greece through the territories of Austria, Yugoslavia, etc. This 'Grossgermanisches Reich' was also to possess protectorates such as Slovakia, Denmark, Norway, the rest of the French nation—to be called Burgundy—and to have influence over a group

of satellite states such as Finland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and the Netherlands. Through economic, political and military agreements, countries such as Great Britain, Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal, Spain and, to a certain extent, Italy, would be closely linked with the 'Grossgermanisches Reich'.

After the war, Europe thus refashioned under the leadership of Germany would have needed considerable additional territory, and as part of its military objectives, Germany had set its sights on Siberia, Turkestan and Africa, with Asian countries representing part of a future plan to share that sphere of influence by negotiation with Japan; finally, North and South America would have to expect a massive military confrontation with the 'Grossgermanisches Reich'. In reality, the Second World War represented no more than a stage in German ambitions to rule not only Europe, but the world in its entirety, through a single, predominant world power, the 'Grossgermanisches Reich'. In this way, Europe's exclusive domination of the world would be restored, even if a compromise had to be reached with Japan, which intended to govern the Asian world. It was in the context of this overall reshaping of the world that Africa found its place in Germany's war objectives.

The reshaping of Africa

The three principal lines of Germany's African policy

Before the outbreak of hostilities, as during the war itself, Germany saw Africa as being divided into three parts: North Africa, Africa south of the Sahara and South Africa. German intentions varied according to the part of the continent under consideration.

In its vast plan to refashion the world, Germany did not contemplate outright colonization of North Africa. In principle, it intended to reserve this privilege for Italy which had great ambitions in North Africa, since Mussolini dreamed of rebuilding the 'Imperium Romanum'. Since it was expected that Franco's Spain would maintain special relations with Germany, and since it claimed territories in North Africa, particularly in Morocco, Germany had also made provision for it as a North African colonial power. France, under the leadership of Marshal Pétain, who feared for the future of its colonies, had been given certain assurances about its North African possessions, but as in the secret German plans for reshaping Europe there was no longer to be any country called France, it is to be presumed that France would have been excluded from North Africa as a colonial power if Germany had won the war and succeeded in putting its plans into effect. However, during the war, the Vichy group had to be reassured and the Gaullist partisans of Free France, who claimed to represent the whole French Empire, had to be stopped. One thing

is certain, Germany intended to maintain economic domination over North Africa, just as it would have done, moreover, over the whole of Europe. The Reich intended to accompany this economic presence with military bases all over North Africa in order to cover the directly coveted part of Africa—south of the Sahara—with a military umbrella.

The 'Mittelfrikanisches Kolonialreich'

Germany intended to carve an African colonial empire stretching in one uninterrupted sweep from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean, bounded by the Sahara to the north and by the Union of South Africa to the south. A table of territorial claims was drawn up on 6 November 1940 by Bielfeld, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was a kind of summary of various ambitions, whereby the following territories were to make up the German Colonial Reich in Africa: Togo, Dahomey, Gold Coast, Western Nigeria, Southern Niger and Southern Chad as far as 15° N., Cameroon, French Equatorial Africa, the Belgian Congo, Tanganyika, Uganda, Kenya, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia and South West Africa. Furthermore the ports of Dakar, Conakry, Freetown, Duala, Pointe-Noire, Boma, Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, Mombasa-Kilindi and Diego-Suarez were to accommodate German military bases, as were the islands of Fernando Poo, São Tomé, St Helena, Ascension, Pemba, the Comores, the Seychelles and Mauritius.¹

Projects drawn up on 30 May and 1 June 1940 respectively, by Claudius, principal private secretary and assistant to Ribbentrop, and Ritter, ambassador and also assistant to Ribbentrop, are largely identical to the detailed claims made by Bielfeld in the previous November. One slight difference can be seen in the project drawn up less than two years later, on 21 January 1942, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In that project, the key idea for an immense colonial Reich stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean remained the same, but in a form rather more prejudicial to Great Britain and, by then, less so to Vichy France, which apparently would not have had to give up Togo and Dahomey. However, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Spanish Guinea and Rio Muni were also to be claimed by Germany.

Eurafrica at the service of Germany's Europe

German claims thus show clearly that the objective was indeed to refashion the African continent entirely, and that this was only part of a far more ambitious project to reshape the whole world. What was to be Africa's role in this vast Nazi plan? Basically, a military and economic one. Let us attempt to analyse the economic role of this new dreamland. One of the experts on African affairs of the day, M. Schmitt, wrote in 1942: 'It is only through the political changes

brought about by this war and the future reshaping of the world that Africa will become, if not Europe's only tropical complement, at least its most important. In consequence, its future significance can be visualized only in terms of a complementary economy in a Eurafrikan complex.'²

Bielfeld himself, in his peace proposals of 6 November 1940, explained the underlying motives of Nazi Germany's African ambitions. He stated, *inter alia*:

When drawing up claims for colonial territories, the basic fact to be borne in mind is that, after the reshaping of Europe, the territory which will need to draw its supplies from the complementary colonial area will comprise, in addition to Greater Germany, Scandinavia, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, Hungary, Slovakia and other European territories. These countries will form part of the great European economic zone and will be required to gear their economies to the German economy.

Bielfeld went on: 'Economic planning in German colonies will have to take account of the needs of some 150 million people.' Africa was thus to serve not only Germany, but the whole of Europe. The aim here was to bring about a form of association between the monopolies in other, German-dominated European countries and the powerful German monopolies. Bielfeld's plan, furthermore, did not remain silent on this point since it stated, among other things:

The ultimate goal is to place the greatest possible part of the available colonial territory in Africa under German influence, so that, through collaboration with the other colonial powers, a joint operation can be mounted in the prospection, maintenance and exploitation of all the resources of the African continent, for the benefit of all Europe, and particularly in order to satisfy Greater Germany's own needs.

Basically, a slogan of the day gave a good summary of the imperialist intentions of German strategies: 'Eurafrika for the Europeans!' Thus, Africa was to be limited to a complementary role. Eurafrika was not to signify a real community of interests between two continents, but a forced association in which Africa would be at the exclusive service of the European monopolies under German patronage.

Nazi ideology in Africa

The reason why we have introduced the ideological issue from its racial and racialist point of view is in order to examine it in the context of the relationships between whites and blacks in the colonies which had been designated for German rule. As emphasized by those in charge of African affairs, the aim was not to apply a colonial policy in the British or the French manner, but to introduce one marked by a new feature—National Socialism. It is therefore

more appropriate to speak of a 'National Socialist colonial policy'. In the colonies, the racial structure was basically to consist of two parts, that of the white race and that of the black race. Since, in principle, the Jews were not to be given the right to settle in German colonies, this racial classification was automatically simplified.

Theoreticians of racial policy in Africa did not make any clear-cut definition of what they termed the specificity of the white race, but set out, in piecemeal fashion, some of the characteristics of the white which distinguished him from the black. This is why, moreover, it is just as difficult to find any complete account of the specificity of the black. The latter was, above all, defined in relation to the white, and according to his relationship with him. In the colonial setting, the white race was considered as a single whole. Thus, no distinctions were made between different European nationalities, nor between the Aryan élite and the others. It appears that the black himself would make this difference quite intuitively. In an official NSDAP brochure on the racial issue in the future colonies, the following statement is noteworthy:

The native, when not already Europeanized or a half-caste, distinguishes, in Africa, between the pure white—in part Germanic people or, as in South Africa and in North American immigration laws, termed the Nordic race—and the 'half-and-half' non-pure white, in which case he thinks, for instance, of the French, or of the Levantine, etc. The native often has a very accurate perception of the various specific characteristics of the peoples amongst his white masters.³

Taken as a whole, the white man, it was argued, was first of all a great explorer. Thanks to his genius, enterprise, temerity and sense of organization he had apparently been able to discover all the continents of the world. The white's intelligence, plus all the distinctive features in the make-up of his personality, had thus enabled him to organize great states throughout the world, create millennial civilizations, invent technology and adapt it to man's needs, in order to dominate nature more effectively. Thus, it was alleged, the white man not only fashioned the history of his own, white race, but of mankind as a whole; in short, he re-created the world and shaped it in his own image. The white race was thus defined as the master race, whose qualities, it was alleged, were supreme and which, by its very nature, was destined to rule over the others.

The picture presented by Nazi theoreticians of the 'specific characteristics of the black' plunges us into quite another world. Renowned scientists and university professors drew up outrageously racist theories, in the guise of a pseudo-science devised for the good of the cause. Professor Zumpt, for example, made so bold as to state, without the slightest scruple: 'History has taught us that the natives of Africa are not in a position to set up internally ordered states that correspond to established notions of security and human rights, nor to explore the huge economic wealth which the world so urgently needs.'⁴ Another

scientist, Professor Fischer, asserted in the same context that 'intellectual qualities are based on hereditary faculties; racial differences are hereditary differences; intellectual qualities differ according to race, therefore there are differences, in racial terms, at the level of the intellect'.⁵

In other words, some races are more intelligent than others and, within the limits of this conception, the most intelligent black could never be any more gifted than the most brainless of whites, since this was the result of hereditary biological factors. Naturally, whites affected by hereditary diseases had to be excluded from this comparison since they no longer had the advantage of all the faculties of the white race. Accompanying the lower intelligence potential of the black race as a whole, there was, the Nazi experts also claimed, a lack of consistence in the way the black thought, any system of logic appearing to be quite foreign to him. Furthermore, the black apparently was quite satisfied with this situation, since he was essentially a peasant by nature.⁶ Without intelligence or logic, the black 'neither expects nor demands equality', asserted yet another colonization expert, 'but rather that the superior white race, recognized as capable and worthy in all its representatives, should assume the role of ruler'.⁷

It was therefore up to the white race to seize upon this manifest need of the black race in its quest for an enlightened guide. If the nature of the black was that of a slave, the nature of the white was that of a master. The official text of the NSDAP, drawn up by Hecht, leaves us in no doubt about this: 'The fact of belonging to the master race gives these peoples a natural right to rule. . . . It is clear that the European, thanks to his great technological and personal achievements, by comparison with those of other races, derives from this superiority the natural right to make of them what he can, by virtue of his intellectual gifts. This is a simple law of nature. The master races, because of their genetic features, have the essential right to be the master races.'⁸ What strange logic on the part of those very people who denied the existence of any form of logical faculty in others.

The racialist organization of the colonial Reich

Every organization in Nazi Germany took part in intensive 'preparations for a colonial comeback' as from the summer of 1940. In their individual fields of competence each one was to draw up detailed plans for the imminent return to Africa. Thus, the colonial Reich was actually already in existence on paper; the economic, political, social, legal and even cultural organization was not only outlined and discussed between the various authorities but by 1943 was ready to be put into operation. The fundamental principles of National Socialist colonial policy were by then quite clear, and we shall therefore merely underline a few aspects of this policy of enslavement.

In a letter sent on 21 August 1940 to the Colonial Policy Office—an organ-

ization planned to become the Ministry of Colonies at a later date—the Minister of the Interior wrote: ‘The administration of the colonies should be carried out in such a way that, politically and economically, it wholly serves the interests of the Fatherland.’⁹ Nazi colonialism is at least to be credited for its frankness. In a circular dated 24 July 1940, the Minister of the Economy of the Reich stressed this point: ‘The major importance of the colonies lies in the economic field. The colonies are part of the German economy as a whole and form an economic entity with the Reich. This is why the economies of the colonies should be planned and directed in accordance with the requirements of the German economy as a whole.’¹⁰

On the basis of this theory, the black was to take his place in the European economy as an unskilled labourer. The role of the white in general, and the German in particular, was to represent the Führer in the colonies. A letter to the Colonial Office from the Ministry of Justice dated 4 June 1941 specified this, moreover, in the following terms: ‘Germans, and people of the same rank, should not be employed in the colonies as “workers”.’¹¹ Thus, it was for the whites to give orders, and the blacks to carry them out. It was also planned to make it compulsory for all blacks aged 16 and above to be in possession of a work record-book (*Arbeitsbuch*).

In view of the policy of segregation, which was the underlying logic of Nazi ideology, the whites and the blacks were to live separately in the colonies. Industry would be based in the white zones, and the black population, settled on the outskirts in ‘black reserves’ would come into work by day and return to the reserves in the evening. Furthermore, land-tenure legislation would be drawn up so that colonial land would become the property of Germany, the state assigning clearly defined reserves to the blacks as dwelling zones, on the understanding that these populations could be shifted at any time, on the advice of the Governor, and resettled in places deemed appropriate by the colonial official.¹² In the view of some, ‘it would be better to set up native reserves immediately . . . as in South Africa’.¹³

For the purposes of carrying through the colonial policy of segregation, the Nuremberg laws had to be adapted to colonial conditions. A bill was accordingly drawn up in September 1940 for the safeguarding of the purity of racial blood and honour of the Germans. This ‘law for the safeguarding of the purity of racial blood in the colonies’¹⁴ laid down the death penalty for any black having sexual relations with a white, whilst for the same offence, any white would be sentenced to a fine, or would have to move to a different colony.

Administration of the law, as a whole, was not to be the same for whites and blacks. Since they were two quite different racial entities with different faculties and characteristics, German jurists had drawn up a colonial legal system for whites,¹⁵ which was not dependent on the Governor and whose

highest authority was the Supreme Court of the Reich (*Reichsgericht*, or for certain people, *Reichskolonialgericht*), and a colonial legal system for the blacks, in which the highest authority was to be the Governor,¹⁶ a political official with practically no legal competence. However, in this case too, the parody of justice proved to be an appropriate instrument for racialist colonial policy.

The militarization of Africa by the SS and the Wehrmacht

How was the colonial policy devised by the Nazis for the Africans to be put into practice? In order to be able to enforce the racialist laws, a police force had been given special training in preparation for work in the colonies. It was clearly understood among the higher echelons of the Reich that Africa would be militarized, in order to enable the Fascist system to be strictly applied. Police officer training for the African colonies began well before the war, since seminars for them were organized as early as February 1938. In addition, colonial police schools were set up as from 1941 in Oranienburg and Vienna, with training periods in Rome and North Africa. Alongside the regular police force, the SS had prepared a special form of SS training for the colonies, where the same role was to be played as in Germany. The Wehrmacht itself had organized a colonial Wehrmacht covering the three forces and directly answerable to the High Command in the Fatherland—therefore under the direct orders of Hitler. The Wehrmacht had been looking into the question well before the outbreak of hostilities, and the various training periods for military officers who were to be sent to the African colonies started up as early as September 1940. By 1942, it can be said that the three armed forces of the Wehrmacht, the police and the SS had built up a colonial structure which was ready for Germany's return to Africa. However, there was no question of conquering Mittelfrika in a separate war, even if it were confined to Africa. This vast colonial empire would automatically fall under the yoke of victorious Germany as one of the major rewards of the Second World War. German military involvement there would begin only after the war. In the plans of the Wehrmacht and according to the express wishes of the chief of naval staff, naval units would be the first to take possession of the colonies by occupying coastal regions. The flag would then be raised as a sign of the Reich's sovereignty. The Governor and some of his team would form part of the initial expedition of these naval units.

The link would thus be established between the incoming German colonial authorities and the outgoing colonial authorities. Very shortly afterwards, army and air force units would occupy the interior of the country. Thereafter, the rest of the administrative team could be sent to the colony. Following the takeover of the military and administrative running of the colony region by region, reinforcements of the three forces would arrive until the planned peacetime strength was reached. The military authorities calculated that they would need

six months to take over the military and administrative running of the colony from other colonial powers.

The impressive Mittelafrika colonial empire outlined by the Germans was to stretch, without interruption, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean and from Niger in the north to South West Africa in the south, its borders meeting those of the Union of South Africa. This vast empire would have been militarized by the police, the Waffen-SS and the three forces of the Wehrmacht. But the German army was not intending to stop there. We have seen, in references to German ambitions in North Africa, that the Reich did not intend to exercise direct colonial influence in this region, preferring to leave this role for its Italian, Spanish and possibly French allies. What the German authorities did demand was economic domination and permanent military bases. With such military bases in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, and even if important concessions were made to the Italians, the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean would be under German control. Thus, German Mittelafrika would benefit from an impressive military umbrella. As for the rest of southern Africa, the Union of South Africa was regarded as a special ally, and it is highly likely that military agreements would have linked that country to Nazi Germany, and therefore to Mittelafrika.

In its conditions for peace, the German navy would demand the African ports of Dakar, Conakry, Freetown and others outside its colonial empire, as well as most of the islands surrounding the continent for use as military bases. The Canary Islands, Ascension, St Helena, Fernando Poo, Madagascar, Réunion, Mauritius, etc., would have housed German naval bases. Thus, not only the African continent, but also the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean, the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean would, to all intents and purposes, have been under the control of Nazi Germany.

The Union of South Africa

Among the very few African states which enjoyed at that time a certain degree of autonomy, the Union of South Africa was the only one where white settlers had become nationals of the country and exercised complete authority on the basis of an overt racist policy. These were not whites who were 'temporarily' living in the colony, but settlers with no other homeland but South Africa, whites without a mother country in Europe, and who had no possibility of seeking one day to return there. Furthermore, these whites had gradually set up a system of racial segregation as a national policy, and millions of blacks in the Union were thus excluded from the political life of the country, serving mainly to build up the wealth of the white man. All this meant that South Africa was basically quite different from all other countries on the continent

and Hitler's Germany intended to direct its policy towards goals that were particularly linked with those of the Union, even though a number of clashes were to highlight some major contradictions.

Several publications in Hitler's Germany praised 'the racial point of view in South Africa'.¹⁷ 'South Africa respects the frontiers prescribed by nature', it was stated;¹⁸ or again: 'the racial idea is on the march in South Africa'.¹⁹ Oswald Pirow, a Minister who occupied several key posts in various South African cabinets, was not only of German origin, but also a great supporter of Hitler's Germany, as were many of his colleagues. Neither Prime Minister Hertzog nor Strydom attempted to conceal their sympathies with Nazi Germany. The newspaper *Rassenpolitische Auslandskorrespondenz* quoted Pirow in its July 1937 issue, stating:

Racial policy determined South African policy which was none other than a policy of white domination. The Voortrekkers created something which is still bearing abundant fruit long after their death. The role of Africa in world politics will be determined by the position it adopts with regard to blacks. It will be almost entirely dependent on whether the white maintains his domination. . . . South Africa has recognized that, all in all, political equality would mean social equality, and social equality would lead to a race of degenerates. Recognition of these facts has determined the policy now in force in South Africa, and this will remain the country's policy in the future.²⁰

The German experts analysed the South African racial segregation policy very thoroughly, in order to work out how best to co-ordinate it with the future racial policy in the colonial Reich. The German Academy of Law concentrated particularly on this problem, in close co-operation with the Colonial Policy Office.²¹ Furthermore, South African whites visited Germany regularly for business or study purposes. It may be noted that of the total number of South African students going abroad to study between 1922 and 1933, 26 per cent went to Germany, 24 per cent to Great Britain, 20 per cent to the United States, etc.²² Eminent South African politicians such as Verwoerd and Strydom, who were both Presidents of South Africa after the war, carried out their studies in Germany, and it is a well-known fact that Verwoerd, who, between 1924 and 1928, studied in Hamburg, Leipzig and Berlin, 'had very close connections with National Socialist circles at that time',²³ and drew the essential part of his racialist theories from them. What is most striking is the similarity between the racialist laws in South Africa and those drawn up by the Nazis for Africa. We shall confine ourselves here to giving a few examples. Concerning employment, Hitler's Germany intended to set up the system of work record-books (*Arbeitsbücher*) for all blacks having reached the age of 16. In South Africa, 'all Africans having attained the age of 16 years are required to possess Reference Books'. Basically, the *Arbeitsbuch* and the Reference Book had the same

purpose—to regiment the black population, prohibit free movement within the territory, and set up a modern form of slavery at work.

As regards land tenure, we have seen that the blacks in the colonial Reich were to lose ownership of their land, and the colonial government would be the only body authorized to allocate a clearly defined zone to part of the population for a given period of time. In South Africa, the Natives Land Act of 1912, the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 and other laws²⁴ established that ‘no African may acquire the permanent freehold of land anywhere in South Africa—even in the Native zones they occupy’.²⁵ Sexual segregation was stipulated by the *Kolonialblutschutzgesetz* (the law for the safeguarding of racial purity in German colonies). This law corresponds to the Immorality Act of 1927 in South Africa, which represses with equal rigour sexual relations between persons of different races.

On the legal question, it has been seen that Germany intended to set up two separate legal administrations, one reserved for whites and the other for blacks. The essential difference lay in the fact that, whereas the whites could rely on a genuine legal system, the blacks would be subjected to the justice of the Governor, a political appointee, thus, whose basic function was to defend colonial interests. A South African law of 11 October 1927, and the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 which was a fuller development of it, resemble Nazi administrative and judicial intentions in many respects. Not only did the legal administration differ in South Africa according to whether one was black, white or coloured, but courts for the blacks were under the direct authority, not of the Minister of Justice, but of the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development.

Let us now go on to examine the Fascist and Nazi organizations to which South Africa gave shelter before, during and sometimes even well after the Second World War.

The Fascist organization Broederbond (Association of Brothers) was created in 1918 and maintained a public existence until 1924 when it went underground. Its basically racist manifesto called for the strict separation of blacks and whites, separate development of the two communities—later to be called apartheid—and absolute supremacy of the white over the black. The Broederbond was in contact with the German Nazi Party, and in 1934, one year after Hitler came to power, Graf von Durckheim Montmartin was sent to South Africa by the Nazis to negotiate with the Broederbond about the possibilities of reversing the generally pro-British attitude, thus allowing South Africa to take up position alongside Germany in the imminent world conflict. In 1944, this organization had a membership of approximately 2,672 people, including leading nationalist figures such as Malan, Hertzog, Plessis, Verwoerd, and others.

The Greyshirts organization was also of Fascist disposition and gave

regular public demonstrations of its anti-Semitism. Believing that the Jew was 'an unassimilable element in every national life', it frequently organized anti-Semitic demonstrations at the landing of Jewish refugee immigrants from Nazi Germany.

Another Fascist association, known as the South African Gentile National Socialist Movement, led by Johannes von Strauss von Moltke, declared its sympathies with German Fascism by its very name. This movement sought to destroy the 'perverse influence of the Jews in economics, culture, religion, ethics and statecraft and to re-establish European Aryan control in South Africa'.²⁶

Other organizations were to emerge at a later date, such as Oswald Pirow's New Order. The first point on this organization's programme was: 'rejection of democracy and creation of a Christian, White, national-socialist South African Republic, independent of the British Empire, and based on the authority of the State and the discipline of the people'.²⁷ The fourth point provided for the 'ruthless application of white civilization in the Union and, to the greatest possible extent, elsewhere in Africa, through negotiation and influence'. Pirow's programme reflects Nazi ideals at various levels. It was based on the principle of the Führer, excluded all parliamentary democracy, was against capitalism but for private ownership provided that this was white, it was attached to the land, against the Jews, and so forth.

Another organization, Ossewa Brandwag (Ox-wagon Brigade) was also based on the principle of the Führer, and was fighting 'against the [British] Empire, capitalists, war [with Germany], communists, Jews, the party and parliamentary system and trade unions'.²⁸ Ossewa Brandwag also called for loyalty to South Africa, the unity of the people and solidarity among all whites in Africa. Moreover, it called for the development of a separate language that was neither European nor African—Afrikaans—national pride and determination, political and economic independence, the independence of the Church, a Christian-national and socialist political regime and, finally, the proclamation of a workers' republic based on National Socialism. It should be noted that this paramilitary organization received funds and military supplies via German submarines or from agents sent from Germany.²⁹

In South West Africa, a former German colony placed under British mandate and administered by South Africa, was an organization called the Deutscher Bund für Südwestafrika, established in 1924. As for the Nazi Party itself, the NSDAP, it was set up in South West Africa early on and there were local party cells there well before Hitler took power. Ernst Wilhelm Bohle, one of the NSDAP chiefs in Germany, had lived in South Africa and South West Africa, and had set up Nazi cells there before being given important responsibilities as head of the Auslandsorganisation-NSDAP in 1937 and as Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs some time later.

Nazi Germany's return to Africa was keenly awaited by South Africa.

In a letter dated 17 May 1936, the German ambassador in Pretoria, Wiehl, summed up in the following way the motivations of the South African authorities: 'It would not only be far from being a bad thing to have a German colonial presence in Central and Western Africa—it would even be desirable. Germany could then keep the millions of blacks living there in order and remove them from the pernicious influence of the French and Italians.'³⁰ The head of government, General Hertzog himself, was to declare: 'having regard to the future of relations between blacks and whites in South Africa, the nationalists would very much appreciate a new division of Africa, if Germany were to rule over a Central African territory [Mittelafrika] stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. They would regard this German territory as a welcome barrier against other conceptions of racial policy.'³¹ Pirow saw this possible good neighbour relationship as the best solution to what he called the issue of the 'Black Peril'. He believed that the Union would solve this problem by giving the white population greater racial awareness. This would, however, involve building up a new philosophy in the white population of South Africa, which could be achieved through the influence of National Socialist ideas originating from abroad.³²

Racialist opinions in Hitler's Germany and in the Union of South Africa were therefore so perfectly attuned as to foster excellent neighbourly relations, designed to subjugate the black populations under barbaric and inhuman systems. However, this good neighbourliness did not fail to take into account the realities of South Africa. The Union of South Africa was a British dominion and was economically and politically part of the British sphere of influence. Although Hitler's Germany had succeeded in becoming the second most important customer in South African trade, its importance remained minimal by comparison with the economic activities of Great Britain in that country. Bilateral commercial agreements had helped to boost trade with Germany, but never posed a serious threat to British interests. Industrial and financial concerns were either totally or majority-owned by the British. The second element was the position of the Jews in South African economic life. Jews such as Oppenheimer, Philipps, Beit, Michaelis, and others were among the pioneers of South Africa's economy. It was therefore clear that a penetration by Nazi Germany into South Africa, at Great Britain's expense, would not have been favourably looked upon by all, whatever the anti-black viewpoints existing on either side. It was for this reason that German propaganda looked particularly to the Boers and to supporters of the Nationalist Party for backing, and got little sympathy from whites of English or Jewish origin.

The following points thus summarize the war objectives of Nazi Germany in Africa:

1. In North Africa—economic and military colonial domination by Germany; administration entrusted mainly to Fascist Italy and, to a certain extent, to Spain and Vichy France.

2. In Africa south of the Sahara—outright, total colonial domination by the colonial Reich from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean.
3. In South Africa—removal of Great Britain from this sphere of influence, and thus a reduction of the importance of the Jews, and above all close collaboration between racist South Africa and Nazi Germany in order to increase control over the black populations of Africa.

The defeat of Germany and the consequences of the war for Africa

Collapse of the African dream

Germany's return to Africa was only possible once a glorious victory had been won. The 1940 victory over France gave an undoubted fillip to Nazi strategists and those nostalgic about bygone colonial days. But this victory, which the Germans chose to see as the prelude to the great final victory, could in no way determine in any conclusive way the outcome of such a vast world conflict. So the reasons for the failure of Nazi Germany's war objectives in Africa were varied, but the major cause was the military defeat that finally came about in 1945.

Certain differences of opinion existed between Germany and South Africa, despite unquestionable ideological affinities. The very structure of the South African economy imposed very clear limitations on the relations between the two countries. A full member of the great British family and at the same time sympathizing with Germany, South Africa made repeated attempts to offer its mediation in order to bring the two sides in the dispute—Great Britain and Nazi Germany—together. At the request of the German Minister Plenipotentiary Wiehl, the South African Prime Minister Hertzog promised 'to speak more forcefully' at the Imperial Conference in 1937 in requesting Great Britain to come to an arrangement with Germany. Hertzog declared at that Conference that South Africa would disassociate itself from Great Britain if it became involved in a conflict with Germany, and he asked the Prime Ministers of the other Dominions to come to an 'understanding' with Germany.³³ A year later, Pirow went to Germany and was received by Hitler on 24 November 1938. Pirow tried to convince Hitler of Great Britain's goodwill, and assured him of British friendship towards Germany.³⁴ Pirow also brought up the problem of the Jews, and offered South Africa's mediation in order to reach an equitable solution. South Africa's mediation attempts had no particularly favourable consequences, particularly as other reasons forced South Africa to draw away from Germany. When referring to the colonial Reich, we touched upon the

question of South West Africa. Nazi Germany was claiming this territory, a former German colony, and intended to make it part of *Mittelafrika*. The position of the South African authorities, however, whether pro-British or pro-German, was unanimous on this issue: South West Africa was not to be handed back; Germany would merely receive compensation for it. Germany, however, although aware of the position of the South African authorities, refused to yield. Even when Pirow met Hitler in 1938, no agreement was reached on this problem.

A neutral South Africa would deprive Great Britain of important sources of finance for the war, in view of the economic structure of the Union. However, apart from the purely economic aspect, strategic implications were of capital importance, and Germany was perfectly aware of this. In a report dated 28 June 1938, the German ambassador in Pretoria wrote: 'Britain has recognized that the Cape route to India is vital—because it is far safer and not exposed to the dangers of naval and aerial warfare—and this has induced it to strengthen its positions in South Africa and Central Africa. Britain has not merely undertaken to expand the port of Cape Town and set up the naval base of Simonstown, but has also begun the task of binding its colonial possessions more closely together.'³⁵ As the defence of the great British Empire depended heavily on this region of the South Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean, South Africa's role in the war thus went well beyond the scope of strictly bilateral relations. The possible neutrality of South Africa would have signified a break-up of the British Empire, and therefore a foretoken of the defeat of Great Britain. Yet was South Africa really as independent as to be able to opt for a position of neutrality? The Union was linked with Great Britain by the military agreement of Simonstown, whereby South Africa made that town's naval base available to Great Britain in wartime and peacetime. This automatically committed the Union militarily to England in the event of international conflict, quite irrespective of other Commonwealth agreements. The German authorities therefore knew what to expect, and this was, moreover, borne up by the reports made by German ambassadors in Pretoria.

We shall not discuss here the many studies that have been made concerning the North African campaigns or the various strategic conceptions concerning this region. Two major facts are nevertheless worthy of note:

1. Contrary to the strategic conception of certain members of the German High Command, Hitler had decided to aim first for military victory over the Soviet Union. This decision, furthermore, was reflected in the impressive number of men and military equipment assigned to the war against the USSR and in the lack of material available to Rommel in North Africa.
2. The Allied landing of 8 November 1942 in North Africa slowed the advance of the Axis forces in Africa, and the Axis defeat at El-Alamein marked a turning-point in the war.

With the end of military operations in North Africa, Africa ceased to be a battlefield. However, this did not mean that Nazi Germany had turned its attention away from Africa or abandoned its ambitions. The arrival in Africa was postponed until after the final victory. But, with the defeat of Germany in 1945, this dream was not to be realized.

Africa's part in the defeat of Germany

The First World War had already given proof of the efficiency of colonial soldiers, and the Senegalese infantrymen had already acquired a reputation in Germany, particularly as they occupied the Rhineland after the war, in face of widespread indignation by the Germans who interpreted this as an act of treason by France with regard to the entire white race. Hitler himself often remarked that 'coloured men' should not be involved in conflicts between whites and described the use of black troops in Germany as sadism. The Second World War only strengthened the French and British resolve to use their colonial empires to the full in a confrontation with Germany. Thus, as early as 1940, French West Africa supplied 127,320 infantrymen, French Equatorial Africa 15,500 and Madagascar 34,000. This was only the beginning of war operations. The African continent did not experience any major military operations, except in North Africa where hostilities raged until the capitulation of the Axis armies in 1943. However, Africans enlisted in the French, British, Italian and other armies fought not only in Africa, but also in France, Germany, Italy and on other European fronts, as well as in the Middle East, Indo-China, Burma, and elsewhere. It can therefore be said that Africa played an active role in the Allied Forces' war effort through an active presence on the battlefields within Africa and elsewhere. It should not be forgotten, however, that Italy—then a colonial power—also mobilized troops from Africa, and on 10 June 1940, the Italian forces in East Africa represented some 300,000 men, 200,000 of whom were Africans. When, on 26 August 1940, French Equatorial Africa went over to General de Gaulle, Colonel Leclerc made arrangements to take over command of the colony's troops, and when he arrived in Largeau on 16 December the force consisted mainly of the Régiment de Tirailleurs Sénégalais du Tchad (RTST), later called the Régiment de Marche du Tchad (RMT). It was this army which took possession of Fezzan in December 1942. The troops from the French colonies in Africa then took part in the liberation of Corsica in September-October 1943, in the campaign in Italy, with the entry into Rome on 15 June 1944, and in the campaign in Provence in August 1944, before moving northwards to join up with the rest of the French army.

It should also be noted that the battle for El-Alamein, which started on 1 July 1942 with an offensive by Rommel's Afrika Korps, marked one of the most important turning-points in the war. The Axis defeat at El-Alamein was

but the start of events that led to general capitulation throughout North Africa in 1943, made possible by the November 1942 Allied landing. Ideological considerations had swayed Hitler and had led him to aim first at military victory in the East with the crushing of the USSR, before turning his full attention to fronts such as the Mediterranean, particularly as he was relying on blitzkrieg tactics to achieve a decisive victory. By neglecting the North African front, against the advice of some of his generals, Hitler facilitated the task of the Allies who took over control of the Mediterranean area and Africa in May 1943, an advance that was further consolidated by the ousting of Mussolini in July, and Italy's signing of an armistice with the Allies in September.

The African continent provided an ideal support base for the Allied troops.

In 1942, for instance, 2,994 aircraft landed at Fort Lamy Airport, and a further 6,944 flew over that base towards the Libyan front, or the eastern front, via Bassorah. This was a key strategic advantage which could also be seen in other African regions under British or Free French control. Once the Germans had been driven out of North Africa, the Suez route fulfilled its role as lifeline to the British Empire once more, and made it possible for the necessary supplies from the colonies and dominions to be shipped through. The British presence in East Africa secured key strategic advantages in the Indian Ocean, and control of the Cape route, by an Allied presence in South and southern Africa, strengthened these advantages that were as much economic as strictly military. Indeed, the control of Africa made it easier to ship through to the European fronts the reinforcements and supplies not only from the British and French colonial empires but, most important of all, after 1943, from the United States of America. It has been established that at the outbreak of the war, of the twenty essential wartime primary products (coal, oil, cotton, wool, iron, rubber, copper, nickel, lead, glycerine, cellulose, mercury, aluminium, platinum, antimony, manganese, asbestos, mica, nitric acid and sulphur), Great Britain had shortfalls in everything but coal. As long as she controlled the sea lanes, however, she could procure such products from her empire, or after 1943 from the United States.

It is noteworthy that it was on African soil, in Algiers, that General de Gaulle, on leaving London, set up the French Committee for National Liberation on 3 June 1943 (to become, a year later, the Provisional Government of the French Republic). With its Consultative Assembly, delegates from the home country and representatives of the overseas territories were able to meet in this skeleton parliament. Thus, in 1943 the French Empire was reunited, with the exception of Indo-China and Kuang-Chou, and to a certain extent Syria and the Lebanon (the end of the mandate over these countries was officially recognized in December 1943). So it was in Africa that France, totally occupied by the Germans since the Allied landing, formed once again a free government

with extensive territories and considerable resources. This encouraged more and more French people to join the resistance, led to the creation of the Organisation de Résistance de l'Armée (ORA) and compelled the Americans to take an interest in the French resistance and give it material support.

The major consequences of the war

The Allied victory in 1945 had a variety of consequences in Europe, Africa and the rest of the world which have left a deep imprint on international affairs right up to the present day. At first sight, the major victors were the United States of America, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France, together with other, less important Western powers; and the big losers were Germany and Japan. But, in reality, what did the Axis defeat signify in terms of the objectives pursued by Hitler and his allies?

While Germany's ambition had been to bring back the centre of world decision-making to Europe, a centre which had been steadily moving away from Europe since the First World War, it was the Axis defeat that marked the final shift of this centre of gravity. Two powers emerged as the major victors of this world confrontation: the USSR and the United States. Ironically, it was precisely this very Soviet Union that Hitler had sought to crush and partially merge into his great Germanic Empire; it was the communism that he dreamt of annihilating that became a truly great power, to the detriment of Fascism and Nazism. On the other side, the United States, that country outside Europe which Germany intended to bring to its knees after the formation of its huge empire, managed to install itself, by means of its troops, in the very heart of Europe. The collapse of this centre of gravity was thus conclusively confirmed: even though Great Britain and France were on the side of the victors, these European powers no longer occupied the forefront of the international scene, and the maintenance of their former power was already in the balance. If the war with Germany had been won, it was because of the immense sacrifices made by the Soviet Union, the massive involvement of the United States and the active participation of the colonial empires. France and Great Britain thus owed much to the USSR and the United States, not to mention the colonies. In fact, their position as victors was on a European rather than an international scale. These powers did indeed defeat Germany; it was divided first into four zones, and then into two republics, and occupied by the Allied armed forces. Germany—which had sought to become the centre of the world—was thus broken up and placed under the control of the USSR and the United States. As soon as the conflict between those two powers erupted, part of Germany—the German Democratic Republic—found itself on the side of the USSR, whilst the other part—the Federal Republic of Germany—took up position in the American camp. Great Britain and France did the same.

The division between the blocs, which were born of the Second World War, cut right across Germany. The Soviet Union became the unchallenged leader of the East, and at the same time the West came under the leadership of the United States of America. What happened to the colonial world and Africa? The colonial empires had played a full part in both world wars. In this way, the peoples that were dominated by Europe had been able to perceive the contradictions in the imperialist system, and weigh up their masters' strengths and weaknesses from close at hand. The ideals for which the colonizers had called them to arms were not translated into practical action in the colonies after the war, and often the urgent demands for autonomy and independence merely fell on deaf ears or met with blind repression. Even during the war, rebellions had broken out in several places, and independence movements emerged or grew in strength—in Indo-China for example, Ho Chi Minh constituted his government in September 1945, whilst in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria nationalists called for internal autonomy or independence. Thus, France and Great Britain, who were the apparent victors of the war, were immediately faced with the problem of decolonization, i.e. that of the breaking up of their empires, which were the basis of their internal power and international status. The process of decolonization which had begun after the First World War was, therefore, to gain momentum after the Second World War, and nothing could stop it. On the contrary, wars of independence broke out in almost every part of these empires, and trade unions or non-violent movements compelled the authorities to give ground, and at times to withdraw completely, and therefore lose even more of what little remained of their international influence. The Bandung Conference in April 1955—where the former colonies and peoples that were still under colonial domination gathered together, excluding for the first time in modern history the colonial powers from an international conference—marked the arrival of a new era, that of the final collapse of the colonial empires and of the emancipation of peoples hitherto dominated by Europe.

What conclusion is to be drawn from this? By unleashing war, Germany sought to restore Europe's lost power to it, through internal reorganization, the crushing and annexation of part of the Soviet Union, the absolute control of the African continent through maximum colonial exploitation, the domination of the United States of America and the sharing of influence with Japan in the Asian region. Germany lost the war and broke up into two republics with fundamentally different regimes, coming under the domination of the two new major powers whose influence it had intended to annihilate or contain. As for Africa, it initiated the process of decolonization which resulted in the construction of new, independent states, freed from colonialism and from the role Germany planned to compel it to adopt. As for present times, this period of history which is currently being made and cannot yet be recorded, it will be interesting to follow the recent development of relations between Africa and

Europe. Will Africa become the immense zone of influence *vis-à-vis* Europe as Germany dreamed, or will it succeed in gaining real independence and maintaining equitable relations with other nations and continents, and thus safeguard the interests of the African peoples? Only time will tell.

Notes

1. *Die territoriale Kolonialforderung an Frankreich im Rahmen der Gesamtforderung* [The Claim on France for Colonial Territory Presented as Part of the General Claim], Berlin, 6 November 1940 (signed: Bielfeld), AA-Bonn UStS Kolonien, 1937-1942, f. D 523745/56; cf. also the letter from OKM to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 27 July 1940; DZA-Potsdam 6120 Friedensfrage, 1940-43, f. 1.
2. M. Schmitt, 'Leistung und Potential der afrikanischen Wirtschaft' [Present and Potential Output of the African Economy], *Deutscher Kolonial Dienst*, No. 9/10, 1942, pp. 91 et seq.
3. G. Hecht, *Die Bedeutung des Rassengedankens in der Kolonialpolitik* [The Significance of the Racial Concept in Colonial Policy], p. 2, Berlin, 1937.
4. F. Zumpt, 'Kolonialfrage und nationalsozialistischer Rassenstandpunkt' [The Colonial Question and the National Socialist Racial Standpoint], in 'Deutsches Ringen um kolonialen Raum' [The German Struggle for Colonial Territory], *Lese- und Vortragshefte*, No. 5, 1935.
5. E. Fischer, 'Geistige Rassenunterschiede' [Intellectual Differences Between Races], *Rassenpolitische Auslandskorrespondenz (RAK)*, No. 4, 1939, p. 3.
6. O. Karstedt, *Probleme Eingeborener Politik* [Problems of Native Population Policy], pp. 30 et seq., Berlin, 1942.
7. H. E. Pfeiffer, 'Eigenleben und Eigenkultur der afrikanischen Eingeborenen' [The Indigenous Way of Life and Culture of the African Natives], *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*, No. 11, 1936, pp. 336 et seq.
8. Hecht, *op. cit.*
9. BA-Koblenz R 2/4966.
10. AA-Bonn UStS Kolonien, 1937-42, f. D 523757.
11. BA-Koblenz R 22/2364, ff. 8-9.
12. BA-Koblenz R 22/2367, ff. 44 et seq.
13. E. Haber, 'Rasse und Kolonisation' [Race and Colonization], *Der Biologe*, No. 4, 1937, p. 109.
14. BA-Koblenz R 2/4965.
15. BA-Koblenz R 22/2365, ff. 133.
16. BA-Koblenz R 22/2367, ff. 182.
17. Cf. *Völkischer Beobachter. Rassenpolitische Auslandskorrespondenz (RAK), Deutsch-Afrikaner*, etc.
18. *RAK*, 1938, No. 2, pp. 5 et seq.
19. *Ibid.*, 1940, No. 7, pp. 5 et seq.
20. *Ibid.*, 1937, No. 7, p. 6.
21. BA-Koblenz R 22/2365, ff. 82 et seq.
22. *Afrika-Post* [Pretoria], 9 December 1960, pp. 17 et seq.
23. R. Italiander, *Die neuen Männer Afrikas* [The New Men of Africa], p. 175, Düsseldorf, 1960.

24. Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, particularly the new and far more precise formulation of 1952, No. 67, article 5.
25. Cf. Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, 1945, No. 25, article 6, and Government White Paper on the Tomlinson Report U.G., 1955, No. 61.
26. B. Bunting, *The Rise of the South African Reich*, p. 65, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1964.
27. Telegram of 18 September 1941 (Trompke), AA-Bonn-StS Afrika, 1939–43, f. 240664.
28. Telegram of 18 January 1944 (Ossewa Brandwag im Jahreswechsel, 1939–44), *ibid.*, f. 241102.
29. AA-Bonn-StS Afrika A 1943–44, ff. 261833 et seq.
30. AA-Bonn Südafrikanische Union, 1936–40, f. 299250.
31. AA-Bonn Pol X Bielfeld, f. 240626.
32. AA-Bonn RAM Südafrikanische Union, 1936–44, f. 299238.
33. AA-Bonn Pol Südafrika-Deutschland, 1936–38, f. E. 510248.
34. AA-Bonn Reichsminister Südafrikanische Union, 1936–40, ff. 147842 et seq.
35. AA-Bonn Pol X Allgemeine Auswärtige Politik, Bd. 2, f. 53.

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The Horn of Africa and eastern Africa in the World War decade (1935–45)

N. Ayele

The Horn of Africa, 1935–45

The decade 1935–45 was, of course, of decisive importance in modern world history. It was the decade of bitter and bloody struggle against Fascism, imperialism and expansionism. The decade was no less significant to the Horn of Africa than it was to the main theatre of the Second World War, the European heartland. In this article we shall review the effects of the events of this decade on the Horn of Africa.

The Horn of Africa in perspective, 1896–1934

For purposes of the present study the Horn of Africa comprises essentially Ethiopia, Somalia and Djibouti. Because of its rich natural resources, its strategic location, and Ethiopia's mystique of independence, the Horn has for centuries been a magnet attracting a good deal of attention from the major powers. As a result, this relatively small area with a population of less than 35 million has domiciled and indigenized Judaism, Christianity and Islam. For centuries it has attracted as friends or foes ancient Greeks, Egyptians, Persians, Ottomans, Portuguese, Arabs and, from the nineteenth century onwards, British, Italian and French imperialists. In the contemporary period the exigencies of conflict and revolution on the Horn have brought about the involvement of both the major powers and other interested groups.

The political landscape of the Horn of Africa has been shaped in the context of the interactions of nomadic expansion from the coast to the centre, feudal expansion from the centre to the coast and, from the latter part of the nineteenth century onwards, colonial occupation at the expense of both the feudal and the nomadic groups. Thus the events of 1935–45 can only be appreciated in terms of the chain of actions and reactions that reach back to at least the latter part of the nineteenth century. Most of the boundaries and the state forms that we find on the Horn today were shaped at this time or slightly later. Whether we are trying to understand the Fascist invasion of

Ethiopia (1935–41) or the recent conflict (1977) on the Horn of Africa we are inexorably led to the fifty years' span from the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884–85 to the Fascist invasion of 1935. Of course, a detailed discussion of this period is not within the purview of this paper: pertinent events and facts of relevance to our central concern will suffice.

On the threshold of the nineteenth century, the long and chequered process of struggle for territorial expansion, political domination and economic appropriation on the Horn of Africa had reached a state of equilibrium as most principalities and other groupings of the area were exhausted from the interminable conflicts that characterized their existence on the Horn. While most of the peoples of the Horn remained weak, divided and disorganized towards the middle of the century, two feudal state systems in the form of the Mahdist state in the Sudan and the Ethiopian state in the centre of the Horn had emerged and were relatively stable and viable. While these two state systems were organizing themselves internally and carrying out occasional expansionist forays, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the Berlin conference of 1884–85 quickened European imperialist ambitions and designs with regard to the north-eastern parts of Africa. Hence, by 1869 or immediately thereafter the colonial powers had established footholds on the Horn or in proximate areas. The Italians settled themselves at Assab, the French at Obock and the British in Aden. It is from such enclaves that the subsequent colonial possessions of Eritrea, British Somaliland, and Djibouti developed through force or cunning.

By the end of the nineteenth century Ethiopia had become, in the words of Ernest Work, 'a pawn in European diplomacy',¹ inasmuch as it remained the only unconquered Black African polity. From 1889 to 1896 this pawn in particular and the Horn area in general was divided up—on paper—between the Italian, British and French imperialists. Accordingly, most maps produced in this period portrayed Ethiopia not as an independent state but as a colony. In addition to its clashes with the British at Magdala in 1868 and with the Italians at Dogali in 1887 Ethiopia was to vindicate anew its independence on the battlefield in the form of the Battle of Adwa on 1 March 1896. As is well known,² Ethiopia defeated the Italian invading forces in this war and reconfirmed at least its formal independence. Ethiopia's victory against colonialism had made the Emperor Menelik II 'a power to be reckoned with' and necessitated a change of tactics on the part of the imperialists who still maintained their sometimes colluding, sometimes colliding objective of dominating Ethiopia and thereby sharing out the whole Horn of Africa among themselves. Already they had achieved an advantageous position by sealing Ethiopia off from the sea and making it dependent on them by virtue of their occupation of the coastal territories of Eritrea, Djibouti and the Somalilands.

In 1897, unannounced, unexpected and unscheduled, the three imperialist

powers who were to continue to have a fateful impact on the making of the political history of the Horn sent 'diplomatic' missions to the court of Emperor Menelik in an effort to recoup by 'diplomacy' what had been lost on the battlefield. The problems of boundaries on the Horn of Africa, which were the effective cause not only of the Fascist invasion of 1935 but also of more recent conflicts, can be directly traced to the events of 1897 and the succeeding years. Each of the colonial powers mentioned had 'negotiated' scores of 'treaties' with dozens of ethnic groups on the Horn and had claimed hundreds of kilometres of territory on the basis of their colonial agreements, ignoring Ethiopia, while the Ethiopian feudal rulers, notably Menelik II, had been expanding southwards, eastwards and westwards. Much of the territory claimed on paper by the imperialists was already Ethiopian territory. It was, therefore, the contradiction between the theoretical claim to territory by the imperialists on the one hand, and actual presence by Ethiopia on the other, that had to be resolved. Hence, the lesson of the Battle of Adwa for the imperialists was that they needed to change tactics from confrontation to 'negotiation' if they were to succeed in stopping Menelik's forward progress and consolidate whatever coastal footholds were in their effective possession—until such time that they had the upper hand and could avenge Adwa and partition Ethiopia. For the Italians, such an opportunity for revenge presented itself in 1935.

The French representative, Mr Lagarde, was the first to come to Addis Ababa in February 1897 to negotiate for an expanded colony of Djibouti and for Menelik's connivance with France in that country's nefarious designs on Mahdist Sudan, to which Britain also aspired. Then in May came Rennell Rodd of Britain, who succeeded in obtaining Menelik's assurances of neutrality regarding Britain's efforts to 'pacify' [read 'colonize'] the Sudan and thus beat its chief rival in Africa, France, which had a similar objective. In addition, Rodd also established at least the basis of boundary agreements between the Sudan and Ethiopia and managed to secure for Britain a large piece of land on the eastern part of the Horn to be called British Somaliland. To add insult to injury, whatever did not conform to the *a priori* paper claim by the British in their 1891 and 1894 agreements with Italy and France over Ethiopian territory and the rest of the Horn of Africa, Rodd shrewdly defined as a 'cession' of territory by Britain to Ethiopia—without, of course, Ethiopia's knowledge or confirmation. The myth of 'cession' survives to this day as one of the many legacies left over by colonialism to the peoples of the Horn of Africa.³ The last to arrive in Addis Ababa, the Italian representative, Major Nerazzini, had the easiest time. Most of the agreements were oral, and Italian occupation of both Eritrea in the north and Somalia in the east was recognized by Emperor Menelik, who evidently was in a magnanimous mood towards a defeated colonial power. Menelik's gratuitous surrender of Eritrea and his acceptance of continued Italian occupation of so much of what was to become

Italian Somaliland is a question that still puzzles students of nineteenth-century history of the Horn of Africa. While the reconfirmation of the pre-1896 (Adwa Battle) boundary lines between Ethiopia and the Italian colony of Eritrea was not very difficult to establish, the one between Ethiopia and the future Italian colony of Somaliland proved to be elusive, if not intractable. Emperor Menelik is said to have drawn a straight line parallel to the sea on a *Habenicht* map, approximately 100 miles from the sea. But Nerazzini went to Rome and claimed that he had 'negotiated' a boundary with Menelik that extended Italian possessions to '180 miles from the sea'. Here again was another time-bomb left behind by imperialism that was to explode in 1935 and remnants of it still linger today. Clearly, therefore, Italy and Ethiopia had not succeeded in 'negotiating' a boundary line between Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland. This confusing state of affairs suited the Italians well, as subsequent events were to prove.⁴ The Ethiopian Government, on the other hand, was not only slow in becoming aware of the discrepancies but slow also in appreciating their implications. It remained for another generation to bear, absorb and survive the brutal consequences of such deliberate colonial machinations that wrought havoc on the peoples of the Horn.

On the threshold of the twentieth century, an event of significance in the long struggle against imperialism was the Darwish movement of Sheikh Sayyed Abdulle Hassan in the British and Italian Somali colonies. The Sheikh's protracted struggle for religious purity on the one hand and against the alien colonial elements on the other lasted some twenty years from 1900 to 1920, and though it ended inconclusively as far as the Sheikh's objectives were concerned, it nevertheless sowed the seeds of a nationalist movement among the Somali peoples on the Horn.⁵ In 1906, 1915 and 1925 the three colonial powers (Italy, Great Britain and France) continued to sign secret tripartite and bipartite agreements among themselves partitioning the Horn of Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular in various ways, while seeming to carry on normal diplomatic relations with 'independent' Ethiopia. As Gaetano Salvemini notes, owing to these prior agreements, and as long as British 'special interest' in the Lake Tana region of Ethiopia was not compromised, the British Foreign Office would not interfere with Mussolini's designs on Ethiopia⁶ in the 1930s. The British at this time even severed a part of their Kenyan colony, the area known as Jubaland, and had it annexed to Italian Somaliland by way of fulfilling their promise of compensation to Italy for the expansion of British territory after the First World War.⁷

Mussolini's Fascist regime came to power in Italy in 1922, and a year later Italy championed Ethiopia's entry into the League of Nations (established in 1920) as a 'civilized nation', meeting the standards and fulfilling the requirements of membership, in spite of objections by the British, who opposed its joining on the grounds of continued slavery in Ethiopia. The same Mussolini

was to launch his invasion against 'savage' Ethiopia, which required a Fascist 'civilizing' mission, only twelve years later. Mussolini and the future Haile Selassie I had a chance to size one another up when the latter visited Rome during his tour of Europe in 1924. On 2 August 1928 Italy and Ethiopia signed a twenty-year Treaty of 'Constant Peace and Perpetual Friendship' in Addis Ababa. For Mussolini, such peaceful pretensions provided the necessary veneer to conceal his predatory intentions. He was only 13 years old at the time of the Battle of Adwa and is said to have been affected by Italy's defeat: 'The casualty figures of the disastrous battle . . . 10,000 dead and seventy-two cannon lost . . . were still hammering in his skull.' As he was to declare later, 'the great account opened in 1896 had to be settled at all costs'.⁸ In 1930, a four-power treaty called the 'Abyssinian Arms Traffic Treaty' limiting and controlling the importation of arms into Ethiopia was signed, thus making Ethiopia even better exposed to Italian aggression.

Thus, by 1930, Mussolini's brooding and plotting on Ethiopia had gathered force, and he was now thinking either of how to obtain the support of other European powers or of how to neutralize them and prevent their intervening should they be disposed to do so. It is to this dimension of the conflict that we shall now turn our attention.

The international situation, 1934–35

The drama of the decade 1935–45 was one that was conceived and developed in Europe and played out on the Horn. As was the case with developments in the rest of Africa in the latter part of the nineteenth century, here again was a case of the making of the history of the Horn of Africa in the metropolises of Europe. In turn, events on the Horn of Africa were having serious repercussions on developments in Europe. The early 1930s witnessed a series of economic crises in the capitalist world followed by political reaction and the emergence of Fascist regimes in parts of Europe; and a characteristic manifestation of Fascism is militarism. The emergence of Fascist (or Nazi) regimes in Italy and Germany was slowly but surely changing the political chemistry of Europe.

By 30 January 1933, Hitler had become Chancellor. In October of the same year Germany withdrew from both the League of Nations and a world disarmament conference. These acts sent shock-waves throughout Europe, but Mussolini found them to be very advantageous for his aggressive designs on Ethiopia. Mussolini was potentially a rival or ally of Hitler depending on how he built his power and prestige in Europe. And the best way for Hitler to gain support in Europe was to gain ground in Africa. Mussolini was to resolve once and for all, so he thought, the perennial problem of whether Italy was 'the last of the big powers or the first of the small powers'. Mussolini and his

colleagues had felt cheated by the Allies, who, in the First World War, had left only the crumbs of their colonial empire, the deserts and peripheral lands of Libya, Eritrea and Somaliland; and Italy's own efforts at annexing Ethiopia had received a shattering blow at Adwa in 1896. Nevertheless, at least as far as the British were concerned, in 1915 and 1925 they had, in one way or another, given Italy the green light to expand into Ethiopia, the only surviving independent Black African country. Mussolini thought that the international situation of the early 1930s provided him with the best opportunity to attain his objectives. Ethiopia was to be a staging post for Fascist forces, a place to test weapons and strategy, an occasion to restore Italian dignity damaged at Adwa and develop Fascist self-confidence with which to turn to matters European. Then and only then would Italy be a power to be reckoned with. Of course, the annexation of Ethiopia would be critical in alleviating the economic and social contradictions in Italy, and would relieve the pressures on the government at home. But Mussolini had to play his game carefully. He needed at most co-operation or at least neutrality in Europe for his African adventures. The powers of consequential importance to both Italy and Ethiopia were France and Britain on the one hand and Germany and the United States on the other. In particular, both because of their physical presence on the Horn (the British controlled the Suez Canal, the Sudan, British Somaliland, and Kenya, while the French were in Djibouti), and because of their influential position in the League of Nations, the actions and reactions of Britain and France were significant. These two powers used Ethiopia as both a carrot and a stick to regulate and control Mussolini's behaviour but they ended up by being used by Mussolini to help him achieve his own objectives in Africa and eventually to ally himself with Hitler in a 'Pact of Steel' against them. Thus, the years 1933-35 were ones of tragi-comedy which witnessed France and Britain trying, ostensibly, to avoid war in Europe, following policies of appeasement (Stresa, 1935; Munich, 1938), and simultaneously attempting to improve relations with Italy, even at the expense of each other. At the same time, they sought to keep Italy away from Germany. They thus saw in Italy's impending adventures in Africa a salutary preoccupation with colonial expansion in Africa which would lessen its involvement in matters European . . . at least in the short run. Again the two powers sought to pose as Italy's benefactors by giving Ethiopia to Mussolini on a silver platter so they could extract favours from him in Europe. These conditions explain the vacillating and confused European policy *vis-à-vis* the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935/36.⁹

As for Germany, Hitler was banking on a conflict of interests between Italy on the one hand and France and Britain on the other. His strategy was to keep his options open with all of them to improve bilateral relations while at the same time standing ready to exploit their secondary contradictions. The United States was vacillating between involvement and isolationism.

In the late 1930s the country was just recovering from a serious economic depression and it was not prepared to get involved in European conflicts. Yet its economic and cultural ties with Europe required its involvement one way or another. Moreover, the alignment of forces in the 1930s reflected an inner current in the struggle between socialism and Fascism. At least initially, the bourgeois democratic forces of Europe were united with the United States and the USSR in a common struggle against the Axis Powers of Germany, Italy, Japan and their smaller cohorts. It is against this background that we view the developments of the late 1930s and early 1940s on the Horn of Africa.

The pretext or effective cause of Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia was what is known as the 'Walwal Incident'. Actually, Mussolini had decided to launch an invasion of Ethiopia as early as 1933 but he needed a *causis belli*. The undefined nature of the border between Ethiopia and Italian Somalia combined with a weak and sporadic assertion by Ethiopians along the border was bound to take its toll. Sure enough, Italians had been infiltrating Ethiopian territory slowly and quietly while attention was focused on the demarcation of the northern border between Ethiopia and British Somaliland. Their systematic encroachments on Ethiopian territory had brought them more than 150 kilometres inside Ethiopia into places like Walwal. In the course of enforcing the rights of sovereignty in Walwal a band of 400 Ethiopian escorts to a British-Ethiopian Boundary Commission surveying water and grazing resources in the Ogaden was challenged by garrisoned Italian *cum Somali banda* troops on 5 December 1934.¹⁰ In the ensuing battle, the Italians could not be dislodged from Walwal and, to add insult to injury, the Italian Government demanded a formal apology and compensation from Ethiopia for daring to assert its sovereignty on its own territory. Ethiopia, of course, refused to comply. The altercations and exchange of messages provided a convenient diplomatic cover for Mussolini to plan his invasion.

On 20 December 1934 Mussolini issued a fourteen-point directive in which he declared, *inter alia*, that:

The problem of relations with Ethiopia could be solved in only one way: 'The destruction of the Abyssinian armed forces and the total conquest of Ethiopia.' . . . This problem has existed since 1885. Ethiopia is the last part of Africa that is not owned by Europeans. The Gordian Knot of Italo-Abyssinian relations is going to become increasingly entangled. It is necessary to cut it before it is too late.¹¹

In January 1935, Italy was mobilized and General Emilio De Bono was sent as High Commissioner of Eritrea to prepare the ground for the impending invasion of Ethiopia. Meanwhile, a series of diplomatic shuttles by France, Britain and Italy were taking place while German rearmament was picking up pace. Mussolini's tactic was to lure the British and French to his side by giving them the impression that he would side with them *vis-à-vis* Germany. To this end, therefore, he carried out negotiations with them singly and

jointly. A high point of such negotiations was reached at Stresa where on 11–14 April 1935 Mussolini met British Prime Minister MacDonald and French Premier Flandin to discuss co-operation among them on matters of common interest. The ostensible aim was to create a ‘Stresa front’ against Germany. Mussolini took the occasion to extract support, albeit indirect, for his African adventure. This he achieved by having the final communiqué drafted to read: ‘The three Powers [France, Britain, Italy] find themselves in complete agreement in opposing any unilateral repudiation of treaties, which may endanger the peace . . . of Europe.’¹² This last phrase, ‘of Europe’, turned out to be crucial, as Mussolini read it aloud again, and elicited no objections from either the French or the British delegations. Mussolini immediately concluded that his plan had worked and that France and Britain were concerned only with peace and the status quo in Europe, and not in Africa. He took this as a veiled signal for him to proceed with his African adventure. Given the fact that both the British and the French had been aware of Mussolini’s intentions concerning Ethiopia for some time, Mussolini’s assumptions about their attitude was not entirely wishful thinking. At this time, Ethiopia was still protesting at the League of Nations and calling for Italian withdrawal from Ethiopian territory.

In the summer of 1935 the League of Nations was deliberating on the ‘Italo-Ethiopian Dispute’ even as Italian preparations for war were becoming more and more open and strident. The League was not in a position to make a bold and unambiguous stand because of the vacillations of some of its prominent members like France and Britain, and Mussolini stood a good chance of exploiting such weaknesses.

He defied the League and rejected all its proposals. To Mussolini even ‘diplomacy’ was to be war; and he had instructed his agent Baron Aloisi, when dispatching him to Geneva in August: ‘I want no agreement unless I am conceded everything . . . and that includes the decapitation of the Emperor. . . . You must henceforth act as a soldier rather than as a diplomat, as a Fascist rather than as a negotiator. Even if I am accorded everything I prefer to avenge Adwa. I am already prepared.’¹³

He then proposed to France and indirectly to Britain his terms on the ‘Abyssinian Conflict’, which were:

1. A declaration by Britain and France in favour of Italian political and economic preponderance in Ethiopia.
2. A French declaration of policy on the necessity of Italy’s demographic and economic expansion.
3. Italy would assure its continued co-operation at Geneva in League affairs, if the above demands were met.
4. Italy would recognize the rights of Great Britain in Ethiopia as established in the treaty of 1906.¹⁴

The Fascist invasion of Ethiopia: 1935/36

On 2 October 1935 Mussolini appeared in Rome's Piazza Venezia and declared:

Black shirts of the revolution; men and women of Italy; Italians throughout the world. . . . A solemn hour is about to strike in the history of the Fatherland. Twenty million Italians at this moment are gathered throughout the whole of Italy. Twenty million persons: a single heart, a single will, a single decision. This manifestation is to demonstrate that the identity between Italy and Fascism is perfect, absolute, and unchangeable. . . . I refuse to believe that the true people of France . . . and of Great Britain want to spill blood and push Europe on the road to catastrophe in order to defend an African country universally stamped as unworthy of taking its place with civilized people. . . . To military sanctions we will respond with military measures. To acts of war we will respond with acts of war.¹⁵

This speech apparently constituted Mussolini's declaration of war, since at 5 a.m. on 3 October 1935, De Bono crossed the Ethiopian border from Italian Eritrea in accordance with prearranged plans.

Shortly after the Italian offensive (19 October), the League finally declared Italy an aggressor, and thus in violation of the covenant and to be penalized by sanctions. Different committees were established to define what strategic materials the sanctions would cover and how to enforce them. However, French and British intervention caused a delay in the implementation of sanctions while the two held meetings to find an alternate resolution to the conflict that did not involve a head-on collision with Italy. Mussolini encouraged this situation by stating that he would 'not hesitate, if it were necessary, to make war on the British'¹⁶ should they impede him by pushing for oil sanctions or closing the Suez Canal through which his entire 500,000-man army and enormous military hardware passed. Mussolini had boasted in August 1935 that Italy had mobilized 'a million men and spent 2 billion lire' for the campaign in Ethiopia.

Fumbling with the ball of diplomacy, Britain and France then came together in Paris in December 1935 to work out their alternative offer to Mussolini that would avert an open rupture in the Stresa front against Germany. They agreed on the Hoare-Laval Plan, which partitioned Ethiopia in such a way as to allocate most of it to Italy while maintaining respective British and French interests in accordance with the 1906 Tripartite Treaty, mentioned earlier.¹⁷ The British and French had even the audacity to send the proposals to Ethiopia for approval by the Emperor. Under cover of these diplomatic flurries, Mussolini's Fascist army pressed on with the war on two fronts. Marshall Graziani, otherwise known as 'the Butcher of Libya', had been transferred to Somalia to open a second front. So, the pincer movement

was complete from Eritrea and Somalia. The Italians used over 150,000 Eritrean, Somali and Libyan *askaris*, who, in fact, were initially crucial to the success of the Fascist invasion of Ethiopia. Thus, they had Africans fighting Africans, oppressed against oppressed in the interest of colonialism.

Within Ethiopia itself preparations to withstand the invasion were slow and not very effective. General mobilization in Ethiopia was ordered only on 29 September 1935. The Emperor and some of his entourage put an inordinate amount of faith in the efficacy of the League and the integrity of its leading members. Both turned out to be unfounded. The European and American advisers to the Emperor¹⁸ often gave false hopes of an early peaceful solution to the Walwal Incident. Needless to say, whether they were situated in Europe or in Africa these 'advisers' and ambassadors were primarily concerned with their European or American interests. Nor was the Emperor's attitude towards change and the Ethiopian people conducive to proper and adequate preparation against the Fascist invasion. One senses this from what the Emperor told a French visitor:

You must remember that Ethiopia is like Sleeping Beauty, that time has stood still here for 2,000 years. We must take great care, therefore, not to overwhelm her with changes now that she is beginning to wake. . . . We must strive to steer a middle course between the impatience of Western reformers and the inertia of the Ethiopians who would close their eyes if the light were too strong.¹⁹

In the summer of 1935, the Emperor is said to have attempted to secure American support for Ethiopia by offering the possibility of oil concessions. On the counsel of his American adviser, Everett Colson, the Emperor made overtures to the United States (to the chagrin of the British) in the form of a seventy-five-year oil and mineral exclusive concession over half of Ethiopia. On 29 August 1935, the Emperor negotiated with Francis W. Rickett, representing the African Exploration and Development Corporation, a front firm for the American Standard Oil Company.²⁰ The State Department, however, put pressure on the company to renege on its agreement, claiming that it did not wish to appear to take sides in the 'conflict' nor jeopardize European efforts to find a peaceful solution.

Consequently, when the Fascists unleashed their war, Ethiopia had some 50,000 men with the most antiquated arms, no tanks or armoured vehicles, and an eleven-plane 'air force', of which only three or four were serviceable.²¹ On the other hand, the first Fascist expeditionary force consisted of 'more than 200,000 men and 7,000 officers, 6,000 machine guns, 700 cannon of every calibre, 150 tanks, 150 pursuit and bomber planes'; in September 1935 'a further 100,000 men, 1,000,000 tons of stores of ammunition, 200 cannon, 6,000 mules and 2,300 motor vehicles' were dispatched.²² On 6 October, Adwa and Adigrat in Tigray were captured. Much bombing and strafing was

carried out in Tigrai. One of Mussolini's sons, Vittorio, was an enthusiastic pilot during this war and he remarked:

I was always miserable when I failed to hit my target, but when I was dead on, I was equally upset because the effects were disappointing. I suppose I was thinking about American movies and was expecting one of those terrific explosions when everything goes sky-high. Bombing those thatched mud huts of the Ethiopians doesn't give one the slightest satisfaction.²³

Fascist journalists extolled the war and Pope Pius XI is quoted as having been anxious that 'a defeat of the Italian undertaking [read 'invasion'] would be to the detriment of the interests of the European colonizers of Africa'.²⁴ By November 1935 the war was not progressing fast enough for Mussolini, so he decided that De Bono was not a ruthless enough Fascist and replaced him with another veteran, Emilio Badoglio.

With Badoglio's arrival and his resumption of the invasion in January 'the character of the war changed'. Unlike his predecessor the new Fascist marshal was very liberal with the use of mustard gas and other asphyxiating or poison gases. As an eye-witness recounted: 'Wave after wave of planes in groups of nine, fifteen, and eighteen, sprayed the deadly vapour so that it formed one continuous pall. . . . This lethal rain fell unceasingly on civilians as well as soldiers, on men, women, and children, on animals, rivers, lakes and pasturelands.'²⁵

Ethiopian resistance against the invasion was organized in the north at first under the leadership of Rases (Generals) Kassa, Imru, Seyoum, Mulugeta. With whatever arms they could muster, these war leaders tried to withstand the enemy. It was precisely when the Ethiopians showed some resistance to the Italian offensive that the Duce urged 'the maximum liberty in the use of asphyxiating gas'.²⁶ For a brief period in December, the Ethiopian counter-offensive threatened not only to hold its own but even to penetrate Italian strongholds in Eritrea. But thanks to poor communications (all of them monitored by the Italians), logistical problems and the liberal use of mustard-gas bombing, the Ethiopians could not sustain their counter-offensive.

By this time Graziani's southern offensive had also begun. Graziani, who had a poor record in the First World War in North Africa, was seeking to rebuild his image with an easier war on the Horn of Africa. It was Graziani who said 'the Duce shall have Ethiopia with the Ethiopians or without them, as he pleases'.²⁷ Though his army was small compared with Badoglio's in the north, so was his challenge. His force was highly mechanized as called for by the terrain, flora and fauna of the area to be trampled upon. By 7 November, Graziani had occupied Qorahei and moved on to Neghele. Graziani used mustard gas profusely and, in the capture, or rather the destruction, of Neghele, he is said to have dropped some forty tons of high explosives on

the town. His counterpart in the north had fielded 170 planes dropping 396 tons of high explosives in Amba Arodam of Tigray. Such was the nature of the genocidal war of Fascist Italy against Ethiopia. What was perhaps the most decisive engagement of the Italian war of invasion took place in Maichew at the end of March 1936. Emperor Haile Selassie himself led the Ethiopian forces. Though the Ethiopians fought with valour and heroism they could not repulse the larger, better armed and prepared Italian forces. When the one-day battle was over, there were some 8,000 Ethiopians dead while the Italian casualties amounted to a few hundred. Mussolini is said to have been disappointed by the fact that 'the fallen Italians had not even numbered 2,000 and that the war had been won at too low a price to reinvigorate the national character to the extent Fascism required'.²⁸

The Emperor retreated from Maichew back towards Addis Ababa, pursued by Badoglio's air force of 150 planes: 'men, women, pack animals were cut to bits or were fatally burned by mustard gas'.²⁹ From April to May the Italian offensive both from the north and from the south met with less and less resistance. Ethiopian resistance fighters led by Dejazmach (Brigadier) Afework, Rases Desta, and Nesibu, Fitawrari (Colonel) Guangul and several others could not stop Graziani in the Ogaden and Bale. As Badoglio was moving on Addis Ababa, Graziani was aiming at Harar. On 2 May 1936 the Emperor decided to leave the country, ostensibly to carry on the struggle on the 'diplomatic' front. But in doing so, he became the first Emperor in the history of the country to have fled the country in the face of foreign aggression. This act, as a recent article on the period has charged, was a major contributing factor to the Fascist 'victory' and the occupation of Addis Ababa.³⁰

On 5 May 1936 Badoglio's forces entered Addis Ababa and on 9 May Mussolini announced to the world: 'At last, Italy has her empire.' As a knowledgeable observer noted:

At one stroke the war quelled discontent at home, or at least drowned it in Fascist propaganda and shouts of military glory; it eased the burden of economic stagnation and created a timely diversion and it opened a new phase in Mussolini's policy of seeking imperial power in the Mediterranean and Africa.³¹

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1. See E. Work, *Ethiopia: A Pawn in European Diplomacy*, London, Macmillan, 1935.
 2. The reader may benefit from a recent appraisal of the background and the circumstances of Ethiopia's struggle for independence by Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence*, London, Heinemann, 1976. Cf. also Work, *op. cit.*
 3. For a brief review of the boundary 'negotiations' of 1897 the reader may refer to this author's earlier work: 'Rhetoric and Reality in the Making of the Boundaries in the Horn of Africa in 1897', *Ethiopia Observer*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, pp. 16-30.

4. For the record, the boundary between Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland was to be the subject of another negotiating session which took place in 1908 in Addis Ababa. A more formal boundary convention was signed at this time but it did not change the situation. For the relevant documents of these 1897 and subsequent negotiations see, for instance, *The Somali Peninsula*, Mogadishu, 1962.
5. The Darwish movement forced the British to use the aeroplane for bombing and for work in tandem with the Italians to extinguish the movement. The Sheikh used Ethiopian territory as his staging-post and hoped for Ethiopian collaboration in his struggles; he finally died and was buried in Ethiopia, and his kinsmen and grandchildren have remained active in Ethiopian public life. For a brief review of this period see I. M. Lewis, *The Modern History of Somaliland*, pp. 63–91, New York, Praeger, 1961.
6. For a succinct and knowledgeable appraisal of the circumstances that led to the 1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia and its wider repercussions see Selvemini, *Prelude to World War II*, New York, Doubleday, 1954.
7. Cf. for instance, R. Hess, *Italian Colonialism in Somalia*, pp. 156 et seq., Chicago, 1966; George Baer, *The Coming of the Italian–Ethiopian War*, pp. 11 et seq., Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1967.
8. See A. J. Barker, *The Rape of Ethiopia, 1936*, p. 15, New York, Ballantine Books, 1971. For a text of the 1928 Italo–Ethiopia Treaty, see Gringold Duprey, *De l'invasion à la libération de l'Éthiopie*, pp. 462–3, Paris, 1955.
9. Some very good studies on the international situation include: Salvemini, op. cit.; Frank Hardie, *The Abyssinian Crisis*, London, B. T. Batsford, 1974; Thomas M. Coffey, *Lion by the Tail*, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1974; George Baer, *The Coming of the Italian–Ethiopian War*, op. cit.; Franklin D. Laurens, *France and the Italo–Ethiopian Crisis*, The Hague, Mouton, 1967; Brice Harris, Jr, *The United States and the Italo–Ethiopian Crisis*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1964; Irone Kirkpatrick, *Mussolini*, New York, Avon Books, 1964; William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, London, Pan Books, 1960.
10. For details, see Baer, op. cit., pp. 45 et seq.; see also Pitman B. Potter, *The Wal Wal Arbitration*, Washington, D.C., 1938, *passim*.
11. Cited in Baer, op. cit., pp. 59, 61.
12. Hardie, op. cit., p. 117; Salvemini, op. cit., pp. 191 et seq.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 254.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 263.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 373.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 255.
17. For details see Laurens, op. cit., *passim*; Hardie, op. cit., pp. 164 et seq.
18. These advisers included, besides ambassadors, De Halpert of Great Britain, Everett Colson of the United States, General Virgin of Sweden and Anderson of Switzerland.
19. A Del Boca, *The Ethiopian War: 1935–1941*, trans. P. D. Cummins, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1969.
20. Cf. Coffey, op. cit., pp. 133 et seq.; and Brice Harris, op. cit., pp. 35–42. The United States Government (under F. D. Roosevelt) was also to be the first country (on 5 October 1935) to announce 'neutrality' in the war and thus 'wash its hands of Italian aggression'. Cf. Coffey, op. cit., p. 170.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
22. Del Boca, op. cit., p. 21.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 59–60.
24. Baer, op. cit., p. 284. As many as 300 journalists, virtually all Italian, covered the invasion.
25. Del Boca, op. cit., p. 29.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 78. The effect of yperite or mustard gas was also described by Ras Imru, who

said that on 23 December 1935 'a hundred or so of my men who had been splashed by the mysterious fluid began to scream in agony as blisters broke out on their bare feet, their hands, their faces. Some who rushed to the river and took great gulps of water to cool their fevered lips fell contorted on the banks and writhed in agonies that lasted for hours before they died. Among the victims were a few peasants who had come to water their cattle.'

27. Quoted in Del Boca, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 177; cf. also Budoflio, *La guerra d'Ethiopia*, pp. 139 et seq. The Italian war machine was at times shaken by desertions to the Ethiopian side by Eritrean or Somali askaris—who could not bear Italian discrimination. On occasion, the natives would be ordered to bury Italian dead but leave their own dead unburied.
30. The Emperor's departure for London has been described as an 'act of treachery and cowardice of the kind never committed by any Ethiopian monarch in the nation's long history'. Ministry of Information, *The Italo-Ethiopian war*, p. 25, Addis Ababa, 1975.
31. Del Boca, *op. cit.*, pp. 206–7. The invasion cost Italy a few thousand dead and 12,111 million lire.

The Horn of Africa in a decade of world conflicts (1935–45)

A. Eshete

The Horn of Africa in the period under study comprises Ethiopia, British Somaliland, French Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, and the Italian colony of Eritrea. But as the World War in this part of Africa focused on the Italian Fascist invasion of Ethiopia, the other regions will be treated only when and where their fate was affected by the development of the Italo-Ethiopian war.

Ethiopia in 1935 was politically a country still dominated by feudal aristocrats ruling autonomous or semi-autonomous administrative regions and paying yearly irregular tributes to the Emperor in Addis Ababa. The former Crown Prince Ras Tafari Makonnen had, after overcoming the overwhelming odds that confronted his rise to power from 1916 to 1930, finally acceded to the throne and taken the title of Emperor Haile Selassie (Power of the Trinity)—a divine Emperor by tradition, Elect of God, the Lion of Judah! But behind this pomp lay at the most only urban power limited to Addis Ababa and its periphery, for power in Ethiopia in 1930 was in the hands of the feudal barons who held jealously to their authority and resisted all change. Moreover, Ethiopia in 1930 was still a ‘museum of peoples embracing several nationalities with their linguistic and cultural identity’. And although it was a Christian country by name, an estimated one-third of the population were Muslims. All these factors did not favour centralization and uniform administration radiating from Addis Ababa. But change had indeed been cracking the old feudal structure since the dawn of the twentieth century, when, with the introduction of commercial capitalism—a result of European imperialist penetration—all branches of Ethiopian life (economic, political, administrative) had begun to undergo a transformation. As all feudal societies, Ethiopia was a land with a subject–master relationship in which the subjects (*gebar*) in each fief or manor, called *gult*, paid their tribute to the landlord or *gult-shum*. But the modernizing effect of commercial capitalism and the flow of European advisers attached to the government at Addis Ababa, advising the formation of a state on a European model, were to initiate the break-up of the subject–master relationship and create a citizen–state rapport in which the individual would no longer be the subject of his lord: he would pay no more tribute, but become an independent citizen paying a yearly tax to the state. He would

be administered not by hereditary feudal lords but by salaried government officials sent from Addis Ababa. The feudal army in each region had to be replaced gradually by a central army commanded from Addis Ababa and stationed in different corners of the Empire. Justice, police, etc., were all gradually to become centralized. Such a process had started at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the economic field, elements of a capitalist economy had penetrated, and a monetarized economy had been steadily developing. Small industries (textile, leather, etc.) were visible, but it was mainly the export of raw materials (coffee, hides) and the import of manufactured commodities from Europe and America that flooded the Ethiopian market and destroyed the traditional industries. The development of commercial capitalism and urbanization was particularly enhanced by the construction of the railway from Djibouti to Addis Ababa in the first decade of the twentieth century. Modern education, that started mainly at the beginning of this century, was developing slowly and at the beginning of the 1930s Ethiopia possessed a good number of foreign-educated intellectuals. All this helped to present a façade of modernism to the new arrival in Addis Ababa. But the reality was that in 1935 Ethiopia, with a population estimated at 5 to 15 million, was still a very backward state with over 95 per cent of the agricultural economy at subsistence level, and all idea of change held back by parasitic feudal lords and a feudalized Church (the Orthodox Church) that held survey over most of the cultivable land. Although the slave trade had largely been reduced in the twentieth century, domestic slavery was still persistent in spite of the commitment given to the League of Nations by the government at Addis Ababa in order to obtain membership.

Independent Ethiopia was surrounded by imperialist powers on all sides: by the British in the Sudan, Kenya and British Somaliland; by the Italians in Eritrea and Italian Somaliland and by the French in French Somaliland. Ethiopia's boundaries with her colonial neighbours were determined by agreements signed after the battle of Adwa in 1896: with France in 1897, with Britain in 1902 and 1907, and with Italy in 1897 and 1908. But the Ethiopian victory at Adwa against the invading Italian army in 1896 only temporarily checked Italian imperialist dreams in the region and did not alter the inherent threat to Ethiopian independence by the surrounding imperialist powers. All through the first decade of the twentieth century and until 1935, Britain, France and Italy never really ceased, on paper, to divide up the Ethiopian territory into their respective zones of influence—a scheme which never materialized, not only because of Ethiopian resistance but also because of imperialist rivalry among the three.

The real danger of imperialist aggression was, however, visible in Ethiopia ever since the rise of Fascism in Italy at the beginning of the 1920s under Mussolini. Under the cover of revenging of Adwa, Mussolini was

determined to put into effect the Fascist principle of imperialist expansion by which it was hoped to achieve economic expansion and prosperity in Italy through the exporting of excess labour and importing of Ethiopian raw materials. The Italian threat was clearly felt among the Ethiopians, and articles in the press tried, directly or indirectly, to alert the public. The Italian Government attempted to overcome Ethiopian suspicion by declarations of friendship and good intentions, and even went so far as to sign, on 2 August 1928, a Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Ethiopian Government. But the threat of Fascist invasion of Ethiopia was becoming clearer as the Italians became increasingly provocative, exhausting Ethiopian patience. Indeed, as early as 1925 Mussolini's government had begun sending Italian as well as native Somali troops (*dubat*) inside Ethiopian territory in the Ogaden region, particularly towards the water-rich villages of Walwal and Warder, about 150 kilometres north of the Italo-Ethiopian boundary of 1908. And the so called 'Walwal Incident' of December 1934, where the Italian Fascist army used its aeroplanes and tanks for the first time against a poorly armed and unprepared Ethiopian infantry could be taken as the beginning of Fascist invasion of Ethiopia. The League of Nations to which Ethiopia appealed was ineffective. Thus Mussolini proceeded with his aggressive plan of an overall invasion of Ethiopia, from the north through Eritrea, and from the south through Italian Somaliland and the Ogaden. While General de Bono, who was assigned Commander-in-Chief of the entire Italian invading army, led the northern front, General Rudolfo Graziani, the 'hyena of Libya', was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the southern forces.

In the field of armaments and military techniques, needless to say feudal Ethiopia was not prepared for the aggression of Fascist Italy. While the Italian warplanes and tanks were piling up at Massawa and Mogadishu, the Ethiopian Government that had invested its full confidence in the League of Nations was drilling and training on the streets of Addis Ababa the army that was to be sent days later to the two war fronts. And although there were hundreds of thousands of rifles in Ethiopia they were outdated, barely functioning Mausers, Schneiders, etc. Ethiopia had hardly any tanks or anti-aircraft weapons. As a result, by the outbreak of the war only the 25,000 men of Emperor Haile Selassie's Imperial Bodyguard, trained by Europeans, could be called a modern army. And all the modern arms Ethiopia possessed were the 50,000 to 60,000 modern rifles that in the final days the Emperor managed to muster from various sources. The country was completely unprepared for defence against bombs, and still less against the poisonous gases that Italy used extensively against the Ethiopians. The Ethiopian system of military communication, which was neither traditional nor modern, betrayed them to the enemy. Shortage of supplies and provisions was worsened by the transport difficulties and the lack of military vehicles (which Italy possessed in large numbers). That

was the *rapport de forces* at the time of the aggression: it was not uncommon to see a brave Ethiopian perish while struggling bare-handed with a Fascist armoured tank, as if it were some sort of wild animal that he was determined to kill.

On 2 October 1935, Mussolini told the world of his decision to invade Ethiopia. And simultaneously the Fascist army crossed the Mereb river boundary of Eritrea and penetrated into the Ethiopian highland province of Tigrai (which had received orders from Addis Ababa not to put up any resistance) with some 50,000 Italians and native *banda askari* troops. On 6 October the town of Adwa—battlefield of 1896—was occupied. And advancing south, the ancient city of Axum capitulated on 14 October, while Mekelle, a major Tigrai city, was occupied on 4 November without any fighting. On the southern front the Fascist army of some 100,000 soldiers under the leadership of Graziani was advancing towards the Ogaden. On the Ethiopian side the situation was worse than in the north and apart from few military posts with a small number of soldiers, there was no army that could resist the invaders. The total number of Ethiopian soldiers in the Ogaden arid regions was estimated at 6,000 in July/August 1935, largely armed with obsolete guns. The Governor of Harar and the Ogaden was then Dejach Nessibu, a favourite of the Emperor but not a military leader. The Italian initial advance on this front was therefore little different from that of the north. Beginning in early October 1935 a number of Ethiopian Ogaden towns were occupied: Dolo (a border town) on 3 October, Guerlogubi on 5 October, followed by Galadi, Qalafo, etc.—and this in spite of the resistance of the Ethiopian military border posts. This meant that the Italians were now in control of a good part of southern Ogaden. The fiercest resistance that the Italians had to sustain in their advance inside northern Ogaden was in Qorrahe, which was under the valiant leadership of Grazmach Afework who lost his life on the battlefield. The heavy air bombardment (including poison gas) on Qorrahe started on 2 November 1935 and continued for three days. And in spite of the fierce resistance of the Ethiopians the town fell to the Italians on 5 November. Its fall could be said to have opened the route to Harrar for the Fascist invaders. Graziani's army continued north and occupied Qabri Dahar on 6 November, after heavy fighting. Qabri Dahar and Qorrahe now became the launching ground for the future attack on Dagahabur, JigJiga and finally Harrar.

Emperor Haile Selassie, who had said, '*Je ne suis pas un soldat*', admitting that, unlike his forefathers, he was not a warrior, was totally unprepared and unwilling to lead his army against the aggressor, even when the League of Nations on which he had counted failed to stop Mussolini.

Finally, however, the general mobilization call was made in the traditional feudal manner and all able-bodied Ethiopians (followed by wives, children, domestic slaves), untrained, badly armed, and unprepared for such a war,

were arriving in Addis Ababa, chanting war cries and asking to be dispatched to the war fronts. And they were being dispatched to the northern and southern war fronts all throughout October and November 1935. The army sent to the north (about 80,000 men) was led by the Minister of War, Ras Mulugueta. Several bodies of Ethiopian soldiers (about 10,000) were also sent to the south to reinforce Dejach Nessibu's army in Harrar and the Ogaden. Moreover, Dejach Beyene Merid was sent to Bale and Ras Desta Damtew led his army in the defence of Sidamo, both in the south. Finally, the Emperor, after a brief visit to JigJiga (in the Ogaden) following the fall of Qorrahe and Qabri Dahar, returned to Addis Ababa and left for the northern front where he established his headquarters at Dessie (capital of Wollo), south of the province of Tigrai.

On the international scene, Ethiopia's colonial neighbours, Britain and France, two principal members of the League, had begun to engage in straight-forward collaboration with Fascist Italy. By a secret treaty of 7 January 1935, France had renounced in Italy's favour all French interests and claims in Ethiopia with the exception of the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway zone. In addition France made over to Italy a substantial share in the railway business. By this treaty the French Prime Minister, Pierre Laval, gave Mussolini a 'free hand' in Ethiopia in return for Italian support for France should Germany attack her. But the most well-known imperialist treachery was the Hoare-Laval Anglo-French proposal of 11 December 1935, by which over half of Ethiopia's territory (575,000 square kilometres) was to be ceded to Italy. But although Mussolini accepted the Hoare-Laval plan as a possible base for discussion, the opposition of the British House of Commons to this 'shameful transaction' and the resignation of Sir Samuel Hoare from the Foreign Office put an end to it. And for some time, in Britain as well as in France, the pro-Italian fever seemed to have cooled down. But the hesitation of the two big European powers rendered the League of Nations sanctions ineffective.¹

In the meantime the war continued on both fronts. The Italian army of the north was now being led by Marshal Badoglio (who had replaced General de Bono on 15 November 1935). The Ethiopian troops on the northern front were now approaching the Italian lines. And on 15 December, the regiment led by Ras Imru (25,000 soldiers) had crossed the Tekezzie river and attacked the Italian post at Dembegunna (in Shirre), killing an estimated 400 Italian and native soldiers and capturing a number of tanks and considerable arms. Another Ethiopian army led by Ras Seyum of Tigrai and Ras Kassa Darghe was engaged in Tembien. The bloody battle that Ras Mulugueta, the Ethiopian Minister of War, waged at Amba Aradom, in Enderta, south of Mekelle, started on 9 February 1936 and was ended on 19 February, by his death and the dispersion of the Ethiopian army, heavily bombarded and poisoned by the Italian warplanes.

On the southern front, the Fascist army in the Ogaden under Genera

Graziani had to divide up, and an important section of the army, led by Graziani himself, was diverted to the west to hold back a large Ethiopian army advancing from Sidamo and Bale, under the leadership of Ras Desta Damtew (30,000 soldiers) and Dejach Beyene Merid (15,000 soldiers) respectively, and concentrating on the Juba and Wabi Shebelle rivers. While in the north the Fascist army used the Eritreans as shock-absorbers of the initial Ethiopian onslaughts, in the south the Somali native bands (known as *dubat*)—the most notorious of which was the Onol Dinle band of 7,000 men—served the same purpose. This Fascist scheme disturbed the Ethiopian fighters, since ‘our own brothers were constantly placed between us and the enemy’. But the high rate of desertion (to join up with the Ethiopian army) among the native Fascist bands was some compensation.² In the major battle of Ganale Doria (a tributary of the Juba) in December 1935 between the Italians and the army of Ras Desta, the number of dead on the Fascist side was considered high, but the Ethiopian loss was estimated at 10,000. Ras Desta himself was later arrested and executed by the Italians.³

Graziani then turned his attention back to the Ogaden where the war had subsided for some time. This second and final battle for the conquest of the Ogaden started with the bombardment, for the first time, of the major towns and main objectives of the Italian southern invading army; JigJiga and Harrar. A number of successive battles and determined Ethiopian resistance (in spite of the weak leadership of Dejach Nessibu) could not stop the Italian advance in the direction of JigJiga and Harrar.

The final, decisive battle that determined Ethiopia’s fate was that of Maichew on 22 Megabit 1928 (3 March 1936) on the northern front where the northern Fascist invading army marching south met the assembled Ethiopian army led by the Emperor. The fierce and determined resistance of the Ethiopians at Maichew (up to 4 April) had, however, again to give way to the superiority of Fascist arms. Now the Ethiopian choice was either to continue in this war of unequal strength or to retreat and start a new chapter of guerrilla resistance and harassment of the enemy until victory and the liberation of Ethiopia from Fascist occupation. The people chose the latter. But the Emperor, instead of reorganizing and leading his army in this way for the defence of the nation in peril, in line with the heroic tradition of the past, chose, after his return to Addis Ababa, to abandon Ethiopia to the invader, and in great secrecy took the train for Djibouti in the first days of May 1936, to spend the war period in England, leaving the Ethiopian Government and army in disarray and practically leaderless. In the same way in the south, Dejach Nessibu, the Ethiopian general of the southern army, who had news about the departing Emperor, completely abandoned his army and left for Geneva, where he died. The advance of the Italian army both on the northern and southern front was from now on a mere formality and a matter of days. While Addis Ababa was

occupied by the forces of General Badoglio on 5 May 1936, Graziani's army occupied JigJiga and Harrar on 7 and 9 May respectively. On 9 May 1936, the King of Italy signed a decree by which he made himself King of Italy and Emperor of Ethiopia. On 15 May the League of Nations accepted the *fait accompli* and decided to raise the embargo that was in any case never effective.

This brief interruption to the independence of Ethiopia was a shock to all peace-loving peoples, especially to those in the Third World for whom Ethiopism (or Tafarianism as it was called in the West Indies) had remained in this era of growing nationalism in Africa and Latin America a symbol of Negro African liberty and a source of proud identity for the black Diaspora. Progressive thinkers from all corners of the world had been arriving in Ethiopia since the beginning of the war in order to resist Fascism. As one Sudanese officer, then on the battlefield, said: 'Ethiopia attacked was the last symbol of African liberty.'⁴

As for the Ethiopians, following the departure of the Emperor, while chiefs loyal to him established their headquarters for a brief moment in Gore, near the western Ethio-Sudanese border, and the rest of the aristocracy largely chose to collaborate with the Fascist aggressors, the ordinary Ethiopians and the smaller chiefs all over the country elected new war leaders, little known or unknown figures who had distinguished themselves by their courage and prowess, to lead them in the guerrilla war of independence.

With the occupation of Addis Ababa, Rome assumed the conquest complete, and Ethiopia was grouped with the former Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somalia, and the whole was given the name of Africa Orientale Italiana (AOI) on 1 June 1936, to be administered by a Fascist 'viceroy of Ethiopia'. Badoglio, Graziani (from 11 June 1936 to 21 December 1937), Amedeo, the Duke of Savoy (from 21 December 1937 to 19 May 1941) and finally Pietro Gazzera occupied this post during the period of occupation. The Africa Orientale Italiana was divided into six provinces: Amhara, with the capital at Gondar; Galla and Sidama, capital Gimma; Somalia (including the Ogaden), capital Mogadishu; Eritrea (including Tigrai), capital Asmara; and Shoa, with the capital at Addis Ababa. As can be seen from the above division, Fascist emphasis was on tribal separation. All through the five years of the occupation of Ethiopia, this aspect remained the cardinal feature of Fascist divide-and-rule policy. On the nationality front, the Fascists claimed to support a policy of equality of all nationalities (in spite of the Fascist racist 'master race' claim that considered all blacks inferior) and made propaganda dividing the Ethiopians into 'master' and 'subject' nationalities, by which means it was intended to bring into collision what they called the 'Amhara master nationality' and the rest of the so-called Ethiopian 'subject' nationalities. (Whatever the fallacy and Fascist origin of this propaganda, many of its elements survive to this day.) Another aspect of the Italian divide-and-rule policy was religion. Mussolini's

agents in Ethiopia did whatever they could to create hatred and conflict between the Christian and Muslim population whom the Fascists again divided into oppressor and oppressed. They feigned to pass for protectors of Islam and the Muslims against the domination of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. But in truth Fascist policy was bent on the development of the Italian brand of Catholicism in Ethiopia, in collaboration with the Vatican, and at the expense of all other foreign missionaries, including the French Catholics, and the British, German and American missionaries, who were all expelled. The Italians also tried to win the Ethiopian aristocracy over to their side, at least up to the attempt on Graziani's life in February 1937. Following this incident, the Fascists began to lose faith in the general policy of collaboration with the aristocracy and Mussolini's 'Niente Ras' policy was clearly hostile to them. As far as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was concerned, their initial policy was to create a high clergy (especially the Abun, the Ethiopian Archbishop separated for the purpose from the Patriarchate of Alexandria) that would collaborate with them, and to distance themselves from those who were suspected of opposition to Fascist rule. Those who remained loyal to the Ethiopian resistance movement were summarily executed, as was Abune Petros (Bishop of Wollo), a well-known Ethiopian martyr. This characteristic of Italian policy was particularly marked after February 1937 and the ensuing indiscriminate massacre.

As far as the oppressed classes of Ethiopia were concerned, the Italians again used class contradictions as an instrument of divide-and-rule. Slavery in all its forms (including domestic slavery) was abolished, as were all feudal contracts that tied the oppressed Ethiopian peasantry (*gebar*) to the feudal lord. And the number of freed slaves was said to be so high that the Fascist administrators who did not know what to do with them had to reinstate them with their former masters, albeit on an apparently free status basis. In the same way the liberated feudal peasantry was reported to have resisted from then on further exploitation of its labour by the former landed aristocracy. But the Ethiopian masses were not duped for long by Italian propaganda. Nationalization of the best cultivable land in Ethiopia (as in Eritrea half a century before), the wholesale transformation of the traditional peasantry into ordinary wage-earners at the mercy of the Italian settler sent from the congested and agitated areas of Veneto and Emilia Romagna in line with the policy of 'demographic colonization',⁵ soon showed that the Italians had come to evict the Ethiopians and enslave them in their own land within a new racist and segregationist⁶ colonial capitalist system of exploitation. As a result, when this was made clear, the Ethiopian peasant did not hesitate to take arms and join the resistance movement against the oppressors.

The second phase of the Italo-Ethiopian war, that of guerrilla resistance, started and continued unabated until liberation. The patriots came from all

nationalities and religions of Ethiopia without distinction and were united by one common cause and purpose. However, resistance was said to be highest amongst the highland population, such as Shoa (around Addis Ababa) and in the northern provinces of Gojam, Gondar-Beguemidre, etc. The lowlander, who had always had little or no contact with the feudal central government in traditional Ethiopia (or whose region at the most served as a convenient field for hunting or even slave-raiding, as in the case of the western border lowlands), had developed little or no Ethiopian nationalism and was said to be less patriotic. Well protected by the natural setting of the country, its mountains, forests, gorges and ravines, living by hunting and on wild fruits, or whenever possible fed and lodged by the people, distinguished by his long hair and beard, the Ethiopian patriot harassed the Fascist invaders. Unity, communication (both within and without Ethiopia), and co-ordination among the different regions, as well as transmission of modest supplies of arms and provisions, was made possible by the creation of the Ethiopian Patriotic Association, which covered the whole country although its headquarters was in Shoa, and its leadership predominantly Shoan. It is difficult to name even the principal patriotic leaders from all over the country.⁷ But such names as Abebe Aregay, Haile Mariam Mammo, Takele Wolde Hawariat, Shewareged Gedle (all from Shoa), Belay Zeleke (Gojam), Amoraw Wubneh Tessema (Gondar-Beguemidre) remain legendary symbols of Ethiopian resistance against Fascism.

As we said earlier, the harder the Ethiopian resistance struck, the more atrocious acts of despair the Italians committed, as was clear from the February 1937 massacre. At this time the patriots around Addis Ababa had made several successful attacks on Italian troops, and even repeated incursions into the city itself, so that there was a widespread fear among the Fascist leadership that an all-out attack against Addis Ababa was in the making. It was during this period of Fascist anxiety that two bombs were thrown at Graziani on 19 February 1937, while he was distributing alms to the poor in the style of the Ethiopian Emperor. All the high aristocracy and high clergy (including the Archbishop) who were ordered to attend were present. This heroic though poorly planned and co-ordinated act (which may not have been altogether unconnected to the patriotic resistance around Addis, a fact that Graziani seemed absolutely sure of)⁸ was the work of two Eritreans, Abriha Deboch and Moges Asgedom, who were in the service of the Italian Government and had firsthand experience of Fascist rule. The two succeeded in escaping after the act, but thousands of Ethiopians were caught in the fire. After a minute of silence following the explosion of the bombs that wounded Graziani and others in his vicinity, the Fascist troops began what became the most hideous massacre known in the whole period of occupation. First those inside the palace, the invited aristocracy and high clergy, the poor who were invited

to receive alms (including invalids, blind and crippled beggars)—some 300 in all—were shot in cold blood. Then the Fascist carabinieri and black shirts went into the streets of Addis, and from house to house, shooting, burning, driving lorries over any Ethiopian in sight, irrespective of age or sex. The monastery of Debre Libano, some 100 kilometres outside Addis, accused of having given shelter to Abrha Deboch and Moges Asgedom, was burnt together with some 120 monks and nuns. The Ethiopians who belonged to the association called the Young Ethiopians, composed mainly of foreign-educated intellectuals, were tracked down and summarily executed, or deported *en masse* to prisons in Somalia and Eritrea. And if the whole Fascist occupation has cost Ethiopia about an estimated one million lives, this massacre alone, which continued for three days and nights, claimed the lives of some 30,000 Ethiopians.⁹ This incident, more than any other, encouraged Ethiopian resistance and swelled the numbers of the resistance movement.

On 10 June 1940, Italy joined the war on the side of Germany, and against the Allied forces, notably Britain and occupied France. This Italian decision had far-reaching and immediate consequences on the military situation in the Horn of Africa. Italy, immediately and without much difficulty, occupied British Somaliland with part of its forces in Africa Orientale. And in the winter of 1940, Britain, which by the Anglo-Italian agreement of 16 April 1938 had given *de jure* recognition of Italian sovereignty in Ethiopia, now revoked it and sent troops against all Italian possessions in Africa. The troops sent against the Italian settlements in the Horn advanced on three fronts: in the north through Eritrea, in the south through Italian Somaliland, and in the west through the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, with an army including Allied army officers and soldiers, but predominantly drawn from the Commonwealth (mainly South Africa and Australia) and from neighbouring colonies of the Sudan, Kenya, Egypt and India. In the north, the forces of General Platt occupied Massawa (9 April 1941), Asmara (1 April 1941) and Keren (where the British faced the greatest resistance). In the south, the British forces under General Cunningham, after occupying the main towns of Italian Somaliland (Mogadishu on 25 February 1941, Brava, etc.) proceeded inland, overran the Ogaden and took possession of the town of Harrar. In their engagement with the Fascist troops in the interior of Ethiopia, the British worked in close collaboration with the Ethiopian patriotic resistance movement. Addis Ababa was occupied on 6 April 1941 by the southern British troops under General Cunningham. The former Emperor of Ethiopia, who had passed the war years in England, had left London for Khartoum in July 1940, and after raising an army of some 2,000 men entered Ethiopia through Gojam. From there, supported by British troops and surrounded by patriots from Gojam and other regions, he regained Addis Ababa on 5 May 1941—exactly five years to the

day after the Italian occupation of the capital. On 19 May, after the battle of Amba Alage, the Duke of Aosta capitulated with 250,000 men, formally ending Italian rule.

The old Ethiopian monarchy was restored. But who was to govern Ethiopia, and the rest of Africa Orientale Italiana? Those were the questions that perplexed the Horn during the whole period of British occupation that started in 1941, and extended to 1950. Contemporary conflicts in this part of Africa still bear the scar of British colonial policy dating back to those years.¹⁰

Ethiopia in 1941 was a land that had undergone in the five years of Fascist occupation substantial transformation in infrastructure, and had gone a long way along the road from a feudal society to a capitalist mode of production. During that time the Fascist administration had laid special emphasis, mainly for military and political reasons, on the development of transport and communication, with the aim of linking the important centres of the Empire and creating easier control and administration. Road construction was thus the favoured area of Italian enterprise in Ethiopia. New and modern production methods in the field of agriculture and industry were also substantially implanted and had a long-lasting influence on the future development of the country.

After liberation from Fascist rule in 1941, with the help of the British 'ally', a good part of Ethiopia in the south-east, including the Ogaden, and Harrar with the railway area from Dire Dawa to Djibouti, as well as the Ethiopian Haud, were declared Reserved Areas and put under direct British military administration, albeit for the duration of the war. The rest of Ethiopia was to come under the authority of the Emperor not as a *de jure* sovereign but as a *de facto* ruler 'who must accept our guidance and control on pain of loss of our support and finance'. And for the weakly established Emperor with no army, no money and no means to establish his administration, amidst a rising opposition from the patriotic resistance movement, from regional rebellions (Tigray, Gojam, the south, etc.) as well as from young progressives, British support and finance was a *sine qua non* for his maintenance on the throne. Hence, for some years to come, Ethiopia had passed from Fascist occupation to British protectorate tutelage. Indeed, the British Government made no attempt to hide this initially. As Anthony Eden told Parliament on 3 May 1941, 'an independent Ethiopian state does not at present exist, though we would like to see it reappear, and . . . what the Emperor possesses is not the throne but a claim to it . . . and legal authority remains with the commander of the British forces of occupation'. In practice what the British did was to send 'advisers' to advise the different branches of the Ethiopian Government placed under nominal Ethiopian ministers, themselves paid from the British Treasury. The colonialists came up with their usual 'humanitarian' arguments of support, again, for the 'subject' peoples of Ethiopia under 'Amhara' domination, or

for the abolition of feudalism as well as slavery in Ethiopia (with the intervention, as usual, of the Anti-Slavery Society)—all to justify British colonial occupation of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Government, under pressure from nationalist circles, was reluctant to take British orders, or to see the country change hands from one colonial rule to another. Nor did the British supporters of Ethiopia remain silent. The most consistent and persistent among these was Emily Pankhurst who bombarded the British Foreign Office with violent ‘not again’ letters bidding and challenging the government to free Ethiopia. Support for Ethiopia was international, ranging from the blacks of America to progressives all over the world. And as the Foreign Office admitted, interest in Ethiopia in certain British circles bordered ‘on the fanatic’. Moreover, the British feared international opposition to the violation of the Atlantic Charter forbidding the dividing up of conquered areas. For these and other reasons, the British Government was gradually forced to change position and to declare on different occasions that it had no colonial intentions in Ethiopia. And by the treaty of 31 January 1942, signed between Great Britain and Ethiopia, Ethiopian sovereignty was formally restored. But the British refused the Ethiopian request to include a clause about Ethiopian territorial integrity. British administration of the Ogaden and the Reserved Areas (Ethiopian territories), as well as that of Eritrea and Italian Somaliland, was maintained. The British advisory system with military and financial tutelage of Ethiopia continued. And growing Ethiopian suspicion of British colonial intentions towards part, if not the whole, of Ethiopia necessitated a search for an alternative big power alliance to offset British supremacy.

The power that offered itself most readily and fitted into the Ethiopian scheme was then the United States of America. Washington had indeed aired as early as 1941 its intention of establishing a military base on the African coast or hinterland of the Red Sea—possibly at Massawa or Asmara as part of its Middle Eastern defence system! On 9 August 1943, the United States and Ethiopia signed an accord of mutual aid in the pursuit of the war against aggression. The Emperor, who had already before the war attempted to win American economic penetration to offset the old European colonial powers in the region, seized the occasion to establish closer contacts with the United States; the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington, headed by Blata Ephrem Tewelde Medhin, was one of the first to be reopened after independence. Apart from the military field, the United States also seemed ‘determined on an economic offensive in Ethiopia’, with emphasis on export trade and financial, banking and business institutions. But Washington also declared its readiness to participate in the relief and rehabilitation of Ethiopia through loans and direct participation in such areas as road construction, air transport, health, agriculture, mining and rearmament (although with outdated arms), as well as in administration through American advisers (as a counterweight to British

advisers). The Ethiopian Government even tried to convince the American economic mission to Addis Ababa to take over the railway line in the Ethiopian section and administer it financially. In 1944, an oil prospecting concession was granted to Sinclair Oil Company of the United States in the Ogaden and its political significance soon proved to have been well calculated. Finally, in 1945 Ethiopian Airlines was established under an agreement with Trans-World Airlines (operations started in 1946). The pro-Ethiopian black American movement may also have had a hand in strengthening closer ties between Ethiopia and the United States. The British, of course, did not appreciate the Ethio-American *rapprochement*, which they, with justice, interpreted as an Ethiopian idea 'to play off the Americans against us'—particularly so as the Americans acted completely independently of Great Britain, 'without any attempt at prior consultation with us' and 'we seem to be getting into a quagmire over these lease-lend arrangements made behind our backs'. British firms in Addis Ababa that had already replaced, or were preparing to replace, the Italian firms did not hide their discontent with American economic offensive in Ethiopia. American export trade to Ethiopia was highlighted in 1945 by the export to war-torn feudal Ethiopia of a badly needed item: 6 million American Lucky Strike cigarettes and a promise of more! That reflected well the future trend. But American support to Ethiopia on such issues as the Reserved Areas, the Ogaden, Eritrea, Somalia, etc., was more substantial.

The first issue that Ethiopia wanted Britain to settle was the return of the Reserved Areas and the Ogaden to Ethiopia. And this area, constituting about one-third to one-quarter of Ethiopian territory, included the Ethiopian Haud, the Ogaden, JigJiga, and a 25-mile belt around French Somaliland also covering the railway area. The British justified this military occupation by the exigencies of the war. However, gradually the question of the Reserved Areas and the Ogaden was becoming more and more political and colonial rather than military, and hence Ethiopian anxiety and insistence on its early restoration and reintegration with the rest of the country.

The British justified occupation of a 25-mile belt around Djibouti and the control of the railway by the fact that Djibouti was still in the hands of pro-Vichy forces. Djibouti in pro-Vichy hands had collaborated fully during the Fascist occupation of Ethiopia, and after the arrival of the British a blockade was declared and there was no civilian transport east of Dire Dawa to the 25-mile belt round French Somaliland under British occupation. The Emperor had indeed expressed on a number of occasions his desire to occupy Djibouti either alone or in alliance with British forces, and thus break Ethiopia's landlocked situation and give it access to the sea. He had also suggested Anglo-Ethiopian financial administration of the railway from Addis Ababa to Djibouti (of which part of the shares were given by Laval to Mussolini), while keeping

it under British protection. But the British did not consider the proposal favourable and the idea was dropped. With the fall of the pro-Vichy forces in Djibouti in the summer of 1942, and their replacement by the Free French forces of General de Gaulle co-operating with the Allies, civilian transport was resumed on the railway and the land blockade to Djibouti was raised. The Anglo-French negotiations for Djibouti and the railway resumed in December 1942 without the knowledge of the Emperor and despite his request for the presence of an Ethiopian representative.

Once the imaginary or real Djibouti threat was over, the British had no more 'military' reason for occupation and control of at least the northern section of the Reserved Areas around the railway line to Djibouti. But this area, as well as the Ogaden up to JigJiga and the Ethiopian Haud, remained under British occupation (amidst Ethiopian nationalist as well as international and black opposition). The issue was no longer military and the War Office repeatedly told the Foreign Office that there was no 'operational need' for the region, but the British Colonial Office insisted that it was 'a matter of life and death'. Why? And this brings us to the notorious idea of Greater Somalia.

The idea of Greater Somalia was not, as is often assumed by foreign as well as Ethiopian scholars, the creation of Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary at the Paris Peace Conference of 1946; it was in fact the 'baby' of the Colonial Office (as the Foreign Office called it), born much earlier. Indeed the idea goes back to the first months of 1941, right after the British occupation of Somalia, when the Colonial Office proposed to unite an estimated three-and-a-half million Somalis in French Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, British Somaliland including northern Kenya, and the Ogaden, 'the four dismembered provinces of the homogeneous Somali country populated by one of the most intelligent, virile and proud peoples of Africa—now despoiled by four different governments'. The British, always as humanitarian as their colonial interest could allow, were also, all through, consistent in what they wanted to do with Greater Somalia. The Somalis were not ready for independence and Greater Somalia was to become a British colony, or at best, a British Protectorate! Greater Somalia was not to be put under Italy, for the Somalis hated the Italians, nor under 'Christian' feudal Ethiopia (against which several petitions of 'problematic' origin were distributed), but under the British whom the Somalis loved! Indeed, whether the French would agree was never seriously considered. Ethiopian opposition was envisaged, but in return for the Ogaden a territorial compensation was to be offered elsewhere, in Eritrea, or a corridor to the sea at Zeila. However, what part of Ethiopia was to be grouped with Greater Somalia was never clear in the minds of the people at the Colonial Office. Some were satisfied with the Ogaden up to JigJiga. Others wanted to include Dire Dawa and Harrar, and the whole of the Danakil regions (which would take Greater Somalia up to the Red Sea port of Massawa and beyond!). The reaction

at the Foreign Office to what they called 'a figment of Colonial Office dreams' was often quite cold. But in spite of local and international opposition (including that of the United States) the Colonial Office pushed on with the project and the Foreign Office was at a loss to justify either to Ethiopia or to its Allies British retention of the Ogaden and the Reserved Areas. At one point the British Representative told the Ethiopian Government 'that victory over Japan depends upon our retention of the Ogaden'.¹¹ This had caused amused surprise in Washington, which approached London to be enlightened on this strange equation. In spite of strong Ethiopian opposition the British again forced Ethiopia, through financial and military threats, to accept the continued occupation by the British army of the Haud, the Ogaden and Reserved Areas by the Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement of 19 December 1944, in order 'as an ally to contribute to the effective prosecution of the war', albeit 'without prejudice to their underlying sovereignty'. And the idea of Greater Somalia, at the expense of Ethiopia and in violation of Ethiopia's 'underlying sovereignty', developed badly but consistently up to the Peace Conference of 1946. The Somali Youth League was formed in this atmosphere of British patronage to promulgate the idea of Greater Somalia.

One final question that needed settlement was the future of Eritrea, also under British occupation since 1941. Apart from dismantling, as in Ethiopia, transport and communication facilities and industrial and agricultural equipment installed by the Italians and sending them to neighbouring British colonies, the British did not have any idea what to do with Eritrea. Its return to Italy was out of the question. Ethiopia claimed the reintegration of this territory—an integral part of Ethiopia before the Italian occupation in the 1880s—and a strong unionist Free Eritrea movement composed of members from all Eritrean nationalities, and of Christians as well as Muslims, was soon organized with connections in Addis Ababa; it was the only Eritrean political movement at the time, badly viewed by the British who appeared to incite opposing movements on religious and ethnic grounds. Moreover, British colonialist circles wanted to link part of western Eritrea (especially the Muslim Beni Amer) to the Sudan on religious grounds, and to give the rest of Ethiopia in exchange for the Ogaden, as was mentioned earlier. The idea of a Greater Tigray, comprising highland Eritrea and Tigray, the northern province of Ethiopia, under British or Anglo-Ethiopian trusteeship, was short-lived. So also the idea of transforming Eritrea into a Jewish colony was dropped after a while. But in spite of local and international support for the Ethiopian claim to Eritrea, the Foreign Office had again to succumb to Colonial Office pressure for the attachment of part of Eritrea to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and this was the Eritrean package that Bevin took to the Paris Peace Conference of 1946.

Thus it is clear that, following the evacuation of Fascist troops, British

colonial intentions profoundly confused the political situation in the Horn of Africa. The problems of Eritrea and Greater Somalia, created at this time by British colonialist circles, were left to plague to this day the future generations of the Horn of Africa.

Notes

1. The sanctions, which included refusal to import all Italian goods, prohibition to sell or transfer arms to Italy, and suppression of all types of credit to Italy, were boycotted by, among others, the United States, Germany, Japan and Austria.
2. Tekle Tsadik Mekuria, p. 187; Salome Gebre Egziabher, 'The Ethiopian Patriotic Resistance', a typescript based on oral traditions collected in the late 1960s by the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University (p. 46).
3. 'Le cri montagnard du Ras Desta a traversé l'Afrique de part en part . . . comme une épée longue et sûre dans l'avilissement de ses reins.' Léopold Sedar Senghor, *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache*, Paris, PUF, 1948.
4. At the news of the end of Ethiopian independence Kwame Nkrumah recounts in his memoirs: 'It was as if London declared war on me personally. My nationalism exploded. I was ready to go to hell if necessary to realize my objectives: the end of colonialism.' (*Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*.)
5. In the whole of Africa Orientale Italiana there were in 1940 an estimated 185,617 Italian settlers. The majority of these were in Ethiopia (mainly in Shoa—40,000), 72,500 in Eritrea and 15,000 in Somalia (Miege, *L'impérialisme italien*, pp. 249–50.) The immigrants were largely settled in towns.
6. In residence, in public places, in transport, in education, in work, in marriage and sexual relations, etc., the Duce had given strict racist orders to be applied in Africa Orientale Italiana.
7. No systematic in-depth study, based on local oral and written sources as well as foreign material, of the patriotic resistance in the different regions or of the personalities involved has yet been done.
8. The Graziani papers at Archivio di Stato, EUR, Rome, contain rich material on the incident.
9. *Italy's War Crimes in Ethiopia*, p. 1.
10. The British archival sources for the period at the Public Records Office are now open to the public and our data for this chapter draws heavily on these same sources.
11. F.O. 371/41457 Foreign Office to War Office, 6 November 1944.

South Africa and the Second World War

B. Davidson

Like the Great Depression of the 1930s, of which indeed it must be considered as something of a natural sequel, the Second World War can be seen in certain important ways as a turning-point in the history of South Africa, as in that of other territories deriving from or belonging to the imperialist systems of Western Europe. But the over-all consequences of the Second World War in South Africa—again, as elsewhere—were far more ambiguous. So it was that the events and development of 1939–45 immensely tightened all those economic, social, cultural and political conflicts already on the South African scene.

These events and developments gave the English-speaking and overseas owners of South African capital and economic power a means of increasing their wealth and influence. At the same time they offered the Afrikaans-speaking (Afrikaner) section of the white minority a first real chance of preparing a serious challenge to the British minority's predominance in manufacturing, industry, and administrative control. Carried on by governments in which the interests of the British minority were generally paramount, or were politically accepted to be so (even if with Afrikaner participation), the war none the less worked to produce the conditions that were to undermine that situation in the political field, and also increasingly in the economic field as well. Reduced to a weak and divided opposition in those years, the party of extreme Afrikaner nationalism suffered severe defeats, including the arrest and internment on charges of sabotage or subversion of some of its most notable leaders, only to emerge with the tools of electoral victory already to hand.

Once again it was shown, as in 1902 at the end of the Anglo-Boer War, that the interests of British capital and commerce were ready and even eager to concede political primacy to the ideas and attitudes of their rivals, provided always that the system from which they drew their wealth was thereby guaranteed. And although the processes that were hastened by the war gave the non-European majority—whether African, coloured, or Asian—a new militancy and a new sense of unity or at least of the need for unity, seeming by 1944 to promise some relief from systemic discrimination, still the war years ended with their position prospectively worse than before, and with full-scale apartheid only a few years ahead.

TABLE 1. Population censuses of 1936 and 1946

	Numbers in thousands		Percentages of totals	
	1936	1946	1936	1946
Whites	2 003	2 372	20.9	20.8
Africans	6 596	7 831	68.8	68.6
Coloureds	769	928	8.0	8.1
Asians	220	285	2.3	2.5

Even a brief analysis can help to explain this apparent dislocation of cause and effect. It needs to be remembered that the Union of South Africa, as an autonomous country and then Dominion of the British Commonwealth, was less than thirty years old at the outset of the Second World War. Although from the very beginning a system of planned exploitation of non-white labour and land, with racism as its operative instrument, this was still a society whose capitalist structures were far from mature. Its ruling white minority—or rather minorities, British and Afrikaner—possessed a political independence within the wider British system, as well as all local powers of decision and execution; but theirs was still a society whose structures were largely dependent on external interests centred chiefly in London. Its economy had already moved a long way from the condition of a purely colonial exporter of cash crops and raw materials, as had been the case at the time of Union in 1910; but it was still economically weak and financially vulnerable.

Much of this began to change during the war years. Let us first look at a comparison of the population censuses of 1936 and 1946 (Table 1). The figures seem at first sight to suggest little proportionate change. Yet they conceal at least two significant trends. In the first place, the annual rate of increase of the Afrikaner minority was markedly larger than that of the English-speaking minority, including immigrants from Britain. Secondly, although the African proportion of the world population actually fell by one-fifth of 1 per cent (always supposing, which is much, that the counting of Africans was done with accuracy), the rate of African urbanization rose steeply in these years, chiefly in the war years, and more and more as the war proceeded. Thus the proportion of Africans registered as 'urban' (a notably loose term but still one that we must use) had stood at 19 per cent in 1936 of the whole urban population, but was 24.3 per cent by 1946, while, in absolute figures, the number of Africans living more or less permanently in towns in 1946 was rather more than half as large again as the total for 1936. Seen from another angle, the number of Africans employed in manufacturing rose by 57 per cent between 1939 and 1945, or from 156,500 to 245,400; and these totals may be taken as more or less

accurate ones. This flow of African workers into industry continued, so that by 1948, when the fuller effects of wartime expansion could begin to be measured, urbanized Africans accounted for 80.8 per cent of unskilled employees, for 34.2 per cent of semi-skilled employees, and for 5.8 per cent of skilled employees in all urban occupations subject to wage regulation, and, therefore, capable of yielding accessible data.

Now this, as may easily be seen, constituted a large structural change; and it is in this change that one may seek the reasons for much that happened then and since. Within the ruling ethos of racist segregation, this very marked trend towards African urban employment called for a reorganization and reinforcement of its legal and customary basis. Logically for that ethos and system, the year 1948 accordingly brought in a government vowed to the installation of a full-scale system of apartheid. Though optimistically called 'separate development', apartheid was and is a term better understood, in fact, by translating it as the development of the white minority at the cost of regression for the non-white majority. This was a structural change, in other words, which, along with parallel expansion in accumulation of capital, could lay foundations for the post-war processes whereby South Africa has developed into a markedly indigenous capitalist system, far less dependent than before, and, onwards from the 1950s, could evolve its own sub-imperialist policies towards the rest of the subcontinent. Always important to the system, the urban employment of cheap non-white labour and above all of African labour had become a vital element. The system now could no longer manage without more and more of that cheap urban labour (and with this, of course, I include mining labour).

There is little space here to discuss the detailed consequences of this and parallel structural changes promoted by the Second World War. Generally, however, it can be said that the effective rate of exploitation of non-white labour never lessened during the war years, but rather the reverse, whether by means of low wage policies, a refusal to develop non-white social services, or any relief in the pass laws and other instrumental regulations. In all its essentials, the existing system of segregation held firm, and was even strengthened. When the Purified National Party (*Herengigde Nasionale Volksparty*) came to power in 1948 on a programme of full-blooded apartheid, its task accordingly was in no way to install systemic discrimination, but only to complete what already existed, while taking additional measures to repress a growing volume of non-white protest. A view that is sometimes heard, to the effect that this pattern of apartheid is a product of the post-war years, can find no support in the evidence. The nature of the pattern was already clear in 1948, just as the means of imposing it were plentiful.

White politics

The United Party led by General J. B. M. Hertzog, it will be recalled, had easily won the general election of 1938, with the National Party securing only twenty-seven seats in a lower House of 153 seats. The fact at that time was that Hertzog's political views were sufficiently extreme to undermine opponents in his own Afrikaner community. True to his racist loyalties, he had revealed obvious sympathies with Hitler and the German National Socialists (who had taken over the government of Germany in 1933), and had welcomed Hitler's campaign to revise the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, notably in regard to the matter of Germany's lost African colonies. While some members of the National Party were soon to call for the return of South-West (Namibia) to Germany, Hertzog preferred to look elsewhere, and in 1935 was credibly reported to have suggested that Germany should be given Liberia as a substitute. Aware by 1938 of the likelihood of world war, he hoped to keep South Africa neutral. Events fell out otherwise.

When war broke out early in September 1939, Hertzog found his cabinet divided. He and five other ministers were for neutrality, but seven others, including the very influential General J. C. Smuts, were for declaring war alongside Britain. Hertzog might still have managed to maintain his view, or at least have long delayed a declaration of war on Germany, but unhappily for him he had called the South African parliament into session on another issue. He was obliged to submit to a parliamentary debate. In a session full of drama, Hertzog's colleague Smuts argued the case for an immediate declaration of war, and carried it by a majority of eighty votes to forty-seven. Hertzog at once resigned and Smuts formed a new government, while the former Prime Minister and his followers joined the opposition represented by the National Party under Dr D. F. Malan.

Although 69 years of age, Smuts thereafter dominated the political scene. Backed by a solid majority, and with his opponents split, demoralized or under arrest for subversion, Smuts prosecuted the war with vigour while, thanks to his old connections, he at the same time achieved a place of influence on the world scene as one of Prime Minister Winston Churchill's most valued advisers. Though weak and ill-prepared, the South African armed forces (Union Defence Force or UDF) were rapidly expanded to some 137,000 men within a year of the war's declaration. Two fighting divisions were assembled and a small but useful air force. Troops were sent to help the British in their campaigns against Mussolini's armies in the Horn of Africa, thus liberating Somalia and Ethiopia, and then in North Africa. Conscription was avoided, but volunteers came forward from all communities. Some 80,000 African and 40,000 coloured volunteers served in many departments, and also on the field of battle, but were never allowed to carry arms. It was necessary to win the war but never, in

Smuts's mind, at the price of admitting any racial equality among South Africans.

The National Party, meanwhile, was sorely in crisis. Outmanoeuvred by the wily Malan, Hertzog soon retired from the scene (and died in 1941). Yet Malan had other difficulties. The centenary year of the Great Trek, 1938, had witnessed the formation of the Ossewabrandwag (Ox-Wagon Sentry) as an extra-parliamentary 'action movement' of Afrikaners modelled more or less deliberately on the National Socialist storm troops of Germany. Notably under the leadership of J. F. J. van Rensburg, the Ossewabrandwag and smaller extremist groupings developed a campaign of anti-war activity which ranged from political demonstrations to outright acts of sabotage. Malan himself was probably as pro-Nazi as his more outspoken colleagues, yet was careful to leave himself room for manoeuvre in case his early hopes of Nazi victory should not be realized. Others had no such prudence, at least until 1943. Whether from ideological sympathy with Nazi racism or from the calculation that a Nazi victory must carry them to power—and the two considerations were after all inseparable—these all spoke strongly for the Nazi cause. Thus B. J. Schoeman, a future cabinet minister, found it well in November 1940 to affirm that 'the whole future of Afrikanerdom is dependent upon a German victory'; while another future minister, Eric Louw, could say as late as August 1942 that: 'If Germany wins, Dr Malan will have the majority, and Hitler will negotiate with the one who has the majority. . . .' A future Prime Minister, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, was found guilty in a court judgement of aiding and abetting Nazi propaganda in South Africa; and another future Prime Minister, B. J. Vorster, was among those arrested under wartime emergency regulations in September 1942 and held in internment until January 1944. Among other things, Vorster had told the public in 1942 that: 'We stand for Christian Nationalism which is an ally of National Socialism. You can call this anti-democratic principle dictatorship if you wish. In Italy it is called Fascism, in Germany German National Socialism, and in South Africa Christian Nationalism.' Such were the men who were to rule the apartheid state.

Yet the frankly racist nature of these Afrikaner National Party spokesmen, shared as it was during the Second World War by all those who were to govern South Africa after 1948, should not suggest that the party of white 'moderation', the United Party, was in reality any less racist. The United Party's slogan, true enough, was 'In War or Peace the United Party for a United Nation', and much was said to the same effect in party documents and manifestos. But 'the United Nation' had to be all white. A *Guide to Politics for Young and Old*, issued in 1943 over the signature of the United Party's Secretary-General, O. A. Oosthuizen, was careful to insist on that. 'The paramount object of the United Party,' said this pamphlet, 'is the development of South African national unity [and] we can claim to have made sufficient progress towards national

unity to give us encouragement for the future.' 'A practical demonstration is that the Cabinet is composed of Afrikaans and English-speaking members. The two races share the governing power of the country. . . . The two races within the United Party recognize each other's distinctive cultures and inherent national sentiments. . . .'

As to the non-white majority who were not within the United Party, there should be moderation and common sense. In this respect 'the United Party standpoint is that, even apart from any humanitarian sentiments or sense of justice, it is only sound common sense to safeguard the rights of the natives, coloured and Asiatic people who live in the Union. The natives in particular are at least a great economic asset, and the rest have their place in our economy. . . .'

The 'natives', one should perhaps explain, meant the Africans; and we have seen just what kind of an economic asset they had become by 1943. As to 'safeguarding their rights', the United Party had already given an unambiguous example of what it meant by that when removing Cape Africans from the electoral roll a few years earlier. But in case this was not enough for its readers, Oosthuizen's *Guide to Politics* hastened to add that this wish to 'safeguard native rights' 'does not mean that it is our intention or policy to extend, hastily and indiscriminately, the political institutions that we have built up in many generations to native races on the same terms as apply to Europeans. . . . Our policy is gradually to extend political rights to those capable of carrying out the corresponding duties.'

The Africans of the Cape, as it happened, had carried out 'corresponding duties' for 'many generations', and in 1936 they had suddenly been found incapable of doing so. But Oosthuizen found it unnecessary to say anything about that.

Anti-racist gestures by the United Party, in short, were no more than electoral eyewash aimed at appeasing a small but useful white liberal vote in Cape Town and Johannesburg. The historical evidence can in fact reveal no difference of substance between the domestic policies of the two principal white parties. If the National Party's sounded far more severe during the Second World War, this was largely because the United Party had yet to come to grips with the threat to effective segregation presented by the wartime influx into non-white urban employment. When the National Party duly came to grips with that threat, and responded to it by a more severe system of segregation, the leaders of the United Party invariably found themselves in substantial agreement. Apartheid, in its various forms, was always an all-white weapon in South Africa.

The non-white condition

The history of South Africa since the 1890s—with the Glen Grey Act of 1894 as the symbolic starting-point, even if the process had been already long in the making—is that of the dispossession and eventual destruction of ancient and stable rural communities, and the transformation of their peoples into the helots and servants of a white minority, whether English-speaking or Afrikaner.

This process was far advanced by the onset of the Great Depression of the 1930s; and the Second World War, hauling the white economy out of that depression, carried it considerably further. Even by 1930 there had been 361,000 African labourers on white farms, but by 1946 there were as many as 568,000, with the figure still rising year by year. We have noted the sharp rise in wartime urbanization, whether of whites (chiefly rural Afrikaners) or of non-whites, but it may be appropriate at this point to offer the detailed proportions as set forth in a series of censuses (Table 2).

By 1946, in absolute figures, rather more than one-third of all Africans were more or less permanently urbanized or were working on white farms. The remaining African population was confined to that small area of the land surface of the Union—about 11 per cent during the Second World War—to which the Land Act of 1913 had 'allocated' them. This area had long been divided into a number of 'native reserves'. And here the process had just as long been one of steady impoverishment of zones, such as the Transkei and Ciskei, whose climatic and other natural advantages had traditionally assured their populations a relatively ample standard of living. In these 'reserves'—the 'Bantu Homelands' of the future—the general condition was recognized during the Second World War as reaching one of near-disaster because of overcrowding and erosion. It is a point worth dwelling on for a moment.

Thus the Native Mine Wages Commission of 1944 took evidence from many witnesses who dwelt on the impoverishment of the reserves. Among these

TABLE 2. Urban populations as percentages of various communities

	Census years				
	1904	1921	1936	1946	1951
Whites	53	55.8	65.2	74.5	78.4
Africans	13	12.5	17.3	23.7	27.2
Coloureds	46	45.8	53.9	60.9	64.7

witnesses was the chief medical officer for the Transkeian territories. Dr Smit produced figures for seven districts which he considered to be representative of the whole reserve. Conservatively estimating an average family as being composed of five persons, he reported that 36 per cent of all families had five or more head of cattle, 20 per cent had five or less, but 44 per cent had no cattle at all. So that some 60 per cent of all families in this supposedly flourishing Transkei, by 1944, could be reckoned as deriving negligible or no benefits from livestock on the hoof, traditionally the mainstay of this population. Such cattle as there were, added Dr Smit, 'are for the greater part undernourished, stunted, sub-economic creatures'. Another witness before the same official commission, again reporting on the Transkei, computed in that same year of 1944 that a selected group of 8,000 families with arable allotments had an income of seven shillings (about \$1.50 in the exchange values of 1944) per family per month, while a second group of 10,000 families without arable allotments had only four shillings (about \$1.00) per family per month.

'In other words,' this witness explained to the commissioners, 'it is erroneous to regard a native reserve as an agricultural area. It would be more accurate to speak of it as a well-spread-out residential area, where the average family unit makes no more out of its land than the average city-dweller pottering around in the backyard garden.' The 'native reserves', in short, had long since ceased to be areas of 'native development', and had become what had been intended in white legislation from the first: mere holding zones for cheap black labour used in the white areas which composed some 90 per cent of the land surface. These holding zones, of course, had been supposed to be able to maintain the families of male migrants while the latter were absent at work in the white areas; but by 1944 the time when they had been able to do this was long since gone. Making this point once more, another official commission, the Native Laws Commission of 1948, took evidence which largely referred to trends that became dominant during the Second World War. It found that nearly one-third of all families in the reserves possessed no land, and that in any case, beyond this, about one-fifth of all land in the reserves was or had become unfit for cultivation. And so it came about, around 1945, that nearly two-thirds of the South African black population was in possession of cultivable land amounting only to about 8 per cent of the country.

In theory, this situation was supposed to be relieved by a steady and sufficient flow of urban wages back to families in these reserves. A certain flow did of course take place, for widespread starvation must otherwise have been unavoidable. It was and is hard to measure. How insufficient it might have been, however, was indicated by the level of wages. Leaving aside the question of wages paid to migrant mining labour, where the level was admitted to be singularly low, one may consider the findings of an official report of 1941 to the Prime Minister, dealing with 'the social, health and economic condition of

urban natives'. This report found an alarming situation. The following lines say a good deal about the condition of non-whites during the Second World War:

Recent investigations by the Wage Board into the earnings of unskilled workers in thirty-five industries, including municipal employees, show that in Johannesburg 27,994 adult labourers receive an average wage of £1.1s.9d. per week, which with the government cost of living allowance of 8s.8d. per month brings the figure to £1.3s.9d. per week or £5.2s.11d. per month. . . .

An official estimate of two years earlier had put the cost of housing, feeding and clothing an average family at £6.10s.0d., while an estimate put forward in the same report of 1941 argued that it could not be less than £7.14s.6d., or about £2 per week more than the wages actually quoted as being paid. Several experts in any case doubted that the 'minimum decent standard' of rather more than £7 was in any way meaningful in its own terms. Such a standard of living, commented one of them in the same report,

is perhaps more remarkable for what it omits than for what it includes. It does not allow a penny for amusements, for sport, for medicine, for education, for saving, for hire purchase, for holidays, for odd bus rides, for newspapers, stationery, tobacco, sweets, hobbies, gifts. . . . It does not allow a penny for replacements of blankets, furniture, or crockery. . . .

One may note that most Asians suffered as badly as most Africans, or worse, and that although some coloureds suffered less, and even considerably less, the trend for them was essentially no different.

Non-white responses

Non-white protest became more effective than before, during the Second World War, partly under Asian leadership and partly under that of radicals in the African, coloured, and white communities. Broadly, this trend towards more effective protest produced a new militancy, and, in measure with that, the perspective of a new unity of non-white action. Political manifestations of this trend were various and important, both at the time and for what would follow later. But they have to be seen against the background of growing mass protest against specific forms of discrimination and impoverishment. This, too, was various in form and often unexpected. While all non-white labour organization continued to be severely harassed or banned, the years of war none the less saw many attempts to secure an improvement in wages and conditions. In 1939–45, for example, there were as many as 304 strikes, however illegal,

compared with a total of 197 in the previous fifteen years, or about sixty a year compared with thirteen a year; and these wartime strikes involved some 58,000 Africans, coloureds and Asians (as well as some 6,000 whites). Labour militancy continued to grow in size and confidence until the great African miners' stoppage of 1946, when 75,000 Rand mineworkers demanded a better wage, only to be driven back to work by Smuts's police.

This new urban militancy followed a long history of rural protest and counter-violence to the violence of the system, and was met, as before, by an increasing repressiveness that was soon to be systematized in the extraordinary laws of the apartheid state after 1948. In retrospect it may be seen to have signalled two aspects of response: on the one hand a mere reaction to a poverty now felt to be acute and becoming worse, but also, on the other, a growing if still confused awareness of the operative structures of the system in which all non-whites were enclosed. This growing awareness may in turn be seen as the spur to the emergence of a new political consciousness. But it came with difficulty. Against it was another long tradition, that of 'reasonable compromise' by a non-white leadership who had hoped, and still to some extent continued to hope, that black co-operation with the system would bring its due reward in relief from its worst aspects. It was a hope which had invariably proved, so far, to be a will o' the wisp, leading nowhere, but it still had its followers. Beyond such influences, there was the fractured nature of the non-white experience. Divisions by community, region, religion or even occupation were deepened by illiteracy, rural isolation, and the many confusions of the time. Yet the outline of a new political consciousness could still make headway in this period. Decisive in promoting it was the influence of a small but determined South African Communist Party (outlawed only in 1950) and some other left-wing groupings. All these had quarrelled and split among themselves and even within themselves (perhaps above all within themselves); but on the central point, that militancy and unity could alone turn protest into useful change, they were generally solid, often courageous, and sometimes effective.

The history of non-white political organization during the Second World War is no less complex than in earlier or later years, but may be sketched in essential outline. Briefly, this is the period in which the ideas of black nationalism—more accurately, of non-white nationalism (for the Asians share in it, and so, to some extent, do the coloureds)—grow out of their élitist limits and develop, if slowly and with many setbacks, into a rallying ideology for wide masses of people. It is also the period in which the assumptions of reformism—that the system of oppression is not only susceptible of reform, but that suitably patient pressure from below can actually reform it—begin to lose ground, and, gradually, sink beneath the rigidities of a system which repeatedly denies all such assumptions, or makes a patent mockery of them.

Taking an inspiration partly from the Indian National Congress in India,

and partly from the South African Communist Party and other left groups, the leaders of the Asian community developed ideas of militancy and unity somewhat earlier than those of the Africans; or, at least, their ideas on the subject became effective somewhat earlier. The coloureds, for their part, suffered more than the others from an internal split between those who still believed that 'reasonable compromise' and 'patient pressure' would carry them into a privileged position alongside the whites, and those, against them, who developed a strongly leftist analysis and practice. Even when forms of common action between Africans and Asians began to appear on the scene, unity of the coloureds and with the coloureds continued to be problematical. It would remain so.

For the Africans, the old National Congress of 1912 (ANC) had gone into a virtual eclipse during the 1930s, and had proved perfectly incapable of reacting effectively to the removal of the Cape Africans from the provincial electoral roll in 1936. Its central frailty lay in its almost exclusively urban leadership by a small educated group whose ideas had barely evolved in thirty years of experience. Its consequent influence in most rural areas was accordingly small in practice, and often non-existent. Though calling itself a national congress, its nationalism was confused and hesitant, while its overall analysis of what to do was still, essentially, that of Jabavu in the 1910s. If Africans would only prove sufficiently convenient and patient, then the sheer pressures of history, Christianity, economic growth, and even common sense would eventually reward them with 'the kingdom of equality'. It was the same will o' the wisp that we have noted earlier.

But the Second World War presided over a change in this analysis, An initial sign of new ideas, partly from left-wing political work, came in December 1940 with the election as president of the ANC of Dr A. B. Xuma. Though Xuma was no firebrand, he none the less believed strongly in organization; and it was under his presidency, maintained till 1949, that the ANC began to grow out of its constrictive élitism. Another sign of changing times came with the movement's annual conference of 1943. Held in Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State, this reacted to the politics of the Second World War, and above all to the promises of the Churchill-Roosevelt 'Atlantic Charter' of 1941. Four years earlier, in December 1939, another annual conference had 'respectfully requested the Union Government to repeal all differential legislation', a merely routine appeal in the wake of many others, and as completely futile. Now, in 1943, the tone was different, and so was the content.

The Atlantic Charter had undertaken that the Allies, when victorious, would 'respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live'. Meanwhile, with great victories in Russia and North Africa in 1942, it had become clear that the war was being won; and 1942 was also the year, one may add in passing, when the Afrikaner National Party leaders began to change their pro-Nazi tune and sing a different one instead.

None of this went unnoticed by the ANC. In a document of some historical importance, entitled *Africans' Claims in South Africa*, the Bloemfontein conference insisted that the words 'all peoples' in the Atlantic Charter must apply to colonial peoples as much as to those whose territory had been occupied by the Nazi-Fascist-Japanese Axis. The following passages from *Africans' Claims* are characteristic of the new state of mind now making itself felt:

We know that the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa and his delegation to the Peace Conference will represent the interests of the people of our country. We want the government and the people of South Africa to know the full aspirations of the African peoples so that their point of view will also be presented at the Peace Conference. . . . This is our way of conveying to them our indisputed claim to full citizenship. We desire them to realize once and for all that a just and permanent peace will be possible only if the claims of all classes, colours and races for sharing and for full participation in the educational, political and economic activities are granted and recognized. . . .

As African leaders we are not so foolish as to believe that because we have made these declarations that our government will grant us our claims for the mere asking. We realize that for the African this is only a beginning of a long struggle entailing great sacrifices of time, means and even life itself. To the African people the declaration is a challenge to organize and unite themselves under the mass liberation movement, the African National Congress. The struggle is on right now and it must be persistent and insistent. . . .

The language of the old reformism, as may be seen, still had its place in supposing that a system built on cheap non-white labour could in fact allow the 'sharing and full participation' of those who provided that labour. But the demand was no longer 'respectful': it was made as of right, and it was coupled with a clear statement that harsh struggle must lie ahead. Detailed demands were set forth, moreover, in these documents of 1943, and were coupled with a clause-by-clause examination of the Atlantic Charter and its implications for the non-whites of South Africa; specifically, beyond that, there was also a Bill of Rights concerned with the meaning of full citizenship. The latter was the work of a committee whose names included all the prominent Africans of that time, from the old leaders such as Dr I. P. Ka Seme to new ones such as Dr Z. K. Matthews and J. S. Moroka, together with communist spokesmen such as Moses Kotane and some of his colleagues.

Here was the beginning of a new maturity. Many pressures had promoted it. Significant among them, as already indicated, were left-wing influences which had already, in April 1939, taken initial steps towards organizational unity. At Cape Town in April of that year, left-wing representatives of all the communities had sat together in a Non-European United Front conference. Splits and dissensions duly followed. Yet Simons, much later, could rightly recall that 'the seed of a grand non-racial alliance had been planted', even if

another seventeen years had still to pass before it could produce any useful fruit. An immediate outcome of 1943 was the organization of most activist coloureds in a Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) which called for non-white unity but proved able to do little about achieving that result. But a more important development, also in 1943, once again foretold the future. A group of young African intellectuals and activists, confident of their ability to lead beyond the hesitations of the prudent Xuma and his kind, came together and founded the Youth League of the ANC. And here indeed the historian is tempted to pause, for in the founding names of the Youth League we find all those that were to resound across the years ahead: Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, and others who were to lead the ANC into the bitter years after 1948.

New trends

These young men responded to their own perceptions, but also to the growing militancy of the urban masses which signalled these wartime years. Notably in the Johannesburg peri-urban townships of the Africans, there were protests of a new kind. Some of these took shape in bus boycotts, protesting against the cost of fares, in which thousands of men and women walked many miles to work and back, week after week, rather than submit to an increase in those fares. Others emerged in a broad campaign of 1944 against the pass laws. And in these same mid-war years there came another phenomenon. This was a vast influx of squatters onto land around the great white cities, and above all around Johannesburg. Driven by unemployment and hunger from the countryside, but drawn on equally by the cities' call for more cheap labour, tens of thousands of Africans poured in. There was of course no provision for housing them: because according to the laws they should not have come at all, or, if they came, they should not have stayed. But according to the needs of the economy, they were urgently wanted. In this characteristic contradiction, the white municipal councils passed strong resolutions, but did nothing to alleviate the situation. Doing something would cost money, and this was money they did not wish to subtract from their own comfort.

Countless families or individuals had to live how and where they could; but many decided to take land and build huts. New squatters' townships spread across the veld. Perhaps the most famous of them was the one founded on vacant land adjoining the Johannesburg African township of Orlando. Here it was that a huge concourse of rural immigrants built their own township of canvas, flattened paraffin tins, packing cases, or whatever they could use, and, under the leadership of James Mpanza, followed his slogan of *Sofazonke*, 'Let us all die together', rather than surrender to the police who came to remove

them. Mpanza's township was joined by others, and in this way the foundations of the great legalized peri-urban settlements of the future, such as Soweto (South-West-Township) were laid. But these foundations were also, if indirectly, those of a new militancy of protest. And this was the militancy that was to be forged into the basis for a new unity, in the years ahead, by the leaders of the Youth League and their like.

In all these ways, and in others that a fuller record would describe, the years of 1939–45 proved highly influential for the underlying conflicts of this society. On one side, as we have seen, they enormously strengthened the white economy. They gave this economy the means of developing from a largely colonial structure into one with the power to achieve its own indigenous capitalism and, with that, its own policy and practice of a sub-imperialism in southern Africa. All this would be the work of the long post-war boom, especially after 1950; and yet it remains true that the structural origins of this boom lay in the steady shift to urbanization and manufacturing during the wartime years.

On the other side, there came a clearer consciousness of their condition among non-whites, and, in the greatest of their communities, a fresh leadership among Africans for whom the implications of struggle had begun to be understood and measured. All this, too, would mature only after the war was over; yet once again its origins were in the struggles of the wartime period. Much at that time remained tentative, confused, always subject to doctrinal or regional disputes and dissensions, while the 'great divide' between countryside and city—between the reserves and the peri-urban townships—continued to wield a powerful influence. But the burden of the evidence suggests that an underlying drive for militancy and unity stayed in the centre of the picture in spite of all distractions. And indeed, if this had not been so, it would be difficult to explain the great campaigns of protest of the early 1950s.

One may suggest, too, that the more percipient leaders of each side came out of these wartime years with few illusions left to them of the nature of the contest that must lie ahead. On their side the leaders of the whites were ready by 1945, as their reaction to the African mineworkers' strike of 1946 amply indicated, for a major reinforcement in their apparatus of control. No matter what liberal interpretations might continue to argue that the system would reform itself through the blind pressures of economic expansion, the facts showed otherwise. The system would not reform itself: even could not reform itself. The proof was provided in 1948 and after by the governments of the Purified National Party and their legislation. Yet there is much to suggest that the same proof would have come in any case. Governments of the United Party might have strengthened the apparatus of control by means less apparently abrasive, less patently crude, less obviously repressive, than those adopted by Malan and his successors. But there is nothing in the evidence to suggest that the net result would have been essentially different. The election of the Purified

National Party in 1948 can be seen as little more, in fact, than the logical development of the racist system as it had matured during the Second World War. The United Party could have prevented that election by a reorganization of voting constituencies, for the election was won by the National Party with a minority of votes on an electoral roll weighted in favour of rural constituencies where the Afrikaner extremists had their big battalions. But Smuts and his United Party government did nothing to revise the electoral roll. The United Party may be said to have allowed the Purified National Party to have its victory, and then to have been well enough content.

Few illusions, on the other side, could any longer distract the leaders of the non-whites. There might be many individuals among the non-white communities for whom the future as a 'black bourgeoisie' still seemed possible, and if possible then desirable. That was true of petty-bourgeois shopkeepers, traders, urban landlords who squeezed their tenants, and some of those who had managed to win higher education at Fort Hare or in other colleges which admitted non-whites in those days. Yet these were few, and their voices carried no weight among the harried masses. In this respect, as in others, the experience of the war years confirmed the leadership of men such as Mandela and Tambo, Kotane and Marks, or Dadoo in the Indian community, for whom the prospects of a useful reformism had become manifestly small or non-existent. Of what the real alternative to reformism must consist there might as yet be little conception. All that now seemed certain, in this direction, was that a real alternative must be found. The years ahead would teach.

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The Second World War in Volume VIII of the *General History of Africa*

J. J. Milewski

The purpose of the paper and basic assumptions

The purpose of this paper is very modest. I would like here to consider what trends and problems of African history of the period 1939–45 (or 1935–45) should be included in Volume VIII of the *General History of Africa*. I shall not discuss the Second World War in Africa in all its dimensions, but try to suggest what aspects of it should be described, and in what proportions. In other words, this is primarily an article on the selection of material. It goes without saying that given such an approach the paper is very subjective, and does not present views other than my own.

I should also mention that I am not going to discuss here the table of contents of Volume VIII, since this has already been done. Therefore all propositions, listed below, apply to the existing table of contents, which is the responsibility of the Volume Editor. I hope that my suggestions, if approved, can fit into any table of contents.

Let us discuss very briefly the main assumptions of the article. The first concerns the place of the Second World War in African history. The Second World War was a historical phenomenon of non-African origin whose consequences were imposed on the African people. I believe that this aspect of the war should be clearly shown in Volume VIII. With all the suffering and destruction which the war brought to Africa, and with all the sufferings of African soldiers outside Africa, we have to bear in mind that the main fronts of the War developed in Europe and in Asia, and there people suffered much more than on the continent which is of interest to us. Therefore the notion of a 'world' war should be given, in relation to Africa, its correct meaning.

The second assumption, which should be accepted at the seminar, concerns chronology: when did the Second World War start in Africa? The traditional view would suggest 1939, but there are many historians who affirm that it started in 1935. Ethiopia is called by them 'the first front of the Second World War'. I believe that there are many arguments in support of this view, especially in view of the military aspects of the war and the strategy of the Axis.

The third general assumption, which was discussed in May 1979 in Ouagadougou,¹ is the focus on the economic and social changes of societies on the continent. During the period 1939–45 (or 1935–45) those changes were significant, both in a positive and a negative sense, and should be well represented in the volume.

The fourth and last general assumption is the question of control over generalisations, linked with the war. It is very tempting to explain many developments during the period 1939–45 as ‘caused’ by the war. With Africa in particular, we should show very clearly which parts of the continent and which societies were affected by the war, and in what degree, and which ones were not. The reader of the volume should be made aware that although the general influence of the war on African history was significant, its direct influence on particular parts of the continent differed tremendously, and in many parts did not exist at all.

What type of military history?

In the volume covering the period 1939–45 one cannot avoid discussing military history. Moreover, there is a great tendency among some historians to expand on military aspects of history—battles, operations, movements of armies, etc. But of course Volume VIII, like all volumes of the Unesco *General History of Africa*, is expected to be a ‘general’ history, covering all important aspects of the life of African societies.

The task of the Editor and the authors in selecting what is really important in the military history of the period is not easy. The military history of the Second World War in Africa has been extensively documented. It may be difficult to summarize, and yet one feels that much should be said on the subject.

For all the above reasons, I should like to propose that the relevant parts of Volume VIII concentrate on the following aspects of the military history of the war in Africa:

First, a very brief account of the military operations in Africa from 1935 to 1945, compared with operations on other continents (Europe, Asia and the Pacific) in terms of: number of troops and arms involved; number of casualties among soldiers and civilians; value of the national wealth destroyed; economic costs of the war effort. These comparisons should be made both in absolute and relative terms, as a percentage of the population, wealth, etc., of the area. Such estimates are available.

Second, a brief description of the military operations on the African continent in terms of: territories; timing; number of troops, both African and foreign, involved; destruction of national wealth, etc., as above.

Third, recruitment of African soldiers: methods of recruitment in various colonial territories; numbers recruited in different territories; timing; factors affecting recruitment; social/ethnic composition of African troops; question of social upgrading, etc.

Fourth, participation of African soldiers in military operations in Africa. The Ethiopian war of independence, of course, comes under this heading, but other fronts such as North Africa should also be represented. Here one could, I believe, make a small departure from the idea of the 'general' history, and embark on a more profound analysis of the participation of African soldiers in terms of their performance, casualties, military upgrading during the operations, etc.

Fifth, participation of African soldiers outside Africa. To this applies all that has been said on point 4 above, with the following additions: conditions of service of African soldiers as compared with their European comrades; their role in particular operations; upgrading and distinctions; casualties.

Sixth, participation of African soldiers as regards changes of horizons, attitudes, social and political views. This problem applies to both areas of participation, in and outside Africa. It does not appear that much research has been done on the subject for the war period, although the influence of war experiences on post-war attitudes was observed by many authors. But I think it is important to show how the attitudes of African soldiers changed during the war, especially on the non-African fronts.

Seventh, participation of Africans in non-military services. This aspect of African participation in the military operations in and outside the continent should not be neglected. By non-military services I mean numerous occupations: serving the Allies' army, navy and air force bases; army transport; food supplies, etc. This type of participation developed in many countries during the war, e.g. North Africa, Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, to mention just a few. It had significant influence on the development of local markets, local transport and other forms of enterprise, and on changes of attitude of people living far away from the battlefield.

Eighth, future military and political leaders on the fronts of the Second World War. To show this aspect of participation, one should look more carefully into biographies of many leaders of the post-war period. I believe that expanding the text of the volume on the personal war experiences of some post-war leaders is worthwhile for two reasons: (a) introduction of biographical stories will make the volume more interesting and readable; (b) it will allow better understanding of such phenomena as the Algerian war of independence, or the origins and early development of armies in some states after independence.

I would like to stress again that all the above suggestions are related to the periods 1939-45 (or 1935-45) only. The post-war role of the soldiers and

problems of demobilization and its consequences all fall within the next period and are better documented, at least for some countries, than the area I am suggesting.

Economic changes and problems

All historians studying the period of the Second World War in Africa agree that in economic terms it was one of the most difficult periods—perhaps the most difficult—in the modern history of the continent. The reasons are too well known to be discussed in this paper. Yet it should be remembered that the crisis of the war was imposed on African economies only two to three years after the recovery from the Great Depression. In 1939 most African economies were still far below the level of the 1920s, which could be regarded as relatively 'normal'. After 1939 all African economies started to decline rapidly again in terms of trade, fall in gainful employment, fall in real income of wage earners and the urban population and a dramatic decline in the incomes of most of the rural population producing for export markets. Some of these trends are shown in Figure 1.

A. G. Hopkins was right in saying that

the Second World War had a much more serious effect on West Africa than did the world slump of the 1930s because of the acute shortage of consumer imports and because of the abrupt closure of many export markets in Europe. French West Africa, having declared for the Vichy Government in 1940, found itself blockaded by the Allies, and so was particularly badly affected. By the end of the war West Africa's total importing capacity was lower than at any time since 1900 (with the possible exception of 1921) though population and public debts increased greatly after the beginning of the century. These adverse trends of the period 1930–44 had two principal consequences. In the first place, investment was curtailed and ambitious projects postponed. Secondly, the long period of economic hardship led to the rise of a movement which was eventually to bring colonial rule to an end.²

The observations of Hopkins apply to many parts of the continent, but it will not be sufficient to make such a statement in the volume. The reader should be able to find a much deeper and wider analysis of at least the following trends: standard of living of at least the representative groups of population; employment in various sectors of administration; employment in the foreign-dominated sector; changes in the expenditure of governments, etc. All that should lead to the answer to the basic question: what was the influence of the war on the real economic situation of the population in particular areas? Can one speak about one general trend in this respect, or were there any differences in the trends?

But there are other questions, concerning territories where the military

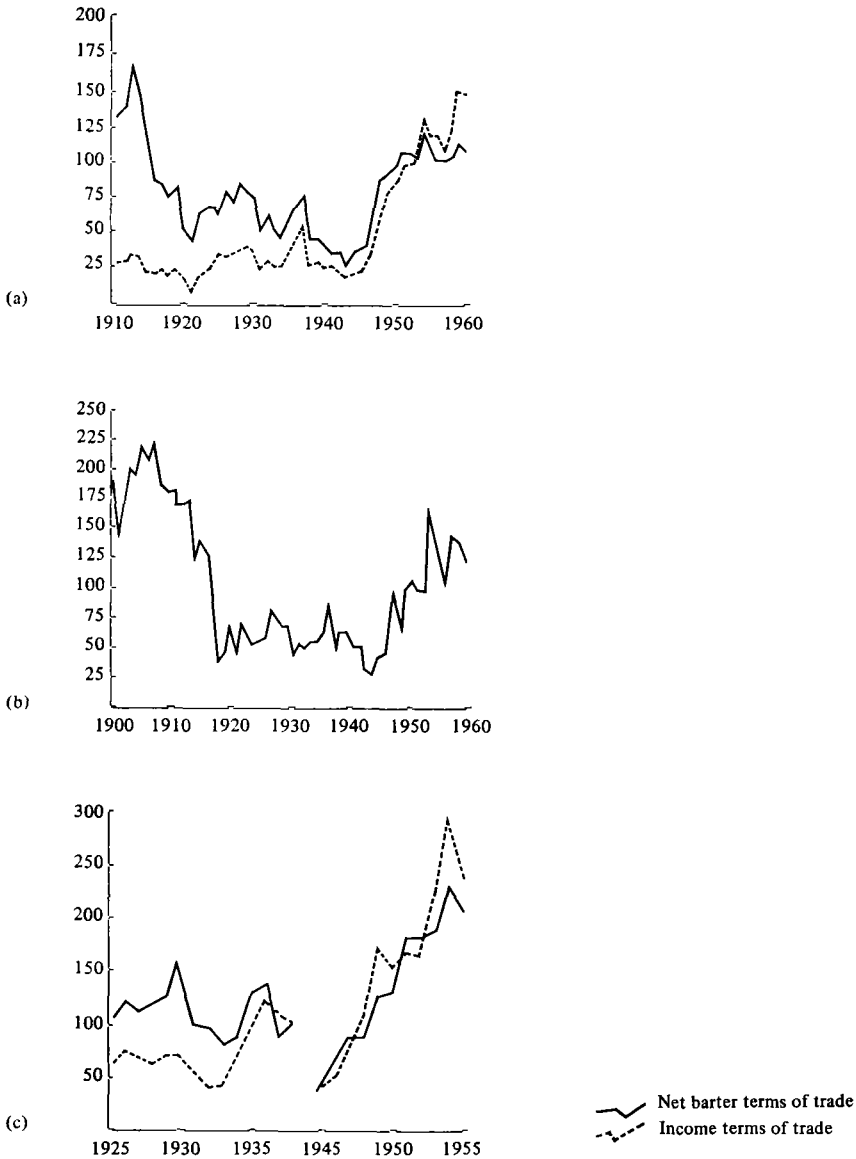


FIG. 1. (a) Nigeria—terms of trade, 1911–60 (base 1953=100); (b) Ghana—terms of trade, 1900–1960 (base 1953=100); (c) French West Africa—terms of trade, 1925–55 (base 1938=100). (After A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, pp. 180–1, London, Longman, 1973. Hopkins's figures from: G. K. Helleiner, *Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria*, 1966; S. H. Hymer, 'The Political Economy of the Gold Coast and Ghana', in G. Ranis (ed.), *Government and Economic Development*, 1971; J. J. Poquin, *Les relations économiques des pays de l'Afrique noire de l'union française*, 1951.)

operations took place: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, as well as Ethiopia and Somalia. Volume VIII should of course analyse the changes in the economic situation of the people living in the war zones and areas close to the battlefields. But the authors cannot avoid a study of the destruction which war brought to these countries. General information on the 'destruction of towns, bridges and villages' will not satisfy the reader, especially when we bear in mind that all destruction which took place in the countries of North Africa were caused by foreign armies, struggling for foreign goals. One can assume that they regarded African land as a strange theatre of war, caring little for the damage they did. As far as methods for estimating the material destruction caused by the war are concerned, historiography of the Second World War in Europe can supply a very useful model.

Economic policies of the colonial powers during the war in Africa are a special issue, which should be well represented in this volume. For a student of the economic history—as well as 'general' history—of colonialism in Africa during the period of the Second World War this period provides a unique opportunity to analyse the colonial systems with all their contradictions and conflicts. In economic policies they meant, on the one hand, obliging the African producers by various administrative measures to increase output in all sectors of the economy. The degree of economic oppression and exploitation increased significantly in wartime in many parts of the continent. On the other hand, colonial administrators in some territories were very careful about the political feelings of the people. They knew that increasing economic hardship increases political tensions and anti-colonial attitudes. Therefore, in many colonies we can observe contradictory economic policies. Moreover, during the Second World War, the colonial administration, in Nigeria for example, demonstrated for the first time a keen interest in the standard of living of the population, and sponsored research on that subject.

Development of political movements

Most authors writing on the development of the political movements in Africa after the Great Depression tend to treat the period of the Second World War in very general terms. With very few exceptions, there appears to be a standard approach to the problem: wide analysis of the movements in the late 1930s, a very general outline of the changes and developments during the war, and then a detailed analysis of developments after 1945. I do not think that such an approach can be usefully applied to Volume VIII. Indeed, the reader of this volume should be given more information on the activities, ideas and processes of the political education of leaders, not only during the war but also after it.

At this seminar there is no need to remind ourselves how many new

political organizations were established in various African countries during the period 1939–45. I will mention some of them simply as a reference for the general observation I wish to make. These are some of the organizations established during the war years:

Morocco: Istiqlal, founded in 1943; Parti Communiste Marocain, founded in 1943;

Nigeria: Nigerian Reconstruction Group, founded in 1942; Nigerian National Council, founded in 1944; Trades Union Congress of Nigeria, founded in 1943; Egbe Omo Oduduwa, founded in 1944;

Ivory Coast: Syndicat Agricole Africain, founded in 1944;

Togo: Togoland Union, founded in 1943; Comité de l'Unité Togolaise, founded in 1941;

Kenya: Kenya African Study Union, founded in 1944;

Senegal: Bloc Africain, founded in 1944;

Somalia: Somali Youth League, founded in 1943;

Sudan: Ashiqqua—National Unionist Party, founded in 1942; Sudan Movement for National Liberation, founded in 1944.

There were of course many others.

These political and other organizations are of course well known to historians; some have been studied by many authors, and in specialized studies much information can be found about their early history. But in 'general' histories they are discussed very briefly, usually in an introduction to post-war development. But the origins of those organizations and many others not mentioned here, founded between 1939 and 1945, in my opinion are crucial for an understanding of the history of political movements in Africa. The reader of Volume VIII should be able to learn, without consulting specialized studies, the social background of these organizations, their political aims, the identity of their leaders, the size and influence of a particular organization, and why some failed and others succeeded in their political struggle during the war. Did the war conditions facilitate the development of new organizations, or hamper it? Did the conditions differ in various territories? These and other questions should be answered, in my opinion, in Volume VIII. But again it should be stressed that the history of new organizations in the period 1939–45 should be treated as an important topic in itself, and not just as an introduction to post-war developments.

A separate problem is the wartime activity of the organizations and movements founded before 1939, and which continued their work during the Second World War. On some of these movements much research has been done, but again most of the information is available only in specialized studies. It is the duty of the authors of Volume VIII to show why and how the activities of those organizations changed during the war. How did war conditions affect their work? Did they change their general aims and goals? What were the

reactions of those organizations to the most important events in local politics, including colonial policy in the given territory?

But the political movements in Africa during the war should not, in my opinion, be presented only in terms of the activities of various organizations. Here we come back to the biographical themes in Volume VIII. It goes without saying that the reader of the volume should be supplied with sufficient information about the work, attitudes, political activity, contacts, etc., of important leaders who after the war played a crucial role in the struggle for independence. But that is not enough. I believe that the leaders of the second rank, who are so far known only in the national histories of African countries, should be popularized in the volume—especially those who founded new organizations during the war, but were not fortunate enough to enter the pantheon of African modern history. The following questions should be answered in the volume: who were the people, apart from the most famous ones, who founded new organizations? What was their social and professional background? What was their contact with the leaders, already established before the war? How far were they influenced by the Pan-African movement?

Of course I am not suggesting that the volume should not discuss at length the work during the war of such leaders as Azikiwe, Bourguiba, Houphouët-Boigny, Kwame Nkrumah in the United States, Ben Barka, Ferhat Abbas, Mohamed Benbella, and many, many others. Their contribution to political movements during the war is so well known that the authors will find it difficult to select information about them. What I am suggesting is the need to show, through a wide presentation of African personalities of the period, that during the period of the Second World War there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of leaders and organizers of independent, anti-colonial and semi-political professional movements active throughout the continent. The expansion of political movements after the war can be attributed to a large extent to them. And tribute to them should be paid in the relevant parts of the volume, if we wish to respect historical truth.

Political movements and colonial administration

This is a very well known problem, and has been discussed in numerous general and specialized studies. Here again, the main problem of the authors of the volume will be the selection of the material. In my opinion the main focus here should be to show the reactions of particular movements to changes in general colonial policies, as well as to analyse the various administrative practices in the countries discussed. But one should avoid, in my opinion, the solution used by many authors, who concentrate on the reactions to the

'Atlantic Charter', 'Brazzaville Conference' and similar events. These facts are well known, and they should not outshine the numerous reactions of political movements to day-to-day colonial policy.

Political movements and Nazi policy

This problem is a good example of the difficulties of analysing certain historical events. For the European historian, and particularly for historians from the countries that were conquered and occupied by the Germans during the war, there is a very clear dividing line between two attitudes: collaboration and struggle for freedom.

But looking at the same problem from the point of view of African leaders, and especially those from North Africa, we note at least two differences. First, Nazi Germany was fighting with colonial rulers. Therefore one could expect that German success might bring some relaxation of the colonial system. Secondly, during the war the atrocities and war crimes committed by the Germans in occupied Europe were known neither in North Africa nor to North African leaders then living in Europe. With this in mind we should present in the volume the Nazi infiltration of North African political movements and contacts made during the period.

The whole of this issue was particularly important for the North African political movements up until 1943. In presenting the problem in Volume VIII the following aspects deserve special attention: (a) the degree of penetration by Nazis in different movements in the area; (b) the disputes and conflicts between the leaders on this issue before 1943; (c) the failures of Nazi policy in this respect, since they are much less well known than the successes.

The importance of this problem should be seen in the long-term perspective of the development of modern political movements in Africa. For the first time a European power, fighting with other European colonial powers, was trying to use these movements as a tool in the struggle. It is known that the Nazis did not succeed in their attempts to use the North African and Middle Eastern leaders and their movements in the fight against the Allies, with some small exceptions, but their very attempts to do so indicate that the movements already represented a significant political power.

Summary

All my suggestions tend in fact in one direction: the period of the Second World War in Volume VIII should not be treated as a transitional stage from colonialism to independence, but as an important, in many cases tragic,

historical period on its own. But I must repeat that the suggestions mentioned above should not, in my opinion, affect the table of contents, prepared by the Volume Editor. It may be simply a question of extending some chapters or subchapters, if of course some of my suggestions are accepted. I do believe that all the problems mentioned in this paper are already covered by the table of contents, at least in general terms.

Notes

1. See the *General History of Africa: Studies and Documents*, No. 8.
2. A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, pp. 184–5, London, Longman, 1973.

Report of the symposium on Africa and the Second World War

The following experts took part in the symposium: Professors J. Devisse, A. Eshete, I. El-Hareir, A. Kum'a Ndumbe III, A. Martel, J. J. Milewski, J. Ollandet, G. O. Olusanya, G. Rochat, B. Sohounou, G. B. Staruchenko and H. Stoecker.

Professors C. Ageron, N. Ayele, B. Davidson and A. A. Mazrui drafted preliminary papers at the request of Unesco, but were unable to take part in the meeting.

Professor B. A. Ogot, Chairman of the International Scientific Committee, and A. A. Mazrui, Editor of Volume VIII, were invited to the symposium, but were unable to attend.

The following observers followed the proceedings: Mgr G. Montalvo and Father André Demeersman, representing the Holy See; and Mr Ahmed Abdel Halim, representing ALECSO.

The Organization of African Unity, the Association of African Universities and the liberation movements (ANC and SWAPO) were also invited, but were unable to attend. The ANC sent a cable expressing its apologies.

The Secretariat was represented by: Mr Maurice Glélé, Programme Specialist, Head of the African Cultures Section (Cultural Studies Division), representing the Director-General of Unesco; Mr Alioune Traoré, Programme Specialist; Miss Marie-Florette Lengué, secretary.

The symposium was opened on the morning of 10 November by Professor Yussef El-Ghein, Secretary of the People's Committee of the Garyounis University who, in his opening address, welcomed the participants and stressed the importance of the project being implemented: the history of Africa, in the differing and complementary forms which its development had taken and in its many-faceted unity, which was now being written by the Africans themselves. He said that it would be particularly interesting to learn, for instance, something of their interpretations and their lines of inquiry in regard to the subject-matter of the symposium.

In his statement, Mr Maurice Glélé, representing the Director-General of Unesco, thanked the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for having organized the symposium and for the cordial welcome which it had given the

participants. He said that, regardless of the interpretation placed on the Second World War, as far as the historical life of the different regions of Africa was concerned it marked a decisive turning-point in developments on the continent, with the enormous possibilities it offered of freeing it from all forms of domination. He expressed the hope that the symposium would propose new avenues of research and suggested, for example, that systematic interviews conducted among Africans who had taken part in the war as combatants would enable a no doubt very striking picture to be formed of their evolving reactions to Europe. He likewise ventured the suggestion that, in future, a very precise study be made of the different forms taken by Africa's participation in the conflict. He invited the symposium to provide hitherto undisclosed elements gleaned from the most recent research, with a view to giving added substance to Volume VIII of the *General History of Africa*: 'Africa since 1935'.

After reporting on the absence of Professor Ogot, Chairman of the International Scientific Committee, Professor Ajayi, member of the Committee, Professor Mazrui, Editor of Volume VIII, and several of the experts who had been invited and who had been unable to come to Benghazi for personal or administrative reasons, he went on to present the English and French versions of Volumes I and II of the *General History of Africa* and to announce the early publication of the same two volumes in the Arabic version, and the publication in 1981 of the French and English versions of Volume IV.

The participants then proceeded to appoint the following officers for the symposium: Professor I. El-Hareir (Libya), member of the International Scientific Committee, Chairman; Professor G. O. Olusanya (Nigeria), Vice-Chairman; Professor J. Devisse (Rapporteur of the International Scientific Committee), Rapporteur.

The meetings were held every day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. All the discussions were tape-recorded, for the purpose of assisting the Editor of Volume VIII. Professor Milewski (Poland) also kindly agreed to take as many notes as possible on behalf of Professor Mazrui.

Having adopted the guidance note and agenda prepared by the Secretariat, the symposium set to work on the agenda.

Agenda

1. Introduction to the General History of Africa.
2. North Africa, Libya and Egypt in the Second World War.
3. The Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa in the World War decade (1935-45).
4. The Union of South Africa and the Second World War.
5. The Second World War and French resistance in Africa.

6. The Second World War as a step towards Africa's integration into the capitalist system.
7. The Second World War and the development of African nationalism.
8. The Second World War and the decline of Europe in world affairs.
9. Postwar social and constitutional reforms in Africa.
10. Tentative recapitulation.

Item 1: Introduction to the General History of Africa

Mr Glélé introduced the entire ongoing project and recalled the procedure laid down for appointing volume editors and authors and for preparing chapters and volumes. He said that Unesco had made a special effort to set down oral sources through the agency of the centres in Niamey, Zanzibar, Yaoundé and southern Africa, and to make compilations of written sources by collecting and microfilming manuscripts written in Arabic and Ajami, through the Ahmed Baba Centre in Timbuktu. He recalled that the International Committee for the Historical Sciences, at its twelfth Congress held in Bucharest in August 1980, had included in its programme a working session devoted exclusively to the critical methodology used for oral sources. The documents published by Unesco in the series 'Studies and Documents—General History of Africa' were gradually making it possible for the international scientific public to follow the work of the different symposia which had been organized in liaison with the editorial team of the *General History of Africa* since 1973.

Mr Glélé also presented, for the participants' information, the table of contents of Volume VIII which, following six years' discussion, had been adopted at a special meeting of the International Scientific Committee in July 1980. While the table of contents of that volume was not submitted for discussion at the meeting, the theme of the symposium had a bearing on several of the chapters listed in the first part of those contents.

Item 2: North Africa, Libya and Egypt in the Second World War

There were two papers on this item. One of them, by Professor Ageron, was circulated to the participants in both languages prior to the meeting, while the other, by Professor El-Hareir, had not been received by the Secretariat and had to be introduced by the author in person.

In his statement, Professor El-Hareir stressed the idea that Europeans fought in Africa in a conflict that was of no concern to Africans, but which caused, especially in the case of Libya, heavy loss of life even after hostilities had ended, due to such hazards as minefields, as well as heavy damage to urban centres like Tobruk, Tripoli and Benghazi.

In the final analysis, the only advantage that Libya derived from the war was that of ridding it of Italian colonialism.

The following four topics for discussion emerged from the presentation made by Professor El-Hareir and from the paper by Professor Ageron:

- (i) In the twentieth century, there is not a single conflict from which any part of the world remains unscathed, and all strategies, whether they be economic, political or ideological, are now global in scale. It was probably during the Second World War that this new reality first emerged clearly. From 1939 onwards, for example, the place and role of the French and British colonial empires could be perceived in the conception which the Europeans had of the impending conflict. The discussions were unable to go very deeply into this point, since the theme of the symposium was concerned with Africa in the Second World War rather than with the overall conduct of that war. Examples were cited of global or regional military strategies which differed significantly from one another, depending on whether they involved the Italians, British, Germans, Americans or French. The importance of Malta was also mentioned.
- (ii) The participation of Africans in the conflict took a very wide variety of forms. At one extreme, it is possible to find the case of Libyan soldiers who were forcibly conscripted in the struggle against the Ethiopians or their fellow Libyans and who had no hesitation in assisting the Ethiopian or Libyan resisters. Other Libyans, by contrast, took part of their own free will in the operations of the Free French brigade which advanced from Chad. In the Maghrib and Black Africa, there were also cases both of people who resisted conscription and of those who were volunteers. African conscripts who took part in the end of the war in Europe probably did so with the same mixture of reluctance and acquiescence.

The discussions naturally led on to another debate on the ways in which Africans joined the armies of the belligerent powers and their motivations in doing so, and the manner in which these soldiers experienced the conflict in which they were participating. This offered a promising avenue of research. When it has been explored, largely through interviews, it will probably furnish precise information on changes in attitudes and on the influence which such military experience may have had on the determination shown by a number of Africans to help their continent break loose from European colonialism.

When the comprehensive study of African military participation in the Second World War comes to be tackled, the study of the losses of human life and the demographic and economic shortfalls which these occasioned should not be overlooked. A study should also be made of the influence which the existence side-by-side of soldiers from several regions of the continent, and their participation under duress in colonial

conflicts outside Africa, may have had on the outlook of the men concerned.

These points were regarded as being particularly important and as warranting being called to the attention of the Volume Editor and the authors.

- (iii) With regard to the destruction of all kinds caused by the Second World War, it would be desirable for very precise studies to be carried out as a substitute for the estimates currently available.
- (iv) The important issue of the attraction which one or other of the contending forces may have exercised on Africans from the north of the continent was not examined in depth.

The eastern areas of northern Africa, in liaison with the Arab world, may perhaps have given thought to the idea of forming an alliance with Nazi Germany, and the relations of the Mufti of Jerusalem with the Nazis was mentioned on several occasions. This does not appear to have been true of the western areas, although some individuals, parties or circles may have vacillated. The debate on this point is still very open.

One idea that was put forward several times—in a manner that has never before been spelt out so clearly—was that the choice of alliances, regardless of what they may have been, was a legitimate one for the African peoples in instances where the aim was to drive out the colonial power. In the present state of our knowledge, Nazi Germany does not appear to have established serious links with the independence movements, nor does North Africa appear to have occupied a prominent place in its political and military strategy analyses. The situation as regards Italy was plainly quite different. Stress was laid on the need for research into African resistance during the Second World War.

There is likewise still a lack of comprehensive studies on the development, during the Second World War and the immediate postwar period, of the nationalist movements and the relations existing between them. A recent study (Kaddache, 1980), mentioned in the paper by Professor Ageron, shows that the Algerian nationalist movement had a two-tier structure: on the one hand, this was clandestine, on the model offered by the Third International, while on the other, it was military, on the model of the French army. Stress was laid on the advisability of making a study, in the case of Morocco, for instance, of the phenomena involved in grassroots resistance.

*Item 3: The Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa
in the World War decade (1935–45)*

The discussions were prefaced by Professor Eshete's introduction of his paper and by the summary presentation of the paper by Professor Ayele, who was absent.

In an approach pointing to rather similar conclusions, both historians emphasized a number of fundamental points which formed the subject of the discussions.

- (i) Ethiopia in 1935 displayed signs of economic backwardness that were leading to the breakdown of authority. When the impact of Fascist aggression came, Ethiopia was not in a position, either militarily or economically, to respond at once. Only the Imperial Guard of 25,000 men was relatively well equipped—and only then with nineteenth-century arms—while the rest of the contingent was composed of troops levied by feudal lords. At the head of this motley force, the Emperor exercised a theoretical military command which had no real significance, for want of a basic administrative infrastructure and the military equipment necessary. There was no Ethiopian army as such, but rather an amalgam of forces, of differing quality, which were in some instances provided by the Ras, who were often political rivals of the titular Emperor or were in rebellion against him.
- (ii) As a result of the balance of power existing between the European nations, Fascist Italy was eventually able to count on the neutrality of France and Great Britain and on the silence of the League of Nations, and it set about making long-range preparations for the incidents that were to make the invasion possible. The springboards for the action it took were the Ogaden and Eritrea. Emphasis was placed on the role of European diplomacy in the Italo-Ethiopian crisis, which clearly demonstrated European attitudes towards Africa.

In this connection, the additional information provided underscored the scale of the Italian war effort. Regardless of the deep-seated motives for the war, it was conducted with enormous resources considering the period, and during the Italian occupation, for instance, it gave rise to the creation of the road infrastructure needed for troop movements (the example of the Addis Ababa–Asmara road was mentioned).

- (iii) The turning-point in the episode was in the spring of 1936. With the defeat of the Ethiopian forces and the capture of Addis Ababa, Emperor Haile Selassie chose to go into exile.

There was an animated discussion on this point. The issue was that of how a choice could be made between two completely conflicting

versions: that of 'traditional' historiography, whereby the Emperor is presented as being a clear-sighted resistant who chose exile in order to prepare the counter-offensive because, Ethiopia being what it was, he did not have the means to prevent the invasion, and the more recent and strongly argued thesis, whereby the Emperor, as the symbol of Ethiopian unity, had failed to perform his function by not remaining at the head of the resistance within the country or by not being killed at the head of his troops.

This harsh judgement, based on the analysis of documents and interviews, is also a reflection of the new approach to writing the history of Africa from the inside. Other arguments were put forward in opposition to this view in the course of the discussions. It could be argued, for example, that by leaving Ethiopia, the Emperor frustrated the Fascists' plans, since Rome's idea was to use him as a puppet for some time. It is impossible not to see to what extent this new approach is contradicted by the image of the charismatic chief and the 'Father of Africa' in the years after 1945. The differences of approach between the external and internal views were particularly evident in the case of Haile Selassie. Professor Eshete made the point that the conflicting picture of Haile Selassie that emerged was due to the fact that greater attention was now being paid to domestic factors, which made it possible to write African history from the African viewpoint. The discussions did not enable the different opinions held to be reconciled, and it is arguable whether they ever can or should be at any price. This long debate enabled a parallel to be drawn with the as yet unstudied case of the deposed King Idriss of Libya.

- (iv) As the discussion showed, there was less difficulty in establishing that the Emperor did not play any active part in organizing popular resistance, which came into being after he had left and was co-ordinated by an Ethiopian Patriotic Association. This body appointed local chiefs, sometimes from among members of the aristocracy who concurred with its concerns and struggles.

In this regard, the research published from 1973 onwards clearly shows that the resistance was spontaneous and that it varied in intensity and in the degree to which it was organized from region to region—the central plateaux having played an important part—and also that it was assisted to varying degrees by British or French intervention until the battles of the Second World War.

There appeared to be virtual agreement on this point and on the view that the popular aspect of the resistance is an established historical fact. One factor which has still to be gauged—and that too was emphasized—is whether the Emperor, from his place of exile, did not contribute

to fostering an attitude of awareness towards Ethiopia and to encouraging the efforts that were to culminate in the liberation of his country by African and British troops.

- (v) The study of the different forms taken by the Italian occupation gave rise to further differences of interpretation, at least in appearance, regarding the question of the enlistment of the Ethiopian aristocracy as allies, irrespective of whether this was deliberately sought by the Italian generals as a temporary expedient or not. In any event, Mussolini was not in favour of the proposal: his dream was to build an imperial Italy, extending from Eritrea to Somalia, as a colony that would be settled and exploited.

One interesting argument, which was only briefly discussed, involved the assertion that, in the wake of the Italians, the British, with their plans for political changes in the Horn of Africa, prepared the ground for the difficulties which Ethiopia is now experiencing in its relations with Somalia and in Eritrea.

- (vi) British intervention brought back the Emperor and enabled him to start rebuilding the country, in which the social situation had already been radically altered by the occupation forces.

Attempts to modernize Ethiopia with the competing assistance of Great Britain and the United States did not come within the scope of the symposium's discussions. Even if they had been on the programme, their importance would have been overshadowed by points (iii) and (iv) above, which are the key to all the current discussions on the re-writing of the recent history of Ethiopia.

The participants were unanimous in expressing the hope that Volume VIII would accord the history of the peoples of the continent its rightful place, especially as far as liberation struggles were concerned, but also that a 'case-study' that was as difficult to assess dispassionately as that of Haile Selassie would be presented with the utmost lucidity.

- (vii) The war waged by Fascist Italy on Ethiopia was elucidated in another important respect. In Italy, the war was—and still remains—a 'popular' war. This made it possible to prevent Italian public opinion from learning about such serious actions as the use of poison gas during the conquest or the severity of the repressive measures taken, like those following the attempted assassination of Graziani in February 1937. A small proportion of Italian public opinion took a stand against the war and the occupation of Ethiopia: the example was quoted of the departure for Ethiopia of three members of the Italian Communist Party.

Item 4: The Union of South Africa and the Second World War

In the absence of Professor Davidson, a summary of his paper was presented. Four points arising out of his paper were then discussed briefly.

- (i) The origins of apartheid plainly have to be sought in the events prior to and during the Second World War. However, this is a very complex issue, in which it is still not possible to discern completely the roles—which were certainly not all of equal importance—played by the confrontation between the British and the Boers and, more especially, by German intellectuals and Nazis, although not a great deal is known about the last-mentioned factor. In the case of South Africa, the Second World War did not contribute to the success of African nationalism, at least not at first sight. It exacerbated the tensions between whites and prompted the most racist among them to organize a constitutional system for the defence of their privileges. It also sharply alerted the Africans to the idea that their unequal status could not be changed without an organized struggle.
- (ii) The Second World War largely contributed to the development, within the capitalist system, of important sectors in the economy of southern Africa that were essential to the Allied war effort. That development, which had prompted South Africa to take part in the war against the advice of some of its white leaders, enabled it to join in the victory against Fascism but, at the same time, it sparked off social conflict and confrontation between blacks and whites within the country itself. From this point of view, the economic growth arising out of the Second World War can, in the long run, be regarded as being favourable to the blacks, in that it fostered an increasingly acute sense of awareness among them.
- (iii) South Africans took part in the fighting in the Horn of Africa and brought with them a militant segregationist attitude which aggravated the tensions in the region and contributed to the deterioration of relations between the restored Imperial government and the British.
- (iv) The plan for a Greater Somalia and the idea of creating a Jewish homeland in Eritrea can apparently be attributed to South African influences. Right from the end of the Second World War, there were growing protests, even in Great Britain, at South African influence in the Horn of Africa.

The idea—although somewhat remote from the theme of the symposium—that the sanctions that are applied to South Africa, and are largely circumvented by the countries of Western Europe, would affect the working class and blacks in general as much as it would the white South African governing class was regarded as having been amply discussed in existing documents, to which reference need only be made.

Item 5: The Second World War and French resistance in Africa

The paper presented by Professor Ollandet, which was summarized and commented on by the author himself, formed the basis for the discussion.

As a result of the war and of their joining the Free French, French Equatorial Africa and Cameroon, which was under French mandate, assumed a measure of importance that stood in direct contrast to the relatively uneventful political, administrative and economic life of those territories in the period prior to hostilities.

Chad, which was constantly worried by the threat emanating from the Italian-occupied North, was the first territory to join the Free French. The entire Congo region, with the considerable backing of the Belgian Congo, took the same course, in a bid to escape the consequences of the defeat suffered by Belgium and France.

The appointment of Félix Eboué as Supreme Administrator did not have the impact that it is sometimes claimed to have had. He was badly received by the white colonials and he disappointed the Africans by adopting a policy that displayed no particularly far-reaching changes compared with that of his predecessors.

The immediate consequences of joining forces with the Free French were grave. Failing the existence of a currency—which had previously been issued from Dakar—the imperative need to put banknotes guaranteed by the authorities into circulation gave rise to a serious loss of confidence among the population, and there was a very adverse reaction to the pressures imposed on the collection of raw materials such as rubber.

This is the background against which the Brazzaville Conference has to be viewed, in that emergency measures were needed if there was to be any prospect of saving the French empire. Although this important theme was touched on several times, the symposium was not able to discuss it.

A variety of proposals for research were made in connection with the theme being discussed, such as a study of the way in which the political myths that were first embodied in the person of Pétain, were then transferred to Hitler and subsequently to De Gaulle, and yet again, with virtually no change, to the political leaders who took over the countries on independence; and, for example, an analysis of the extent of the dissensions caused by the swing first to the Vichy regime and then to the Free French, and of the after-effects of the quarrels that took place at that time.

*Item 6: The Second World War as a step towards Africa's integration
into the capitalist system*

In introducing his preliminary paper, Professor Milewski laid stress on the part devoted to the stepped-up pace of Africa's integration into the capitalist system.

As in the case of the previous papers, the points raised provided substance for the subsequent discussions.

(i) On the eve of the Second World War, the situation was characterized by the Africans' growing loss of economic control over their production of export commodities, at least in most instances. Preparations for war, which started in France, for example, as early as 1935, prompted the French government to provide for the integration of the useful production 'of the empire' into the inevitable war effort. This was naturally reflected in the increased demands made on them in the pursuit of French interests.

In a country like Nigeria, for example, the loss of economic control resulted in the decline or disappearance of the groups of Africans who had amassed fortunes in the nineteenth century.

(ii) In both pre-war Britain and France, concern was shown for stepping up the pace at which the productive regions of Africa emerged from enclave status by instituting a policy for capital investment in ports, railways and roads. Before, during and after the Second World War, government agencies, such as FIDES and the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, kept watch over the implementation of this capital investment programme. This policy was often combated by the European settlers, who did not understand its importance and who regarded it as being irrelevant to their immediate interests, which were to exploit cheap African labour. The war effort resulted, in various ways which differed very considerably from country to country, in increased pressures on the labour market, the extreme form of which was forced labour. These pressures were not unconnected with the reactions bound up with the rejection of colonialism. Likewise, the growing awareness which the labour employed by the settlers gradually came to have of being exploited played no mean role either.

In some instances, a semblance of economic take-off was engendered by the war. The need to create small-scale industries manufacturing products which the European colonial power could no longer provide gave rise to a few urban workshops and created an additional labour market. As a rule, these small-scale industries did not outlive the war.

(iii) The banking system, which had been very limited in scope until 1945, played absolutely no part—if the work already done on this subject is to be believed—in productive investment and the creation of African

enterprises. The capital transfers abroad conducted through their intermediary resulted in the repatriation of profits to the metropolitan countries and in a shortage of investment funds on the African market. During the Second World War and in the immediate postwar period, capital accumulation and investment accordingly proved to be very difficult for Africans, with a very few exceptions, whereas expatriates from a variety of origins held the monopoly over the marketing of export produce and trade.

Such a situation made the emergence of a category of African planters in Ivory Coast during and after the Second World War a rather exceptional phenomenon, and they came to form, through their syndicate, a new economic base and an organizational springboard for the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* party.

The issues involved in capital accumulation by Africans through plantations and small-scale industries, from 1930 to the present day, are of course of considerable significance.

- (iv) However, developments differed from one region to another, depending on economic, military and political factors. During the Second World War, French Equatorial Africa witnessed a substantial growth in public and private investment, which contrasted sharply with the low level of similar operations in the preceding period. On the other hand, the difficulties of sea traffic between French West Africa and France, from 1940 to 1942 at least, led to a deep recession, which can also seemingly be noted, although perhaps not for the same reasons, in the British West African colonies. Trade relations were then established between African, British and American ports and these to some extent upset the trading patterns that had existed prior to the war.

In West Africa, the year 1943 saw a recovery in exports. However, this was not reflected in any improvement in the living standards of Africans, often quite the contrary, either because wages did not rise or because the prices of their produce did not improve, or else because of increases in taxation—so much so, that the entire period of the war was a most difficult time for the Africans, because the prices of imported products had continued to rise.

In addition to the difficulties caused by the decline in the economic and social situation of the Africans, in some instances there were very serious cyclical crises on a local scale, such as the 1940 drought in the Sahel. This illustrates the importance which the detailed study of regional cases can assume.

- (v) All in all, the period of the Second World War was therefore particularly critical for the Africans in economic and social terms. The colonial powers promised to make improvements in the postwar period but, when

the time came, many of those promises were not kept. From 1945 to 1947 at least, this further disappointment gave rise to reactions of varying degrees of violence, which took extremely different forms, ranging from strikes to rebellions, in many parts of the continent. The radical political turn taken by independence demands, as in Ghana for example, has its roots in those factors.

- (vi) The idea to emerge from the discussions was that there was one fundamental issue which had yet to be studied in detail, and that was the forms taken by the integration of the African economies into the capitalist system, which most of the participants regarded as having been precipitated by the Second World War.

It was suggested that a very careful distinction be drawn in the volume between two very different forms of the integration of Africans into the system, both of which were equally involuntary as far as they were concerned. The first of these, which was of a spectacular nature, stemmed from the war effort both before and during the Second World War and from postwar European construction policies; this form is quite patent and gave rise to postwar neo-colonial trade. A large number of studies and publications on this field are being produced in several countries.

In any event, regardless of whether the form involved is the first one or the second, they are both the outcome of pressures from outside the continent rather than—it would seem—of developments specific to the economy of Africa. The second form of integration would entail studying, sector by sector and region by region, the way in which the people who created African capital gained access to the capitalist mode of economic organization. Here again, the analysis of specific cases is important: government policy produces results very different from those of uncontrolled private enterprise. The dates at which these centres of capital accumulation in the hands of Africans emerged are clearly of considerable historical significance.

- (vii) Similarly, at a different economic level, but one that involves a greater number of Africans—in spite of the methodological difficulties involved, owing to the fact that the documentation is so varied—it would be important to study the income variations, in the broadest sense of the term, of Africans before, during and after the Second World War. In the case in point, this involves their integration into an international monetary system, whether this be capitalist or not. Such integration is particularly interesting in Africa, since it is sometimes of very recent date.

*Item 7: The Second World War
and the development of African nationalism*

The examination of this point was largely bound up with the preliminary paper submitted by Professor Kum'a Ndumbe, who presented the broad lines of his study.

By taking the broad-based and meticulously studied example of German policy towards Africa before and during the Second World War, the author also prompted thought to be given to the example of all the different European colonial powers. It is through the varied reactions of African nationalist currents to Nazi propaganda that questions had to be asked about the entire attitude of Africans to the belligerents on both sides.

- (i) Before the war, Nazi Germany endeavoured to gauge its chances and to secure its prospective alliances in Africa. The return to the traditional theme whereby Germany purported to be the protector of Muslims met with a mixed reception. In the Western Sahara, where a powerful German commercial firm had been established, it corresponded to the deep-seated desire to resist colonization felt by entire religious groups. However, it did not produce any open alliances, perhaps because of the diplomatic bargaining conducted between the European powers. In North Africa, it was not responsible for any deep-rooted movement of adhesion, at least not until the defeat of the French. In Libya, where the Libyan resistance was opposed to the very harsh presence of the troops and settlers of Fascist Italy, relations with Nazi Germany do not appear to have offered prospects for an alliance aimed at liberating the country. The question was obviously less relevant after the German-Italian pact, and reference was made on several occasions to the participation of the Libyans in the struggle against the Axis powers and to the rejection of their ideology. The situation in Egypt has not been studied adequately, in spite of the scale of Italian ambitions in the region. It may have been closer to that of the Near East, where intensive discussions took place between the Grand Mufti of Palestine and Hitler's Germany.

In Cameroon, the former German protectorate where there was considerable anti-German resistance immediately prior to the First World War, the Germanophile attitude displayed in some quarters, with their nostalgia for the 'good old days when order reigned', represented a way of rejecting French colonization rather than any inclination to conclude some form of alliance with Germany. It was clearly with South Africa, then led by Herzog, that the search for an effective alliance was taken furthest. On this question, in spite of the spectacular manner in which white circles and leading figures identified with the Nazi doctrine, which has been studied very fully by Professor Kum'a Ndumbe, the

conversations held at Berchtesgaden did not result in complete agreement, partly because of the future status proposed for South-West Africa—the present-day Namibia. The discussions were still continuing when the outbreak of war compelled South Africa to choose sides. At the time, it had little control over its economic decisions, which were largely dictated from London and by certain business circles that were branded as Jewish, and it accordingly joined the Allies, in spite of the deeply felt Nazi sympathies of some of its leaders. General Smuts led the country throughout the war, although he may not necessarily have discarded the racial conceptions and the segregationist outlook derived from National Socialism. The refusal to arm Africans and coloureds who had been mobilized stemmed from the sentiment, based on racism, that they should, under no circumstances, participate in combats between whites and be given the opportunity of killing white men. However, the partisans of Germany, who were members of secret societies and paramilitary organizations with direct links with the Nazi war effort, managed to commit acts of sabotage and thereby compelled several South African divisions to be held back in the country.

- (ii) The Belgian and French defeats and the rising demands of the Italians and Franco's Spain complicated German attempts to exercise an influence in Africa. No matter what prestige French authority may have lost in its colonies, the pull exerted by Germany was not powerful enough to incite any particular region or country to conclude an open alliance with it. The image of 'Hadj Hitler' consummating the revenge of 'Hadj William' probably never went beyond the ideological stage, even though that image may have been a powerful attraction in some countries, as in Algeria.
- (iii) Although it is still not well known, the attitude of Africans to German propaganda would be worth studying on a case-by-case basis. Their behaviour towards Nazism can now be perceived more clearly. In Nigeria, the racist doctrine, from what was said at the symposium, was clearly perceived and was rejected with lucidity. When the relations between Europeans are studied, it remains very difficult, in the case of Germany, to differentiate between the respective roles played by memories of the colonial power of the Empire, which fostered the desire for reconquest and revenge, by the new plans made for re-establishing the German presence in Africa—the most sweeping of which, drawn up by the Nazis in 1940, made very detailed provision for the colonial enslavement of the black peoples by Europe under German control—or by the memories of past colonial projects which had provided for the absorption of the Belgian Congo into a Central African German colonial empire. It is just as difficult to imagine the picture which Africans might have

had of these complex situations in 1939 and during the war, the pleasant or disagreeable memories left by the German colonizers, the possible admiration for the courage of the German troops fighting in Africa during the Second World War, and acceptance or refusal of Nazi thinking. All those factors would have to be assessed, however, in arriving at an understanding of African attitudes. There can be no doubt that their respective influences depend very largely on the historical and geographical situations. This line of research certainly deserves thorough investigation in future. It may shed light on the loyalty which the Africans very often displayed for the colonizers, although it would naturally not rule out the manifestations of resistance against the very principle of the colonial presence. As a result, one of the apparent contradictions in the behaviour of Africans during the war might well be resolved. Naturally, such problems as these were posed much less acutely in the case of Libya, which was crossed by the ebb and flow of the combats and which had scarcely any other choice than to resist Fascist Italy, the ally of Nazi Germany.

- (iv) This analysis also entails examining the extent to which Africans during the Second World War may have perceived not only Nazi doctrine but also the colonial policy planned by the Third Reich after its projected victory over France, Britain and the Soviet Union.
- (v) A further major question arises out of the foregoing, namely whether Britain and France (the cases of Belgium, Spain and Portugal were very different) had comprehensive projects for colonization in Africa, and whether these involved strengthening or playing down the system, or else consenting to the independence of the colonized countries. The discussions on this point only sketched the outlines of a line of inquiry that it would be desirable but probably difficult to follow. One certain fact emerged: the fundamental changes which occurred in the world balance of power following the Second World War made it impossible to maintain the colonial status quo.
- (vi) It may be asked what the fortunes of the Euroafrica concept have been since it was first mooted by Germany. It is true that images and facts should not be superimposed on one other indiscriminately. The fact remains that the association that has now been concluded between a large number of African countries and Europe appeared, in the eyes of some of the participants, as being an extension of that concept and, in any event, as arising out of the same forms of decision-making external to the continent.
- (vii) A number of details are noteworthy inasmuch as they did not feature in the paper presented. This is the case, for example, of the important report drawn up by Kurt Weigel which, together with another report

from the German Navy, was used as a basis for the Third Reich's colonial projects.

An additional study drafted by Professor Kum'a Ndumbe provided an answer to some of the questions raised during the discussions, in that it dealt with the way in which German policy was presented and perceived in North and West Africa and in South Africa.

The idea was put forward—and should be put in the form of a written document—that the study of a specific case, say that of Nigeria, could provide a very concrete response to most of the questions raised during the discussions.

*Item 8: The Second World War
and the decline of Europe in world affairs*

This theme was not prepared directly by specific papers requested by the Unesco Secretariat. However, it was extensively broached in most of the papers analysed, in particular that by Professor Mazrui. It was introduced by a statement by Professor Starushenko.

From the views expressed in all the papers presented at the symposium, there is absolutely no doubt that the Second World War marked the decline of the power of Western Europe, in favour of the United States and the Soviet Union. The agreement reached in respect of the Atlantic Charter, notwithstanding the differences of interpretation, and at Yalta, undoubtedly influenced subsequent developments in the world as much as their ideological and political disagreements have done. However, the pressure exerted by the Soviet Union after the Second World War, at the time the United Nations Charter was being drafted in San Francisco, and in political developments in the world, largely contributed to the liberation of the African and Asian countries. This was a major influence when it is borne in mind that, in the present state of our knowledge, no voluntary change in attitude towards the independence of their colonies could be discerned among the European colonial nations in 1945. Even if views differ on the assessment of the respective roles which the United States and the Soviet Union played in the liberation of the African continent, there is no denying the fact that the new world diplomatic and military balance which emerged from Yalta and arose out of the confrontation of two rival economic and social systems completely changed the parameters of the colonial problem.

A start has scarcely been made on analysing European responses to this new situation, failing adequate discussions on such occurrences as the Brazzaville Conference. On the whole, most of the participants seem to have regarded that conference much more as an attempt at conservation than the start of a movement towards independence. At most, the trend may have been towards dominion status within a sort of Commonwealth.

Italy did not have to concern itself with the fate of its former colonies, since the victors of the Second World War did so in its place, and thus determined the future of Africans for the last time.

Item 9: Postwar social and constitutional reforms in Africa

There was not so much a discussion on this item as an exchange of ideas. It would be desirable if the participants in the symposium could provide the Secretariat with the maximum amount of information on the issues raised under this heading.

- (i) The usefulness of detailed regional studies was once again mentioned. Whether these involved the participation of the countries of the Nile valley in the Second World War or the postwar revolutions, or else case-studies as complex as that of Nigeria, the speakers were invited to provide the Secretariat in writing with all the information they had available.
- (ii) It would be interesting to study the patterns of solidarity and collaboration formed between the nationalist movements which paved the way for independence. The career of N'Krumah was cited by way of an example. Reference was likewise made several times to the convergence of the revolutions that had taken place in the Arab world—the most significant of which had been the Nasserian revolution in 1952—with the African liberation movements. There have so far been very few studies on the forms and nature of African nationalist movements. The same can virtually be said of the investigation of resistance movements at the time of the Second World War and of the parties which grew up afterwards: the example of the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) was quoted in that regard.
- (iii) The development of trade unions and their role in the immediate postwar period as the spokesmen of the anti-colonial struggle can plainly be seen. Reference was made to the many studies which have already been carried out. Generally speaking, in regard to this point and to all those covered by item 9 of the agenda, steps should be taken to assemble a very wide-ranging bibliography.
- (iv) As far as methodology is concerned, it is important to develop oral history at an early stage, as a means of grasping the recent past through interviews with the protagonists and witnesses while they are still alive. Indeed, it is important to analyse the changes that have occurred in Africa among the people rather than exclusively among their leaders. The study of all the problems raised in the course of the symposium should be extended to the cases of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies.

Item 10: Tentative recapitulation

Professor Mazrui's paper was taken as the starting-point for the discussion on this item. A number of lines of research emerged therefrom and contributed to shedding light on all the foregoing discussions.

One of these lines of research concerns what Professor Mazrui calls 'the five distortions of African development' and this concurs with and expands on all the discussions which took place at the symposium. Africa does not occupy the economic place in the world which its wealth in terms of raw materials, energy resources and industrial potential would normally warrant. That fact emerged very clearly in the Second World War, it is still very patent in 1980 and is aggravated by the unequal development of the regions, countries and social classes of the continent.

A second line of research is bound up with the relationship between the development of universities and the inadequate growth of technical training in Africa following the Second World War. Professor Mazrui considers that the establishment of universities copied from the Western model has seriously prejudiced the technical training streams. The discussion would be worth pursuing country by country and probably, or at least, region by region, for each type of colonization.

The discussions in the course of the symposium have prompted the Rapporteur to bring the following recapitulatory themes together:

- (i) It appears important to draw up a comprehensive assessment, based on regional evaluations, of the losses of human life which Africa suffered between 1935 and 1960, in particular as a result of the Second World War. This would cover the direct participation of soldiers in the war but also the increase in the number of victims due to forced labour, regardless of the form this took, to the deportation of entire population groups as in Libya, to military resistance as in Ethiopia, and to all other forms of resistance throughout the continent.
- (ii) The same type of comprehensive assessment could be made in respect of economic questions, covering the period of the Second World War and the immediate postwar period.
- (iii) It seems quite clear that the increased tensions caused by the Second World War were at the root of the increasingly acute reactions of the Africans, even though this response to the weight of colonial exploitation took very different forms. A study still has to be made of the precise route which thinking in the trade unions and among young intellectuals and peasants took in alerting them to the need to struggle for their freedom. In this field, the inclination may be to rely more on preconceived ideas than on scientific studies.

All this clearly highlights the problem of the role played by the

media in instances where they existed and by education, no matter what the level.

- (iv) One of the ideas often expressed in political terms by the Africans is that the alliances they make must contribute not only to ensuring their full political independence, but their economic and social freedom as well. It would be interesting to ascertain whether that idea already existed in the liberation movements at the time of the Second World War. It would also be interesting to grasp at what time, and under what conditions, Marxist analyses and appeals to the Soviet Union came to be a lasting feature of those liberation movements. Following this symposium, it is clear that the evolution of political ideas, ideologies and reactions is just as rapid in Africa as in the rest of the world. There are undoubtedly significant shifts in emphasis, which have to be clearly evaluated, between the analyses made in 1935 and those of 1945, between 1945 and 1960, and between 1960 and 1980.
- (v) The foregoing comments have two main consequences as far as methodology is concerned: the first is that the current diversity of the options open to the different regions of the continent can probably be elucidated and explained by reference to the period from 1939 to 1960; the second lies in the straightforward yet necessary reminder that that history of the period was composed of successive stages which have to be situated in a clear-cut manner. It is certainly possible to speak, in the context of colonial consolidation, of a 'pre-war' in relation to the Second World War, as was clearly brought out by the discussions. The period of the war can be considered as corresponding to one or two chronological stages, depending on the regions involved. It should be borne in mind that the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as super-powers altered all the existing patterns of colonial relationships after 1944. However, the question has to be asked as to where the 'postwar period' ended as far as Africa is concerned.

There is obviously no ideal cut-off point. It could be argued that the end of that 'postwar period' was marked by the Nasserian revolution in 1952 or the Bandung Conference, or else by the emergence of the Third World. Or it might even be argued that the study should be pursued as far as 1960. In any event, by that date, the overall balance in respect of a large number of issues, as they affected both the continent itself and its relations with the rest of the world, was altered so radically that a new period of historical time can be regarded as having begun. As far as each of these identifiable sequences are concerned, it would be important to lay stress, in the case of the Africans, on the weight of the past heritage of the foregoing periods and on that of the innovations that took place.

- (vi) One line of thinking that was not touched on at the symposium would entail studying increasing African claims to cultural identity, which started to be voiced before the Second World War and which grew significantly during and immediately after the war.
- (vii) Notwithstanding the overall pattern characterizing the continent's forward march towards independence, the diversity and indeed the contradictory nature of local experiences between 1935 and 1960 plainly makes it essential to compile a large number of case-studies if Volume VIII is not to present a too simplified and superficial picture of the period. This will not be the least of the difficulties with which the authors of the volume will have to contend. It will probably be necessary to assist them in overcoming this problem through a very considerable effort of documentation and bibliography.

One of the participants requested that the following be recorded in the final report of the symposium, with regard to British West Africa, 1935-45:

- (a) The emergence of more 'radical' organizations as typified by the Youth Movements, e.g. UGCC (United Gold Coast Convention), NYM (Nigerian Youth Movement) which had a broader appeal.
- (b) The continuing economic depression and its effects on political agitation—the retrenchment and the cutting back on social and economic developments.
- (c) The return of the younger elements—e.g. Azikiwe, H. O. Davies—and the rise of a new kind of journalism which followed closely the pattern of the Yellow Press in the United States.
- (d) The economic warfare against colonial rule as, for example, the Cocoa pool which led to the recruitment of farmers into the nationalist movement on a large scale, thus broadening its base.
- (e) The impact of the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis and of the Communist Movement, e.g. ITA, Wallace-Johnson's Organization.
- (f) Specific developments during the war, e.g. the introduction of forced labour, discrimination against African soldiers even at home in West Africa, the various economic measures which curtailed further the role of the African in the economic activities of his country: for example, the setting up of the marketing boards and the regulation that the granting of licences to buy produce was to be based on performance before the war, during which time Africans for various reasons played little or no part in the economic life of their nation.
- (g) The attempts to control and regulate prices which failed woefully and engendered bitterness against colonial rule.

- (h) The constitutional reforms, e.g. Richards Constitution, which fell far short of expectation and led to greater agitation culminating in a delegation to Britain by the NCNC (National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons) in 1947.
- (i) The phenomenal rise in the cost of living which was not accompanied by a rise in wages except for expatriates and which led to a nationwide strike in Nigeria in 1945.

All these factors are crucial in understanding the period and the developments that followed.

- (viii) The idea was expressed several times that it would be desirable for the Editor of Volume VIII, in his concluding chapter, to examine the solutions envisaged in Africa with a view to securing the total liberation of the continent from all imperialist threats, together with the blueprints for society which have been sketched out since the 1970s and which aim at preparing the Africa of the year 2000.

The report was adopted at the closing meeting on 13 November 1980.

Annex I: Guidance Note

The International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa considered that Volume VIII, which deals with the contemporary history of Africa (Africa since 1935), called for the utmost scientific rigour, in view of the topicality and complexity of the problems involved. For that reason, the Committee proposed the organization of a series of symposia and meetings of experts on Africa's recent history with a view to clarifying methodology and compiling a scientific record of the available sources.

Meetings have been organized in this connection on 'The Historiography of Southern Africa' (Gaborone, Botswana), 'The Decolonization of Africa: Southern Africa—the Horn of Africa' (Warsaw, Poland), 'The Methodology of Contemporary African History' (Ouagadougou, Upper Volta) and 'The Historical and Socio-cultural Relations between Black Africa and the Arab world: 1935 to the Present' (Paris).

The Benghazi symposium covers a theme that is no less important: 'Africa and the Second World War'. Drawing on the agenda submitted by Professor Ali A. Mazrui, Editor of Volume VIII, and on the studies prepared specially for the symposium, the Secretariat of Unesco has drafted this guidance note. It is intended to draw the experts' attention to points that warrant careful consideration.

Agenda

1. *Introduction to the General History of Africa*

- (i) Presentation of the project by Professor B. A. Ogot, Chairman of the International Scientific Committee.
- (ii) Introduction to Volume VIII of the *General History of Africa* by Professor Ali A. Mazrui, Editor of this volume.

2. *North Africa, Libya and Egypt in the Second World War*

A brief outline of Northern Africa on the eve of the conflict; the types of colonization (populations of European origin).

Strategic position of the Maghrib; the position of Libya and of Egypt; importance of the economic and demographic potential of the Maghrib to the war economies (North Africa: 'Untapped reserves of strength').

Nationalist aspirations and the war (in each country).

Relations between the nationalist movements of the countries concerned; objectives pursued (comparison); (emphasize the long history of demands for independence, dating back to the First World War).

Study of society: the war effort (conscription, requisitioning of grain, etc.).

Role of Islam and of Arab culture in the nationalist movement (literature and cultural nationalism).

Influence of the presence of foreign armies (American and British) on the nationalist parties.

Nazi and Fascist radio propaganda; the policy of Vichy and that of the Allies.

Reforms demanded and those granted after the war; the new growth of awareness and the gradual disintegration of the colonial system.

3. *The Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa in the World War decade (1935-45)*

(i) The Horn of Africa on the eve of 1939.

(ii) The economic recession.

(iii) Invasion of Ethiopia by Italy and consequences for the Horn (Somalia, Sudan, etc.).

(iv) Ethiopia and the League of Nations; the effects of the invasion of Ethiopia on international relations.

(v) Strategic status of the Horn.

(vi) Relations between the Horn, eastern Africa and western Asia during the war; social movements and nationalist aspirations; political consequences in Europe of the liberation of Ethiopia by the Africans themselves; psychological impact in Africa and in the African Diaspora.

4. *The Union of South Africa and the Second World War*

South African society on the eve of the Second World War.

The attitudes of the political parties towards Germany.

The policy of apartheid practised among the troops of the Union of South Africa (80,000 blacks and 40,000 coloureds joined up voluntarily to combat Fascism and Nazism, and they were never given permission to carry arms).

Consequences of the presence of the South African army in the Horn of Africa.

Circumstances of blacks during the war.

Nationalist ideas and struggle by blacks for equality after the war (role of the Youth League of the African National Congress (ANC)).

It would be interesting to discover for what reasons the Second World War failed to contribute decisively, in the Union of South Africa as elsewhere in Africa, to black emancipation.

5. *The Second World War and French Resistance in Africa*

The French colonies on the eve of the Second World War; economic situation.

West Africa, Equatorial Africa and Madagascar under the Vichy regime; the appeal of 18 June: echoes in French Africa, outside the Maghrib; the attitude of Governor-General Boisson and the bombing of Dakar.

Role of Governor Félix Éboué.

The rallying of French Equatorial Africa to the cause of the Allies.

The war effort (the role of the Africans in the British, French, Belgian and Portuguese colonies; contribution of the African forces to the Allied victory; the psychological impact of the defeat of the Axis at El-Alamein).

The Brazzaville Conference.

6. *The Second World War as a step towards Africa's integration in the capitalist system*

The African economy on the eve of the Second World War.

Entry of Africa into the world capitalist system.

New trend in African agriculture towards production to meet the needs of the wartime economies of the colonial powers (cocoa, ground-nuts, coffee, tea, etc.) and consequences.

Maintenance of predominance of cash crops after the war, to the detriment of food crops.

Deterioration of trade terms.

7. *The Second World War and the development of African nationalism*

Origins of African nationalism.

Political action of African students in the West.

Pan-Africanism.

The concept of negritude.

The consequences of the war for the nationalist movements.

The role of the trade unions and parties.

The attitude of the nationalists towards the Axis.

The impact of the war on the development of awareness among colonized peoples.

8. *The Second World War and the decline of Europe in world affairs*

- (i) The decline of Europe: the situation of the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Italy.

The leadership of the United States of America and of the USSR in international relations; splitting of the world into two camps (Yalta).

The Marshall Plan and Europe.

- (ii) Consequences for Africa:

Influence of the United States and the USSR on the colonial powers in Africa.

End of the myth of European invincibility (the tales of soldiers returning to Africa).

Postwar crises and conflicts in Africa; growth of awareness and struggle of political parties to win reforms or autonomy.

Case-studies: the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA) in French-speaking Africa; the Convention People's Party (CPP) in Ghana; the Independence Party (Hizb al-Istiqlal) in Morocco.

Cultural support for nationalism in the struggle of the African political parties (role of the Black Diaspora and of the Messianic movements, inspired by Islamic or Christian beliefs).

African political movements and political parties in the mother countries. Africa on the international scene (UN).

9. *Postwar social and constitutional reforms in Africa*

A few case-studies:

- (i) In Northern Africa (Tunisia, Algeria).

- (ii) In Central and Western Africa: the aftermath of the Brazzaville Conference; reforms (abolition of 'right of citizenship', etc.); the outline law.

- (iii) The case of Ghana.

- (iv) The case of Kenya; the social movements.

10. *Tentative recapitulation*

Bring out the main features of Africa's contribution to the Second World War and the latter's social, economic and political repercussions on the development of the continent.

