Introduction
The Alternative to the Neoliberal System of Globalisation and Militarism

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Helmi Sharawy has directed the Arab and African Research Centre (AARC) in Cairo since its creation in 1987. Under his energetic guidance, the AARC has become in Egypt, the Middle East and Africa, generally a partner that cannot be ignored in any serious cultural or political debate concerning the challenges that confront the peoples of all of these regions.

Despite the stringent administrative tasks imposed by his directorship of the AARC, Helmi has never failed to bring his own personal contributions into such debates. The collection of contributions chosen for this publication in English is clear evidence of the wide range of subjects he has covered. Such contributions entail a critical reading of the relations between the Arab and African worlds in the past and present; the expression of the cultural dimensions of their liberation struggle; the role of civil society in their current struggles; and the perspectives that such struggles open for a possible renaissance.

As a foreword to Helmi Sharawy's book, I chose to add my contribution to the debates he has raised with the following discussion of the alternative to the neoliberal system of globalisation, militarism and imperialism today, and the hegemonic offensive of the United States.

The Alternative: Social Progress, Democratisation and Negotiated Interdependence

What people need today, as well as yesterday, are society-wide projects (national and/or regional) articulated to regulated and negotiated globalised structures (while assuring a relative complementarity between them), which would simultaneously permit advances in three directions:

a) Social Progress: This demands that economic progress (innovation, advances in productivity, the eventual expansion of the market) be necessarily accompanied by social benefits for all (by guaranteeing employment, social integration, reduction in inequalities, etc.).
b) The democratisation of society in all dimensions, understood as a never-ending process and not as a blueprint, needs to be defined once and for all. Democratisation demands that its reach is felt in social and economic spheres, and not restricted to just the political sphere.
c) The affirmation of society-wide economic and social development, and the building of forms of globalisation that offer this possibility. It needs to be understood that the unavoidable auto-centric character of development does not exclude either the opening (on condition that it remains controlled) or the participation in globalisation (inter-dependence). However, it conceives of these as needing to be formulated in terms that would permit the reduction – not the accentuation – of the inequalities of wealth and power between nations and regions.

The alternative that we are defining by advances in three directions demands that all the three progress in parallel. The experiences of modern history, which were founded on the absolute priority of national independence, whether accompanied by social progress, or even sacrificing it, but always without democratisation, continually demonstrate their inability to go beyond the rapidly attained historical limits. As a complementary counterpoint, contemporary democracy projects, which have accepted the sacrifice of social progress and autonomy in globalised interdependence, have not contributed to reinforcing the emancipatory potential of democracy, but have, instead, eroded it – even to discredit and finally delegitimise it. If, as the predominant neoliberal discourse pretends, submitting to the demands of the market presents no other alternative and if this idea would by itself produce social progress (which is not true), why bother voting? Elected governments become superfluous decorations, since 'change' (a succession of different heads that all do the same thing) is substituted for alternative choices by which democracy is defined. The reaffirmation of politics and the culture of citizenship define the very possibility of a necessary alternative to democratic decadence.

It is therefore necessary to advance in the three dimensions of the alternative, each one connected to the other. Less can mean more: developing step-by-step strategies which allow for the consolidation of progress – even ones that are so modest that they can be achieved immediately – to go even further while minimising the risk of failure, going off-course or moving backwards.

Making this step-by-step strategy concrete means taking into account the evolution of science and technology and the acceleration of the revolutions it has brought on (and this in all its dimensions – new riches, potential destructive forces brought on by these revolutions, transformations in the organisation of the workplace and social structures, etc.). However, in order to do it, we would need not to submit, in the vain hope that these revolutions would have the magic ability to resolve by themselves the challenges of social progress and democratisation. It is the opposite in integrating the new in a controlled social dynamic that we can exploit their eventual emancipatory potential.

The social project abusively qualified as liberal (and in its extreme form – neoliberal) is founded on the sacrifice of social progress to the unilateral demands of the short-term profits of dominant segments of capital (the transnational capital of the 500 or 5,000 largest transnational companies). Through this unilateral submission of workers, human beings and nations to the logic of the market is expressed, without a doubt, the permanent utopia of capital (according to which all aspects of life need to adapt to the demands of profit-making), in many ways an infantile utopia, without any scientific or ethical base. It is through this submission that social progress and democracy have been emptied of any reality.

On a global scale, this submission can only reproduce and deepen the inequalities between nations and regions, especially considering the new structures that conform to the demands of capital which has reached a new level of development. This means that monopolies (sometimes known as comparative advantages), which benefit from the oligopolies of the dominant centres (the 'triad': the United States, Europe and Japan), are no longer simply about industry. They are also about other forms of economic, social and political control: the control of technology, reinforced by abusive practices of industrial and intellectual property, the access to the planet's natural resources, the ability to influence opinions by controlling information, the extreme centralization of the means to intervene financially, and the select few who have access to weapons of mass destruction, etc.

Market economics and political power of the state, including the military, are today, as they have always been, inseparable. Faced with this unity that has been put in place by capital and transnational oligopolies and the political powers at their service, how then do we build people-centred counter-strategies which, over and above 'resistance', can actually advance the alternative defined here? This is the real challenge.

Combining the Expansion of Social Movements and the Rebuilding of the Political Citizen

There is no modern society that is stuck in an absolute immutable stage. In this sense, the existence of social movements, visible or not, clearly organised or working under wraps, crystallised around a program of objectives defined in political or ideological terms or misguided by the discourses of politicians' politics, united or fragmented, is not new.

What is new and characterised by the present movement is that social movements – or 'civil society', to use the current fashionable term – are fragmented, and they disregard politics, ideologies, etc. This is simultaneously the cause, but rather more the product, of the erosion of social battles and politics in the recent period of contemporary history (after World War II) and, because of this, the weakening of their efficiency and therefore their credibility and legitimacy. This erosion therefore has happened within a fundamental disequilibrium, with dominant capital taking advantage of this vacuum, and submitting people and societies to the exclusive logic of its demands, to proclaim the eternity of its reign, to pretend that it is rational and even beneficial (the end of history, etc.), that is to say, the permanent utopia of capitalism. This manifests itself through absurdities such as 'there is no alternative', or in the imagination of a social movement that has the ability to transform the world without defining its targets and plans.

Social movements – in plural – exist and are reinforcing their presence and their actions everywhere throughout the world. It is not even necessary to give examples: classes, class struggles, democracy movements, women's rights, rights of nations, peasants and environmentalists, are just some of their expressions. The transformation of the world by the crystallisation of the alternative can take place only by active involvement in these movements. However, it also demands that such movements know how to progressively go from the defensive to the offensive, from fragmentation to convergence in diversity, in order to become decisive players in inventive and efficient projects to build political strategies aimed at citizens.

Recognising the weaknesses in the present movement is neither to denigrate it, nor to take a nostalgic glance at a past that is over, but to choose to act to reinforce its emancipatory potential. The people's adversary is oligarchic and globalised capital and dominant imperialism, the totality of political powers which, for the moment, are totally at its service, that is to say the governments of the triad (since both the right and the left share the same penchant for 'liberalism'), most notably the United States (in which the established Republican

and Democratic parties share the same vision of their hegemonic role) and those of the ruling classes throughout the South. This adversary deploys an economic, political, ideological and military strategy that uses all of the institutions set up to service it (OECD, the World Bank, IMF, WTO, NATO, etc.). It has its centres of 'thought' and its meeting places (Davos in particular, but also universities with their conventional economics departments). They control the fashions and they decide the catchwords and discourses that they impose: 'democracy' or 'human rights' (understood as a manipulative term), 'war against poverty', 'the erasing of nations' and the parallel promotion of 'communities', the war against 'terrorism', etc. The majority of the movements and the activists that lead them are, up until now, always one step behind, answering belatedly – well, or not so well – to their pieces of the strategy or discourse. We must liberate ourselves from these reflexive and defensive positions, taking our turn and substituting our discourses, our strategies, our objectives, and our language. We have a long way to go.

We will only be able to move in this direction if we are able to systematically analyse the adversary's strategy in its global dimensions and its local and segmented expressions. These strategies are a long way from being a monolithic bloc. They are interspersed with contradictions that we need to analyse, get to know, identify and isolate. We need to propose counter-strategies that can take advantage of these contradictions.

Faced with this urgent need, the movement seems to be still quite weak. Because it has not yet acknowledged the importance of this thinking and the need to draw the conclusion of the necessity for united action, the movement remains fragmented, defensive, and soft in its discourse and propositions (which its adversary knows and takes advantage of). We must therefore advance to levels that make the crystallisation of popular forces' counter-strategies possible, in their global vision and interdependence, and in their segmented and local expression. It is only when the principles of the alternative are defined and consistent that they take shape in programmes and actions that are rich in diversity and convergence in their impact on society. This is when the movement will become a transforming force in history.

The opponent makes sure that our progress is difficult, not only by physical interventions when necessary (police violence, backward democratic steps, support to renewed fascist currents, and wars) but also by soothing propositions, so that the movement remains apolitical, 'soft' and one step behind. The 'movementist' ideology contributes to this, since it rejects precisely, and on principle, what we are proposing: the convergence through diversity of

a reconstruction of citizen politics. In these conditions, the movements and the organisational forms that support them (specifically the NGOs, which are now often considered to be the exclusive manifestation of civil society) must be examined critically. Do they adhere to the perspective of the construction of alternatives? Or are they the system's management technique for its real ambitions – using them as 'anti-alternative' instruments?

Only the rebuilding of citizen politics will allow the movement to acquire the scope that calls into question the disequilibria operating in favour of capital. Only this rebuilding will allow for the emergence of new social equilibriums and politics that constrain capital to adjust to demands that do not come out of its exclusive logic – forcing people to adapt to the demands of capital as opposed to forcing capital to adapt to the demands of people.

Our call is addressed to everyone – including ourselves – who find themselves involved in various actions and meetings around the World Social Forum (Porto Alegre) and in national and regional forums. The World Forum for Alternatives will act as a catalyst – with and among others – for the elaboration of popular, efficient and credible counter-strategies.

The propositions that follow are just propositions – that some may evaluate as erroneous, extreme or provocative. However, in my opinion, they are worth discussing.

The Collective Imperialism of the Triad, the Hegemonic Offensive of the United States and the Militarisation of Globalisation

First Thesis

The global system is not post-imperialist – it is imperialist. It shares several fundamental and permanent characteristics with other previous imperialist systems which always commanded the expansion of global capitalism. It offers to the people on the periphery (the South, to use the current terms – three-quarters of the world population) no chance to 'catch up' and share, for better or for worse, the advantages of the level of material consumption reserved for the majority of the people in the centres. It only produces, and reproduces, the deepening of the North/South gap.

Nevertheless, imperialism has, in many ways, entered into a new phase of its expansion. This has a direct relationship with transformations in capitalism and capital: technological revolution, transformation of the workplace, globalised financial domination, etc. These relationships are the subject of serious research and animated debates. However, once again, the overall tone

is directed by the economic obsession of some and the genteel 'soft' politics of others. This happens up to the point where the system is often presented as offering a chance to all those who want to take it. This highlights the weakness of the movement and the efficiency of the dominant discourse.

I must insist on another new dimension of imperialism. Imperialism, which was always referred to in the plural, since permanent and violent, economic and political conflict between the various imperialist centres was always at the forefront of history, is now referred to in the singular. It has become the collective imperialism of the triad.

The facts clearly illustrate the reality of the collective character of this new state of imperialism. In all the global economy's managing institutions, Europe and Japan are never singled out for positions that are different from those of the United States, whether it be in the World Bank, the IMF, or the WTO (we remember the demands imposed in Doha in 2001 on the WTO by the European envoy Pascal Lamy, on the Third World as being even more severe than those of the United States).

What are the reasons behind this common vision of the triad? Up to what point is the solidarity that they display defining a new stable step in imperialist globalisation? And where can we find the eventual contradictions within the triad?

It has been the custom to explain this solidarity by political reasons: the common concern about the Soviet Union and communism. However, the disappearance of this threat did not end this northern common front. Indeed, Europe and Japan are no longer dependent on the United States, as they used to be immediately after World War II. Having become serious rivals, one could have expected that their conflicts would have destroyed the triad. However, by agreeing on the same globalised neoliberal project, they, in fact, did exactly the opposite. I am therefore strongly tempted to explain this choice by the new demands of capital accumulation by the dominant oligopolies. They have attained a level of growth that has never before been seen. The sheer size of the oligopolies (the large trans-nationals that have their anchors in the states of the triad) has meant they need – for their own reproduction – access to a global open market. For some, this new fact means that an authentic transnational capital, and therefore a transnational bourgeoisie, is in the making. This question clearly merits more profound research. For others (including myself), this extreme conclusion is not needed, since the common interests in managing the global marketplace are strong enough to be at the root of transnational capital's solidarity.

The contradictions that could have destroyed the triad, or at least weakened its collective strength, do not lie in the divergent interests of the dominant segments of capital. Their origin should be found elsewhere, since if capital and states are inseparable concepts and realities, the triad – and even its European segment – are still constituted in singular political states. The state cannot be reduced to its functions as a service provider for dominant capital. Affected by all the contradictions that characterise society – class conflicts, different aspects of the political culture of the people in question, the diversity of national 'collective' interests, and the geo-political expressions of their defence – the state is a distinct player of capital. And what will this complex dynamic bring about? Will it lead to submission to the immediate and exclusive interests of dominant capital? Or will it bring about other combinations that regulate the demands of the reproduction of capital and those that manifest themselves in other fields?

In the first hypothesis, with the lack of an integrated common political institution for the triad states, the United States, as the 'commander-in-chief', will be asked to fill the place of this 'global' state, indispensable for the 'good governance' of globalised capitalism. Also, the partners in the triad will accept the consequences. However, in this case, I would argue that the 'European project' would be devoid of content, reduced to – in the best case – the European segment of collective imperialism, or – in the worst case – the European section of the American hegemonic project. For the moment, the ripples that we hear from time to time are due to the political and military management of globalisation, not its economic and social management. In other words, certain European powers would prefer a collective political management of the global system, while others accept unaided management by the United States.

On the other hand, in the second hypothesis (that is to say if the European people manage to impose on dominant capital the terms of a new historic compromise which define the content of European states and the European Union), Europe could hope to be an autonomous player. In other words, the option (and the battles) for a 'social Europe' (that is to say if power was not simply about being at the immediate and exclusive service of dominant capital) is inseparable from a 'non-American' Europe. And this can only happen if Europe distances itself from the management of collective imperialism by which the interests of dominant capital defines itself. In one sentence: Europe will be on the 'Left' (with the understanding that this definition means taking into consideration the social interests of European peoples and innovations in North/South relations which will bring about a real post-imperialist evolution).

Second Thesis

The hegemonic strategy of the United States is based on the collective character of the new imperialism and profits from the insufficiencies and weaknesses of the anti-neoliberal social and political movements.

This strategy, barely recognised by the pro-American defenders is, in the dominant discourse, the object of two 'soft' propositions, not quite real but operational, from the point of view of our opponent. The first is that this hegemony belongs to a 'gentle' leadership, sometimes known as 'benign hegemony' by the democratic fraction of the American establishment. Through this mix of false naivety and real hypocrisy, this discourse pretends that the United States only acts in the interests of the peoples who are associated with the triad, motivated by the same 'democratic' sentiments, and even the interests of the rest of the world, to whom globalisation offers the chance of development, reinforced by the benefits of democracy that American power promotes everywhere, as we know. The second is that, in all domains, the Unites States benefits from the enormous advantages – whether they be economic, scientific, political, military or cultural – that legitimise their hegemony. In fact, American hegemony works from logic, and a system that has little to do with the discourse it develops.

The objectives of this hegemony have been proclaimed, and adhered to, in innumerable proclamations by the US leaders (unfortunately, little read by its victims). After the fall of the USSR – their only potential military adversary – the US establishment estimated that it had a period of about 20 years to put into place its global hegemony and reduce to nothing the possibilities of its potential rivals. Not that they were necessarily capable of an alternative hegemony, just capable of affirming their autonomy in a global system that would be non-hegemonic – in my language, a multi-centric system. These rivals are of course Europe (we no longer hear of a Japanese hegemony!), but also Russia and, most of all, China. The latter is the principal designated adversary that Washington may have to envision destroying (militarily) if it continues to persist in its development and a certain independent will. Other rivals have also been noted, in fact, all southern countries that may develop a resistance to the exigencies of globalised neoliberalism – India or Brazil, Iran or South Africa.

The objectives are therefore to vassalise the allies in the triad, to make them incapable of effective global initiatives, and to destroy the 'large countries', always by nature too big (the United States being the only one with the right to be so). Further objectives are to dismantle Russia after the USSR,

dismantle China, India, even Brazil, taking advantage of the weaknesses of each country's power systems; manipulate the former states of the USSR, and provoke the centrifugal forces in the Russian federation; support the Muslims of Xinjiang and the Tibetan monks; feed the conflict with the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent; and intervene in the Amazon (Plan Colombia), etc.

In this strategic perspective, the United States decided that their first strike would be in the region that extends from the Balkans to central Asia, and traverses the Middle East and the Gulf. Why this region for the first American wars of the 21st century? Not because the region could shelter serious enemies, but exactly the opposite, because it is the soft under-belly of the global system, made up of societies that, for different reasons, right now are incapable of responding to aggression with even a minimum amount of efficiency. The strategy was to strike the weakest to begin a long series of wars – a clear and banal military strategy – just as Hitler started by attacking Czechoslovakia, while his ambitions went above and beyond this to the United Kingdom, France and Russia.

Conquering the region also presents other advantages. A major producer of oil and gas, exclusive control by the United States would make Europe seriously dependent, reducing any eventual manoeuvrability. Additionally, the installation of American bases at the heart of Eurasia will facilitate the wars of the future, against China, Russia and others. The unconditional support of Israeli expansion is logical within this perspective, Israel being a *de facto* permanent military base at Washington's service.

The decision to militarise the management of the global system was not taken just by the team of Bush Jr. It has been the rallying call of the ruling classes of the United States since the fall of the USSR; Democrats and Republicans only differ on their choice of language. Moreover, contrary to what they would like naïve opinion holders to believe, this option is meant to mitigate the insufficiencies of the American economy, in which the competitiveness of all the segments of the productive system have continually deteriorated, as witnessed by the trade deficit that characterizes it. By imposing themselves not as the 'natural leader' via its economic advantages, but as the military dictator of the world order, the United States is creating conditions that force its vassalised allies (Europe and Japan), similar to others, to shoulder their deficit. The United States has become a parasitic society that cannot maintain its level of consumption and waste without impoverishing the rest of the world.

Third Thesis

The present time is one of extreme gravity. In this sense, comparisons with the 1930s are mostly justifiable. Like Hitler, the President of the United States has decided to replace the law with brutal military force, thereby erasing all the conquests that democracy's victory over Fascism has permitted, condemning the United Nations to the same lamentable fate as the League of Nations. Alas, the comparisons can continue. Fabrication and choosing minor adversaries to lay the groundwork for major confrontations and systematic lying: the dominant classes of the allies act like Chamberlain and Daladier with Hitler. They cede to, and even sometimes contribute to, legitimising American wars in the eyes of those they are deceiving.

The movement has to understand that, faced with its opponent's coherent and criminal strategy, no counter-strategy can be effective if it does not have the battle against American wars as the principal axis of its action. Today, what are the discourses on poverty or human rights worth, when compared to what is in store for people in a far worse future, which will be imposed by military violence? These wars, still 'small' (despite the gigantic material and human destruction of their victims), do not constitute 'a problem among others', but are the harbinger of the enemy's strategy.

Elements for a Popular Counter-strategy

The aforementioned reflections – if they make sense – can only lead to one conclusion: the principal axis of actions to come can only be about the organisation of actions against 'American wars' and the construction of a large front, composed of all the forces that could be in opposition. In this spirit, I will offer three propositions:

First Proposition: A priority in Europe for the reconstruction of a citizens' politics, capable of bringing about the converging of the demands of the movements that remain terribly fragmented.

The construction of this political force and the gathering of the subject that could compose it is conditional on the success of the movements in their social and protest demands, that is to say, the ability to restore a real Left compatible with European integration which would give a social dimension to the aforementioned project. Equally, this is the condition for the Left to separate itself from the pro-imperialist Right, which accepts the alignment with the United States' imperialist strategies. In other words, there will never be a 'social Europe' if there is no simultaneous engagement toward 'another

politics' vis-à-vis the rest of the world, which would involve a real post-imperialist transition.

The European people can and must make the United States aware of the fragility of their position in the economic system of globalised capitalism. If they manage to impose the use of their capital surpluses for social development, instead of its current role of supporting American waste, they will simultaneously constrain the United States and force them to abandon their excessive ambitions. This strategic objective clearly does not exclude the immediate support of the courageous men and women who, at the heart of the system, are saying 'no to war'. Nevertheless, I remain sceptical about the effectiveness of the internal opposition in the United States, as long as the privileges of this parasitic society remain guaranteed. The American ruling class has managed to obtain a dominant public opinion which is sufficiently naive that the protests of the conscious minority are not able to bring down the deployment of the United States' hegemonic strategy.

Second Proposition: Encourage a rapprochement between the large Euro-Asian partners – namely Europe, Russia, China and India.

Russia, with its oil and gas reserves, offers Europe its only means to escape the American diktat, assuming that Washington is successful in its plans to have exclusive control over the Middle East. In addition, since the majority of the foreign trade and investment that Russia attracts is from Europe and not the United States, there is already favourable ground for a rapprochement between Europe and Russia, in spite of the difficulties (produced by the 'comprador' management of the Russian economy with which important fractions of the new ruling class are associated) and the manipulation of American imperialism, which brings its support to the centrifugal forces operating in Russia and other former states of the USSR. Here again, as in Europe, a favourable evolution benefiting the working class implies another foreign policy which distances itself from Washington.

The rapprochement of Russia, China and India would find its *raison d'être* in the – military – threat that these three countries will face with the eventual success of the United States' deployments in Central Asia. American diplomacy is making this rapprochement as difficult as possible by mobilising, to its benefit, the contradictions of the political visions of each of the three partners and in supporting the comprador fractions of the ruling classes. However, over and above the geo-political conflicts that make up the border questions between China and India, or Tibet and the Xinjiang, over and above Washington's manipulations that 'support' India against China

and at the same time agitate Pakistan and provoke conflicts between India's Muslims and Hindus, the strategy of the popular forces – defined at this stage by the demands of the constitution of an anti-comprador front – has to take in once again, here and elsewhere, the measure of the direct relations that comprador management (in place in Russia and India, and threatening in China) maintains with the demands of American geo-political diktats.

Third Proposition: Revive Afro-Asian people's solidarity (the spirit of Bandung) and bring back to life the 'Tricontinental'. This solidarity between peoples of the South runs today through their struggle against comprador powers that is produced and supported by 'liberal' globalisation. The themes elaborated above concerning the alternative – social progress, democratization, national autonomy – will find here their *raison d'être*.

There is little doubt that the legitimacy of these comprador powers is being questioned in many countries of the South. Nevertheless, the responses of the people of the South to the challenges they face from the new imperial system and liberalisation make it difficult to advance alternatives that are defined in terms of democratisation, social progress and the construction of a just and negotiated global inter-dependence. The disarrayed popular classes frequently find refuge in illusions that are 'fundamentalist', ethnic or religious, which are mostly manipulated by the local comprador ruling classes, and are supported by imperialism and particularly by the US. These consist of real steps back, which need lucidity and courage to fight; and today, they constitute a major obstacle to the rebuilding of solidarity between the Afro-Asian peoples (by intensifying the often criminal conflicts between Muslim and Hindus here, Hutu and Tutsi over there, etc.). The impasse that constitutes these communal regressions finds its extreme manifestation in questionable characters such as the Taliban, Bin Laden, or Saddam Hussein, who were themselves the beneficiaries of the generous support of the CIA, only to become the United States' 'Public Enemy Number One', and could, by this fact, appear to be so in the eyes of large sections of popular opinion.

The counterpoint is being drawn here from the reconstruction of national, popular and democratic alliances, such as those that brought down some dictators (Mali being a prime example), but also apartheid in South Africa, and that also brought about Lula's victory in Brazil. These advances – modest when we consider the present dominance of imperialist aggression – are nevertheless potential harbingers of the renaissance of the southern peoples' front.

In conclusion, the struggle for social justice, democracy, and a multi-centric equal international order are inseparable. The United States' establishment understands it perfectly. This is why they are moving ahead to implement their own hegemonic international order, by substituting the use of brutal military force for international law and justice. They know very well that – for them – this is the only means to impose an unjust neoliberal social order of inequality, condemning democracy, where it exists, to degradation, and making it impossible elsewhere. Resistance movements and people's struggles must understand this. They must understand that their plans for social progress have no future, if the United States' plan for military hegemony is not stopped.

PART 1

Times of Confrontation

1

Arab-African Relations from Liberation to Globalisation

Is it legitimate today to sub-divide the African continent according to the races it contains? Can this, moreover, be simply done with an a-historic content for race, or an idealistic concept of identities? Or are we going to talk about the Arabism of Egypt, Libya or Maghreb as if it were an identity gained with the advent of the Arab race, implying that these were 'lands with no people' – a sort of 'No Man's Land' or fragile spaces that could not confront the invading empire? Or will Arabism equate with Bantuism or negroism sometimes, and Hausa and Swahili cultures at other times? If we continue in this vein, we will end up with Arabism confronting Africanism with no scientific definitions, and thus quit the domain of social sciences and enter the realm of easy ideologies, in an epoch of the great phantom ideologies.

There is no scope here for a comprehensive study, nor does the author assume an apologetic attitude towards the stances of geography or history, while the catastrophic imperialist globalisation and its product in the continent and the Arab world leave no place for escape into past models. However, the scientific mode of thinking may help us comprehend the social, cultural and historic reactions, governed by the laws of 'dialectics' and contradiction in the epochs of the great migrations and empires, until all were encompassed within the logic of the polarising world capitalist system. Thus, the Arabs and Africans entered the colonial era as products of the world capitalist system. In the colonial era, identities did not develop, for they developed and crystallised only in the era of national liberation, as we shall see later.

The phase of demographic intermingling and interaction, or acculturation, through the advent of the historic empires (which were far more respectful

of the peoples than the present-day imperialist empire) saw the Roman Empire, followed by the Arab Islamic Empire. In the latter, the Arab race played a limited role, for a short period of time only, but its Islamic Arab culture was disseminated mainly by various elements (from the East, West, or even South of Europe), which prompted the peoples in the North of the continent, and other parts as well, to adopt this political and social culture. For historic reasons, Egypt and Maghreb became the centres for dissemination, anthropologically as well as politically, and the same factors stood behind its acceptance, or otherwise, at the borders of the Sahara, and limited parts of East Africa, Andalusia in Europe, and Persia in Asia, etc. The intensity of the force of the local reaction, and the specific historical and geographical circumstances decided the fact that Egypt identified itself as 'Arab', Maghreb to a lesser degree, while Spain and Iran refused the Arab identity. In Africa rose the empires of Mali and the Songhai, as well as the city states in Kilwa, Lamu and Mombasa.

The Spread of the Arab Islamic Empire

The spread of the Islamic Empire in African Sahara did not lead to the disappearance or distortion of societies or languages as happened later on under colonial rule. Ajayi, Davidson, Ogot and others speak a lot about this phase of interaction, and the emergence of the empires of the Hausa, the Fulani, the Manding, and the Amhara or Abysinnians, who could not, in their turn, annihilate the Yoruba, or the Mossas, or the Somalis. No one belonging to the Cape Town school or any other can deny the product of all these empires in two fields: the existence of various forms of class of social exploitation, or enslavement; and the absence of the concept of Africanism in these conditions. The same is true of the absence of 'Arabism' in the domain of Islamic culture. The dominant feature was the resistance offered by these peoples through the centuries, in various traditional forms, to colonialism: as demonstrated, for instance, by the peoples of Egypt, the Fula and the Zulus in their isolated local cultural units. Such empires and kingdoms of the pre-colonial era could have developed into modern states had it not been for the colonial intervention. All these countries lived through the beginnings or the embryo of the modern state during the same era as the European states, but were distorted or interrupted by capitalist colonial invasion. These countries did not suffer the same defeat during the period of the Arab-African interaction. Hence, new conditions for the development of new identities emerged, but gave rise to deformed identities in Mamluki Egypt, and Maghreb under the Bays, and isolated elsewhere in the

continent. We should note here that Egypt and parts of North Africa suffered under Islamic Ottoman occupation prior to the capitalist expansion in the rest of the continent, and this Ottoman citizenship predominated up to the environs of Mali and Zimbabwe, with no intimation of Arabism. Similarly, the Jihad meant for a long time the management of the interaction in Maghreb and West Africa, still on an Islamic basis.

It will be necessary to point out the fact that Egyptian historians do not generally speak about one Egypt, but rather about Pharaonic, Coptic, Mamluk, or Ottoman Egypt, then modern state Egypt, and Arab Egypt since the Nasser era. Thus, stress is not laid upon any one identity, but rather, on the dynamism of the identity, or its development according to the laws of dialectics. However, some stabilising elements may prove their importance in influencing future developments, even if not consciously concerned with the identity. Here, we note the deep presence of the Arabic language and its traditions in the African North, while Islamic sciences and Islamic *ulamas* played the biggest role in the rest of the continent, to the extent of writing some of their contributions in Ajami (African languages in Arabic characters), rather than in Arabic. Such a close loyalty to Islam, and not Arabism, lay behind the different degrees of interaction between the various regions of the continent. It is therefore astonishing to see some African scholars follow their colonial predecessors in denying the existence of a certain Islamic-African identity (or even Arab as in the case of the Hausa or Fulani), which need not be in full agreement with the models of the identities born of the ideologies in vogue.

Phases of Modern Identity Building

Following this dialectical methodology, we can proceed to the study of one of the main phases of modern identity building – and I insist on speaking of phases and not stable conditions – which shows new characteristics in conformity with the new dialectics imposed by the colonial and imperial epochs.

To be brief, we shall proceed directly to the phase of pan-Africanism and pan-Arabism, which were concurrent with all similar pan movements, whether Islamic, Turanic, Slavic, or even Arian (German or Nazi). We shall first examine the traditions inherited by our Arab and African region prior to the emergence of these pan movements, i.e. inherited from the period of the colonial invasion, after the hegemony of the world capitalist system. During that period of two to three centuries, the colonial ideology, the 'negation from history' was imposed (Cabral 1966 and Rodney1972). The big social entities were negated, as well as the principal linguistic entities at the hands

of colonial anthropologists (Prah 2001). Another instance of this 'negation' which had almost become a self-choice after being imposed was the ideology of tribalism (Mafeje 1971).

The emergence of pan-Arabism or Africanism was more of a political phenomenon than a socio-political development. We have therefore to question the popular content of these pan movements, their spontaneous consistence with the socio-political movement, and the role of the new consciousness in reforming that movement. Now that building consciousness has become an endeavour in itself, we have to ascertain the role of its actors, and the masses that adhere to it, in order to make sure that this new Africanism or Arabism is the same as the pan movement of before! Since any 'policy' has its own social, political and cultural base, it is imperative to define these elements very clearly when studying Africanism and the pan movement. The same holds in the case of Arabs, Arabity and pseudo-Arabism. Such a study will show that the new Africanism is much more recent than pan-Africanism, and similarly, pseudo-Arabism is more recent than pan-Arabism.

The pan-African movement was conceived in the diaspora, and the 'other' in its view was not colonialism in particular, but the oppressor, which gave rise to various tendencies within the movement that were not directly related to liberation from colonialism. Such tendencies appeared with Garvey, or Blyden, or the leaders of the Negritude or Francophone movements, who did not take a clear anti-colonial attitude except after the development of the national liberation movements after the Second World War. Although Du Bois and James were clearly anti-colonial, unfortunately they were not the most vocal within the movement, and this condition still persists up till today. This may explain partly its weak influence among the peoples of the continent. We may even contend that the weak anti-colonial stand at the inception of the African movement led to its weak relation with the Arab movement, which was openly anti-colonial from the start.

On the other hand, the pan-Arab movement was conceived around the beginning of the 20th century, like its pan-African counterpart. It started in similar conditions on the initiative of certain groups of politicised Christian intellectuals opposed to the tyranny of the Ottoman coloniser. While the African movement started – alienated – in the diaspora, the Arab movement was also partly alienated at the start for three reasons: first, it was mostly Levantine in origin; second, it was mainly Christian in a predominantly Muslim world; third, it did not gain the whole-hearted support of Cairo and its intellectuals at its start, nor did it get the full support of Maghreb which

was on the throes of its 'Islamic' insurgence against the French who gave their efforts for subjugation an anti-Muslim character from the start. Thus, the pan-Arab movement in its turn did not gain much popularity until after World War II. A thorough analysis of both movements shows that national liberation retained the commanding position of the rise and deterioration of both movements, and their inter-relations as well.

In brief, we may conclude that the political turmoil attached to both movements was the driving force for their charismatic leaderships after independence, and which put the independence of the Congo at the heart of the Arab liberation movement (before that of Aden, and during the Algerian revolution). It also kept the fight against apartheid at the heart of both movements, and led to the creation in Casablanca, in 1961, of a group combining three countries of the Arab North, and three countries from sub-Saharan Africa. This group created its common post and customs units, as well as ministerial committees of all sorts, soon to be followed by the creation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. In the latter, Egypt and Algeria played prominent roles, and especially outstanding was the role played by the Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of the Colonies. At that time in the sixties, the author was a researcher in the team of the bureau detailed by Gamal Abdel Nasser for African affairs, was responsible for the various offices belonging to more than 22 African liberation movements, and a member of the expatriate committee that was responsible for the presence and wellbeing of some 20,000 students from all parts of Africa (north and south), who were getting free education, like all Egyptian students, in all grades of education.

Of course, we had to face certain everyday problems from some unruly youths, and a certain cultural tradition of aversion against 'black' youth. There was also some exaggerated talk about the 'Black Giant' (Nasser), and also about the civilising role of Islam and Arabism in Africa, and the insistence of the Islamic movements on the importance of dissemination of Islam and the Arabic language, etc. Some African governments complained that it was not of much use to have their youth receive religious education in Al-Azhar and not in regular schools and universities, and Abdel Nasser responded by creating special sections to teach in English and French in the universities for African students.

We lived all through such problems of interaction. However, the discourse against Arabs, and the historic legacy of slave trade, came only from openly reactionary sources as we used to say, and it was no coincidence that such

talk came from some of the leaders of the Negritude Movement and capitals such as Abidjan, Dakar and Nairobi, which are well known for their entente with imperialist powers. This was no surprise since the revision of history is an ideological process as much as a cultural one. However, I would stress that the tune of the common national liberation was the more prominent, and was much more credible for African unity than the racist accusations or the negative versions of the historic relations between the Arabs and Africa. This confused attitude to the assessment of social history should receive more attention in future.

From Liberation to Solidarity

From liberation to solidarity and from solidarity to cooperation: this was the trend of Arab-African relations up till the 1990s when the interaction came almost to a standstill. By the end of the 1960s, the symbols of national liberation had almost all been toppled, by *coups d'état*, or in Egypt's case, by the imperialist Zionist aggression. The leading political voice grew weaker at the beginning of the 1970s, although the armed struggle was still rising in Africa and Palestine as an indication of the continuing unrest of our peoples. The Arab-Israeli war of 1973 was an attempt at taking breath, but it had ambivalent effects. It showed the depth of the African-Arab solidarity (with Egypt, Syria and Palestine) on the one hand, but caused some losses to the development plans of the newly liberated nations of Africa, due to the rise in petrol prices, on the other hand. At the same time, the imperialist powers started their counter attacks against the Third World, by imposing the newly conceived policies of so-called economic reform and structural adjustment, which meant the wave of privatisations, the reduction of the commitment of the state, and the resulting deterioration of public services. To better achieve these goals, the mechanisms of Third World solidarity such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the UNCTAD were reduced to ghosts of the past.

However, we must note that during the 1970s, the revolutionary fervour was still apparent in Africa: we saw Algeria assume the role of Nasser at the head of the Group of 77 to build a new economic order; in the heart of the continent, the armed struggle achieved good results in Guinea Bissau, Angola and Mozambique; and the struggle against apartheid rose to new heights in South Africa. The Arab and African liberation struggle got world recognition when Arafat and Sam Nujoma were received at the United Nations, as the General Assembly recognised 'the right of the struggle against colonialism by all means' (meaning the armed struggle). Severing political relations with

Israel was another sign of the continued solidarity between peoples whose main concern was still national liberation. On the Arab side, we saw Libya try to continue the role of Egypt in helping the African liberation movements, and Sudan sign the historic reconciliation agreement with the South in Addis Ababa in 1972, and Maghreb recognise Mauritania. This led to Arab solidarity with African nations in their plight due to the rise of oil prices, when the Arab Summit in Algiers created a special fund to compensate the African states for any difficulties caused by the rising oil prices.

Still, we must admit that the discourse of 'common liberation' was being replaced by that of 'solidarity' in an economic crisis that looked very much like the poor relatives were being helped by their more affluent relatives. It was a shift from the discourse of 'revolution' to that of 'riches'. The issue was no more one of cooperation, but one of give and take. This left the door wide open to compromise solutions with racist regimes, as in the case of the Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel (1979) and the Komati Agreement between Mozambique and South Africa (1984). This all led to the demise of the solidarity trend itself as time went by.

Yet, the relations between the two groups continued to develop even against the trend pursued by the world order to contain any independent blocks, which culminated in the destruction of the socialist block itself – the main antagonist to the imperialist capitalist block. We shall not elaborate on the continued institutional forms of Arab-African cooperation, which prove the will of the two sides to keep interacting, even under these unfavourable conditions. This will is structural as well as functional, and is bound to stay alive unless the globalisation mechanisms manage to stifle all such trends for cooperation between the oppressed, and not only between Arabs and Africans. Thus, after an Arab-African Summit in Cairo, attended by 62 countries in March 1977, a development bank, a fund for technical assistance, and permanent cooperation committees were created between the two sides. There was also an agreement to create a joint Arab-African cultural institute and a permanent trade exhibition. All this demonstrated the deep wish for a common historical presence within Third World structures, yet it also indicated the nature of the regimes that stood behind that entire endeavour. Those regimes were an integral part of the world capitalist system, and not merely on its periphery, as proved by the investment of the integral amount of the oil capital in American and European financial institutions, and in US government bonds. They also comply fully with the policies of the international financial institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) of privatisation, reducing the role of the state, and the exclusion of the masses in the Arab and African

worlds from any real participation in the production process. All these ended with the reduction of the above framework to an empty structure, with no effectiveness whatsoever starting from the 1980s.

The Spirit of Liberation Loses Its Heat

When the spirit of liberation loses its heat, the feelings of solidarity lie low and the cooperation institutions deteriorate between groups of people already imbued with mutual mistrust, it becomes very difficult to mobilise them for united action. This becomes even harder as the governing regimes get more involved with the militarised imperialist leaderships which dare, these days, to resort to direct colonisation (in Iraq) to which they had not dared resort for almost a century. In this new atmosphere of globalisation, rife with the ideas of conflict of civilisations – where Islam had assumed the role of ultimate evil in place of communism – Arab-African relations are imbued with new hallucinations about the close connection between Islam and Arabism, as a follow-up to the old doubts about the connection between Arabism and Islam in the first place.

There are enough residual problems to keep such doubts lively, as well as certain elements that might entrain a country or another in this anti-cooperation direction. There is also an intentional confusion in the presentation of certain issues. This situation may be better understood when we remember the global framework in which Arab-African relations take place. The Arab world has been subjected to open oppression since the early nineties (in Iraq and Palestine), as an exercise in the military projects of the USA since it assumed the role of the single military pillar. In such a framework, it is easy to make the connection between Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. Then, over and above, came the terrorist attacks against the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the conflicts between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, and the application of Sharia law in some Nigerian states. Of course, the American media, in spreading such accusations, intentionally ignore that it was the US that was the first to cooperate with the Islamic fundamentalists in the Arab world to confront the forces of the Left, and recruited and trained the terrorists of Osama Bin Laden to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. We shall not elaborate on this issue here, but it is closely connected to the American and European position in Somalia and Mauritania (on the border between Arabs and Africans). Similarly, the whole issue of South Sudan is now presented in the light of the 'Arab sin', in the framework of Muslim-Christian conflict. This is instead of studying it as social historical problems, as it is not

the Arabs who are in Nigeria or Somalia, or were in Rwanda some or all of the time, as some friends in the Cape Town school would like to assert!

More problems may afflict Arab-African relations with the rise of the role of Israel in the world arena in contrast with the situation in the 1970s. Israel is now playing a prominent role in the Arab region on behalf of the United States, and enjoys a position of strength in the world financial lobby. A special position is reserved for Israel in the measures adopted by the European Union for the Mediterranean Partnership Project. It also plays a leading role in the world market for diamonds, and hence meddles in the illicit diamond trade that fuels the ethnic conflicts in central and western Africa. It is even trying to meddle in the recent trend for renegotiating the partition of the Nile waters.

Although all these problems have a global dimension, the constant efforts of the Zionist movement to increase its influence, on the one hand, and the nationalist and fundamentalist reaction, on the other hand, urge the Arab side to look forward to some kind of breathing space from the Africans, in order to keep their relations on course as they used to be. It remains to be seen to what extent the protagonists of the pan-African movement and the African Union will respond to this requirement in order to preserve this important block of the Third World. Is it possible to rise above the narrow limits of the local or regional considerations, and let this power realise its due position in the WTO and OPEC? Could these two groups realise that the future of the world order is not necessarily American, especially in the light of the difficulties the US encounters in the Middle East, and the greater role played by an enlarged European Union and a renewed role for the United Nations? I believe that within such a framework, Arab-African relations may experience better conditions in spite of the unfavourable situation caused by the hegemonistic mechanisms of American globalisation. Arab and African intellectuals will have to overcome some issues in the field of ideology and methodology considering the following:

(i) History cannot be arrested and transformed to non-historic facts or phenomena, and the dialectics of the relations between peoples have resulted in the re-reading of such phenomena.

(ii) Analysis according to race or colour, or even tradition or region, is not appropriate in the era of globalisation. Therefore, Arab or African identities cannot be read as 'closed units' in an open theatre of the anti-globalization movement.

(iii) The ideological mechanisms and the media trumped up by the globalisation circles create the issues that keep us, consciously or unconsciously, at each other's throats.

2

Mohammad Fayek: African Memories of the July Revolution*

Great national events remain alive in the memories of nations. They stand fast against all tempestuous attempts to obliterate them from the national memory, and they implant other images that once again foster opposing interests.

After World War II, Africa lived through some dramatic events concerning the destinies of its peoples. The July Revolution in 1952 was foremost among these events, not only because of its deep impact on Egypt, but also due to its echoes in the wide field of the Arab, African and Asian worlds. The revolution confronted vested interests and accepted postulates, revived hopes and aspirations, and set up alliances that constituted the elements of an experience of the national liberation movement all over the world, and in Africa in particular. Such an experience cannot be obliterated from the memory of the peoples in question for a long period of time. Such considerations impose a study, in depth, of the July Revolution in Egypt, and its ramifications in Africa. A record of this experience is necessary, to be based on the recorded documents, but also on oral history as kept in the hearts and minds of the makers of the revolution, and their close aids and confidants, who are intent on keeping the memories of the great events in Egypt and their relations with the African liberation movements. Hence this contribution, which presents the experience of Mr Fayek – the man responsible for African affairs in Nasserist Egypt. The following is a summary of the true record of the events of the period 1952-70 as remembered by Mr Fayek, and is presented under the main headings of:

* The author conducted 5 sessions, totaling 10 hours, of dialogue with Mr Fayek during the period from 2 June to 1 July 2002. The material was reviewed by Mr Fayek before preparation for publication.

- The Climate that Imposed Egypt's Outreach Towards Africa
- The July Revolution's Concepts of Africa: The Identity and the Strategy
- Institutionalising the Egyptian Action in Africa
- The African Policies of Egypt and the Relations with the Liberation Movements
- Some Final Remarks: An Open Conclusion.

Lately, there has been a proliferation of books recording the memories or memoirs of various personalities purporting to contribute to the history of the revolution. Few of these make an authentic scientific contribution despite media embellishments. Yet, oral history, if true and authentic, has become part and parcel of the history of nations.

In some cases, however, the narrator lets loose his memories of the events, trying to reshape them to suit his point of view, or to utilize them to further his own purposes. With the absence of many essential documents of the revolution, we still have to rely on the oral document, at least, to point the way for research; and that, more than 50 years after this great event.

Our guest, Mr Fayek (born in 1929), never tried to sit down and record the momentous events in which he took part, or in which he played the leading role. Yet, among the chief figures of the revolution, he may be considered a living document. However, because of the nature of the field he devoted his life to, and the clandestine conditions of most of the liberation leaders with whom he had to deal, it was inconceivable to keep full records of such meetings, either in the form of a verbal process or confirmation letters. Thus, he may be considered a living oral document. In addition, the special relationship between Mr Fayek and Gamal Abdel Nasser in this context could not take the form of official directives via official paperwork, in view of the nature of the measures taken and the quick pace of events of the African liberation action.

The oral document we are recording now is the outcome of a lengthy dialogue between Mr Fayek and the author, who does not pretend to have participated in shaping the events, but who was all the time near Mr Fayek, between the African Affairs offices in Helliopolis and more than 20 national liberation movement's offices in Zamalek, plus missions to some African capitals after independence.

I remember the first time Mr Fayek appeared in the premises of the African League in Zamalek one day in March 1956, where we were, a group of young men from Egypt, Somalia, Eritrea, Uganda, Southern Sudan, Nigeria and Chad, reading an article in the *Newsweek* magazine of March 1956, entitled

"The Black Nation". This young group was attracted to the relation of the revolution with the Black Giant as Africa was known in those days in literature and the poems of Al-Faitoury and Abdou Badawi (and maybe some of the over-sensitivity between the blackness of Africans and the white skin of some Arabs was softened by the nickname of Nasser as the 'dark-skinned giant'). Our protector, Abdel Aziz Isshak, introduced us to Captain Fayek, whom he described as the sponsor of African renaissance in Egypt. We were surprised by the appearance of this white-skinned young man (he was only 27 years old then), who was a most polite and quiet person. That was the start of a lifelong partnership, not only in action, but in a sacred mission of participation in the message of national liberation, not only in Egypt, but in the Arab and African worlds as well.

Mohammad Fayek graduated from the Military Academy in 1948, which he had joined after finishing his secondary education at Ibrahimieh School in Cairo. After graduation, he was posted to an anti-aircraft unit at Helwan near Cairo and, until 1952, he attended several training courses at military administration schools. There he was noticed by his instructor, Lt. Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, for his meticulousness in his work and his strict discipline. In the early morning of 23 July 1952, the leadership of the revolution detailed him to one of the units besieging Abdin Palace. A few months after the revolution, Nasser assigned him to work with Zakaria Mohyi Ed-Dine who was creating a new General Intelligence Command as part of his responsibility for internal security. However, Fayek had direct access to Nasser wherever African affairs were concerned. Nasser asked him to study Economics, for which purpose he joined the Faculty of Commerce, and took him as one of his aides to all the international conferences that he attended. Fayek began his education about Africa in a general form by reading *Inside Africa* by John Gunther (1955), but he continued through more sophisticated material, ended with a thorough reading of Karl Marx's *Das Capital.* He also read some writings of the Muslim Brotherhood. Such a stress on self-education through intensive reading in a variety of cultural disciplines was typical of some of the more prominent July officers.

All through our 10-hour dialogue, over a period of one month, Fayek never tried to pose as the man of destiny as many others do, although he was often the sole actor in his field of action, due to the special conditions that I mentioned above. On my part, I did not want to limit myself to the role of the outside interlocutor, inasmuch as I had, at least, some knowledge of the events in question. Thus, I had my own agenda for the historical document

when posing my questions, while he would go forth in narrating the events with no apparent scheme in mind, but to remember as much as he could. It was clear that his memories were strained somehow by the ordeal of the ten years he spent in prison (1971-81). He felt the pain of having lost all documents pertaining to the efforts he had deployed during eighteen of his most active years, after his arrest on the orders of President Anwar Sadat on 13 May 1971. He knew he had to rely solely on memory because of the absence of the documents, and in reply to my provocative questions, he would ask for my contribution as a part actor or witness.

It was notable that Fayek seldom mentioned his fast ascension in the state hierarchy, except for stating that he was responsible for African affairs. Indeed, this was a general heading which covered a succession of responsible positions. Fayek held successively the position of responsibility for African affairs until 1965, then Councillor for African and Asian Affairs (1966), then Minister for National Guidance (1967), then Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (1968), and then Minister for National Guidance and Information until 1971.

Some readers may infer from the above how modest he is; others may deduce how responsible and close to the leader he was. Some may even conclude that Africa was a space apart from the main cultural atmosphere, or the vicissitudes of the responsible persons in charge of its affairs. However, Fayek did not deny the existence of some obstacles he had to face with African action as far as the media were concerned, or his own problems with the media. He also complained of the bureaucratic hurdles he had to overcome, but in the end, his enthusiasm for liberation movements that looked up to Egypt and to Nasser, its leader, for guidance and help gained some ground in response to a sentimental gesture of appeal. Although many in similar positions would pour forth about July and Nasser, and their 'historical role', Fayek, after his long years in prison, published just one book entitled 'Nasser and the African Revolution 1979, which took the form of memoirs rather than a book of history or a political historical study. This latter fact made me very conscious to guide the narrator into areas he had not touched in his book, and to help make his narrative more precise and in a more chronicled context.

The Climate that Imposed Egypt's Outreach Towards Africa

Fayek mentions the preconceived ideas he had – in common with his leader – about Egypt's relations with national liberation movements. He had not actively participated in the Palestine War against the Zionist colonial project, nor was that a topic of immediate concern in view of the deteriorating situation

in Egypt itself. Yet, since his graduation, he had been acutely conscious of the colonial presence of the British troops in the canal zone, which was a topic of his studies for the grade of captain, together with the schemes of the Europeans and the Americans regarding the Middle East. His nationalist sentiments were nurtured by the British presence in the canal-zone, as explained by his teachers, foremost among whom was Nasser.

This nationalist sentiment was so strong that when he was detailed to the Intelligence Command, under Zakaria Mohyi Ed-Dine, with the duty of intelligence gathering about Israel, he would slip out in his spare time to join Kamal Refaat in helping the Fedayeen to harass the British troops in the canal zone. At the time, the negotiations for the withdrawal of British troops, as well as the question of Sudan, were on the agenda of the revolution. So, Fayek moved on to the Sudanese section of the Intelligence Command, which later became the African Section of that command, before being detached to join the Presidency itself in the 1960s.

Fayek explains Nasser's position on the right of self-determination for the Sudan. He stresses that Nasser could not distinguish between liberation from British colonialism and the Sudan question. He thought it was inconceivable to demand the ousting of colonialism everywhere and the right of self-determination for all peoples, especially in Africa, and deny that right to Sudan, under the traditional slogan of the 'unity of the Nile Valley'. Fayek recognises that the aspiration was that Sudan would choose unity with Egypt afterwards, but Nasser foresaw the complications with large sections of Sudanese public opinion if he refused the independence of Sudan. Indeed, he thought the British expected that the young officers would not relinquish the demand of unity with Sudan, and thus make the question of the independence of both countries more remote. Thus, he decided early on how to outflank the British and American schemes by accepting the right of self-determination for Sudan. Simultaneously, and while the negotiations about the evacuation of British troops from Egypt were on-going, he started action against British colonialism in East Africa, and against American and Israeli influence in Ethiopia. Such action took the form of programmes broadcast to East Africa, about which the British complained during the negotiations, and certain activities in Ethiopia, such as putting a stop to anti-Egyptian activities in Sudan, in solidarity with for Egypt stopping the said activities. This explains the numerous meetings, publicised in the Egyptian press, between Egyptian leaders, including President Naguib, and personalities from Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria (British colonies at the time) in 1953. Fayek also remembers the

broadcasting of special programmes for some of the southern Sudanese tribes such as the Dinka and the Shellook, in an attempt to create special relations with the southern Sudan, and through them to East Africa, as exemplified by the broadcasts in Swahili and Tigrean.

The July Revolution's Concepts of Africa: The Identity and the Strategy

An important point in Mr Fayek's narrative was the cultural and political atmosphere that decided the priorities of the revolution in its contacts with the surrounding world, such as exemplified in the *Philosophy of the Revolution* written by Nasser in 1954. He stressed, as I had expected, the difference between the basics of historical loyalties, of belonging to certain civilisations, and of the strategic imperatives of the security of Egypt. The young officers were keen to know everything about Israel, and when the Israeli aggression on Gaza came as an ugly surprise, their first priority was to ensure Egypt's security by any means. Thus, it became clear that the Palestinian question was inseparable from the concerns of defending Egypt's interests against the colonial occupation and imperialist machinations. This meant their Arab concerns were mainly the continuation of their fight for independence and national security. Yet, they also found that the same problem of independence from colonialism was looming on their neighbours in Africa.

When I pointed out to Mr Fayek the question of the three circles in the *Philosophy of the Revolution* and the order of priorities in that booklet, he replied that it was obvious that Egypt belonged to the Arab World and the Islamic as well, but then we had to confront colonialism in Egypt, the Arab World and in Africa. He said:

> While we were trying to gain as much intelligence about Israel and its imperialist connections, I was reading John Gunther's book *Inside Africa*, from which I learnt about the problems between Ethiopia and Eritrea. I learnt how Wold Ab Wold Mariam was helping Emperor Haile Selassie in his attempts at the complete annexation of Eritrea instead of the federal status of that country (Fayek 2002).

Fayek then enquired about the whereabouts of Wold Mariam and invited him to Egypt, and then they also welcomed other African leaders such as Idris Mohammad Adam and Ibrahim Sultan. This quest for African personalities opposed to colonialism led Fayek to visiting the Azhar area and making the acquaintance of African and Asian students there, in order to gain the maximum information about their countries. He also chose those who could participate in the broadcasting programmes and, hence, the African League in Zamalek was the chosen venue for those youth. I personally witnessed how

some of them became leaders of national opposition groups, or liaison officers with their national leaders, who arranged for those leaders to be invited to Egypt, and meet with those responsible for African affairs in the country. Other Islamic personalities from Chad, Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana visited Egypt in those days, and were welcomed into the African League, where we made their most instructive acquaintance.

Fayek also mentions another area of involvement of Egypt in African affairs. In those days Egypt was appointed as one of the members of the Consultative Council for Somalia which the UN put under Italian tutelage. When the Egyptian member of that Council, Kamal Salah Ed-Dine, was assassinated, Fayek went to the Egyptian Consulate in Mogadishu to take part in the on-going investigations. The Italian authorities took the decision to deport him, but Nasser threatened to disrupt the Egyptian-Italian relations if that decision was implemented.

In that atmosphere, Fayek never felt a priority of Arab over African affairs in the Egyptian strategy. On the contrary, the whole context was that of a growing national liberation movement worldwide. The culmination of this trend was the participation of Nasser in the Bandoeng Conference in April 1955, after the signing of the treaties on Sudan and on the evacuation of British troops from Egypt. There was what Fayek calls 'the Discovery of Asia', with its vast populations and great leaderships, hitherto apparently unknown to the leaders of the revolution. Egypt gained its importance there as a representative of Africa (there were only three independent African states at the time). In Bandoeng, Nasser started the warm relationship with Chou En Lai, which led him on to the crucial relationship with the Soviet Union and the first transaction of Soviet arms to Egypt in September of the same year.

This warm relationship continued despite the Sino-Soviet conflict, and was rivalled only by the warm relationship with Nehru of India. Thus, Bandoeng delimited strongly the first circle of Egypt's national liberation strategy, which widened its outlook on Asia, as its relationship with Sudan was its first outlook on Africa.

Starting from 1955, and after the Anglo-French-Israeli aggression of 1956, the action in support of the Algerian revolutionaries continued and even looked like some sort of revenge on the French colonialists. The opening on the African North thus began with the role of Fathy Al-Dib of the Afro-Asian circle. Similarly, the action in East Africa went on to counter the British and Israeli influence there. Also, the relations with Syria in the East were stressed in order to encircle Israel, and make adherence to the Arab national unity an integral part of the strategy of national liberation.

However, despite the strong adherence to the principle of Arab unity as a basis for the Nasserist concept of the national state, there was no attempt, according to Fayek, to institutionalize this concept in the light of this new spirit. The reason for this may be the existence of the Arab League with its traditional pact, and the existence of other forms of institutions, both official and non-governmental, such as the Union of Arab Lawyers and the Union of Arab Workers, etc. However, these institutions never showed the warmth of the Bandoeng Conference, the following Conference of Afro-Asian Solidarity in Cairo in December 1957, the Conference of Independent African States in Accra in April 1958, or the Conference of all African Peoples, also in Accra in December 1958. In these conferences, the Algerian revolution was adopted as an African cause, a status that the Palestinian Question did not gain except in the Kampala African Summit in 1975. All participants to those conferences were conscious of their institutions of national liberation, which was crystallised in 1960, in the Progressive Group for National Liberation in Casa Blanca, after its role in opposition to the American influence in Congo. Thus, the three circles were combined into one anti-imperialist and anti-colonial circle with no particular priorities within, as some writings still insist today.

Institutionalizing the Egyptian Action in Africa

I kept back the forms of institutional action in African affairs until after the talk of the beginnings and the concepts. It appears that the great events were, sometimes, the moving factor and not a theoretical anti-imperialist stand. Such pragmatism was also imposed by the nationalistic attitude which took the decision to back this nationalist movement or another as was dictated by their respective conditions, or their ability to come to Cairo or make contact with any of those charged with African affairs. The structure of the new national state in Egypt made such a state of affairs possible. It was neither a typical liberal state with a strict hierarchy or division of institutions and authority, nor was it the revolutionary ideological state that planned to export its revolution in a centralised manner, or set its revolutionary standards to evaluate the different forces of national liberation, as in the Soviet or Chinese cases.

While Egypt was conscious of the imperialist plots against it in the Nile Valley, which was the motive for its retaliatory action in that region, it also took action in other regions as in the case of confronting French colonialism in support of the Algerian revolution. So, we see the revolutionaries of Cameroon early in Cairo with Dr Momie, or Egypt taking an active part in

support of the Congo and confronting the imperialist plots in that country. This general attitude of confronting imperialism sheds light on Fayek's role in supporting all the African liberation movements, and the support of the revolutionary opposition for some 'neo-colonial states', although this latter support was kept within close limits.

Hence, we note the multiplicity of personalities in contact with these liberation movements, whether in an institutional manner or otherwise. We note from Fayek's words the multiplicity of persons or positions, together with a certain degree of centrality. This latter had its origin in the charisma of the leader, and not merely the president, which colours all aspects of the state action. Yet, Fayek mentions a multiplicity of positions of contact with such movements, which becomes the project of a major state which was getting ready to play a prominent role in international politics, the absence of which today is not our subject here. Such a multiplicity was not even noted in the Soviet and Chinese relations with African liberation movements.

I shall not repeat here the details mentioned in Fayek's memoirs, but shall merely mention that such multiplicity occurred after the Bandoeng Conference in 1955 and the Peoples' Afro-Asian Conference in Cairo in May 1958. According to Fayek, the African Affairs started in 1953 as an offshoot of the General Intelligence Command under Zakaria Mohyi Ed-Dine, who did not follow its work closely except in so far as the Sudanese affairs were concerned. All other African affairs were the concern of Mr Fayek who went around visiting Al Azhar University and the Islamic student quarters in Bo'oth, looking for the Eritreans, the Nigerians, the Senegalese, etc. Although some press reports in 1956 mention a prominent role for Zakaria Mohyi Ed-Dine and Al-Qaissouni in running African affairs, Fayek did not feel any such role.

Another venue for Africans was the African League in Zamalek, where Fayek met the concepts and efforts of some intellectuals, researchers, businessmen and former diplomats. The League and its periodical African Renaissance were the first attempt of Egyptian cultural society to look at Africa. There, a limited number of young Egyptian intellectuals, myself included, had the honour to show their cultural and political interest in African affairs. Yet, no similar interest was demonstrated by the Ministry of National Guidance, or by any of Egypt's universities. I would add here my personal testimony as the person responsible for relations with African national liberation movements, within the framework of the African League, the latter being a main source of live information about Africa. Fayek would invite interested pressmen and writers to frequent the League and get first-hand information there.

After the Afro-Asian Peoples' Conference, interest in African affairs was renewed, and the Institute for Sudanese Studies was renamed the Institute for African Studies, but its scope remained limited within the traditional disciplines of geographical and anthropological studies until such time as the new generations of professors of political sciences took over the leadership.

The Secretariat of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) headed by Youssef Al-Sibaai was another axis of popular action in collaboration with African liberation movements. Fouad Galal of the People's Assembly also played a prominent role. In addition, after the African Peoples' Conference in Accra (December 1958) and the meetings with African Trade Union Leaders, such as Titga (Ghana), Seddiq (Maghreb) and Tom Mboya (Kenya), Ahmed Fahim's role as their Egyptian counterpart became prominent too. This multiplicity of roles and efforts, as well as the growing problems in Congo, made it imperative to combine all these efforts under a central leadership. So, in 1960, the Office for African Affairs was created at the Presidency with Mr Fayek at its head.

We must remember that Egypt had always had a prominent role to play in African affairs in the UN since its appointment into the Consultative Council for Somalia in 1953, and later on, with the problems over the recognition of the new government of Congo, and the opposition to South Africa's schemes against South-West Africa (Namibia), and southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Several Egyptian diplomats, such as Mohammad Hasan Al-Zayat, Murad Ghaleb, Mostafa Rateb and Emran Al-Shafei, played prominent roles in these problems. However, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs never showed particular interest in African affairs, nor were there any marked initiatives by the ministers in such affairs.

With the wave of independence of African states in the early 1960s, Egypt started to note the importance of economic activities; so, the Nasr Company for Exports and Imports was established with Mohammad Ghanem at its head. This was another lever in the African action of Egypt. So was the developing role of Al Azhar University, and the Islamic Council under Tewfik Eweida.

Thus, according to Fayek, all these seemingly independent institutions were governed centrally by the leader who gave such instructions through his only aide for African affairs, namely Fayek himself. In taking such decisions, Nasser was guided by the detailed reports supplied by Fayek, as well as the various notes and memoranda submitted by some of the above responsible persons via his Secretariat for Information. This secretariat would also receive reports from Egypt's embassies abroad and from the African sections of General

Intelligence. The leader's instructions went to Fayek alone in his capacity as Director of African Affairs, thus he became the façade behind which all the above institutions operated. He was later promoted to the post of Deputy Minister in charge of Asian and African Affairs, then Minister of National Guidance in 1966, at the age of 37. Despite the wide-ranging responsibilities of this post, he expressed his satisfaction to his leader that he still retained the responsibility for African affairs as before. All through this dialogue, Mr Fayek reiterated the fact that despite these numerous institutions and agencies, the African character of Egypt was never expressed in the media and cultural venues in a manner strong enough to suit its real weight in the continent, or what he called the historical roots of Egypt's belonging to Africa.

The African Policies of Egypt, and the Relations with the Liberation Movements

The memories of Mr Fayek are rich in details of African action in Egypt, but they also carry the reader to the heart of the events and personalities concerned. When he talks of South Africa, for example, he frequently refers to the role of Oliver Tambo, the president and long-time leader of the African National Congress (ANC), before his illness and death soon after the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990. Mr Tambo's role is seldom mentioned in the media when referring to the nationalist movement in South Africa. Fayek also warmly refers to his relationship with Patrice Lumumba since their first meeting in Accra in 1958, and the complications of the problem of Congo in 1960, and Egypt's involvement in that problem, which seemed hard to explain by many observers. Similarly, he explains the intricacies of Egypt's stand on the Sino-Soviet confrontation. Despite the close relationship with the Soviet Union, and facilitating their contacts with African liberation movements through AAPSO, the relationship between Nasser and Chou En Lai was as warm as ever. He describes how he personally enjoyed his relationship with the Chinese Prime Minister during the latter's stay in Cairo for 10 days in 1965.

I may add here my own experience in this connection, where I kept my contacts, obviously with Fayek's approval, with six offices in the African League, for members of close friends of the Chinese side, ranging from the Cameroonian Opposition, to the Pan-African Congress. I even witnessed the conflicts between these pro-Chinese movements and the pro-Soviet ones known as the 'authentic movements', such as the ANC of South Africa, the MPLA of Angola, the PAIGC of Guinea Bissau, the FRELIMO of Mozambique, the SWAPO of Namibia and others. Egypt's consistent policy

was not to differentiate between such conflicting movements on account of their Soviet or Chinese affiliations. Indeed, this was the official policy adopted by the Committee for the Liberation of Colonies in Dar es Salaam, and Egypt followed it consistently.

Fayek also recounts how Nasser looked with respect at Emperor Haile Selassie and Ethiopia's role in Africa, and how he did not contemplate the secession of Eritrea, hoping that some sort of federal relationship would prevail. Egypt did not take a stand on the Eritrean problem on ethnic or religious grounds, nor did it try to push forward the leaders of the Eritrean Liberation Front after it was declared in Cairo in 1960. Similarly, Egypt never tried to use the centuries' old affiliation of the Ethiopian Church with the Egyptian Orthodox Church, after the Emperor severed the relation between the two churches. Indeed, Nasser never started skirmishes with Ethiopia except after it had started its action against Egypt with both the North and South Sudanese leaders. This was always Egypt's position towards the question of legitimacy and national unity of African states. As soon as a legal government was established, even if reactionary in nature, Egypt severed its relations with the respective liberation movement. The only exception was the case of Cameroon, as a sign of support for Algeria against France, and the case of the Congo, which was international in nature from the beginning.

As for national and territorial integrity, Fayek stresses the firm conviction of Egypt's revolutionary regime in such values. He cites Egypt's rejection of any special status for the Arab protectorates in the shore towns of Kenya, or for the Somalis in its northern district. Egypt also refused to support any secessionist movement in Congo, or in Nigeria where it cooperated with the federal government against the Biafran secession even under the conditions of Egypt's debacle of 1967.

Fayek considers that the norms adopted by the July Revolution and state, with regard to African conditions, have made it easier for Egypt to maintain cordial relations with African states than with Arab countries. Some may consider this to have been a pragmatic rather than a revolutionary stand while others may explain this by saying that in Africa, the question was simply the confrontation with colonialism, while the goals in the Arab world went much further.

Readers may find a possible answer to such questions when they note the principle of recognising the legitimacy of all systems of national independence (in many cases formal independence only), as opposed to the logic of 'states

of national liberation', which was the guiding principle of all peoples' conferences until the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The acceptance of such legitimacy meant the end of peoples' conferences, both Cairo and Accra acquiescing to this principle. The purpose was to avoid giving the opposition movements the chance to use such conferences as a springboard for their own ends. Thus, support was only given to the struggle against the remaining colonial positions. This firm stand helped prevent Egypt's involvement in many crises such as that of the Democratic Congo or the recognition of Mauritania. In the latter, a failure of communication meant that the Egyptian delegation to the Chatoura Arab Summit conference adopted the decision prompted by Maghreb of non-recognition, of Mauritania as independent State while the official Egyptian stand was to recognise the new state in view of Egypt's African considerations.

Fayek expounded the Egyptian position of non-intervention in the internal affairs of African states by citing the example of the Arab communities in East and West Africa where Egypt expressed its reservations on any illegal claims, and even on their conservative positions in many African countries. I asked Mr Fayek about the Egyptian practices towards the OAU and other African institutions, and it seemed Egypt was keen on institutionalising its African action as much as possible. I also asked if there were any feelings of rivalry with certain African countries, and he cited many facts that show how Egypt put the overall strategies above any passing details. Such a vision does not show the whole perspective, except after a certain lapse of time. Thus, we can contemplate Nkrumah's stance towards the Arab North, Nyerere's position after Egypt recognised the revolution in Zanzibar that led to the establishment of Tanzania, or the cooperation with Algeria in the Colonial Liberation Committee, etc.

The two thorny questions in our dialogue appeared to be that of El Nasr Export and Import Company, and of the African position towards Egypt after the debacle of 1967 and the vicissitudes of the national liberation policies after that debacle. Mr Fayek did not show any reservations about the El Nasr Company, and explained that it was the expression of a real need for creating new economic and commercial relations with this vast new economic sphere, and that it played a very constructive role in that field. The Egyptian commercial fleet also contributed towards this goal. The fact that it contributed in transporting some military hardware to some liberation movements in Africa was only a sideline activity that does not change the whole perspective.

As for the thornier question of the African position towards Egypt after 1967, he gave a simple explanation in the context of the pressure of the imperialist powers on African states. He explained that the debacle of 1967 did not mean the defeat of the July Revolution, nor was it an end to the national liberation struggles worldwide. Indeed, such struggles continued in the Arab world, in Vietnam, in Africa and Latin America for a whole decade after that, such that Nasser instructed him to follow the Asian affairs and widen his responsibilities to encompass Afro-Asian affairs.

Some Final Remarks: An Open Conclusion

The realities and memories remain open as long as life goes on with Mohammad Fayek as General Secretary of the Arab Organization for Human Rights and as a keen observer of African questions. He may feel satisfied to see Mandela active in the African arena, looking after the peoples' interests; Sam Njoma still president of Namibia and SWAPO who kept his office in Cairo for so long; Ibrahim Mokebi of the youth of the African League become the foreign minister of Uganda, and then ambassador to Cairo in 2002; and Ben Bella with his ever-lively enthusiasm heading an active forum to promote North-South dialogue. However, he may be concerned to see the one-time revolutionaries of the Congo, or their offspring, still fighting under the slogans of the insurgents of East Congo with Kinshasa; and the problems in the way of settling disputes in Angola, Rwanda or Sierra Leone. He may be happy that his aspirations of African unity in the 1960s have at last borne fruit at the beginning of the new century by the creation of the African Union, but he may be dismayed by the scheming of the imperialist powers to gain control of this union.

Mohammad Fayek will surely be concerned about Egypt's role in all these momentous events. He may wonder where Somalia stands today, and what Egypt's reaction towards events is. He may wonder where Egypt stands towards the conflicts in Congo. He may wonder where Egypt stands with the active African regional groupings such as SADC, COMESA, the Sahel and Sahara, or even the Maghreb Union. Does Egyptian action and Egyptian diplomacy in this vast African arena correspond to Egypt's interests and political weight, or is our limit the Arab European *partenariat* alone? Or is there still hope for a different ending?

3

Abdel Malek Ouda: Egyptian Nationalism and Africa*

I

To speak of a personality of the scientific and cultural calibre of Professor Abdel Malek Ouda is a task that needs more than my modest capabilities. Yet, my cordial relation with him for more than forty years gives me the courage to make such an adventure in his honour. The first lesson gained by such an adventure is the significance of the deep scientific relationship between the two of us that has lasted for more than forty years, despite occasional differences. Such a friendship with the many shared concerns is only possible because of Ouda's open mindedness and hard work, as well as his sincere feelings of amity towards his friends and followers.

Our discussions and debates have extended for well over forty years, since the 1960s, in the rooms of the African League and later the African Society in Egypt, and in numerous African conferences on political economy in various African cities. I believe the 1970s, with their changing conditions of Arab-African cooperation, saw much of our common concerns and unhappy feelings.

In those days, Africa and the Arab world were bubbling over with transformations from their previous stagnant states to systems of democracy, single party, or scientific socialism, or else to coups and new roles for the military, the intellectuals and businessmen. The conscientious intellectuals had their legitimate concerns about the structure of the national state, and the interests of the popular masses. No wonder, such concerns led to the creation of the Third World Forum in Cairo and Dakar, and the Council for

* This article was presented at the ceremony held in honour of Professor A. Ouda by the African Association of Political Science 2003 and also at the ceremony held in his honour at the Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences at Cairo University.

the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in Dakar. In the same period, the intellectuals in Dar es Salaam, Makerere and Cairo got together to found the Society for African Political Sciences, with Professor Ouda as one of its pillars in Cairo, at the north-east tip of the continent.

This conception of Africa was not a novelty in Egypt, nor was it new for Professor Ouda who was in his mature forties then (the 1970s), and he had enriched the Arab literature with his numerous works on Africa such as: *Politics and Governance in Africa* (1963), *The Idea of African Unity, 1963 The Determining Years in Africa1969, Israeli Activities in Africa1961, Socialism in Tanzania1968, The Negro Revolution in America,1964* and many others, all through the 1980s and 1990s and even up to the present. His main works are in excess of twenty such volumes, and he has carried out a lot of expert research and many studies, plus hundreds of articles published in the press.

I was proud to join Professor Ouda in 1976 on a trip to Lagos to re-establish the African Association for Political Sciences, after its earlier foundation in Dar es Salaam in 1973. There, we were joined by a number of eminent scholars such as Ali Mazrui, Professor Williams and Shamuyarira, the (then) young scholars Nabudere, Tandon, Shifts and Mamdani, and many other young African scholars. In those years, Cairo and Dar es Salaam were the base for many African national liberation movements, and this kept the banner of revolutionary transformation high in the air. Yet, these were also the years for social and political change, for the open door policies, and for the sudden flow of petro dollars in the Arab region and over to Africa. This gave precedence to a comprehensive scientific study of development projects and their requirements. Thus, this array of scholars – originating from various schools of thought – went to Lagos to define the role of social and political sciences in assessing these new phenomena, and their impact on Arab-African relations. No wonder then that the group included Professor Ouda, who was then already an eminent professor of Political Science, the Dean of the Faculty of Economy and Political Science, the Dean of the Faculty of Mass Communication and also the Dean of the Institute of African Studies, in charge of the prestigious Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, as well as Editor of the Al Siyassa Al Dawliya (J.I.P). He also consolidated his insight into Arab and international affairs in his capacity as visiting professor in Yemen, Bahrein, New York, Tokyo and UNESCO.

With this prestigious background, Professor Ouda led opinions in the sphere of Arab and international relations from the tribune of the African Society in Cairo, and in his capacity as Director of the Fund for Technical

Aid to Africa, established by the Arab League. In this latter capacity, he was the focal point of a process of institutionalising Arab-African cooperation, a process that needed his truly scientific approach and nationalist sentiment. Unfortunately, this process failed to achieve its professed goals despite the tremendous efforts deployed by Ouda and some of his associates, and this failure was deeply regretted by him as demonstrated in some of his recent studies that deplored the insular attitudes of some donors, or the failure to honour their formal undertakings.

I find it difficult to be satisfied with this summary appreciation of Professor Ouda's rich achievements, but I cannot enumerate all his works that I hope you may be able to come across all over the Arab and African worlds. May he continue this very rich career during a long and fruitful lifetime.

Let us now contemplate together the value of the well-known contributions of Abdel Malek Ouda in the Arab and African fields of knowledge. You may be surprised to learn that the young university student that I was in 1956 attended the discussion of the doctorate thesis of Professor Ouda, and admired his masterly exposition of the subject of the nation and the state to a distinguished group of experts on international relations and international law, who could scarcely emulate his development of that subject. In these times, when scores of new states were being formed after World War II, there was a wave of new African independent states, and there were new conditions in Egypt after the July Revolution. So, there was a special need to understand such subjects. No wonder that Ouda's first book was *Politics and Rule in Africa* (1963) to demonstrate to a new generation of researchers the new systems of government in the newly independent African countries. At the time, all we knew about Africa were the had were traditional geographic narratives of the European explorers, some stories about the Arab role in diffusing Islam in the continent and some headlines on 'discovering' Africa, in very superficial attempts to touch on the subject.

For some time, Ouda was taken up by the concept of the modern state in Africa, although he started from the position of the functional role of the state as demonstrated in Egypt in its concern with national security, such that we often meet with references to the Egyptian state in his works. Yet, he never overlooks the ramifications of these interests and their connections with our neighbours, or with African unity, but through the 'national interest'. He never overlooks the fact that the Nile joins ten countries along its course, nor does he ignore the needs for liberation or integration in deciding the policies of states whether their tendencies were socialist or capitalist, provided they fulfilled the function

of protecting national interests and security. Such a vision had its impact on the different dimensions of Ouda's thoughts about the course of African unity and Egypt's role, or Israeli activities in Africa in the light of its role as an imperialist outpost in the region, taking advantage of the needs of newly independent states for technical aid. He studies the military coups in certain African countries in the light of the capability of the governing elites to safeguard the concept of the state and its role. He studies how the bureaucrats lose ground to the military, and how the socialist ideologies fail, to the benefit of the traditionally conservative elites. He is also concerned about the continued international conflict over Africa, and the effects of the Cold War and its corollaries. All such concerns have been expounded in his various works, from *Politics and Rule in Africa* (1963) to *Political Changes in Africa* (2005).

The issue of the Arab-African relations reveals the methodology of Professor Ouda, as he tried, starting with the 1970s, to monitor its political roots in his capacity as a honest examiner and not an apologetic historian. At times, we would differ in our ideological visions, or on the national liberation nature of Arab-African relations, and the role of the different leaderships about them. We might feel far apart about the differences between the functional role of the state, or its national liberation nature, but we always agreed about the deplorable conditions in neighbouring countries, the oil countries or those with fundamentalist regimes that leave no space for unity – even on a functional basis – with the countries of the South in the context of the end of the Cold War, and the impending drive for imperialist globalisation.

However, we never disagreed about the role of the intellectual and his responsibility towards his society. If we look at the works of Professor Ouda, we cannot fail to see his constant role in building a political culture of knowledge of Africa whether in Egypt or in the whole Arab world. He is always present at the scientific societies and conferences whether Arab or African; he publishes his edifying articles in the *Al Ahram* newspaper and other publications. He always encourages his students who include scores of eminent university professors, journalists and leaders of public opinion, to make their contributions to the illuminating mission that he pursues.

II

Professor Ouda was never officially an adept of a given ideological trend, although as a thinker, he has his cultural stand that must naturally be related to one given tendency or another. Judging by our frequent debates, I cannot simply rate him as a conservative bourgeois thinker, because his political

consciousness always comes before his social connections. Yet, originating from the petty bourgeoisie, one cannot place him on the side of the populist or bureaucratic elite.

Judging by his whole work and his discourse to the academic circles, he stands out as an Egyptian nationalist deeply concerned about the affairs of the Egyptian state in its renaissance moments under the July Revolution, although he cannot be considered one of the protagonists of that regime due to well-known historical and family factors. Thus, he may well belong to the ideology of technocrats, if we may venture to say so, who are members of the bureaucracy of the national state. Such an ideology may lead him to accept the ascendancy of the military, even if imposed by force, but that may be fruitful if it is nationalistic in nature, as it will encourage the technocrats to give their best. In this light, Professor Ouda became dean of three important faculties, but did not become a university president. He also served as the advisor to Hasanein Heikal when he became Minister of Information, but did not aspire to take one of the prominent positions in the sphere of information, despite the close relationship between the two men when Ouda served as Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at Al Ahram and Heikal was its Editor-in-Chief.

With this nationalist concern in the background, he published most of his basic works about Egyptian politics with regard to the Nile and the countries sharing its valley. These included *Egyptian Politics and the Nile Valley* (1999), following an earlier work in 1993 entitled *Egyptian Politics and African Issues.* He also edited an exhaustive study on Eritrea, and another on Somalia and the Arab-Ethiopian understanding in 1996.

As I followed him providing analysis, expertise and advice in Arab-African relations all through the troubled 1970s and 1980s, I noted that he does not raise great hopes of the credibility of Arab aid to Africa. He maintains that the Arab leaders were not philanthropists but merely rulers driven by their immediate interests. He even openly criticised the proceedings of Arab-African cooperation in a big colloquium in the 1980s, and published in 2000, in the review of the Arab League, a study on the future strategies of Arab-African relations in the hope that some leaders may make use of it to mend the deteriorating situation.

Despite the fact that Ouda neither appreciated the populist policies nor liked the demagogy of certain charismatic leaders in the recent history of the Arab world and Africa, he was always keen on the issue of African unity. However, he was always concerned about the coherence of the national state in Africa as the guardian of the unity of societies rife with ethnic and religious

fragmentation, and that irrespective of his appreciation of their leaders. I mention here his concern over the armed insurrection in Eritrea and its possible effect on dismantling the Ethiopian state, and also his stand with regard to the issues of the Maghreban Sahara, or South Sudan. In all such issues, he had his reserves about the Arab countries that aided the insurgents.

We once disagreed on the nationalist struggle of the blacks in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, and whether it could be considered an armed struggle like that carried out in neighbouring Angola and Mozambique, although the latter started from outside the country. He maintained that this was a development of a violent struggle, preparing the ground for a negotiated settlement. At the time, I was overseeing a study comparing that of South Africa with Palestine, and thought both could be termed an armed struggle, in view of the drastic change in South Africa from non-violent Gandhian-style resistance to violent resistance.

Now, I am not quite sure about which of our conflicting views was the correct one, since the outcome of the negotiation with the white colonialists was the dismantling of the apartheid system and the creation of a democratic South Africa. Was it the outcome of the ideological resolve of the blacks to go to the armed struggle, or was it a pragmatic decision by both parties that the armed struggle would lead nowhere and acceptance of the interference of the West in favour of a compromise that would fit with the wider interests of world capital? Naturally, Professor Ouda was in favour of negotiated settlements in view of the present balance of forces.

Abdel Malek Ouda thus remains a model of nationalist Egyptian thought in contrast with pan-Arab or ideological thought. Yet, his methodical detailed study of the African situation as exemplified in his ever present articles in the press is the means for Arab public opinion to follow such affairs with a clear understanding of the facts away from the aberrations caused by the actions of the regimes in power.

4

Mehdi Ben Barka: From Bandung to Havana*

I

In 2005, Cairo and other African and Asian capitals celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Bandung, in April 1955. In January 2006 the 40th anniversary of the first Tri-Continental Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America Conference was also celebrated in Havana. Between these two celebrations falls the 40th anniversary of the assassination of the martyr Mehdi Ben Barka on 20 October 1965. On such occasion, the people of Maghreb remember a national hero who championed the struggle of his country for independence, and against despotism. Similarly, the peoples of all three continents stood strongly against the tragic death of a fighter within the ranks of Afro-Asian solidarity, and a champion of the construction of global solidarity of the peoples of the South in all three continents, against imperialism and its exploitative tendency worldwide.

First of all, we note that the action of Mehdi Ben Barka was a direct expression of the concept of the movement of national liberation as the mature challenger of world imperialism whose leadership was openly assumed by the USA from the 1960s. It did not take Ben Barka and the peoples of the Third World long to hear the discourse of globalisation and the world empire under Washington's leadership. The international struggles undertaken by many peoples may have raised hopes of containing the domination of the world under the rising banner of capitalism, or building an alternative system within which the newly independent states would stand as a rampart against the expansionist designs of world imperialism. Such hopes were expressed in

* This paper was read at the 40th Anniversary of Ben Barka's assassination.

the slogans raised throughout the peoples' conferences in Casablanca, Cairo and Arusha between 1961 and 1963. However, the imperialist beast had thrust its claws deep into the bodies of Vietnam, South Africa, Palestine, the Portuguese colonies and in Latin America. This situation was an eye opener to a perspicacious leader such as Ben Barka and his counterparts Che Guevara, Cabral, Dos Santos and Oliver Tambo, to whom the peoples of the Third World looked up as the new generation that would stand up, besides the leaders of Bandung: Nehru, Nasser and Sokarno.

The new concept here was to proceed from the creation of the new independent national states, to broaden the basis of the struggle from Vietnam to Latin America, through counter violence, and the creation of 'more Vietnams', and even to go beyond the traditional struggle for liberation from the old colonialist states, to confronting the spearhead of imperialism, the USA. Thus, the contribution of Ben Barka was historical, not only for its raising the intensity of the struggle, but also for pushing the peoples' struggle to wider horizons. He deemed this, together with others, to be feasible, even if more demanding, such as the focal point of armed struggle that persisted for decades in Asia, and erupted in Africa not long after the assassination of Ben Barka, in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and then Palestine. The shortcomings of these actions that some circles regret were mainly the outcome of certain developments that took place within the structures of the national states themselves, and that are not foreign to the machinations of the imperialist powers.

Mehdi Ben Barka challenged many spheres of struggle at the local, regional and international levels, exhibiting a degree of steadfastness little known among national liberation movements. His exploits included the national/social duality, by spearheading the class struggle in his native Maghreb, which led to the creation of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces. He even participated in the transformation of the forces of the armed struggle for liberation in Algeria into the state structure. He also played a major role in the conflicts among the independent states in the Arab East, where the ideological struggle raged around whether the Arabs constituted one nation or several national states. He then moved on to share with the leaderships in Egypt and the rest of Africa, as well as with fighters in East and South Asia, their extended struggle against the forces of imperialism and colonialism.

The outcome of all these efforts, which may have been embodied in the solidarity movement of the Afro-Asian peoples, was that he moved on from Cairo, Paris, Geneva, Beijing and Moscow, to carry on its merger with similar movements in Latin America. Few leaders on the Arab, African or Asian levels

really possessed such historical dynamism that would have enabled them not to abandon Havana as a stronghold vulnerable to the threats of the huge imperialist war machine. Rather, Ben Barka helped create more strongholds to the south that would engage that war machine for quite some time. Thus, he transcended the limited level of the charismatic national leadership to the wider mechanisms of popular movements which was created after his assassination – and despite that assassination – many variations on the theme of struggle, which culminated in the liberation of Vietnam and Southern Africa, the backing of the Cuban Revolution, and the dominance of a spirit of unyielding resistance in Latin America. All these developments induce a certain optimistic hope in the future, despite the many setbacks in the last few decades, which mark but a moment on the long march of history and the peoples' road to freedom.

II

How can the spirit of Bandung and the tri-continental movement be rejuvenated? The saying goes that 'capitalism rejuvenates itself', which is true, but why is it that the liberation movement does not rejuvenate itself, when it is imperative that it should do so? Both phenomena are not new, as both started as interacting opposites since the expansion of capitalism worldwide and, in particular, into the South. Both phenomena showed different variations, throughout history, inasmuch as the variations in the recent mechanisms used by capitalism had to be met by changing forms of resistance.

Almost half a century ago, General Eisenhower expressed his misgivings about the dangers of the industrial military complex in the USA, on western democracy on one hand, and of the threat implied in its destructive policies of expansion, on the other hand. The foresight of the General is all apparent today, as the peoples of the capitalist centre as well as those of the South face the same dangers from the new manifestations of capitalism today. Such dangers are manifest in the distorted concepts of 'democracy', and the arrogant concepts of hegemony and expansionism. I need not go into details of such practices as demonstrated in neoliberal globalisation, which are even leading to cleavages within the advanced capitalist centre itself and are inducing the disintegration of national entities all over the South. All this is being orchestrated under the rules of the World Trade Organisation, which are undermining the legitimacy of the UN and its various agencies. The ultimate aim is to subject the world economy, culture, media and education to the neoliberal policies, and impose those rules by brute military force, at work all the time, and not in sporadic

cases here or there as the occasion arose, as was the old practice. The examples of economic aggression in Asia, military and political aggression in the Arab and Islamic worlds, and blockades in Latin America proliferate, and we must ask: where are the corresponding variations in the responses of the South? And how can we recall the initiatives of Ben Barka in this respect?

The ever-increasing intensity of polarisation under the hegemony of capital is almost obliterating the past exploits of the charismatic leaders of the South. However, Mehdi Ben Barka tried in his day to assemble the trump cards denouncing the horrid practices of colonialism and imperialism. But it is out of the question now to call back the old model of Bandoeng in 1955, as that governmental model is not much used under the changing conditions of today, irrespective of the practical achievements, for a certain period, as exemplified by the movement of non-aligned countries. The past experience shows that this model of dealing with the peoples' movements, as governmental harmed their representation on the political and democratic levels. Suffice it to cite the cessation of all peoples' conferences after the creation of the (governmental) Organization of African Unity, and the feebleness of the Afro-Asian solidarity movement once the distinction between the state and popular representatives of its socialist member states was obliterated.

In this respect, the initiatives of Ben Barka should be very edifying. His historically significant formulation of the objects of the peoples' solidarity movement and its scope caused concern in imperialist circles, as was shown in certain reports of the US Congress at the time. Such a role also explains the ready participation of certain imperialist intelligence organisations in his assassination.

We may accept the postulate that the limited resistance of certain regimes to the economic and political pressure directed against them through the policies imposed by the WTO, or the excessive debt burden, may indicate the implicit existence of a will to resist in such countries of the South. Thus, the resistance of such countries to the concepts of open borders, limited sovereignty, or interference on the grounds of the defence of human rights, may indicate the existence of certain positive possibilities in certain actions and movements in those countries. Some manifestations of such actions are the stand taken by the Group of 77 countries, and the 'group of four' (India, Brazil, South Africa and Venezuela), and other similar kinds of modest groupings in defence of the interests of the peoples of the South. However, we must note that such groupings tend to put more stress on the economic nature of their action rather than the political, out of baseless fears of the ideologisation of their stand, as was

usual to label the old movements of the Third World. Indeed, the neoliberal policies as they are applied today are nothing but mere ideology, since the Third World is not the beneficiary of any of its economic advantages. The real reason for shunning this politicising of such groupings of the South is the fear that it may have some positive social dimensions for the benefit of their peoples.

The above fears may explain the concern shown at some of the results of the meetings and groupings among the countries of the South trying to consolidate independence within the framework of globalisation. The regional groupings in South-east Asia, the African Union, and the NEPAD show such signs of feebleness, and this was reflected in the Jakarta Declaration (at the 50th anniversary of Bandoeng), aiming at creating the new Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation. The only remaining hope is to hear enough voices upholding the new appeal for liberation and independence within the structures of globalisation imposed on the peoples of the South, and that such movements of certain 'states of the South' make part of such resistance. If we go back to the discussions during the Afro-Asian Peoples' Conference in Ghana in May 1965, which called for convening the tri-continental conference, we may note the concern of many participants then. If such action is to bear fruit, it has to embrace enough of the democratic spirit in order to make its mechanisms operate effectively without the need for the charismatic leaders of the past. Such mechanisms may be discerned in the anti-globalisation rallies that culminated in Porto Alegre. I need not point to the solid capitalist convention in Davos, but to the need to go back to the calls of Mehdi Ben Barka and his teachings, to guide the huge rallies in Porto Alegre, and their ramifications in the popular actions of the peoples of the South, not forgetting the critical assessment of such actions, both in their scope and perspectives.

First of all, we note – while remembering Ben Barka – the great positive value of the World Social Forum in its first popular rally on the Latin American continent. Also, we should not forget that this impressive rally was a culmination of numerous rallies, demonstrations and popular unrest, within the framework of the anti-globalisation movement in many capitals in First and Third World countries. This movement did not emanate from the old popular organisations of the middle of the century, which were being eroded starting from the mid-1960s.

This renovation of the anti-imperialist movements, which responds to the renewed forms of globalised neoliberalism, recalls the discourse of Ben Barka about the movement of the peoples of the South and its allies, which was limited by the realities of the time. We are now witnessing popular solidarity

on a worldwide scale, which may provide a measure of democracy not available for Ben Barka and his colleagues, who fell victim to the manoeuvres of the progressive and nationalist governments in the same way all over the three continents. We may wonder here about the impact of the popular movement in Porto Alegre removing itself from the relative support of the official nationalism at the time of Ben Barka, or, shall we say that such support still exists since a progressive government in Brazil is the host of the present rally? What will the outcome be, when this popular rally spreads itself all over the countries of the three continents, where some regimes openly oppose the movement?

A serious debate may take place about the forces represented in the movement today, and Ben Barka may have given an adequate answer when he stigmatised the movement as being that of national liberation against world imperialism. However, the new movement has a much wider scope. as it has to confront new aspects of globalisation unknown in the 1960s.

When Mehdi Ben Barka issued the invitation to the tri-continental conference, he was not isolated from the social movements and popular organizations labelled today as the old movements. Indeed, some 600 delegates from 83 organisations from the three continents took part in the meeting, which shows the close relationship with the concept of popular masses favoured by the governments of the national states at the time. His action was also related to the growing movements, in the West, against the machinations of world capitalism, and its colonial and social aggressive policies. Those were the times of widespread protests against the war on Vietnam and the apartheid regime in South Africa, as well as the budding youth protests, the movements for human rights, and feminist movements in the countries of the North. In those times, many intellectuals took the lead on a world level, in parallel with the charismatic leaderships of the Third World. This glorious alliance that we hope will be resuscitated supported more than 25 liberation movements in all three continents, with the support of a European movement of solidarity – both open and covert. These solidarity movements were not, at the time, just donor bodies whose main purpose was to finance organisations of questionable social weight, such as the NGOs of today.

While the rallies of the World Social Forum are just beginning to consider the role of the political besides the social in their action and they are debating the representation of political parties and even semi-governmental bodies, we note that Ben Barka and his tri-continent movement were forerunners in that respect. Some may gloss over the significance of the name of the party that

Ben Barka led in Morocco: The Socialist Union of Popular Forces, which Mohammad Yazgui described as the fruit of Ben Barka's efforts. This name bears a real significance as it describes an effective alliance of popular forces and not a hierarchical structure that obstructs the élan of the masses in their struggle for their aims. This is what prompted Ben Barka to transcend the differences between the socialist powers, and to group them together with national liberation forces. He even declared, in a party meeting in Rabat in May 1962, that the movement was part of the worldwide struggle, extending from Beijing to Havana.

We cannot visualise a powerful surge of the anti-globalisation movement against predatory capitalism without a return to many of the concepts that were familiar at the time of assembling the popular masses of the South in Havana in 1966, nor to the clear consciousness exhibited by Ben Barka and his comrades, and the supporting movements that rallied the popular masses, the national democratic fronts, and specific trade unions. The rallying slogan may be 'the world of the peoples of the South', an alternative world, one that is comprehensive, human and possible. Such a slogan is not unrealistic on the occasion of commemorating Ben Barka, the fighter for the liberation of the peoples of the three continents, and the real champion of internationalism. If he were still with us today, he would surely be at the heart of the main battles against imperialism in Palestine and Iraq.

I conclude by quoting Mehdi Manjara who once said: 'Remembering is, in the case of Ben Barka, an act of the future rather than of the past – the future of freedom, and of post-colonialism, and even, of 'post-Ben Barkism'!

5

Israel: A Sub-imperialist Power in the Third World*

The concept of 'imperialism' was used in connection with various terms in the field of political economics, ranging from traditional colonialism, settler colonialism and neocolonialism to sub-imperialism and minor imperialism, as well as a 'relationship' between the centre and the periphery. All these interpretations take place within the framework of the debate on the nature of conflicts and contradictions at the global and regional levels, and with regards to the primary and secondary roles in these conflicts.

The question here does not pertain to mere differences in terminology, but to the various repercussions of these concepts for certain regions of the Third World and the varying patterns of political behaviour in solving the conflicts at the regional level, such as in the Middle East and southern Africa. Particularly in these regions, the difference in understanding the nature of conflict leads to different stands. The evaluation of the nature of the nation-state, the developing social formations and the aims of liberation movements also differ.

Dealing with the example of Israel – and similarly with South Africa – varies according to every given term and leads to extremely serious results, despite the need to take into account certain credible historic features of these terms. For example, the term 'colonialism', in its traditional concept, may not be appropriate if Israel is considered as a Middle East country that 'sometimes' perpetrates aggression against its neighbours or usurps some of the rights of the inhabitants of the region. It will not be considered as a coloniser, according

* Paper presented to AAPS Conference in Addis Ababa, April 1985.

to the logic of the 1947 International Partition Resolution which occupied the territories of others for about 40 years according to the traditional criteria of 'colonialism'.

The term 'settler colonialism', if applied on its own, presupposes the possibility of changing its nature by changing the internal structure of the state through internal political and social struggle without having recourse to changing or destroying the nature of the state apparatus, or according to the participation of the majority in power within a multinational state.

The racist or apartheid concept, for the Zionist project, leads some social forces in the region to face it on religious or national ethnic grounds, or, with the civilisational Arab project, to compete or besiege it. The alternative in this case is to reserve the racist project of the region as part of a Middle East or 'African' state.

The regional agent concept of imperialism or neo-colonialism makes it tempting for other regimes in the region to imagine that it is possible to weaken the regional agent through taking over its very role and depriving the enemy of the privileges of that role, to contain its hostility and its capacity as 'policeman' for the imperialist powers. This means that the organic relations that strengthen the continuity of such a role have been ignored. Even the concept of 'extended imperialism', applied sometimes to Israel has, in its absolute form, led to a kind of literature on the 'marginal difference', the lack of identification, and the possibility of 'neutralising the 'supreme master', by influencing its interests in the surrounding regions.

Contrary to these reservations, there is one common reservation that most of these concepts, when applied, do not explain. This is the growing external role played by Israel or South Africa in the Third World, in conjunction with international imperialism as this chapter will show the specific character that the nature of the economic military component of the Zionist regime may afford.

Thus, applying the concept of sub- or minor imperialism to the prevailing situation in Israel is the most credible, for it responds to the shortcomings of the previous terminological aspects concerning the nature of the Zionist state in Palestine. It explains the nature of the international Zionist movement, in its highest stages, as well as its structural relationship embodied in Israel with the international imperialist system. The concept also accounts for the difference that may at times appear with the centre, and its effects on the regional role played by Israel in the Third World, and particularly in Africa. Finally, it raises questions about the nature of stands within the regional system in the Middle East vis-à-vis the international imperialist system itself and not just the national and regional elements of the situation.

Within the context of this concept, it is possible to understand the nature and role of the Arab and Palestinian liberation movement in confronting the imperialist and sub-imperialist system in the region.

The Concept of Sub-imperialism in Relation to Israel

This chapter cannot be exhaustive enough to cover all the details of the debate on the central imperialist system and the sub-imperialist or minor systems. Several criteria have been set up in this respect, some of which have, due to formalism or the lack of the ideological dimension, classified the USSR – side by side with South Africa – as examples of sub-imperialism, such as Brazil, Iran (under the Shah's rule), India and South Korea. Only a few have been concerned with the addition of Israel to this list after that categorisation.

However, we also benefit in this respect from the elaboration of the structural theory of imperialism, social imperia1ism and sub-imperialism, despite its formalism. Authentic Arab contributions concerning Israel as a minor imperialist state, as well as other Arab application to Saudi Arabia, are also useful. Most of these writings base their argument on the Leninist theory on imperialism and the criterion of capital export and raw material import, or their direct substitutes (e.g. the export of advanced technology in exchange for primary goods). Therefore, the growth of world capital and the aspect of monopolism and centralisation did not hinder the appearance of subsidiary capitalist pivots specialized in export or playing special roles in the regional system. Although these pivots may sometimes seem to be competing with the central system, as is the case of Japan, they move most of the time within the framework of the integrated imperialist system in an era of internationalisation of the economic order, and even play the role of an intermediary between the centre and the periphery.

In an elaboration of his theory on sub-imperialism, J. Galtung makes interesting statements that may be useful, particularly about Israel (Galtung 1976). He speaks about the creation of a type of centre in the peripheral structure, which serves as a bridgehead for the imperialist centre, and presents the latter as a model in order to extend the sphere of its hegemony. The bridgehead ensures the internal order of the periphery while siding totally with the adopted imperialist policy with a view to preserving the prevailing status quo and the capitalist pattern in the periphery. Galtung cites the examples of South Africa in southern Africa as well as Iran (under the Shah's rule) and Saudi Arabia in the Middle East, as regional imperialist powers. He also refers to the USSR in eastern Europe while pointing out that these examples are not as important as the criteria that may lead the central imperialist power to change its options.

It appears from Galtung's work, and from others too, that the external and internal structure in the sub-imperialist system is important; hence, the social structural character of the model and the role of supporting, military and security ideology. The example of Israel relies on all of these criteria put together.

In his book, *The Political Economy of Israel* (Mursi 1983), Dr Fouad Mursi points to an imperialist and minor imperialist power with regard to the Zionist state in Palestine, thus correcting several erroneous concepts that have prevailed in the Arab region. He then proceeds to the analysis of the situation of Israel as a Zionist project injected, by international capitalism, with capital that accumulates and generates the imperialist role of that state. Mursi also unveils the contribution of oil monopolies in enhancing that role, supporting the war economy and engaging in a hegemonistic policy at the level of the Arab region and the Third World.

Arab studies are not limited to the Israeli model, but apply similar concepts to the Saudi role, thanks to accumulated oil capital within the framework of the imperialist strategy for the Arab wealth and the Saudi hegemony in the regional Middle East system for the benefit of the stability of imperialist interests (Salama 1980; Mujahid 1985). This means that the management of petro dollars, the imperialist centre, sets up more than one sub-imperialist power in the Arab region without expected national clashes. Moreover, the management of the peace process in its current form serves the same goals.

It is necessary to note in this respect that these concepts about Israel were primarily formulated by Afro-Arab groupings in the wake of independence within their discussions around resolutions concerning neo-colonialism. Israel was thus classified as an essential neo-colonialist power 'threatening independence and liberation movement through plotting, oppression, military and police measures, and even assassinations. Resolution of the All African Peoples Conference, Cairo, March 1961; cited in Barongo 1980. Earlier on, the group of Casablanca states adopted a similar resolution on 'Israel as a bridgehead of colonialism' (January 1961). The Israeli literature even speaks of the 'Bandung shock', as it explains the isolation of Israel from the conference held in 1955, and the inclusion of the question of the Palestinian people within the resolutions pertaining to colonialism (Curtis and Gitelson 1976).

A Distorted Development Strengthened by the Imperialist Powers

The implementation of the 'project of the state of Israel' by the Zionist movement has never been innocent in any stage of its organic ties with the colonialist projects, particularly if one knows that the abuse of the prophecy

about the 'reconstruction of the temple' did not gain Jewish religious support itself when Hertzel set forth the 'project of state'. Therefore, we have no referential frame to explain the 'project' since its beginning, outside that of the European, starting from Napoleon's call for the Jews to settle in the region during his hegemonistic wars south and east of the Mediterranean, from the middle of the 19th century up to the Balfour Declaration of 1919; the continuous British support of the idea early in the twentieth century until its materialisation in 1948; then the British, French and Israeli joint aggression against Egypt in 1956; the West German support through financial subsidy and provision of arms in the early 1960s, as an overt substitute for the USA and, finally, the Israeli-American alliance.

We are, therefore, facing an early 'colonialist Zionist project', and not a 'Jewish identity' in search of assertion within the defined nationalist project for the establishment of its state. It is not a mere coincidence that the shifts of loyalty of a given state from one obvious colonialist interest to another have been so consecutive, while various nationalist projects in the Third World have, to varying degrees, experienced forms of contradiction with these interests, whatever their bourgeois or capitalist structure may be. This is mentioned here because it accounts for the relations that Israel continues to establish with fascist regimes in the Third World due to constant bonds with the imperialist system above. Otherwise, the alternative for the Jewish majority would be the socialist revolution, which did not take place, given the fact that the upper class always held control over the project.

We do not intend, in this chapter, to consider the details of Israel's political economy and its effects on its external behaviour and the organic relationships with the imperialist super powers, but would just like to point to those aspects of the Israeli structure that concretise the nature of these relations and impose on it the symptoms of 'explosion' abroad, in conformity with the criteria for the sub-imperialist model.

We shall begin with the special relationship between the Israeli state and the Zionist movement. Thus, we can see how Israel, which started with the argument of putting the Jewish people (from a diaspora) together as a state, has now reached anew the argument of the 'Jewish nation in the world' in order to ensure the preservation of the role of the Zionist movement as an international capitalist organisation and one of the major capital owners in the world linked with 'international monopolism'. It therefore selects its immigrants among dominating elements, cheap labour force (the Flasha), or technical cadres, etc., unlike the early trends that led to the immigration of one

million people over a period of twenty months following the proclamation of the state in 1948, that is, twice as many Jews as there used to be in Palestine at that time. The Zionist movement abroad had then to finance the operation of settling 1.5 million Jews after the proclamation of the state at expenses that reached US$4.5 billion. Regular international conferences of Jewish millionaires in Israel have been held for the same reasons ever since 1967. In 1968, for instance, they decided to vote one billion dollars for the reclamation of the Arab land that was occupied in 1967, and carried out many other projects (Mursi 1983). Israel's reliance on this logic right from the beginning is what made it develop socially in the direction of elitism and military security, and emphasise economic liberalism since the 1970s, no matter how it liquidates the state sector or the old Histadrut economic role, as it stressed the prevalence of the hegemonistic religious Likud orientation since 1977, with its proclamation of the new 'economic revolution'.

The development of Israel as a military security project of international imperialism has made it adopt selection in the project of gathering the Jews of the diaspora, after selective immigration has given better results in the new capitalist compounds which is capable of achieving its goals more rapidly. Employment represents 32 per cent of the total population, which is (according to the 1970 statistics) the highest rate in the world; with 10 per cent of the employed working in the army and other units of the military industry. The only country that competes with Israel in this field is the USA (14%).

This situation urged Moshe Sharit, before he died, to put forward the project of Israel's willingness to let one hundred thousand Palestinian refugees return to their land (Mursi 1983). As the economic and political objectives of such a project became clear, he wanted to say that the Palestinian question was no longer the main concern of the Zionist project.

Other aspects of the Israeli economy show the nature of the distorted development provided for by the Zionist project. For instance, the Israeli economy does not reply on the usual base of the formation of its national capital, as international capitalist institutions do that in its stead. Rates of accumulation of capital are constantly increasing despite decreases in local savings. Foreign capital flow is ensured despite the constant deficit in the Israeli balance of payment. Furthermore, this economy is based on the full absorption of the national product by the national consumption, that is, the disappearance of the phenomenon of national savings; yet, investment reaches about half of the national product and capital formation attains the highest rates in the world. The Israeli economy also relies on an annual increase of

imports in comparison to exports, which means that there is a constant deficit in the trade balance, with rising prices, and increased foreign debts and rates of inflation. However, the Israeli economy is intent on constantly raising the settler's standard of living to encourage immigration. This takes place as the national product increases sometimes to 14 per cent, but goes down at times to as low as 1.1 per cent (Mursi 1983).

Various sources note that the growth of the gross national product is going up, and this was the case during the 1956 and 1967 wars. Thus, an impasse in the economy is a direct sign of the outbreak of a war with the Arabs, no matter what the reasons are. The fact that the Israeli economy is based on foreign credit lets one understand the role of world capitalist institutions in feeding this economy after each war. It is natural that we do not interpret that as a periodical charity, but rather as the state construction of the Zionist entity in a certain shape, responding to its allotted function. Hence, war plays the role of capital attraction rather than repelling it as is the case with any country in the world.

Stemmed from this formation, a constant and permanent mobilisation of financial resources from abroad is on the part of the Zionist movement. Israel has obtained from European sources alone more than what has been achieved through the Marshall Plan for building up the whole European economy after the Second World War. The contribution of the USA in that connection is the best manifestation. It suffices to say that the American aid in 1981 was assessed to amount to fifty per cent of Israel's national income and that Israel's bonds in the USA come next to the American Treasury bonds of financing. According to the report of the American general auditor published in 1984, the aggregate American aid to Israel since its establishment was about US$25 billion – US$16.5 billion in the form of loans and grants for military purposes, and US$8.5 billion for economic assistance and grants as part of the programme of security. According to the report, the annual US aid is not just that officially recorded as US$8.5 billion, but in fact it surpasses US$10 billion, from various sources. According to a comment from a Jewish councillor to a former American president on this subject, 'Israel is the single largest recipient of US economic and military assistance in the world and no such commitment is as firm except the one to its (US) Nato allies' (Eizenstat 1984). a This concurs with Fouad Mursi's remark that foreign finances supplied to Israel capital formation in the last few years amount to 34 per cent and that US credits alone constitute more than 80 per cent of foreign supplies.

Israel as a sub-imperialist project does not leave itself at the mercy of financing circumstances nor to the problems of Zionist lobbying in the USA

but proceeds in its internal build-up benefiting from the capitalist patterns of development bound to assistance:

a) Israel imports crude diamonds from South Africa, central Africa and Belgium to convert them into an important export product that constitutes 35 per cent of its industrial exports.

b) Exports of industrial products have soared from 13.4 per cent in 1967 to 31 per cent in the last few years, with increased dependence on heavy industry requiring intensive skills. Industrial establishments inclined towards large-scale projects. Since 1967, the number of 9,765 establishments has become 6,400 dominated by 458 and controlled by a group, setting their hegemony. The role of agricultural production in export was thus allotted 7 per cent (1979) compared to 14 per cent in 1965.

c) The development of the military industrial complex in Israel is linked to its counterpart in the USA and to its results in feeding military tensions at the international level (as regards the USA) and at Third World level (as regards Israel), given the fact that Israel military expenditure is assessed at more than 15 per cent of its national income in the seventies, compared to 10 per cent in the USA. The Israeli newspapers recently published reports by the Institute of Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University and the International Centre for Peace in the Middle East (1984), providing these important facts (Tidhistur 1984; Eizenstat 1984) b)

d) Israel is led by a large and strong military industrial community belonging to pressure groups oriented without an effective popular control or supervision. Some of these groups from the Air Force are starting the production of certain military industries that would serve their interests.

e) These military industries absorb 25 per cent of the industrial manpower in Israel at present and the share of military exports is 27 per cent of the total industrial exports, a situation which affects the economic orientation as well as the social set-up itself.

f) The Israeli Army was the first consumer of the arms produced until the early 1980s. Now, it consumes only 35 per cent of the aviation industry; and 38 per cent of military industries and the rest, which amounts to US$1 billion yearly, is for export. The report does not exclude the possibility of a drop in military sales because the state's income could not depend on more than 25 per cent of that kind of production.

g) Israel has spent, for example, US$2 billion on air industries for the release of some of its Lavy aircraft whereas it will spend US$11-12 billion for

> 10-15 years in pursuance of this industry, owing to the pressure exercised by these air industry groups.

Needless to say, there is a relationship between the development of the military and heavy industries and the development in the production of nuclear arms in Israel – from reactors to missiles with nuclear heads, to the possession of the nuclear bomb itself, and its joint experimentation with South Africa. Israel ranks twelfth among the arms-exporting countries in the world. However, J. Pieterse in his study on Israel's role in the Third World, refers to the CIA sources which classifies Israel as fifth in the field of arms export, meaning that it comes first after the big powers (Pieterse 1985).

It is because of Israel's peculiar economic structure that it cannot continue its life with the strangling economic crises prevailing in the Third World, unless it becomes more and more organically bound to the imperialist capitalist economy and its policies. Under the present social stratification accompanying the development of the industrial military groups, the dominant aggressive Ashkenasim will remain at the top of power, no matter how much broader the role of the Sephardim becomes in the administration and services. Therefore, the class formation in Israel will remain at the service of international class formation and grow within its framework. This is the situation which will continue to associate Israel with its sub-imperialist function and, hence, the international monopolies, which constantly provide it with services, despite the international crises, and facilitate Israel's penetration into the Third World.

In 1975, Israel signed an agreement with the EEC on a free trade zone to open the two markets to the largest number of industrial and agricultural commodities, to such a degree that they could exchange all commodities by 1989. This would enable Israel to move fully and gradually into the African markets and others of the Lome group. This was followed by an agreement, similar to the one with the EEC, with the USA in 1976 within the framework of the GSP system which is available to certain developing countries and allowed Israel exemption of US customs duties on 3,000 commodities.

This did not suffice for Israel. So, it put in pressure to sign a more comprehensive agreement by declaring itself a free trade zone with the USA. And it managed to obtain, in September 1984, the approval of the Senate for exemption from custom duties on the commodities of the two countries. This was a cover good enough for the transfer of American capital and investments to Israel which directly expands its markets in the Third World. This is what is being interpreted by certain Israeli sources as being 'in return for certain services rendered by Israel to the USA in the Middle East, Central America and

Africa'. A member of the Knesset declared 'America is bargaining on the issue of the free trade zone and wishes reciprocal dealing. Is it not enough that the USA benefits from our military forces?' Other Israeli sources declared that this creates an atmosphere of cooperation between industries and industrialists in USA and Israel, which encourages European industrial investments in Israel, aspiring to proceed to America after that (Simdar 1984).

Thus, Israel could be the link between multiple parties. In spite of all this assistance, Israel is suffering economic problems resulting from this distorted growth, and it is trying to overcome them through further integration with the flourishing American economy. In October 1983, it pushed the project of the Israel Minister of Finance to make the US dollar the base of evaluation – as gold – in the Israel market. The procedure was known in Israel as a 'programme of dollarisation' (Lumbrose 1984).

Israel's Foreign Relations Follow an Imperialist Pattern

Ever since the inception of the Zionist movement in the 19th century on the basis of setting up a state for the Jewish people, the movement has been playing a colonialist role which eventually gave Israel a minor or sub-imperialist pattern. These early colonial statements on the fundamental concept of the movement's pioneers included 'the civilising mission of Israel amidst the barbarian east' and the 'protection of western interests near the Suez Canal and on the commercial road leading to eastern India'. This early awareness was manifested through the linkage established between the Zionist project and the western imperialist projects and their endeavour to have the Zionist pioneers in early contact with the European settler colonialism in southern Africa, as disclosed by communications between Hertzl and Rhodes, and Weizman and Smuts at the setting-up of its state in 1948. Israel had not declared official boundaries to itself; therefore, its regional aspirations knew no limits, in the same pattern as the colonialist regime in South Africa, for a long period of its existence. For instance, since the adoption of the international resolution on the partition of Palestine in November 1947, the Jewish population doubled in less than two years. Israel did not confine itself to the limited objective of settler colonialism through migration to a 'no man's land' but subjugated a 'people/state' to the Zionist movement which is basically imperialist in structure. It naturally took some time to establish the new state's institutions by investing the Jewish vanguard spirit led by the pioneers of the movement. The nature of the first settlers, as petit bourgeoisie lured by a vanguard spirit, contributed towards that end and establishing the first Moushav on the Promised Land. It was

just natural that these young pioneers adopted the policy of internal security while seeking legitimacy externally. The first few months after the creation of Israel witnessed a tripartite agreement signed in 1950 by Great Britain, France and the USA to secure Israel's boundaries, in other words, 'declaring an international solidarity with it'. The development of class formation and the control of an advanced European stratum, Ashkenasim, helped in the formation of a ruling elite and thus dominance of their directives in the light of the prophecy to the Jewish people. While the Sephardim and the religious pioneers were building the Moushav and Kibutz and the social establishment, the upper strata were dominating the state apparatus; and even the Hestidrut, with its socialist pretences, launched itself on the policy of capitalist development which reached its climax in the late seventies.

This settler-colonialist formation did not find satisfaction in simply setting up a strong and ideal state among 'backward peoples' according to the arguments of South Africa, but launched itself rapidly into participation with the traditional colonialist imperialist power outside their frontiers. The first provocation against the July Revolution of Egypt (1952) started when the revolution leadership asserted the continuation of its rule in 1955. Soon after that, was the aggression against it through Israel's collusion with Britain and France, with a view to occupying the Suez Canal in 1956, using the imperialist powers. Those who closely followed the development of the Israeli activities in Africa carefully remarked on Israel's early circling around the Nile Basin, and Israel's security as well as economic existence whenever limited by necessity, found room in Ethiopia (Haile Selassie), Uganda, Kenya, Zaire, Central Africa and Chad (Ouda 1966; Rahman 1974). In our judgment, this was but an attempt on the part of the imperialist powers to contain the Nasserist Arab liberation movement from vast repercussions in the area.

The contradiction between liberation and imperialism, which defined Israel's role at this early stage of its existence with its limited economic potential, was then obvious. Israel's volume of trade with Africa did not surpass US$70 million throughout the 1960s despite the fact that it had established 32 diplomatic missions towards the end of that decade. This young state, ruled by the petit bourgeoisie in Israel, intellectually bound to the pragmatic social democratic concepts and their parties in particular, started spreading Israel's own claims of developing the country as a socialist model and modernised experiment. It is not a mere coincidence that its first basic relations are more deeply entrenched with the leader of the African socialism and Negritude, etc. with the aim of establishing themselves first. Then came the objective

of containing the Arab and African liberation movements. Hence, we can understand how Egypt (Nasser) failed to win a unified African position to its side or for the Arabs during the 1967 Israeli aggression when Israel's friends refused to adopt the resolution of the OAU, between 1967 and 1971, calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Egypt, the African land! We need not go further, looking for the Israeli active movement in search of legitimacy and security, but we want to disclose the seeds of the world sub-imperialist role exemplified in Israel since its activities started to break through its settler colonialist or regional framework, directed to Africa in particular.

Israel's Development in the Seventies

Opinions differed in interpreting the great African diversion from Israel (collective severing of diplomatic relations) in the early seventies and what seemed to be a continent turn-down on Israel. Diverse reasons were given by different researchers, such as: 'the changing of Israel image in Africa', 'Israel was looked upon as a seeker of interest rather than a donor', 'because of its relations with South Africa', 'developing relationship between the Africans and the Palestinian liberation movements' or by exaggerating opinions on Africans and Arabs 'forming, in the seventies, a single international sub-system', according to Professor Ali Mazrui. In addition, there were other factors such as 'exercising pressure by the Afro-Americans' or 'the changing concepts of some African leaders' or the 'growth in certain aspects of collective Afro Arab cooperation' (Beshir 1982).

However, most of these opinions failed to completely consider the element pertaining to the nature of Israel's economic development, on the one hand, and its repercussions on Israel's dealing in Africa and outside it, on the other. These researchers overlooked the movement of international capital and the attitude of American imperialism towards the Third World, and the position of Israel and South Africa in that imperialist strategy.

Reviews of the world economic situation in the early seventies, the crises of the American dollar and the economies of Europe and Japan, all point to the American role in raising the oil price in the way it happened. This was due to the control by American companies of their production in the Middle East without directly subjugating their markets to this price, a situation which saved the position of the dollar. At the same time, the crises generated by this economic situation in the Third World urged the recycling of the capital accumulated from the rise in oil prices in investment or assistance by the USA and Europe in Africa and the Third World; after the dwindling of this

assistance in a remarkable manner, given the fact that the petro dollars doubled in the hands of some Arabs, it was possible to recycle these funds to Third World countries to save them from falling under the 'radical or communist domination'. It was then imperative to stage a diplomatic show to satisfy the Arabs by apparently discarding Israel in a smooth flow of Arab and western capital to the continent (Sharawy 1984). We recall in that connection the sum of US$19 billion from OPEC countries to the Third World in 1973-1977, that is 4 per cent of the national income of oil countries at a time when direct western assistance could not reach 1 per cent of their GNP. The same style was previously experimented with, to keep the People's Republic of China away from the African continent, when western capital was in need of China's markets; and for entente with China that it entered the UN in the early seventies.

Israel understood the message and accepted this procedure of formality, despite some of its nervous reactions, given the fact that this attitude was accompanied by a large industrial capital development in Israel which asked to reconsider, on its part, the concepts of foreign market relations in coordination with world capital. This was according to the qualitative and quantitative expansion in its economic relations with Africa, particularly with South Africa and Taiwan, and reformulating its new role within the framework of its strategic relations with the USA to comprise Africa, Latin America and other regions in the world. We can mention here a brief review of the new situation:

a) Reconsideration of Israel's position vis-à-vis the new changes brought about a new conceptual revision of foreign relations in the framework of the Zionist ideology and its commitments. We have previously referred to the concept of the 'Jewish people' vis-à-vis the Jewish state, which means they had to seek the help of the Jewish communities in South Africa and Latin America, and assert the importance of a Jewish lobby in USA as regards to the services requested from certain leaderships in the Third World. According to certain Israeli sources, the question was raised as to whether Israel would be a simple Middle Eastern state in the Third World or a westernized state (Curtis Michael 1981). If the development in the '70s led to Israel's diplomatic exodus from Africa, the capitalist development in Israel engendered its economic intensification in Africa due to the following facts:
    (i) Israel's foreign trade with Africa increased from US$71 million in 1970 to US$326 million in 1980, and the diamond trade alone with South Africa, Zaire and Central Africa is considered one of the strategic secrets (Sharawy 1984);

(ii) The transactions of large companies in Africa amounted to US$3 billion, the main ones of which are Solil Boneh and Kor which alone work on 100 projects. According to some sources, the Israeli companies set up a tripartite system of operation with European countries and the USA that achieved revenue for Israel's treasury up till 1981, amounting to US$4 billion (Hazzan 1984);

(iii) Israel shifted from small operations, mostly of service development projects in a large number of the African states, under the guise of the Israeli socialist development model, to large capitalist projects, and concentrated on countries that needed this type of service, such as Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Zaire, Gabon and Togo. Foreign economic relations of this size must depend, like its internal economy, on foreign financing and not on its national savings, as shown by evidence;

a) Israel's close relations with South Africa after the diplomatic embarrassment was a rewarding alternative for Israel, particularly as it is building up a structural relation between both of them and Taiwan in an axis whose results extended from the production of nuclear arms, developing and testing neutron bombs and producing cruise missiles to cooperation and assistance of the fascist regimes in Latin America (Bolivia and Guatemala) and the Caribbean. Many international sources provide information and facts on this relation; however, our attention should be drawn towards the basic dimensions of these realities (Adams 1984):

(i) The organic complementarity of these sub-imperialist powers with the main centre is confronting the national liberation movements. The then Israel's Minister of Finance formulated this relation himself by saying that Israel will be a suitable pivot for South Africa's production: import it, then re-export it to the USA and the EEC, thus averting taxes and the embargo set by the two parties. An Israeli professor comments on that statement that the two countries will be the bastion for the free world outside their direct regions and their regions of strategic interest (the Middle East and Southern Africa) to become a part of an international network led by the USA and this will become even stronger under the new administration (Reagan's administration; (Hallahmi 1983).

(ii) Israel's Relations with South Africa: Israel and South Africa have become one of the largest sources of arms export, and the list of importers of Israeli arms comprises 9 countries in Latin America and 10 in Africa and Asia, for more than US $1 billion annually. They also exchange experiences in confronting movements of liberation in the neighbouring countries and at Third World level and in drawing together its theoretical framework. They jointly exercised the declared American policy of 'strategic consensus' and collective security, as well as their own on 'going to the source' that is to deal a blow to the source of external instability through the implementation of the theory of 'the land not the people' and the ideal villages, 'Bantustans' or 'associations'. Destabilisation was the adopted policy in the neighbouring countries for 'combating communism and the Soviets' rather than 'regional stability'. This is exactly what happened in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and Lebanon. South African sources speak now of this destabilisation policy and 'Lebanese experience' in Mozambique and Angola (Pieterse and Jenkins 1984). Israel and South Africa exchanged their experience in detail with countries such as Guatemala, El Salvador and some sources even speak of their transference to Ireland and Sri Lanka.

b) Despite the strategic line to expand the Israeli arena of work, quantitatively and geopolitically, it did not fail to concentrate on its basic old elements in the Nile Basin and the Red Sea to secure the region first, but in accordance with the new concepts. It is no coincidence that Israel rapidly penetrated Zaire when the situation of the government deteriorated in Shaba, and built up its armed forces to confront internal instability in addition to its assistance in intervening in Angola and playing its role in Chad. Furthermore, Israel promised Zaire to provide financial assistance through the Zionist lobby in the USA and, accordingly, a comprehensive military agreement was concluded in early 1982. Other arms sales were declared to Kenya with further influence there (the Ngongo affairs). More than one source, whether Israeli or others, disseminated news concerning Israel's sale of arms to Ethiopia, being situated on one of the main sources of the Nile water and one of the states of the Red Sea. It is this same consideration that incited Sharon to pass through Sudan on his tour of Africa in November 1981, to benefit from the support of Numeiri for the Camp David Accord and this

visit was concluded with the contribution of Numeiri's regime in transporting new immigrants from the Flashas to Israel as cheap manpower.

d) Within the framework of Israel's concentration on capitalist patterns of development in Africa and the large economic opportunities that are provided with the world capitalist assistance, the type of growing relations with the Ivory Coast and Nigeria is not limited to the higher figures of trade exchange and the economic projects as well as the hundreds of experts but it has extended since the late 1970s to the direct and effective areas of politics. The attempts to re-establish diplomatic relations with African states is closely linked to the meetings held in Geneva with President Houphouet Boigne in February 1977. Israel also stood by the side of the Nigerian Chief Awolowo in his election campaign in 1982, to be followed by his call to Shagari's government, to resume diplomatic relations between Nigeria and Israel. It expects, as a result, to invest Ivory Coast as a member of the Francophone group as well as the fact that Nigeria has an impact on the OAU.

e) Legalised Relations with the Imperialist Centre: The growing development in the role of Israel entitled it to request from its allies in the centre that its relations with them should be unequivocally legalised through official agreements and treaties. We can see how this was fulfilled on the economic level in the light of the agreements with the EEC and the free trade zone with the USA which went as far as to study the project of 'dollarisation' of the Israeli currency markets. We have seen, practically, the military complementarity in the policy of intervention and arms sales. The late 1970s and the early 1980s have seen developments in the legalisation of these relations as follows:

(i) The content of 'The African Document' of the French socialist party in the name of 'the party and Africa South Sahara in the 1980s' (Le Parti Socialist et l'Afrique Sud Saharienne Paris) pointed out 'the communist' in Africa, particularly the Soviets, and Cuba as an example, stating the necessity of non-intervention policy in the continent. This is the theory that gave support to the South Africa-Israel pattern of intervention on behalf of the big powers, and this also led to the reconsideration of resuming diplomatic relations between Israel and the Francophone states more than once at the periodic Francophone conferences. Israel

is looking forward to the re-establishment of relations with Africa through France in the same manner as the collective severing of relations with Africa which happened in 1972-1973.

(ii) The Camp David Accord of 1979 was an important outlet for collective conviction in Africa, to put an end to the boycott of Israel according to the stand of one of the biggest African states, i.e. Egypt. As this took place at the American negotiation table, it was a situation which gave greater security to Israel in its dealing with the African continent. The extent of Israel's power in the region and its capacity to impose peace, proliferate its pretence of 'development' instead of 'war' and put an end to political and moral resistance and international boycotting was evident to all. It gave Israel a new framework to contain radicalism and communism in the region as well as the Palestinian liberation movement. These are the same gains studied by the racist regime in South Africa in a bid to attain similar agreements with countries in southern Africa.

(iii) After the formulation of the French and American stand, the military statements issued by American and Israeli officials respectively concurred, thus paving the way for the agreement that came to be known as the Memo on the Strategic Entente Between the USA and Israel, on November 30 1982. Alexander Haig and Shron issued statements in between September and December 1981 on common security commitments to confront the communist danger as well as the Cubans and the Libyans, and on extending the frontier of security from Pakistan to the north and the south of Africa. This rendered the strategic entente memo fully expressing Israeli-US integration policy (Sharawy 1984). It also stipulated the cooperation in the field of security trade and the US financing of Israel's defensive arms and services. Eizenstat, former President Carter's councillor, commenting on this memo said that it was the first time that the US refers to 'mutual security' between the two states and agrees on cooperation to put an end to threats to the peace and security caused by the Soviets or the powers under their subjugation. The memo admits, in his opinion, that the US considers Israel a part of her comprehensive strategy to stop any Soviet influence (Eizenstat 1984 a) Stephen 1984). The study written by Simha Dinitz, the former Israeli ambassador

to the USA (1973-78), on 'Israel as a Strategic Wealth to USA' is one of the most important in this respect (Dinitz 1984). It reflects the nature of the Israeli-American relations in that context as it exposes the extent to which the two countries' ideologies and strategies coincide and reveals the difference between the Democrats and the Republicans' perspectives of the international conflict, to reach the conclusion that:

> '… tension between the East and the West and the conflict with the Soviets, according to Reagan, are functional elements in the Middle East conflict and that a state is not evaluated by the nature of its system but by its strategic importance and its standing as a barrier against Soviet expansion…' (Dinitz 1984).

Hence, he concludes that …

> rapprochement between Israel and the USA constitutes an element of deterrence to enemies big or small, and that strategic cooperation is translated into a tactical cooperation in coordination with the two air forces and for the establishment of contingent stores for arms and equipment and for joint manoeuvres at sea and air (Dinitz 1984).

Despite the concurrence between the Israeli and American decision-makers, this did not prevent an Israeli economist from launching a call on the US to define reciprocal interests. Jacob Merider, Israel's Minister of Finance, declared on 25 August 1981 that:

> We call on the USA not to enter into the competition with us or Taiwan or South Africa, in the Caribbean or anywhere else you could sell arms, but allow us to do that. You could sell arms and ammunitions through a middleman, and Israel is that middleman (Merider 1981b).

Conclusion

I wonder whether the points submitted here are sufficient to prove certain concepts that appeared in the introduction of this chapter, on the character of the sub-imperialist power as a 'subsidiary' centre among the periphery that grows organically in the 'arms' of the mother centre, and according to diverse or specific considerations; or whether the Israeli type and its conduct on the African and Third World arena in general needs more studies so that we could reach exact future assumptions. In the two cases, I have to admit that this subject needs further studies of the regional environment where such a sub-imperialist system moves, be it Israel, South Africa or others. No doubt, they do not move in a vacuum or in regions free from contradictions with the movement of the new centre periphery.

The question raises itself as regards the social formations within the sub-imperialist power and its role in consolidating the organic relation with the centre. We have clarified, to a certain degree, the nature of capitalist development and industrial military complex growth, basically in addition to the nature of Israel's relation to the Zionist movement and lobby as international financing centre, and its role which could be an answer to this point. It is the particular nature that made V.G Kiernan describe Israel as 'being the heel of Achilles' that burst with movement and 'the USA self-imposed' obligations towards this ally whereas the interest of the USA, in his opinion, is with the Arabs (Keirnan 1978).

The question remains on the nature of the social systems surrounding Israel or South Africa, on the one hand, and the stands of the Arab national movements with the Palestinian as its vanguard, on the other hand. It is not new to say that the Arab bourgeoisie did not develop to become 'that' national bourgeoisie aspiring to compete with the world capitalist ambitions and, consequently, the sub-imperialist powers. No articulated relations with world capitalism were created to push the latter to consider the map of the regional interests or revise the imperialist commitments toward Israel. It was theoretically impossible to expect the possibility of 'neutralising' the centre power towards the Israeli-Arab conflict as some Arab writers sometimes thought. The path of development of the Arab bourgeoisie on a comprador and parasitical base missed the possibility of playing the main regional role.

The petit bourgeoisie project of the Arab nationalistic state did not succeed either. Being isolated from the masses, it stumbled and was contained in turn in the oil well! It could not succeed in establishing articulated relations with other parties in the world national liberation movement or with a strategic ally such as the socialist bloc. According to Sadat, we could have 'normalised' the Israeli system through the establishment of 'normal' relations with it to reduce the tension around it. Israel's conduct since the signing of the Camp David Accord with the Palestinians and that of South Africa with Namibia and Angola proves that Sadat's concept was totally wrong. Containing the national liberation movement in Palestine or South Africa within the framework of the so-called 'peaceful settlement', which are not settled down yet, despite what happened in Camp David or Komati, jeopardised the Afro-Arab national liberation movement in confronting the imperialist machinations.

While admitting the priority of the local national liberation movement in resisting these machinations, the imperialist system and its subsidiaries cannot be confronted except through a world liberation movement. In the

case of Israel, we can see how it could surpass the question of Palestinian self-determination as well as the pan-Arab national movement surrounding it. The Israeli role, old and new, to serve as a bridgehead to international imperialism presupposes the incapacity of the Palestinian liberation movement alone to solve the problem without a comprehensive Arab and African formula, even with different levels of confrontation.

The continuation of the oil decade may have created difficult conditions confronting the 'socialist' alternative as well as the embarrassment of the nationalistic or religions factors of the conflict confronting the 'civilisational' alternative. At the same time, the settler colonialist project extends to the peak of its regional and international horizons, leaving us to think over the kind of crisis that could lead to its end.

PART 2

Times of Interactions

6

The Heritage of African Language Manuscripts Written in Arabic Characters (Ajami)

There is a different field of cultural research of a limited appeal to African and Arab intellectuals, and all those interested in issues of cultural identity in Africa and the Third World, as alluded to by the title of this chapter. The message of this relatively new field is to expose the interrelations between studies of social and cultural history of African identity on the one hand, and the history of African-Arab relations on the other. The histories of African or Arab peoples are not just a series of incidents, but rather centuries of interactions which need to be studied in detail.

Culture is a collective historical product of people's lives, while languages are the lively expression of social and historical interactions of societies. Script was always the means for people to leave their mark on history, and the same applied to Africa and the Arab world. However, Africa was denied much of its worth by colonialists and historians, who described Africans as peoples without history, and the continent as a stateless societies, as modern states are known, or a huge 'Tower of Babel', where thousands of languages are spoken, but none are written down, except in very recent times! Hence, some claimed, there was no way to ascertain its history, its social and historical identity, or its interactions in time.

There is no shortage of books by Arab travellers in Africa or about Africa, or of African heritage in Arabic, or indeed, of travel books by Europeans, all of which were put to good use by colonial administrations in modern history, to better understand and master the realities of these peoples. Yet, there are few who showed interest in what Africans recorded about themselves since they mastered the art of writing, especially during the centuries that elapsed

since they first interacted with the Arabic language and culture, namely, the heritage of African manuscripts in Arabic characters (Ajami).

Colonialism has disfigured wide areas of the world, and denigrated the culture of the 'other'; it has separated the colonised from the cultural and social history of the world and even blemished their self-image, thus spreading their ignorance of their historical cultural presence. However, the wave of national liberation worldwide and in Africa in particular, has prompted African intellectuals to rediscover their identity and their rich cultural heritage, acknowledged widely today.

Languages and written heritage were always part of the heritage of civilisations, as well as murals in ancient caves, inscriptions on ancient monuments and on parchment, and as recorded in more modern writing. The various schools of African thought and culture have highlighted the richness of African expression, but most of them, like the Negritude and those of African, Bantu or Ethiopian personality, chose not to adopt the heritage of African languages written in Arabic characters as a source of their self-discovery. They did not correctly assess the tremendous impact of either the deciphering of the hieroglyphic writing on the understanding of the millenary Egyptian civilisation – although the Egyptian people had acquired newer languages and cultures – or of their interactions on its evolution. Yet, no one thought such new acquisitions detracted from the value of the known history of this great people. We also have the experience of the peoples of Asia who underwent various phases of recording their heritage in several ways throughout their history, the latest of which was the writing of Persian, Urdu, Turkish and the Kurdish languages in Arabic characters. Some of these peoples have changed the characters they use today, yet this does not lead to ignoring their older heritage written in Arabic characters.

The writer had all this in mind when undertaking this study; he had noted the existence of more than 20 African languages written in Arabic characters, as a result of the historical African-Arab interaction. This interaction led to various degrees of cultural exchange, and even integration, at certain periods of the Middle Ages, and modern times. The author notes that the historic presence of these African languages and their broad spread over the whole continent is in itself a proof of the effective presence of these African kingdoms on the one hand and their successful stand on equal terms with Arab culture, on the other.

We would state here that the present project and treaties are the outcome of the collaboration of the writer, all through 2003 and 2004, with the

African Arab Cultural Institute in Bamako. This institute was the fruit of an agreement between the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Arab League in 1985, but came into effective existence in 2002, to stress the interaction between the African and Arab heritages in all fields of language, literature, arts and social and natural sciences, in order to support the on-going African-Arab cooperation.

However, I would highlight the protracted and rich discussions over a period of more than 25 years with numerous African and Arab intellectuals, foremost among which is the dialogue with the social scientist, and African and Arab anthropologist, the late Dr Mohyi Ed-Dine Saber, the General Manager of the Arab League Education, Culture and Scientific Organization (ALECSO). This dialogue about the cultural dimension of African-Arab relations took place during the author's stay in Tunisia with Dr Saber (1982-1986), within the framework of ALECSO, and in the period 1998-2000 after Dr Saber had quit ALECSO, in their joint effort in founding an African-Arab group intent on the resuscitation of African manuscripts in Arabic characters (Ajami). This interest in the study and dissemination of this rich heritage stemmed from their appreciation of its importance, and their noting that Arab efforts have neglected this rich source of African heritage, while showing interest only in Arabic and Islamic African manuscripts. Thus, the part of the African heritage that received some attention was that written in Arabic by Arab or African authors. Indeed, both ALECSO and its Islamic counterpart, ISESCO, have deployed some effort towards writing some African languages in Arabic characters, but have shown little interest in the collection and study of their Ajami texts. It is to be noted that the problems concerning such texts have been the subject of much debate in recent years, whether as regards the debate about the expedience of writing some languages such as Somali or Swahili in Arabic or Latin characters, or the historic and social value of the texts in African languages written in Arabic characters (Ajami).

The debate about these issues concerned many elements, which we would enumerate in the following:

(i) The heritage of any people is closely related to the roots of its identity and to its place in history. The present-day self-consciousness of the people cannot be based on the negation of its heritage on any pretext, and is explained by its past, and sheds light on that past.

(ii) Recalling the heritage does not necessarily act as a coercive force on the present. Hence, the Arabic language is not the only source of history for the non-Arabic speaking peoples of Africa, nor does the fact that the

first recorded heritage of these peoples was written in Arabic characters impose on them any constraints in continuing to do so, unless they freely so choose.

(iii) The issue of analphabetism is acutely present in the context of the project of modernisation, the limitations of the available education, and the conflict between the traditional and the modern as concerns heritage. While the masses of Africans are more attached to the traditional and to their heritage expressed in Arabic or Ajami, yet their degree of education is generally assessed by their mastery of the relevant European language, or their own language but as written in Latin characters, and this raises much controversy. Indeed, while collecting the material for this book, we noted how some politicians, human rights activists, and intellectuals seeking the establishment of national identity, have resorted to writing in Ajami, in order to reach the widest masses in their countries. I actually met such cases in Senegal, The Gambia and Nigeria, to mention but just some examples.

(iv) We must also give some thought to the issue of the size of the existing heritage written in Arabic characters, and the value set upon it in the study of the social history of any given people. Our experience showed the scarceness of such manuscripts in the official sources existing to date, i.e. available for study; yet, this does not mean that they do not exist in fact. Indeed, all reports received concerning this issue stress the necessity of deploying serious efforts towards collecting such heritage, and remedying its official scarceness. Possible explanations for such scarceness could be that colonial anthropologists intentionally neglected it.

(v) Some argued that their neglect of such heritage was due to its predominantly religious nature or to its cultural naivety, and hence its irrelevance in a social or historical context. Such an argument is incompatible with the modern assessment of the elements of popular folklore or heritage in general, or the importance of the written heritage in the development of the language, on the one hand, while it also ignores the fact that Islamic literature, although religious in form, treats all aspects of the social life of the Moslem, on the other hand; hence, the all-inclusive nature of the written heritage.

(vi) It is sometimes argued that the well-known African authors in the regions where the widespread African languages, e.g. Fulani, Manding, Hausa and Swahili are spoken, such as Ahmad Baba Al-Tinbucti, Abdel-Rahman Al-Saadi, Mahmoud Kaate and Othman Dan Fodio, did not write their well-

> known works in Ajami, but in Arabic. This meant that little scientifically acknowledged heritage was written in those languages during the main period of literary activity, and hence, neither the Europeans nor the Arabs gave much attention to such heritage. Such arguments ignore the fact that many such texts, including those recorded in this work, were produced in the context of the resistance to colonial incursions or in defence of religion and social cohesion during the periods of decline of the African kingdoms. As such, it was natural for the colonial administrations to ignore such a heritage, and to concentrate instead on the Arabic books of travel and exploration, of which many were translated during the colonial era. This was to be expected on the part of the colonial administration which aimed at integration of the culture of the colonies into the European culture, and hence the negation of the other cultures, or at least, to move them into modernity by using Latin characters as a vehicle for their integration.

More recently, colonial anthropology, as its functional methods have developed, has shown renewed interest in the heritage of these cultures and languages, in order to utilise African texts to better understand the systems of thought, and modes of social life of these peoples. This has enabled them to be governed in a more acceptable fashion designed to facilitate their modernisation and integration; and hence, collecting more modern texts and not the older ones. Yet, following the more modern phases of interest in such heritage shows a remarkable tendency to ignore it, after the national cultural policies had settled down to the use of Latin characters for writing down their national languages.

The Framework for Interest in Ajami Manuscripts

Any researcher can note the lack of interest in manuscripts of African languages in Arabic characters early on, despite their importance for African social historiography and their significance for African linguistics across the continent. So far, we are unable to note a date for renewed interest in Ajami manuscripts, despite the widespread interest in African languages *per se*. Probably, monitoring the debate over the ways of writing African languages may decide the degree of interest in such heritage. Similarly, the museums of national cultures may accomplish this goal, but this is outside the scope of this study.

There is no doubt that colonial administrations showed some interest in the folkloric and anthropological aspects that may help administer their colonies, but this was confined to the framework of what was named Francophonism or Anglophonism. After independence, the national administrations showed even more advanced interest in the content of such aspects, and in their

assessment. This interest included Arabic manuscripts and some Ajami texts as well. However, the full volume of the latter was not clearly indicated in the indexes of manuscripts, and this was keenly felt during our visits to various African capitals over some decades. The general result of our search was that the available supply of Ajami manuscripts was remarkably meagre, because of the attitude of the holders of such heritage, using it in traditional medicine and rituals, in refusing to surrender it to 'aliens', or asking for lots of money for handing it to foreign collectors.

Such a result was again corroborated by the replies to our requests for such manuscripts that we received from the Institut Fondamental de l'Afrique Noire (IFAN) in Dakar, the National Museum in Zanzibar, the Manuscript Library of the Institute for African Studies at the University of Ghana and the French National Library in Paris. All these bodies apologised for their inability to help, either because of the rarity of such manuscripts, or their not having the competent personnel for indexing what they possessed. Indeed, the number of such manuscripts mentioned in a comprehensive index made by the Furqan Institute (1998) of some 9,000 manuscripts in the Ahmed Baba Library was very limited.

Yet, the interest shown by the scientific community in Nigeria – from Ibadan to Zaria, Sokoto and Kano – promises better possibilities in this respect. Similarly, the interest shown by the Mama Hedra Library in Timbuktu is promising. One of our collaborators, Dr Momouni Seini, noted that the Library of Niamey University in Niger contains some 4,000 manuscripts in Ajami. Also, L. Munthe noted the existence of some 7,000 pages of Malagasy manuscripts in Arabic characters in Norway. Finally, the studies of the creative English Scholar J. Hunwick 1976 are based on a large array of Ajami manuscripts, in view of his long-standing Afro-Islamic studies.

We would note here that more interest in the studies of African languages and their writing will lead to better information about the volume and locations of Ajami manuscripts. Indeed, we have benefited in the present work from the early efforts of some European scholars in this respect, such as Munthe 1989 for the Malagasy manuscripts, W. Hichens 1972 for the Swahili and S. Rattray 1969 for Hausa.

However, we must note the rarity of mentioning this heritage, or referring to it as a source of data for the study of African languages and their written heritage, even in the works of a well known anthropologist: K. Prah, despite the value of such heritage as noted by the well-known African historian Ki Zerbo1981 in his introduction to the first volume of the General History of

Africa published by UNESCO. We would point here to some encouraging developments in this direction, which may lead to more positive results for this research:

(i) The first phase of interest was shown by the colonial administrations at the beginning of the 20th century in some of this material during the early attempts at writing the African languages in Latin characters, to help promote the relations between the administrations and the local people. Then, in a second phase, the French administration in West Africa and their British counterparts in East Africa officially imposed the use of Latin characters in the years 1914 and 1931, respectively.

(ii) After the wave of independence in the continent, the issue of the official language, and hence its alphabet, came to the fore. So, Swahili was adopted as the official language in Tanzania and Hausa was adopted, among others, as a national language in Nigeria. Other combinations of official and national languages were adopted in other African countries, such as Mali, Guinea and Senegal. In some cases, this caused cultural conflicts, as in Somalia. In many countries, the African languages were adopted as the national language for teaching in the lower levels of education, while retaining the relevant European language as the official language for all other purposes. With all these alternatives, Latin characters were adopted for writing the national language.

(iii) Within the framework of this interest in national culture, some countries in both East and West Africa began to collect the heritage of national languages as recorded in manuscripts in Arabic and Ajami. Notable in this respect were the efforts deployed by the northern Nigeria universities in Zaria and Sokoto, and the University of Ibadan in the South of the country. Also notable was the role of IFAN in Dakar, sponsored by the late Cheikh Anta Diop and the efforts in Niger, sponsored by the politician Bobo Hamo and the political researcher Hambate Ba. Later, these institutions were joined by the Ahmad Baba Center in Timbuktu Mali, the EACROTANAL Institute in Zanzibar, the Library of the Institute for African Studies at the University of Ghana and the University of Madagascar in Antananarivo. Some national libraries in the countries of the African North, in Chinqeit, Rabat, Khartoum and Cairo, also participated in the collection of African and Arabic works.

(iv) After the wave of independence, the interest in African languages moved from the national to the international levels, as represented by UNESCO

> and the OAU, as well as some European institutions. It all started with the meetings of a group of African experts, within the framework of UNESCO, in Abidjan (Ivory Coast) and Ibadan (Nigeria) in 1964, in order to adopt a common alphabet for African languages. Their effort was based on a memorandum by the International Institute for African Languages in London in 1930, on the alphabet and orthography of African languages (presumably using Latin characters). Of course, the outcome of this study did not even mention Arabic characters in which these languages were – and still are – written. UNESCO then convened a general conference in Bamako (Mali) in February 1966 that became known under the slogan 'Unifying the Alphabet of National Languages' (again in Latin characters). This general conference did not mention the heritage of these languages in written form, or treat the problems of writing in Arabic characters as used by theses peoples for centuries.

After this beginning, some twenty conferences or seminars were convened to treat the practical steps to be taken for some languages (Swahili, Hausa, etc), the last of which was held in Bamako in 2002, after Akra, Harare, Asmara, etc. The Bamako conference dealt with the problems of only six languages (Manding, Fulani, Tamashek, Songhai, Hausa and Kanori), but other conferences treated problems of modern literature, and writing in Latin characters for most of the languages of the continent. Many of these conferences adopted oral traditions as the main source for the texts to be studied or for the study of phonetics.

The interest shown by the OAU in cultural affairs led to the promulgation of the Cultural Manifesto at the Algiers Cultural Festival in 1969. This was followed by the African Cultural Pact in Mauritius in 1976. Both documents laid particular emphasis on national languages and their ways of writing and on their role in education and cultural life, with special emphasis on oral traditions, which have to be studied, but with no mention of the previous official languages dominant in the former colonies.

Within such undertaking, a number of African language and oral tradition centres affiliated to the OAU were created in several African capitals, where UNESCO had already started similar centres. Foremost among these centres were those in Niger, Gabon, Zanzibar, Ethiopia and Uganda; but according to the limited information available, these centres have few resources to perform their duties apart from what little they can glean from the countries of residence. Thus, they could not meet the expectations of the OAU in the field of African heritage, and whatever was achieved was confined to the conferences financed by UNESCO.

In the 1970s, a movement of Arab-African cooperation began, which invigorated cultural Arab and African institutions. Thus, an Arab-African cultural cooperation committee was created and ALECSO played a prominent role in this field, under the direction of the late scholar Mohyi Ed-Dine Saber. A special organisation was created for the development of Arab-Islamic culture (1981) which had its counterpart in the cultural administration of the OAU. The two bodies signed an agreement to create the African Arab Cultural Institute in 1985. This institute was reinvigorated in 2002 in Bamako by the Arab League and the African Union (AU).

ALECSO organised many seminars around Arab and African culture, and the role of African *ulema*s in Islamic culture. The organisation sent various groups to several African countries to survey the elements common to both Arab and African culture, including Arab and African manuscripts. I was honoured to be a member of the groups that visited Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria and Senegal between 1982 and 1985, to get acquainted with the situation of Arab and Islamic culture in those countries.

The above activities of ALECSO were matched in certain areas by those of ISESCO which also demonstrated its interest in African languages and their heritage by convening seminars and publishing some booklets that demonstrate the close ties between those languages and Arabic, including the editing of dictionaries for such languages and Arabic. The aim of this endeavour is to facilitate the study of Islamic teachings by the use of Arabic characters (with certain technical assistance such as the supply of typewriters with Arabic characters). This was a continuation of previous efforts by ALECSO.

We wish both organisations would pay more attention to the modernistic tendencies of African intellectuals who are nowadays attached to European languages and writing in Latin characters alone, which necessitates reactivating their relationship with the old heritage of their language. Such efforts would make use of such tendencies that are deploying efforts towards modernising their national languages and their heritage written in Arabic characters (Hausa in Northern Nigeria). I personally saw newspapers in Northern Nigeria (Fajiri) published in Hausa in Arabic characters. Likewise, the well-known Gaskiya House does some publishing in Hausa in Arabic characters, as did Cheikh Anta Diop, who published his party paper – Taxaw in Wolof – in Dakar (in the 1980s) with some pages in Arabic characters, in order to reach the widest public. Similarly, the Institute for Human Rights in Bangoul (Gambia) prints some of its stickers in West African languages in Arabic characters, so as to raise the consciousness about human rights of the masses that do not speak English or French.

The interest shown by political and civil society in reviving the heritage of African languages has urged some senior political authorities to share such interest and take certain steps in this direction. So, ex-President Omar Conary of Mali – then the Commissioner of the African Union – within his capacity as an ex-professor of African History met with President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, who is personally interested in the discourse on African renaissance, in the summer of 2001, and both men sponsored a joint project for the study of Islamic manuscripts (presumably both Arabic and Ajami). The aim of this project is to highlight the contribution of Africans over the centuries to the cultural heritage of mankind. Such a project is not only concerned with national identities or values, but also tries to amalgamate these values with development plans, as South Africa is officially soliciting the sponsorship of business investors for this project, as a means of relating cultural activities with development.

After the final agreement was signed in August 2002 and the Working Group was formed, the two presidents took their project to the African Union which adopted it in its first conference in Mozambique in 2003, to become one of the first cultural projects of the Union.

Within the framework of this renewed interest, we have come across other interests that may have scientific or political consequences. A seminar was held in Bamako (Mali) in August 2002 under the auspices of the Society of Islamic Ulema of Transvaal (South Africa) and some researchers in Mali, under the title 'The Ink Road' (a reminder of the Silk Road, the symbol of Arab-Asian relations in the Middle Ages). This seminar studied the situation of manuscripts in various parts of Africa, which included a study about Ajami manuscripts in South Africa by the researcher Mohammed Haroun who disclosed the existence of manuscripts in the Afrikaans language, written in Arabic characters by some of the Asiatics living in South Africa, dating from the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Interest in African manuscripts was revived at Dakar University, whose History Department convened a seminar in October 2004 to discuss ways of collecting such manuscripts and their role in African culture. Thus, the heritage of African languages in Arabic characters may become a means for democratizing culture, and not a mechanism for Arab hegemony. It will also save the wide masses from analphabetism in the field of knowledge, and activate the national memory to revive the old Arab-African contacts.

Hopefully, the interest shown by numerous institutes in many African and Arab universities in this issue will bear fruit. Indeed, we note a movement

to modernise Hausa on a scientific basis in Kano and Sokoto, and active language and heritage studies from Dakar to Dar es Salaam, through Bamako, Niamey and N'Jamena. This interest is also noted in South Africa in various governmental and non-governmental centres, as well as in north Africa, where the universities of Cairo, Azhar, Mohammad V and Khartoum have created sections and institutes, although these show little interest in literary heritage (manuscripts). Such interest may be an incentive to the African-Arab Institute and other regional Arab and African institutes to pursue such studies diligently and to support them by relevant meetings and publications.

Study Plan

The research aims at providing photocopies of certain African manuscripts written in Arabic characters, known as Ajami, as samples of the cultural work of some African peoples across the continent, over periods of pre-colonial times, or under colonial rule, for study by African, Arab and other researchers. Some of the included texts are of a folkloric nature – although recorded in writing – such as the history of the Antimoros or the Hausas, some take the form of letters addressed to rulers or dialogues with them, and some are *fatwas* or other rulings of a social nature.

I took special pains to ensure the authenticity of the texts by relying only on well-known academic persons as sources of the texts. The same persons undertook the transliteration of the texts into Latin characters and translating them into the French or English languages as the case may be, while I only undertook the translation into Arabic by reliable authorities. In a few cases, some authoritative sources were available such as L. Munthe (1989) on Arabic-Malagasy heritage, and S. Rattray (1969) on Haussa folklore. In such cases, the reference book included the text in Latin characters and its translation into French or English, and I only added the translation into Arabic.

As the samples chosen refer to a heritage rich in its historic or social content, I confined myself to a brief exposé of the general geographical, historical and cultural framework of each language, and the peoples speaking it. Any linguistic, philological or literary treatment of the text is left to specialised researchers in the respective disciplines.

It was noted during the long period spent on gathering this relatively small collection of specimens – from Madagascar, to Senegal and Guinea – that there was a considerable degree of lack of interest exhibited by universities and study centres in keeping such texts or listing them. This added to their rarity in general, and to the reluctance of individuals who own such texts to

cooperate, either due to lack of confidence, or because the texts are considered to be sacred, and not to be parted with.

After two years of tireless effort, lots of correspondence, and visits to various capitals, and relying on personal friendships, we managed to acquire a number of manuscripts from which we chose 16, in the following languages arranged geographically across the continent, from East to West:

(i) Malagasy (1 manuscript)
(ii) Swahili (3 manuscripts)
(iii) Hausa (3 manuscripts)
(iv) Fulani (2 manuscripts)
(v) Wolof (3 manuscripts)
(vi) Manding (2 manuscripts)
(vii) Songhai (1 manuscript)
(viii) Tamashek (1 manuscript)

The manuscripts of each language were presented in a separate chapter, beginning with a note about the situation of the language in its region, and the manuscript(s) presented in that language, with some brief remarks to help researchers pursue their study. Each text is presented page-by-page in the following arrangement: a page of the manuscript (in Arabic characters) is followed by its transliteration in Latin characters, then its translation into the European language dominant in its region, followed by its translation into Arabic. The number chosen varies from one language to another, according to the subject matter of these manuscripts, which included political and social history, debate on the language itself, social criticism, judicial rulings and religious texts.

Some Remarks on the Chosen Texts

(i) Some were chosen from among thousands of manuscripts in Norway, such as the Malagasy Arabic, of which Munthe mentions the existence of seven thousand pages of this kind named Surabi. Others were recorded by colonial administrators who got them from some prominent social personalities, such as the history of the Hausa people, recorded by S. Rattray (1969) and accompanied with a remarkable study well worth further perusal.

(ii) Some come from libraries such as IFAN in Senegal and the Sokoto Library in Nigeria which are known for their rich collection of manuscripts.

(iii) Some, such as the Tamashek texts, came from university libraries.

(iv) Still others, such as the Songhai texts, came from administrative authorities.

(v) Some texts exhibit a tendency for historiography from a popular standpoint that merits careful study (Malagasy, Fulani Haussa, etc.). However, there are also some modern texts from local newspapers from Zanzibar (1960) and Senegal (2003), demonstrating a modern treatment of Ajami.

(vi) Some manuscripts reveal social issues of importance such as problems of private ownership (Songhai), social relations between different communities (the conflict with Al-Mahdi), or *fatwas* or rulings on social issues. This rich contribution may urge anthropologists and social history researchers to conduct more research in this field, instead of simply relying on the prejudiced colonial anthropology.

7

E.W. Blyden: The Modern African Voyage to Egypt and the Levant

Many historians of Arab-African relations have written about the Arabs such as Al-Bakry, Ibn Batuta and others who travelled to Africa during the prosperous years of the Arab-Islamic kingdoms, when there were close relations with many parts of the outside world. Yet, little has been written about pure African literature in those times, except that which has come from the Islamic-African *ulema* and become part of the culture of the Arab world itself, in its tongue, and with its own interests about Fiqh and legislation (Sharia). Such was the literature contributed by Ahmed Baba Al-Tinbukti and others like him.

However, the personality in which we are interested here, Edward Wilmut Blyden, comes from a different context, for he belongs to the Christian culture of Afro-Americans (or Negroes in the language of the time), who returned to their continent in the mid-nineteenth century. He chose to merge with the peoples of the continent, and to promote the process of modernity among them. He put such ideas into practice as one of the pioneers of pan-Africanism, taking advantage of his teaching profession in Liberia and Sierra Leone. On the other hand, Blyden also thought that the relations with the peoples of the Arab world would benefit the African heritage, and guide it into modernity. He thus travelled to the Levant in 1866, where he visited Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria to get acquainted with their peoples and their Islamic culture. He wanted to master the Arabic language, in order to promote the common interests of the African and Arab worlds, both plagued by colonialism. In this endeavour, he was prompted by his positive assessment of Islam.

We will look into the following:

(i) Blyden's cultural background and his assessment of African culture, and the pan-African movement.

(ii) His intellectual voyage between the African, Pharaonic and Arab Islamic cultures, with constant comparison with European Christianity in Africa, and Jewish Zionism.

(iii) His voyage to Egypt and the Levant.

Blyden's Cultural Background and Assessment of African Culture

Blyden first came to Africa in 1850 with his family to join the land of their ancestors who had been taken to the Virgin Islands and Venezuela, along with the slave traffic across the Atlantic. Blyden's family were not happy with their stay in the USA, so they returned to the land of their ancestors in the newly created state of Liberia. The young Blyden had started his study of Christian theology in the USA and completed it in Monrovia, then started a career as a teacher in high school.

Before the age of 25, he was also writing articles in the press about the issue of teaching Africans, and other public issues. He advocated the return of American Africans to their old continent in the context of rising pan-Africanism, with its various ramifications, which was in opposition to the stand by Du Bois, despite their friendly personal relations.

Facing the aggravating rise of racist discrimination against African Americans on the one hand, and the rising Anglo-French competition in colonising Africa on the other hand, he started reservation in his call for Afro-Americans to return. He relied mostly on reasoned articles in well-known cultural publications in the USA and Britain, in contrast with the populist propaganda of men like Marcus Garvey. He founded newspapers in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and did not favour the popular mass meetings.

Blyden's cultural and media background led him to serious sociological studies of the local African societies and their cultures. His comparative studies of Christianity, Islam, Judaism and animism are a noted contribution in religious sociology. H. Lynch 1967 and others mentioned some 29 books and booklets, as well as some 20 studies on various topics that were of interest to him (Lynch 1967).

Blyden's thoughts were always oriented towards the interior of Africa, because he believed the newcomers into the coastal areas, whether intellectuals or those formed in the Christian mission schools, could not really grasp the

deep cultural heritage of the kingdoms and regions of the interior. He was always concerned with modernising African societies, making use of the 'civilised Christian culture'; yet, he felt a romantic attraction to the traditional African culture. Some even consider him among the founders of the Negritude Movement of the 20th century which actually borrowed some of his thought. This orientation towards the interior and its traditional culture led him to look with special esteem at Islamic culture and its Arab sources, which he believed the Africans had adopted voluntarily because it was appropriate to their traditional beliefs. He noted its role in uniting Africans on a wide scale, its equalising between all races, and its appreciation of their cultural contribution. He found proof of such tendencies in the proliferation of African-Islamic manuscripts, in Arabic, which he saw during his visits to the interior, or to the British Museum in London in 1871. However, he was always concerned about the reticence of the traditionalist Moslems towards the issue of modern education in these vast territories that he considered the eventual land of African unity.

Blyden's Intellectual Voyage between the African, Pharaonic and Arab-Islamic Cultures

Blyden had a comprehensive outlook on African culture all across the continent. He moved from this outlook to the idea of constant interaction between cultures as the basis for advancement, side-by-side with social development. He believed African culture was the basis for all human cultures, as the descendants of Ham transferred it from Ethiopia to Egypt, and from there it moved on to Greece and Rome, then to Europe. He was one of the founders of Ethiopianism, the school of African Christian fundamentalism, and shared in founding the magazine *The Ethiopian* in Sierra Leone in 1871. His belief in the ancient origins of the African culture led to his theory that the builders of the pyramids in Egypt were African Negroes. He also claimed that the West Africans came from the East of the continent, then migrated to Sudan. He said Africa was the first refuge for Christ in Egypt; and hence, African influence spread to the whole world. However, the Europeans took the Africans as slaves to America, and could not make up with the Africans; instead they colonized their countries and spread the 'curse against Ham's descendants' to legitimise their oppression of Africans. He asked that this 'curse' must not be taught to Africans. He called for raising the self-consciousness among black Negroes, using the term with self-pride. Such sentiments were manifested in his *A Voice from Bleeding Africa* (1856). He claimed the African personality could be

redeemed by modernising African societies and by creating national states, starting with Liberia.

Blyden believed that progress for Africa was possible if it firstly revived its foreign relations by getting back its sons and daughters from the Americas; secondly, if it mastered the Islamic culture of the majority in its hinterland; and thirdly, if it reached out to the Moslems of the North and East who were in contact with modernism, and adjusted with European Christianity, the bearer of modern civilisation. He was concerned by the inability of the Christians in the coastal areas to cope with the Africans of the hinterland, which resulted in his deep sociological study of both Islam and Christianity in Africa – *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* (1888). In this book, he maintained that both Christianity and Islam were great religions, but he always favoured the spirit of Islam. Although recognising the spirit of modernity carried by Christianity coming from abroad, he thought its chances of penetrating Africa were limited by the wide influence of Islam. He therefore considered it imperative for Moslems to participate in the modernising process in cooperation with the Christian bearers of the new civilisation.

Blyden's keenness on Islam stemmed from his appreciation of its unifying spirit, its support for independence, and its rejection of slavery by rejecting any discrimination between Moslems of any colour of skin. He even went into hot polemics with journalists and researchers in London and Liberia in defence of this sentiment, despite his reserve in criticising Christianity which he seemed to blame more for its attitude to the Negro race than for the theology that he studied elsewhere. This romantic keenness led him to delve into Islamic texts of various Islamic doctrines (Madhahib), and to acquaint himself with Islamic scholars in the interior and even with Islamic heritage. He also pursued the mastery of the Arabic language to the extent of traveling to the Levant in 1866, in order to be better acquainted with Arabic and those who spoke it. On his return, he decided to have Arabic taught in the schools under his supervision. Indeed, he was for most of his active life in charge of Mohamedan schools in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and he even went to Lagos in 1894 to inaugurate a mosque, and started teaching the Arabic language there.

Blyden's Voyage to Egypt and the Levant

Blyden was personally interested in mastering the Arabic language because he considered it to be the unifying force of Moslems, and even learned Fulani because it was the language of the majority of Moslems in West Africa. He

started learning Arabic in 1860 in Monrovia, as a prelude to disseminating it among the Moslems of the interior, as a tool for a better knowledge of the heritage of Islamic manuscripts which he valued greatly, but he was also keen on Moslems learning English as a tool for modernising African society. He believed teaching Arabic in the coastal areas would provide African teachers for the children of the Moslems of the interior, in contrast with the English language which was taught by European missionaries who did not care to work in the 'backward' hinterland. He never trusted the mulattos to work on such a mission, nor did he expect their cooperation. Likewise, he hated the racist attitude of the French, and their condescension towards the African character. In 1866, Blyden was a permanent emissary for the Liberian Government abroad, and in this capacity, he travelled to the Arab world, in order to master the language and get better acquainted with the Moslem society. His ideas about Jews, his enthusiasm for their historic experience, and the Zionist Movement were also a reason for his visit to Jerusalem.

Blyden arrived in Beirut on 11 May 1866 and joined the Protestant College there to study Arabic. He declared himself the Consul of Liberia in Beirut and Damascus, considering this would help him recruit the Syrians (including the Lebanese) to migrate to West Africa, which migration had already started at the time, under the influence of the French. He did not trust the French, nor did he see a future for their language in Africa, but he was on the lookout for people to whet the appetite of the people of the interior to cooperate with those in the coastal areas, to achieve the modern renaissance and build the African united independent state. His writings show

> … concern that the Europeans can never be really acclimatized in equatorial Africa. They cannot work in Sudan or the Congo as peasants, mechanics or workers generally… or to develop industry and trade in this vast continent, but African Mohammedans, and the Negroes coming from the Christian countries, the bearers of civilization and progress are the only force capable of implementing the African renaissance (Blyden nd).

It seems Blyden was intent on mobilising the Lebanese for that task, since most of these ideas came as comments on the progress he witnessed in Egypt and Syria, and were mentioned in his book *From West Africa to Palestine* (1873).

In Cairo he was awed by the pyramids, on one of whose stones he carved the name of Liberia. After that visit, he wrote his book: *Negroes in Ancient History* (1869). He also wrote in *From West Africa to Palestine* that 'the Negroes played an important role in the civilisation of this country' (Egypt). He equally wrote:

> I thought this great work was constructed by my African ancestors. My sentiments are running higher than it did before the glowing works of European genius. I felt the owner of a unique heritage in the form of the pyramids built by my ancestors descended from Ham. The blood runs high in my veins as I hear the echo of the voices of these great Africans … I feel the action of these personalities that their civilization to Greece … I feel superior to all the great people of modern times, and raise my voice to all Africans saying: Raise up your torch, once again (Blyden 1869).

In this spirit too, Blyden extolled the sentiments of tolerance and non-discrimination in Egypt, as reported by Europeans who lived in the country. He also cited this non-discrimination throughout the history of Egypt, where once it was governed by Kafoor the black ruler, this non-discrimination being one of the tenets of Islam. He even mentioned the historic Islamic author Al-Jahiz and his book: *The Superiority of the Sudan (Blacks) over the Bidhan (Whites)*.

In-between Beirut and Cairo, he visited Jerusalem, as a token of his appreciation of the role of the Jews and their suffering throughout history. He saw a parallel between their plight and that of the Africans, who suffered greatly like the Jews, although this gave them both great spiritual qualities which make them eligible to be the spiritual leaders of the world. Such views were expressed in his book *The Jewish Issue* (1898), which appeared after his previous ideas about Pharaonism, Islam and Christianity. This book also came after the first Zionist Congress in Basle in 1896, and in it he praised the Zionist movement which called for the return of the Jews to their ancestral land, in the same manner that he called the Africans to go back to their continent. He believed the Jews to be a powerful secular civil force, who had the right to have their own state, but he warned them against dabbling too much into politics, urging them to give priority to the spiritual side of things. He urged them to extend their activity to Africa, which was where they had historically prospered. Blyden was favourably impressed by some Jewish personalities and traders whom he had encountered in Africa, but he did not favour their integration into the continent, as he always favoured different races keeping their own personalities. Such concepts stood behind his support for Islam as a belief adopted voluntarily by the Africans, who made their cultural and scientific achievements within these tenets. In contrast, he had his reservations about the work of Christian missions in Africa.

These conflicting views led to his adopting ambiguous ideas at times. Some accused him of vacillating between his considering Islam as a positive element in the traditional culture, and the Arabic language as a unifying element on one hand, and his seeing Christian civilisation as a factor to be adopted as a vehicle

for African renaissance, yet not approving its spread among Africans, on the other hand. Similarly, he considered the Jews as most civilised, yet he criticised their political fervour.

Blyden rejected colonialism, yet his biographers report that, near the end of his life, he considered the British presence as an element of progress. When Orabi's revolution in Egypt was overcome, he even spoke of the stability the British occupation would establish, and the abolition of the Arab trade in slaves.

Blyden's rich cultural wealth was always present in his political thought. His long journey within the African, European and Arab cultural worlds earned him honorary doctoral degrees from some European universities. He was always intent on tapping the sources of traditional African culture, as well as delving into Islamic culture, as shown by the list of his writings. He tried to keep close to Christian missionary circles to keep in touch with sources of modernism, yet he kept even closer to the Islamic African circles until the end of his life. Thus, he directed the Mohammedan High School in Sierra Leone from 1901 to 1906, and published several studies on the Koran, Islam and the Negro race, in the last decade of his life.

8

Mahmood Mamdani: A Rebel from Dar es Salaam

The title one of the books by Mahmood Mamdani is *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terrorism* (2004). This may indicate the main aim of the book, namely to display the American administration's intention of coining this classification of Muslims, whether during the course of the Cold War, or the so-called war on terrorism. Mahmood Mamdani has the right political and ideological background to treat such an issue, as he has done with great competence in previous treatments of colonialist, class or ethnic oppression.

I first met Mamdani in the mid-1970s as a young, free insurgent who had just returned from Columbia University in New York to join the staff of Dar es Salaam University in Tanzania. Born in Bombay, India, he moved as a child with his father to Uganda where he lived within the prolific Asiatic community in East Africa, and later completed his studies in the well-known Makerere University in Kampala. We met on the occasion of the founding of the African Association of Political Science, with a group of distinguished young scholars of the social sciences, most of whom had a lasting effect in the realm of political and social studies in various parts of the African continent.

Mamdani's life represents a lively journey of scientific endeavour without the usual relaxation we often see in other intellectuals at a certain stage of life. This may be explained by the fact that he always assumed the role of the engaged scholar who came from a historic Asian culture to African cultures that he deemed to be traditional, and struggled all the time against alien

western, or indeed American, political cultures. He also moved from the social field to the political one across cultural debates. We also see him move from Marxism to modern social philosophies and analytical trends across numerous challenging debates fit for an insurgent scholar all through the various stages of his life, which we may dwell upon in brief.

During his stay in Kampala and Dar es Salaam, he was seriously engaged in the debate over the class analysis of the various social groups and formations. Later, he moved to Cape Town, South Africa, then to the Great Lakes region, where he undertook a brilliant analysis of social and economic ethnic supremacy and segregation. He then moved on to a study of foreign powers infringing upon the peoples of the Islamic world as exemplified in Iraq and Darfur. We shall meet many of these analyses in the present work – *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*.

Apart from his ideological struggles, Mamdani also took part in armed struggle against the oppressive regime of Idi Amin in Uganda, where he participated in the long march through the forests of Tanzania to Kampala, a march reminiscent of the Maoist Long March in China. After the success of this political campaign, he was embroiled in Ugandan politics – first in power, then in opposition – but he soon reverted back to his preferred realm of human knowledge and wisdom, and the struggle for human emancipation in the south and centre of the African continent. He now extends his analyses from New York to those oppressed in the south by the foremost imperialist power in whose capital he now lives.

The Ideological Foundation

Mahmood Mamdani began his intellectual life in a multi-ethnic, Asian-African atmosphere, aspiring to ethnic blending different from the deeply segregated atmosphere he met later in South Africa. Thus, he started in Kampala (with his Indian heritage) and Dar es Salaam in close contact with the philosophy of Julius Nyerere and his TANU Party of a multi-ethnic society.

With this background, the young man undertook his studies of tribes and social classes; on tradition and modernity; on relations of production and relations of power and authority. He was always concerned with the socio political spheres, first from a Marxist standpoint, then through Maoism, later in his own endeavours as a researcher in Pittsburgh, USA (1962), and later in Harvard where he obtained his PhD in anthropology in 1974. In his first

book entitled *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda* (1976), he differs with the empiricism of his tutor Karl Deutsch whose liberalism he none the less admires.

From his early youth, Mamdani expressed his reservations on certain tenets of the Marxist Leninist analysis of social classes. He was critical of G. Frank when he maintains that underdevelopment is a consequence of the primitive production forces. As Mamdani notes 1976, it also has roots in backward social relations and ideas.

In contrast with the dominant functional ideology in Harvard that considers backwardness to be a natural condition, thus providing pretexts for exploitation of colonized peoples, Mamdani resorts to class analysis as the basis for his study of the Ugandan society and its petty bourgeoisie that inherited the gains of independence, whether the Asian merchant class or its African bureaucratic branch. His first book on Uganda, published in 1976, is a clear example of this phase in his ideological journey. The issues he treats in this book also reflect the atmosphere of ideological debate on the African level in the 1960s and 1970s, and its reflection in the West. We shall only touch on some of the main issues dealt with by Mamdani in this fundamental work to illustrate his main trends.

The main issue under discussion in the 1960s was the role played by western colonialism in modernising traditional tribal Africa, in order to create colonial markets and an administrative middle class to bind the newly independent societies in the periphery with the capitalist centre. The young Mamdani was annoyed by the contentions of the functional empiricist modernists that the root of backwardness in African societies was their inherent backwardness and irrationality, and their lack of a state, history or class struggle. Mamdani noted the class struggles in the kingdom of Buganda, while the racist ideology described it as a mere tribe. Such thinking relates the position of individuals in African societies to their personal merits or charisma, while the positions of their homologues in bourgeois societies are classified according to their class relations. Similarly, the poverty of African societies is related to traditional backwardness or natural conditions while in fact it is the product of the historical fact of colonisation, where the colonies were exploited for the benefit of the capitalist accumulation of the western powers.

Thus, for the young Mamdani, class is not merely a formation for deciding the distribution of incomes, but in African societies, it reflects the relations

of power in these societies, and hence the political significance attributed in Africa to class forms and class consciousness. Therefore, Mamdani saw that tribalism in Africa was a product of colonialism and not a natural African formation. A case in point was the conflicts instigated by the colonial power between Buganda and Bunyoro in Uganda over the cultivation of cotton to supply the capitalist market. However, the class consciousness between the *kulaks* of both groups drives them to more acute competition in pursuit of their class interests. Similarly, the aim of the head tax was to drive the rural population into the cities in order to lower wages and to boost capitalist accumulation. Colonial rule also gave preference to indirect rule to isolate the different tribes or ethnic groups from each other. Further, the migration from rural areas helped the settlement of Europeans or Asians in these areas. The class analysis also led Mamdani to the conclusion that the commercial bourgeoisie (European or Asian) dominated the petty bourgeoisie to retain the dominance of the metropolitan bourgeoisie (according to Fanon) 1961. Based on this class analysis, he explained the onslaught of Idi Amin in 1972 against the Asian bourgeoisie in pursuance of the interests of the Ugandan petty bourgeoisie.

The Leap Forward

Social analysis was the centre of serious debate in the campus of Dar es Salaam University before and after the Arusha Declaration by Julius Nyerere (1966), where the petty bourgeoisie claimed the building of African socialism in order to avoid the existence of a class struggle. This campus was then the ground for the opposition to Nyerere who accepted their opposition in his role of a friendly guardian, and considering them to be Maoists or followers of President Mao whose lifestyle he admired (but not his ideas, of course). In this lively atmosphere, Mamdani studied the differences between African socialism and Maoism on the basis of Marxist Leninist theories. Along with Mamdani, there were a number of active young scholars whose friendship we cherish very much, such as Archie Mafeje (South Africa), Nathan Shamuyarira (Zimbabwe), Issa Shivji (Tanzania), Dan Nabudere (Uganda) and Nnoli Okwudiba (Nigeria). Some of these friends have passed away while others are still active and all of them have contributed richly to African political and social literature, having had fruitful discussions with Samir Amin, Hansen and other leaders of socialist ideologies.

All these scholars took part in active ideological struggle within the national state presided over by Nyerere and his Tanu party, and his doctrine of African communalism. Similar regimes were constructed in Zambia, Ghana and elsewhere in Africa. Everywhere, these young scholars militated for scientific socialism and its Maoist versions mostly. In the meantime, an older character such as Ali Mazrui (Kenya) seemed, in comparison, more liberal and almost conservative, although he shared with them their abhorrence of Idi Amin and his regime, as well as the totalitarian practices of Nyerere.

After Nyerere ousted the Arab feudal regime in Zanzibar (1964), Abdel Rahman Babu and his radical group sprang up and boosted the radical tendencies in Tanzania. This incited Nyerere to issue the Arusha Declaration (1966) in order to contain these increasing progressive tendencies in the region. It was no coincidence that the other liberation movements flourished in other parts of colonised Africa, such as the ANC in South Africa, the FRELIMO in Mozambique, the MPLA in Angola, the SWAPO in Namibia and the ZANU/ZAPU in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Dar es Salaam served as the focus of all the liberation movements in Africa as it was the seat of the Committee for the Liberation of the Colonies established by the Organization of African Unity.

The development of the armed struggle was not the only fruit of the national effort in the region, as the class analyses by Cabral, Neto and Dos Santos had affected most of the members of the group of young scholars, as expressed in a publication entitled *Maji Maji* about the class struggle in Tanzania (1976). In this context, Walter Rodney (1972) expressed the effects of such analyses about the bureaucratic bourgeoisie on the political consciousness in Africa, and in it Dan Nabudere pursued his debate over the postulates of Samir Amin on imperialism and the relations between the capitalist centre and the periphery. In this context also appeared the analysis by Mamdani of class struggle in Uganda and the tendency of the petty bourgeoisie for coup d'états as expressed by the regime of Idi Amin. The expulsion of the Asian traders by Idi Amin in 1972 was another manifestation of such tendencies. For some time, the 'political' took the ascendancy over the 'ideological' with Mamdani, as he and his comrades in the Ugandan opposition followed the Chinese example and carried their march from Tanzania. However, the petty bourgeois nature of this liberation army made it more of a coup d'état rather than the Maoist Long March they aspired to achieve. Thus, Mamdani took part with Museveni and the others in the revolutionary government for a short time, a fact seldom remembered.

I had the privilege of the acquaintance with Mamdani all through this period as founders of the African Association of Political Science (1974-1975) and up to the present. After we met, he relinquished his government office and joined the ranks of the opposition as a member of the staff of Makerere University. His ideological expedition then moved to the wider space of the intellectual struggles in the African south and centre, then to the struggle against the concepts of American military hegemony in the space of the three continents.

Social Politics: The Citizen and the Subject

Mamdani returned from the USA to his alma mater, Makerere, as a professor of Political Science, but Idi Amin soon expelled him and many of his colleagues of the elite in Uganda. He spent most of the 1970s as an exile in Tanzania until his triumphal return to oust Idi Amin. I dare say he was happy with his ideological efforts in Kampala, especially through his Centre for Basic Research, but his more illuminating role matured during the 1990s in Cape Town, as the founder of the Center for Fundamental Studies at Cape Town University. There, as professor of African Studies, he was one of the forerunners of the African scientists who accompanied the liberation of South Africa from the abhorrent apartheid system. Before that, we used to adopt resolutions condemning any form of cooperation with the apartheid regime, and South African scholars such as Archie Mafeje and Bernard Ben Magubane fled their native South Africa to work in the universities of Botswana or Dar es Salaam.

The sojourn of Mamdani in Cape Town (1993-1999) was a boon to the cultural movement at both the local and continental levels. His main ideological contribution during that period was expressed in his book entitled *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (1996). This book was a radical change from the classical racist studies that pretended South Africa to be a special case, while he put it within the general African space. This book was acclaimed locally and internationally as it took into consideration the local modes of sharing of power and resources, and the social resistance to capitalist mechanisms. This meant a certain advance on the prevalent analysis of the centre/periphery dominance relation.

The model of South Africa made its impression on Mamdani; I believe it led him to an understanding of other African societies, and he led many other scholars of African countries along similar lines. He studied the case of

South Africa within the wider scope of colonialism where the ideology of the urban modern society stands against racism and tribalism. Similarly, the semi-colonial rule in the newly independent Africa is not greatly different from the apartheid system in South Africa.

Thus, we note the urban citizens under apartheid in opposition to the natives or the subjects in South Africa, just as we note the urban civil society which enjoys liberal democracy in the newly independent countries in opposition to the rural population or subjects. The population that suffers coercion in the urban apartheid is encouraged to practice tribalism and tradition in their Bantustans. Mamdani finds that the situation in other African countries is not much different from that in South Africa. He also finds the explanation for the dominance of the conservative Inkatha Party in the Zulu areas around Durban in the rural nature of those areas. The ANC did not gain ascendancy in those areas except lately with the modernising process. Personally, I believe the late success achieved by Zuma (a Zulu) over Mbeki was brought about by this modernity in Durban. Indeed, Mamdani in his analysis neglects the role of the working class and whether it is just one of the constituents of urban society, or an active player in the struggle for power.

When studying the case of Uganda and the march of Museveni, Mamdani gives more prominence to the role of the rural community and its traditionalism. He also stresses these tendencies in his studies of the situation in Tanzania. In most cases, he gives more preponderance to the rural element and its resistance to modernity rather than to class oppression, in contrast with many other scholars.

I do not intend to present all the contributions of Mamdani in detail, but insist on his great role in enriching African thought in the fields of politics, economy and social sciences. It is remarkable to note his ability to take in Marxist and modernist ways of thinking in his far-reaching analyses. He exhibits his deep understanding of the Great Lakes region and its problems in his book *Citizen and Subject* (1996) that explains much of the ethnic strife in the region. He again analyses the Rwandan massacres in his book *When Victims become Killers* (2001), explaining how the Belgian colonialists had treated the Tutsi minority as a superior Hamite ethnicity and as such they enjoyed the privileged status of citizens, while the majority Hutu were treated as their subjects with few or no rights. This privileged situation of the Tutsi was resented by the Hutu majority to practically the same degree as the old

colonial rulers. After independence when the majority took over power, the Hutu needed little incitement to take revenge on their former oppressors (the former citizens) and the result was the massacre of hundreds of thousands of the Tutsi. This racial bloodshed spread out into other countries of the region, including the eastern Congo.

Confronting Media Terrorism on Darfur

Here, Mamdani approaches a new front in his cultural debate with modernity and tradition, where he presents some new subjects for discussion after his close study of events in Africa, starting with his stay in South Africa (1993-1997), then his sojourn in New York, and the mission to the Congo on behalf of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in 1997. His report on the conflict in eastern Congo resulting from this mission was eventually presented to the UN General Assembly. Later, he visited Darfur, Sudan (2006-2007) and wrote about the conflict there extensively. Again, he was commissioned by the committee in charge of the Nobel Peace Prize to make a report on the conflicts of the 20th century and suggest solutions for the 21st century.

We shall first refer to his standpoint on the conflict in Darfur, as it raised much debate in the West, as a prelude to our exposition of his book on the relationship between political Islam and terrorism – *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim* (2004). His debate on Darfur appeared in the *London Book Review* under the title "The Policies Behind the Term Genocide, the Civil War and the Uprising". Here, he discusses the use of the term 'genocide' and how it appears or disappears in cases such as Rwanda, Iraq or Darfur. This study merits a detailed examination, and so also does his intervention in a CODESRIA meeting (attended by myself) where he stressed the need for a new African knowledge in opposition to the dominant knowledge (coming from western sources). He noted the exaggerated interest shown by the American media and universities concerning the conflict in Darfur, in contrast with much less interest in more bloody conflicts in Rwanda or Iraq. He directly attacks the bulwark of this campaign in the Solidarity with Darfur Coalition (SDC) that has its shady relations with arms suppliers and the media circles that choose to expose or cover up the facts as may best suit their purpose. He notes that the term 'genocide' was seldom used to describe the massacres in Rwanda despite the millions of victims there, besides the famine and displaced populations.

He also notes the term genocide is never used to describe the situation in Iraq despite the millions of casualties and displaced persons. He finds the explanation for such inconsistency in the unfairness of the cultural hegemony and the disparity of the standards of values, and hence his call for a new African system of knowledge.

He applies this reasoning to the case of Darfur and argues that it could be termed as civil war, uprising or insurgency, but not necessarily as genocide as it is currently, all the time. Mamdani then goes on to study the use of the appellation 'Arab' or 'African' for the populations of the province. He notes that the population is mostly made up of West African immigrants who like to call themselves Arab as a means of imitating the elite Arab Muslim merchants in Sudan. He also notes the extreme drought in the region lately that forces these nomadic populations to migrate to the southern areas of Darfur in search of pastures for their cattle, hence the local conflicts over such areas. Yet, American media keeps harping on about Arab terrorism and the genocide committed by the Janjaweed forces to legitimise their intervention, which was forthcoming anyway. He even notes how obstacles are placed on the road of the efforts of the African Union to solve the problem. Thus, Mamdani sees the Darfur problem as another example of the cultural and social roots for conflict ruling the relations between Africans and Arabs.

The Cultural Debate: Good Muslim, Bad Muslim

Mamdani wonders in his book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim* whether the American hegemonist policy divides the world today, after the end of the Cold War, and in particular after 11 September 2001, on the basis of religious cultures, instead of the previous division on the basis of politics and capitalism versus communism. Now, they see the world as producing either a real modern creative culture, or a backward inflexible culture that breeds terrorism. Such judgments appeared first as the principle of the conflict of cultures or civilisations, and then it spread into the different cultures that are subdivided into moderate cultures that can be modernised and those that are inflexible. The first category will produce the Good Muslim who can respond to modern culture, while the second will breed the Bad Muslim. Thus, Mamdani dedicates a good part of his argument to the cultural discourse that prevailed after the 9/11 terrorist event and classifies Islam into two trends, one of which automatically breeds terrorism.

I shall not attempt to present the whole book, which I leave to the attentive reader, but I would like to draw the attention to some salient points that I believe are worthy of consideration.

He considers political Islam as a new phenomenon that first appeared after World War II when Pakistan was created on a religious political basis just like the Jewish state of Israel. Again, Islam was taken up by the Reagan administration to fight communism and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Later, the same administration decided to fight Islam as exemplified in the Islamic regime of the Ayatollahs in Iran. Recently, the American administration has been supporting the moderate regime of Saudi Arabia against the terrorist Bin Laden although both parties are Wahabis!

Yet, the Americans overlook the fact that they actually created and armed the Mojahedeen in Afghanistan; and before that, in the 1970s, they supported and armed the bands of RENAMO in Mozambique and UNITA in Angola that were directed from apartheid South Africa. They also organised the Contras to fight the democratic regime in Nicaragua with Saudi financial support, and also the war by proxy or by drug traffickers in Latin America. Now that Islamic terror has hit inside the US, the cultural war on Islam must don pseudo-scientific attire and political Islam must be stigmatised as the bearer of the irrational principles of the Jihad. Thus, we are confronted with the contrast of modernity versus traditionalism.

Thus, the general attack on a given culture finds its excuses regardless of the party that recently helped found and re-arm it. Mamdani asserts that his studies show that terrorism does not have its roots in the Islamic culture. Indeed, cultures develop and are reformed throughout history. Hence, we must study the recent upsurge of political Islam in connection with the vicissitudes of the Cold War in various regions, the most serious of which lies in the machinations of the American administration in the Islamic world.

In the chapters of the book, Mamdani closely follows the covert relations of the CIA in restructuring terrorist groups, foremost among which stands Al-Qaeda. Similar relations were noted between the Israeli Government and the nascent Islamic movement in Palestine. Mamdani blames the US administration for the increase in the ferocity of conflicts due to the rise of its militarism and the aggressiveness of its imperialism. He goes on to analyse its policies all over the world, from Indochina to Iraq passing by Palestine for which country he can only visualise one democratic solution, viz, one

democratic state that embraces all citizens on its territory. However, this overall democratic solution, and not the Islamic one, is far from practical in view of the deteriorating state of democracy in the US because of its war on terror following the Cold War.

9

The Sudanese Issue: The View from the South*

Many claim to have a stake in objectivity, but few are able to admit how much their perspective shapes their opinions and drives their interests. The Sudanese issue highlights this dilemma today more than any time in the past. Khartoum's perspective on the issue no doubt differs from the perspective in Juba, both of which differ from that of Cairo, not to mention the view from Washington and Nairobi. The Sudanese issue has been much discussed in many world capitals, but without lingering for too long on southern Sudan. We are thus obliged to step back somewhat from the matter. Any true discussion of the issue is essentially a suggested perspective, which might prove useful in the future, even if it has not been in the past. The view set forth here concerns the Arabs, and in particular the Egyptians, as much as it concerns the parties involved in the Sudanese conflict. Indeed, despite efforts to understand the Sudanese issue, the disregard that continues to be shown towards the south in many Egyptian writings is embarrassing. This chapter studies the following:

(i) A method for approaching the Sudanese question;
(ii) The roots of the problem: The alienation, 1947-1972;
(iii) A chance for trust building, lost, 1972-1983;
(iv) Vision of a new Sudan
(v) The Naivasha Agreement

* This paper was read at the OSSREA International Conference on African Conflicts in Addis Ababa on 1 December 2004 and elaborated on after the Naivasha Agreement.

A Method for Approaching the Sudanese Question

In Cairo, and in Arab political culture in general, I feel that we have not yet begun to deal in-depth with the entire range of Arab cultural and social diversity, although we continue to live with many of the problems this causes. We have the Kurds in the Levant, the Amazigh in North Africa, the Negroids in Mauritania, and Arabism-Africanism in Sudan, but an all-encompassing perspective that might help us handle this diversity has yet to be reached. We are still not very attentive at reading the lessons of recent history – both reassuring and disconcerting – from the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, or East Asia. We have no rule of thumb relating to the model of unity (many Arabs here supported the partition of India and the Balkans), or pointing out that, in historical terms, partition is not always a necessity (an option offered to the Bantustans and the Kurds, but rejected on a popular level), or also for dealing with a hegemonic force's insistence on separatism (as against northern Italy's desire for secession). We must see these issues from the proper perspective to be able to deal with them in an appropriate manner.

Here, I shall attempt to approach the Sudanese issue (conflict) from the southern perspective, in the hope that something new can be achieved, while at the same time taking heed of the importance of external considerations that might suddenly arise.

I must first consider the factual perspective. Despite its simplicity, this perspective raises the most significant questions related to the formation of the Sudanese nation, national identity, and the nature of citizenship in Sudan. Members of the early South Sudanese leadership, such as Joseph Garang, Abel Alier, Francis Deng and Bona Malwal, discussed this subject seriously in the 1960s. Any discussion of national unity or integration must be accompanied by an examination of social and cultural unity and diversity in Sudan, an issue taken up by these southern Sudanese intellectuals at a very early stage and developed further by northern intellectuals, such as Mohamed Omar Bashir, Mohamed Abdel Hayy, and Abdel Ghaffar Mohamed Ahmed, in all sincerity. I only mention 'sincerity' here because the colonial anthropological approach played a negative role in this regard, using diversity to raise, automatically, the issue of partition.

Secondly, we need to consider the historical perspective. Many northern historians have not recounted Sudan's social and political history so much as they have written a history of the Sudanese problem and its roots in the modern political development of Sudan. Thus, we are not familiar with the 1901 Zande revolt, the revolt of the Dinka in 1922, the Shulluk, or the general revolt of the

south against the British solution proposed at the Juba Conference in 1947, all of which would have given us a sense of Sudan's integrated structure, shaped by Nubian kingdoms, the Sinnar, the Fur, and the sultanates of Dinka and Zande. We must become acquainted with the writings of Joseph Garang and Francis Deng on Sudanese society at a time when Sudanese history was written solely from a northern perspective, which fell silent on the history of the south, as we see in the writings of Youssef Fadel, Mekki Shebeka, and Mohamed Ibrahim Abu Saleem. This legacy is extremely significant to modern historiography.

We must next consider the developmental perspective. Related to the social and economic history of Sudan both before and after independence, this perspective raises the subject of integration and alienation, whether we are talking about historical forms of exploitation (slavery and the history of the Jallaba or slave traders), the absence of development programs and the uneven distribution of wealth in successive political eras (see the documents of the southern regional legislative assembly in the 1970s and 1980s), or the demand to divide wealth, forcefully presented in contemporary settlement talks, such as at Machakos.

Fourthly, we must examine the issue of hegemony. This is not simply a matter of direct political control – northerners have not been in complete control for any long period of time – but also includes the process of inserting Sudan as a whole into the global hegemonic order, thus expanding regional or global capitalist markets and engendering forms of colonialist policies, a fact sometimes disregarded in the southern perspective. Here, also, is where ideological hegemony comes into play. Put in sociological terms, a certain social class imposes its hegemony over others outside its natural sphere of influence by using cultural elements, such as Islam, or social elements, such as Arabism. In doing so, this class exploits historical or geographic facts, which the ideology reshapes to become a form of control, such as the history of the Jallaba in the south, the Mahdists, or the behaviour of the ruling northern class in general. This situation may continue until such hegemony becomes relatively acceptable, as seen in the ideas of southern moderates such as Bolen Alier and Joseph Lago, and during the implementation of the Addis Ababa Agreement in the 1970s. However, an increasing sense of alienation tends to give rise to the opposite reaction, which is longer lasting. Examples of this type of hegemony are still being played out in different forms in India, Nigeria and South Africa.

Finally, we must consider the issue of counter-hegemony, examining African history in general for examples of counter-hegemonic movements. Hegemony has historically led to violence and counter-violence between regional, social or

tribal forces, which has then grown into revolt and war, followed by the rise of a new hegemonic vision, which may tend either towards integration or alienation, though not necessarily separatism. This is a process of imposing a new ideology with the objective of achieving regional counter-hegemony. This model applies to the Museiveni's resistance movement in Uganda, which rejected northern, and later Baganda, hegemony. It also applies to the revolt of the Tigre against the Amhara under the leadership of Zenawi and the march on Kinshasa from the eastern Congo under Kabila.

These models are not incompatible with the thought of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which raised the slogan 'The New Sudan' to break the traditional hegemony of the bourgeois and sectarianism over Sudan, as is clear in the movement's written documents and the writings of John Garang. Garang, like most of the leaders of the insurgency movements mentioned above, was influenced in Dar es Salaam by the ideas of the Maoist Revolution prevalent in the 1960s and 1970s concerning the use of socio-political coalitions and the Long March, and the popular march to gain control of the capital. Indeed, in his published interviews, Garang does not deny this strategy for the rule of the new Sudan. This raises not only the issue of national unity, but the form of the state and the social system, and enjoins us to see the extension of the SPLM's influence on the Nubian mountains and the other marginalised regions of the country.

We can now examine how the negative aspects of all these approaches or perspectives have led to the erosion of trust between south and north Sudan. Did north Sudan facilitate trust-building or national integration during its leadership of post-independence Sudan? The policies implemented as the modern Sudanese state was being formed do not appear to have had this objective in mind – neither the political coalitions organised during the national liberation movement, nor the development and economic programmes enacted after independence, nor even most of the tussles for power in Khartoum. Indeed, steps to build trust began only recently, starting with the programme of the opposition National Democratic Rally (NDR), and they are still a source of conflict in the Machakos Agreement.

Certain historical events and the stances taken by southern Sudanese of various persuasions prominent in Sudanese political life surprisingly reveal that, in general, southern Sudanese seemed much keener than northerners – albeit to varying degrees – to uphold the principle of coexistence. This is perhaps a response to the mistaken approach – taken by certain Sudanese politicians and intellectuals and ingrained in a broad section of Arab culture – to the Sudanese issue from the tense events surrounding the moment of independence, or from

the logic of Anyanya I, which disappeared from the Sudanese stage at the hands of Garang himself. Nevertheless, Arab writers continue to dwell on separatism of the South, which has not helped efforts to build trust, but has instead led recently to tangible shifts in the position of some southerners.

The Roots of the Problem: The Alienation, 1947-1972

It is remarkable that Sudanese historians did not pay much attention to the history of the south when they wrote about the Marwe civilization in the north, the Sinnar Kingdoms in the east, and the Darfur Sultanates in the west. They may have felt some self-guilt because of the slave trade practised by some northerners in the south, even with the help of some of the southern notables. They may have missed the correct analysis of the global system of colonial capitalism which exploited the south in a manner different to its exploitation of the north due to the 'backwardness' of the former. This may explain why they omitted any mention of the history of southern resistance to the attempts at modernisation, which would have provided a key to the understanding of the political and social integration after independence.

Some may be surprised to learn that at least two of the generation of modern education, from the Dinka tribes, who were students in the same class of law studies at Khartoum University after penetrating the barriers set up by the British around the south for half a century, tried to write the history of the political movements in the south behind those barriers. One of them was Joseph Garang who went left, and became a minister of state, but was executed by Numeiri in 1971. The other was Abel Alier who chose a centrist path, and was appointed by the same Numeiri as Governor of the south, then Deputy President during the period of self-rule, following the Addis Ababa Agreement, from 1972 to 1983.

Joseph Garang wrote a series of articles in the communist magazine *The Southerner* as early as 1961, then in another magazine *Progress* in 1965 onwards, and this series of articles was published in 1971, in a booklet entitled: *The Dilemma of the Southern Intellectuals, Is It Justified?* Noting the early dates of the first of these articles, we find Joseph Garang criticising the stance of the southern intellectual, perplexed in his stand towards the Sudanese question in general and not merely in his position as a southerner.

Joseph Garang, whose only relationship with John Garang is that they both come from the Dinka clans in the South, notes three stands taken by southern intellectuals before and during the first revolt in the early 1950s: a 'rightist', a 'perplexed' and a 'leftist' tendency. He notes that the rightists see only one

issue for the south, which is immediate secession. They consider the problem to be ethnic in essence, the southerners being Africans, while the northerners are Arabs, and the innate hatred between the two makes their separation an absolute necessity. He goes on to refute such contentions. The perplexed are a much wider group, and share the hatred of the northerners, but are aware of the threats of imperialism; especially in the light of the Congo debacle, they have no illusions of possible help from the United Nations, and fear the consequences of secession. Here lies their dilemma, but they are more progressive than the rightists because they give priority to the contradiction with imperialism, and know that the solution of this contradiction is the condition for any building of democracy, or any economic, social or cultural progress for the south. They also admit that the contradiction with the exploiting classes of the north, and their representatives in the state bureaucracy, including their imposition of their bourgeois culture (Islam and the Arabic language) on the south, is a remnant of the British administration. As for the leftists, represented by Garang himself, they adopt the tactics of the alliance with the democratic forces in the north against imperialism and in the pursuit of progress, and refuse the logic of the secessionist racial forces. They do not share the view of the perplexed who equate the threats of imperialism with those of the northern bourgeoisie, since the defeat of the former is a fundamental first step towards any fruitful solution of the southern issue under an alliance of the southern leftists and the nationalists in the north.

Joseph Garang finds that the southerners were aware of the threat of imperialism as early as 1901 with the revolt of the Zande and that of the Nueiris in 1902, followed by the revolts of the Dinkas in 1919 and 1922, and then the Nueiris again in 1927-29. All these revolts were directed against the British, and were not re-directed against the Arabs except after independence when the oppression of the north replaced that of the British.

Abel Alier laments in his book *Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured* (1995) that the northerners followed the British tradition of dishonouring their promises – which was to be expected – even to the point of annulling the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972, as early as 1983. He feels this disappointment very keenly, having been the staunchest champion of that agreement. He joins John Garang in noting the persistence of the southerners in building friendly relations with the north, but in vain.

At the Juba Conference in 1947, attended by the sultans of the south alongside the northerners and the British, the latter supported the suggestions of the sultans to proceed gradually in preparing the southerners for self-

government – in order to retain their prerogative for the longest possible time – while the representatives of the north extolled the virtues of integration, and the benefits it promised the south. Thus, they secured the approval of the conference for independence for Sudan, but in the end the southerners got only 13 out of the 93 seats in the Legislative Assembly, as a result of collusion between the northerners and the British who were trying to woo them away from Egypt. Further, the negotiations for independence between the British, the Egyptians and the Sudanese were not attended by any southerners. Alier comments:

> Thus, the self-rule agreement concocted between the British, the Egyptians and the northern parties could not contain the guarantees for the south, on which their representatives in the Juba conference insisted, and this was the second deceit. The third deceit came with Sudanification of the civil service, where the southerners got only six posts against eight hundred for the northerners. When Parliament convened on 19 December 1955 to approve the Declaration of Independence, the southerners presented as a condition for their approval, the creation of a federal system of government in compliance with the spirit of the Juba Conference. The northerners accepted this condition just to please the southerners, but with no real intention of eventual implementation (Alier 1995).

Thus, the shaky agreement was reached; but in 1958, in the committee for the preparation of the constitution, and the Constituent Assembly, the northerners refused any mention of federalism.

The democratic fervour of the Sudanese masses after the declaration of independence in 1956 was such as to raise the concerns of the new rulers (the Omma Party), who feared the south would refuse their hegemony imposed through their religious dominance, or that their Unionist rivals would go into alliance with Egypt or even downright unity with it. Therefore, the Abboud military coup of 1958 was concocted to pre-empt any such dangers. The coup directed the army to the south to secure the hegemony of the northern rulers in the name of propagating Arabic and Islam in the south. The expected reaction was for the leaders of Anyanya to raise the issue of secession, and to go into alliance with Israel in search of its logistical help.

The deterioration of the situation continued until the outbreak of the popular revolt in October 1964, which demanded the ceasefire in the south, and reconciliation with the 'South Front' being the political dissident front, and not with the extremist Anyanya cadres. This front – one of whose leaders was Alier – rallied with the front of civil society in the north, together with the parties opposed to the military leaders, to form a provisional government.

The spirit of reconciliation was enhanced by the invitation to the South Front to nominate their representatives in the Sovereignty Council and the Government, despite their continued concerns about the arrogant behaviour of some traders and government officials in the south.

The Round Table Conference, in which the parties of both north and south took part, was convened in March 1965, with the participation of some African countries (including Egypt and Algeria). In the conference, opinions varied between centralised or federal unity, with a small southern minority for secession. Yet, the northerners insisted on declaring a unified country and on laying down arms, before proceeding any further, which threatened to explode the whole process. The Sovereignty Council decided, however, to proceed with general elections, despite the boycott of the southern parties. Yet, the southerners remained in the committee of twelve for trust-building measures, which were not implemented properly, and repressive measures in the south were intensified (Beshir M.O 1968).

The Committee of Twelve approved a number of legal, administrative and cultural measures that would help trust building, but the northerners foiled much of their effect by deciding to appoint the head of the south by unilateral decision of the head of the Sovereignty Council and not by elections in the south. Also, the southerners were not given a fair share of the leaderships in the military or the police, and were denied the right to form any militias of their own, nor did they get any posts of responsibility in their education system.

Alier, who took part in all these discussions, notes that the northerners showed all along their distrust of the leaderships of the south. Matters came to a head with the traditional parties of the north insisting on their proposal of an 'Islamic constitution' which the southerners saw as perpetrating ethnic and religious segregation. They withdrew from the committee, and the Committee of Twelve demanded that all parties to the Round Table be invited to meet in March 1966, as had been decided before. The Government of Sadek Al-Mahdi, however, refused to do so and instead called for a conference of the traditional parties in October 1967, which excluded the democratic forces that led the revolution of 1964. It is clear from all these events that the system of religious and traditional hegemony in the north did not only undermine any real solution to the problem of the south, but also the whole process of democratisation of Sudan as foreseen by the forces of the 1964 revolution.

Here, some young elements of Nasserist tendencies in the military institution realised the seriousness of the situation and the dangers of the continued hostilities in the south, and led what was known as the May

1969 Revolution. They declared a nine-point 'Document of the South', and appointed Abel Alier as a member of the cabinet, and Joseph Garang as a minister for southern affairs. After achieving a certain measure of stability, including the liquidation of the left, the new regime signed the Addis Ababa Agreement in February 1972, which granted the south regional self-rule, unification of the armed forces, and the appointment of some prominent southern personalities in the central authority in Khartoum. The agreement also stipulated an active economic and social development programme in the south, all of which, if properly implemented, would have provided great progress of the whole Sudanese question. However, the conditions gradually deteriorated because of the new class in the south and north, and the agreement itself was unilaterally abrogated by the centre in 1983.

A Chance for Trust Building, Lost, 1972-1983

The Addis Ababa Agreement ushered in many positive developments in the south, despite the fact that it was not a direct outcome of the democratic, political and social solution advocated by the leftist wing of the May 1969 Revolution. The agreement was also criticised by the 'nationalists', both Sudanese and Arabs, because of the role of the World Council of Churches and the world reactionary circles in its implementation. It also ushered in a change of course of the central government led by Numeiri which went to the right, away from the democratic forces behind the revolution, and even away from the traditional parties, as it increasingly became a dictatorial regime.

We shall not go into the details of the agreement, as these have been covered in much of the literature on the subject, but shall content ourselves with its main provision of guaranteeing the proper representation of the southerners. It provided for a single regional parliament and a regional administrative cabinet, all of which was to be represented in the centre in Khartoum. Similar provisions were foreseen for education and cultural activities in the south, to take account of the specifics of the south. Thus, the agreement guaranteed a certain continuity of the political-cultural dialogue, and a negotiating stance for the south, even with the emergence of internal conflicts in the south as well as north-south conflicts. However, violations of the agreement were soon to appear on the hands of the central authority in the north (and not only as a result of the antagonism between the elites of the Dinka and of the Equatoria Province as was claimed by some northerners). This was the essence of the lost opportunities which materialised after 1972.

As we concentrate here on the view from the south, we shall try to expose the points of view of the southerners, rather than their assessment of some of the negative aspects of the experience. As I heard or saw in Juba (1980-81), this vision also had its impact on their view in the period of insurgence in the 1980s and later.

A remarkable phenomenon of the 1970s in Sudan is the proliferation of literature that treats the relations between north and south freely, both in criticism of the Agreement, and in the pursuit of a unified and democratic Sudan. The protagonists came from both north and south (Mohammad Omar Beshir and K. Mom). The literature also included literary and sociological studies on the issue of the diversity of the Sudanese society as a means for unity (Francis Deng, Abdel Ghafar Ahmad and Mohammad Abdel Hay). Some even advocated a role for Sudan in building the relationship between Arabs and Africans (Bona Malwal). During that phase, Khartoum witnessed open criticism of the regime from within, mainly by southern authors who militated actively for a unified Sudan (in the magazine 'Sudanese Culture' and the supplement of the Al-Ayam newspaper in Arabic, and in 'Sudan Now' in English). This healthy activity was proof that the good faith on the part of the northerners immediately produced positive responses from the southerners, in the direction of building a unified Sudan.

We shall now review some of the literature of this period, foremost among which are those of Francis Deng, the Dinka intellectual, prominent anthropologist, and social and political scientist. The works by Deng and other southerners are of great importance to Sudanese sociological studies, and contrast much with the north Sudanese school of history which is more traditional and which neglects the social history of the Dinka in relations with the 'others', so aptly exposed by Deng.

Let us now review some of Deng's works and their dates, before looking in detail at some of his views:

(i) *The Dinka of the Sudan, 2001*

(ii) *Dynamics of Integration: A Basis of National Integration in the Sudan, 1973*

(iii) *Africans of Two Worlds, 1978.*

Deng considers the world of the Dinka – some 3 million in the early 1970s – an example of social self-consciousness, and the outreach to the African and Arab worlds close by. Their heritage reflects the unity and multiplicity of the worlds of African legends, and of the monotheistic religions of the Middle

East. In his view, the Dinka personify, just like Sudan as a whole, the diversity of social structure, and spiritual heritage. Thus, they symbolise the interaction of the African and Arab worlds, which belies the arbitrary separation of Arabs and Africans. As a social conglomerate, the Dinka encompass not a small amount of diversity and conflicts (the Kjook and the Boor). Their folklore goes back in history to certain contacts with Egypt's Pharaonic past, then the Christian and Islamic eras as well. They have historical and mythological ties with the Shulluk, the Nueir, the Homor, the Shindy, the Massay, and share with them the problems of identity and integration.

As a scholar of folklore, Deng notes the desire of the Dinka to meet with other ethnicities, as when 'the Arab Mohammad marries Thelma, the girl of the Dinka'. They fear the savagery of the other, yet the God of the Dinka created all peoples and gave each of them their language and way of life. Both Dinka and Arabs come from the same source of creation, although the Dinka and their cattle are superior, of course. Deng insists on the fact that Arab and Negro elements are intermingled in both Nilotics and Semites, and infers from that the solid basis for unity and nation building. It was only the political history that stressed the differences, and pushed the mistrust and enmity to the fore.

In contrast with Deng's social history of the South, Abel Alier recounts in his *Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured* (1995) the problems of its political history. The man is not a researcher, but a politician who recounts his own political career over the period from 1953 to 1989. This history shows the constant political will in the south to work within a 'Sudanese unity' where the elite of the south can find their proper position as their counterparts of the north.

Alier was a member of all committees, negotiations and parliaments before the May 1969 revolution. He became Chairman of the Legislative and Executive Council of the South after the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972. He was appointed Vice President to Numeiri (to remove him from the south) when the northerners started to undermine the agreement and put their men in all executive posts in the south. All through his book, he speaks of the hope he cherished to create new realities in the south for Sudan that 'we want to keep and develop, and we can salvage a lot by acting with wisdom, justice and finesse'. He keeps posing the questions about 'the possibilities for making Sudan a viable homeland, despite this long history of social and economic imbalance.

Another voice that has a notable place in the Sudanese cultural life is that of Bona Malwal, who was Minister of Information and Culture during the 1970s and who furthered the issue of integration of north and south, and even that of the integration of Sudan with Egypt. He faced the attacks against the Jongli Canal Project from the Europeans and some southerners. Despite his protests in London today against the domination of the north as implemented by the present authorities in Khartoum, the essence of his policies was publicised in 'Sudan Now' which he maintained as an independent tribune while he was a minister. In a published text, he says:

> If we study the structure of Sudanese society, we notice the danger of dividing it on an ethnic basis. Indeed, there are no Arabs and Africans in the Sudan, but a homogenous mixture of black Arabs and Africans that we do not describe as Arab or African only. We do not want to relinquish our Arab or African roles, so we decided to call ourselves Little Africa (Malwal nd).

This clear political vision from another Dinka minister is the counterpart of the socio-cultural vision of Francis Deng.

Other voices may be more significant on the effect of 'political and social entente' on the change in tone in the south. Here, we find Joseph Lago the leader of Anyanya 1 during the 1960s, signing the 1972 Agreement and becoming a member of Parliament and Chairman of the Executive Council of the South, and then Vice President towards the end of the Numeiri regime. In an address to the South Legislative Council published in 1978, he says:

> Before the May Revolution, Sudan was torn apart on grounds of religion, community, ethnicity, but national unity has been realized, and our duty now, is to cement this unity. We must confront the forces inimical to peace and security and prosperity, and to safeguard our unity, and not allow tribalism to force us asunder. My election to this house is proof of the political and national maturity of the South, and overcoming ethnic and geographical differences when choosing leaders. There exists now a basis for implementing the character of the south within the framework of a unified and diversified Sudan (Lago 1978).

Such texts show what could be expected to be the political thought in a Sudan under a different regime. This is the political climate that prevailed in the 1970s, and prompted a generation of young scholars and researchers who advocated the principle of unity and diversity, and respect for the identity of the south (Mohammad Omar Beshir and Abdel-Ghaffar Mohammad Ahmed). It even prompted diversity in the cultural and social climate in the north itself (Mohammad Abdel Hay, Salah Mohammad Ibrahim, Ibrahim Isshaq and Mansoor Khalid). Some of the protagonists of this trend cooperated with

the southerners in studying the side effects of the Jongli Canal Project, and in transforming Juba University into a cultural and scientific monument. Yet, the onslaught of the Socialist Union with its well-known totalitarian bureaucratic policies stifled any political action on the part of any of the leftist or even traditional parties in the south. In the absence of any healthy political activity in the south, the enemies of progress raised their heads again, and the project for building a new south started to flounder.

Why was the Chance Lost in the 1970s?

There is no doubt that the Numeiri regime used the Addis Ababa Agreement as a propaganda ploy to bolster its rule, and to gloss over its struggles with the communists on one side, and the Umma Party on the other side. Yet, the structure of the agreement was such as to allow for much progress towards unity and much reconciliation with the south. However, matters did not proceed as hoped for. As soon as the transition period in 1972-1973 had elapsed, the 'harassment' began to break the negotiating power of the south as stipulated by the agreement. We shall summarise the steps taken in this direction as epitomised by southern writers:

a) The southerners never had the chance to choose the head of their regional self-rule Council, as Numeiri decided it through the obligatory membership of the Socialist Union. The Chairman was a southerner, but always of Numeiri's choice.

b) While the southerners expected an accelerated development as promised by the May revolution for the whole country, the economic development projects actually implemented meant more impoverishment for the south. The South Parliamentary group records certain cases where development deteriorated, or some projects were transferred to the north, such as the sugar-producing projects in Mongola and Malweet, the fruit packing in Waw, or the cement factory in Kabiota. Doubts about the Jongli canal were raised by talk about its negative effects on cattle-raising by the Dinkas. When oil was discovered in the Bentio, the disputed district in the northern parts of the south, many hopes were nurtured when it was planned to refine it locally rather than exporting the crude. Yet, it was decided to locate the refinery in Kosti in the north, and not near the oil wells in the south. Eventually, no refinery was built but bad feelings were created, and hence the importance of the wealth-sharing issue during the protracted negotiations.

c) Many southerners considered that the united north refused to see similar steps towards reconciliation with the south, or among southerners. Malwal notes several divisive decisions in that direction, such as inciting Lago, the former secessionist leader, to confront Alier – the champion of compromise – and inciting the representatives of the Equatoria Province against those of the Dinkas in the South Legislature. Then, the law of Regional Rule was decreed from the north without prior consultation with the south, in order to undermine the unity of the south. It is significant in this respect to note that Lago, the separatist, commended the Socialist Union's plan to enhance democracy by breaking up the south.

d) The last straw came with the decrees proposed by Hasan al-Turabi as Attorney- General, purportedly to institute decentralisation, by breaking up the main provinces of the south (and attaching the petroleum-rich district of Bentio to the north) and dissolving the political bodies of the south (which the southerners saw as a prelude to the plans for Arabisation and Islamisation of the south). These measures were implemented in 1980, and the southerners saw this as *de facto* abrogation of the Addis Ababa Agreement.

All the above measures indicate the gradual erosion of trust between south and north during the whole period. This means that the implementation of Sharia laws was simply the tip of the iceberg rather than the only reason behind the insurgence of the south. It proved that the north was intent on marginalising the southerners, who in turn decided that recourse to armed resistance was the only way to regain their eroded interests.

Vision of a New Sudan

The insurgence of the garrison at Bor on 16 May 1983 was not a simple military mutiny such as that of Toret back in 1955. The latter was the prelude to the secessionist movement of Anyanya I while the former was different, although most of the Arab media persists in interpreting it as secessionist, and so do some powers that seek to exploit it in such a direction, the latest being the Americans. Whoever has read the literature of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) since its inception in 1984 and until its vision and programme in 1998 can see at a glance that the analysis of the movement of Sudanese society, its slogan of a unified Sudan, and its aim to create a 'Unified Secular and Democratic Sudan' did not mention once the word 'secession'.

The practices of the Numeiri regime, and its reneging of its development projects for the south, have encouraged the elements of division and alienation in that region. This change of attitude came with Numeiri moving over to new alliances with the Islamists and Al-Turabi during the later period of the Addis Ababa Agreement. The SPLM documents recount that the mutinies in Kobo in 1975, and in Waw in 1976, were secessionist, and John Garang disapproved of such movements. He saw that what was needed was a vanguard movement, starting in the south but aiming at the liberation of the whole Sudanese people. Thus, it was no coincidence that Garang dismissed the wing of Anyanya 2, which had participated with the SPLM for one year.

It is remarkable that the SPLM was supported by leaders from the Nuba mountain region, such as Mohammad Haroun Kafi, and from western Sudan, such as Mansour Khaled and Dreig. Leaders from the north, such as Yasser Araman, Tayseer Mohammad Aly, and supported by Mohammad Omar Beshir, also joined the movement, thus creating a united democratic dissident Sudanese movement.

We note the philosophy of the revolutionary vanguard which adopted the concept of the march of the Sudanese masses from all parts of Sudan on the north – according to the Maoist concept – or even the Ugandan, Ethiopian or Congolese models. Such a model must be contrasted with the onslaught of the phalanges of the Mahdists on Khartoum in an attempt to overthrow the Numeiri regime in 1976-77. Yet, despite the destruction wrought by this onslaught, it was not stigmatised as a 'vicious' insurgency, as was the case of a similar insurgency led by the southern vanguard, with the aim of liberation from oppression, exploitation and alienation.

We shall now try to review the literature of the SPLM and its leader, John Garang, as gleaned from its manifesto in 1983, the Fundamental Statement in 1984, the Vision and Programme in 1998, and the statements of Garang in Cairo in 1997.

Despite the long history of repression and divisive and alienating measures directed against the South, we find no secessionist expressions in the first statements of the SPLM, but only an accurate analysis of the repressive nature of the ruling regime in the north against the whole Sudanese people and not the south alone. This stance was followed constantly by the movement for a period of over two decades. We shall now note in detail the main standpoints of the SPLM as follows:

a) The Fundamental Statement recounts the oppression suffered by the Sudanese people throughout its long history, whether at the hands of

foreign oppressors (Turkish, Egyptian or British), or the ruling clique in Khartoum. The oppressors always relied on the ethnic and religious diversity to adopt the principle of 'divide and rule'. They divided the Sudanese into northerners and southerners, and the northerners into people from the west, the east, Halfa or the centre. They divided the south into the Dinkas, the Equatorials … etc. Another division was between Moslems and Christians, Arabs and Negroes. The early texts accuse the reactionaries and religious extremists (in north and south) of threatening the unity of the Sudanese people, and pledge that the SPLM and its armed forces, as the vanguard of the mass movement, will confront all projects aimed at dividing the Sudanese people and eroding its unity, which it will guard zealously, while developing all the ethnic groups in the Sudan.

b) The Statement of 1984 confronts the dangers of division of the south with the aim of depriving it of its unity and wealth, by annexing the oil regions to the north. The SPLM tries to accomplish this aim by obstructing the operations of Chevron Petroleum and the Jongli Canal project. However, Garang considers that all such problems could be solved within the framework of a united Sudan, where a democratic socialist system will secure all democratic and humanitarian rights for all its citizens and ethnicities, as well as freedom of religion and belief. The armed resistance, starting from the south, is the guarantee of the success of this endeavour in view of the failure of all peaceful efforts in this direction.

c) Garang realises that the SPLM will be stigmatised by the regime as being communist, but refutes this accusation as a deliberate ploy by Numeiri who uses the word 'socialist' to describe his own regime, while trying to come to terms with Washington. He reminds that Numeiri had described Anyanya 2 as imperialist, and then came to terms with it in 1972.

d) What was the discourse of the SPLM after 15 years in action? The 'Vision and Program' issued in March 1998 crystallises the experience gained over 15 years of its existence, having implemented many internal and external relations, and developed a strong negotiating power. The discourse of the movement might have shown more secessionist tendencies after so many failed attempts at reconciliation, but it does not exhibit any such tendencies, although it contains many reservations, and allusions to the right to change its stance within the 'right of self-determination'. Unfortunately for the perpetual detractors of the SPLM, the 'Right of Self Determination' was endorsed at the negotiating table between some dissidents of the movement and the Islamic Salvation Government in Khartoum in 1992, and was

officially recognised at the negotiations between Lam Akool and the representative of the Government, Ali Al-Haj, in Frankfurt in 1993. Then, it was endorsed during the negotiations of the SPLM with the government in Abuja and Nairobi, and then in Machakos, in 2002.

Before studying the new texts of the SPLM (1998) in detail, we would point to the Kokadam Declaration in 1986 and to the Sudan peace initiative in November 1988. The Declaration was with representatives of Sadek Al-Mahdi, while the initiative was with Mohammad Al-Merghani – in person – whose party was in the Cabinet at the time. These two agreements could have solved the long-standing problem of the Sudan, were it not for the resistance of certain sectarian Islamist forces in the north, namely Al-Turabi, who urged Al-Mahdi to continue fighting, while the Minister of Defence advised the cessation of hostilities. As for the Merghani Initiative, it met with the opposition of the Prime Minister, Al-Mahdi.

We would note here that both agreements did not even mention the right of self-determination. The Kokadam Agreement mentioned the 'New Sudan'; it did not specifically mention the problem of the south, but rather the problems of Sudan, and it called for a National Unity Government. The Sudan peace initiative was even more advanced, stressing the national unity, and calling for a constitutional congress on a national scale, and the repeal of the September Laws. It was decided to discuss the practical steps for implementation of this initiative when the 1989 Islamist coup stopped everything and raised the banner of the Jihad in the south.

The regime of the coup of 1989 rejected the documents of 1986-88 and continued its holy war in the south with no prospect of a peaceful solution, as its aim was more ambitious than Islamising the south. However, the interminable war was also very costly for the SPLM, especially as Ryak Mashar in 1991 attempted the coup of 'Al-Nasser', in collaboration with Lam Akool and certain elements of the Shulluk and the Nver. This was an attempt to sway the movement from its military endeavour (which would have moved it nearer a secessionist leaning). It was also an attempt to reduce the influence of John Garang and the Dinkas, for the benefit of the Shulluk, the Nver and the people of the Equatoria Province.

The SPLM regained its cohesion after the Lafon Declaration (April 1995), as attested to by P.A. Nyaba, a dissident who returned to the movement and is now a member of its Executive Committee. Yet the Khartoum Government would not make use of this reconciliation as a step towards a national solution of the conflict, but persisted in supporting all manner of splits in the movement,

in order to destroy Garang at any price. Indeed, the regime in Khartoum insists on its biased assessment of Garang as a secessionist, despite the fact that he had liquidated the Anyanya secessionists in the '80s and the dissidents in the '90s, who went in the same direction. It is more likely that the project of a 'New Sudan' defended by Garang in his talks with the parties of the 1985 uprising was what urged General Bashir to stick to his guns against General Garang, in what took the shape of a personal feud between the two men, to the extent that the Khartoum regime (both Bashir and Turabi) were ready to accept the right of self-determination in its agreements with the 'secessionists' – Ryak Mashar and Lam Akool.

What seems really strange is that the 'Arab visionists' never criticised such agreements on the grounds of their being secessionist, while they fly at any remark or reservation on the part of John Garang to describe it as such. In this connection, I was dismayed lately when a Sudanese intellectual of the stature of Abdullahi Ali Ibrahim, in an unpublished article entitled "About the Blocked Oil Well, and the Great Palace, in Sudan Politics", in which he considers Garang as a despot and individualist leader, while he treats those occupying the palace in Khartoum with obvious tenderness!

In these circumstances, the SPLM issues its Vision and Programme, in which it describes the history of the Sudanese people and the diversity of its social structure, until it comes to the sectarian and exclusionist coup of 1989. Then it goes on to state its vision in several points, of which we summarise the ones relevant to our subject below:

a) The SPLM militates for a new model Sudan to which we all belong, a Sudan united on a new basis, and new commitments based on the realities of Sudan and not the old Sudan which cost its people 32 years of war.
b) The SPLM rejects the arbitrary rule of the unprincipled local elite, clinging to political authority, by pretending to be nationalist. It proposes either a confederation comprising a number of independent states, or a new Sudan in a social and political unity, to which we pledge our allegiance irrespective of ethnicity, tribe, religion, or gender; a democratic Sudan based on the voluntary will of the people, and the rule of law, and adopting a democratic secular system, and popular participation.
c) The SPLM aims at the implementation of the right of self-determination in a new Sudan, reiterates the assurance of the national unity and peace in the 'liberated areas', and the new Sudan as a political unit where ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity is recognised.

d) The SPLM will not alienate itself from the centre (Khartoum), and will not become a regional movement, but will continue as a national movement within the new Sudan, and urges the northerners to join it.

e) The SPLM will persist in holding peace talks with the Government in Khartoum, but on the basis of a confederal state, the right of self-determination, and the new Sudan. It shall continue its membership of the National Democratic Rally (NDR) and the Asmara Pact, while retaining its political, organisational and military independence.

f) The SPLM will continue its joint efforts with the NDR to implement the joint military action in the rural areas, and the uprising in the cities, to topple the rule of the Islamic Front, and the creation of a new Sudan within the alternatives proposed by the NDR.

g) The SPLM will ensure the objective conditions for the people of the new Sudan to practise the right of self-determination. Such a right cannot be unilaterally imposed, but must be decided in a free referendum under international supervision… This right is recognised by all political forces in the Sudan, the pact of the NDR, the IGAD, as well as the Government of the Islamic Front.

h) The SPLM reiterates its international commitments to the African cooperation and integration, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), since the African people includes all inhabitants of the African continent. Thus, there is no place for ethnic prejudices, but equal relations with the cultures of the Middle East, and the special role within the Arab world and the Arab-African relationships.

With these concepts, the SPLM participated with all nationalist political forces in the north to unify the opposition to the regime in Khartoum. The Asmara Pact (1995) recognises the right of self-determination, as was recognised by the Khartoum Government.

Then the SPLM extended its influence to other regions: in the south-west (the Nuba Mountains), the south centre (Abei), and east Sudan, with what is known as the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) led by General Abdel Aziz Khaled. Some consider this to be an extension of the basis for secession, but this is absurd as this base goes as far north as Kasala. The SPLM and its allies, on the other hand, see it as an extension of their concept of a new Sudan, and the rallying of the popular alliance around it.

A significant gesture here was that the SPLM announced in its first conference (1994) its intention to support the creation of the New Sudan Brigade (NSB), to open its ranks to all Sudanese irrespective of their previous

political allegiances. The founding act of the NSB was issued the next year (1995), aiming at building a new nationalist force to ensure the unity of the Sudan, by borrowing from the SPLM and the democratic movement in the north the best elements of their experience. The NSB will also help the marginalised regions overcome the unequal development elements. The creation of the NSB provides a positive answer to the negative attitudes of the north towards the secessionist tendencies of the Al-Nasser movement.

The NSB is not a rally of intellectuals alone, but is a rallying point of all groups marginalised by the Islamic Front, which include the trade unions, the associations, the businessmen, the officers expelled from the army, and women, and even some Arab tribes such as the Messirs, the Rasheeds and others. In other words, the NSB is not the movement of the Dinkas, the Christians, the Africans, or the animists alone.

The Decline?

The southerners have always believed that the failure to implement the various opportunities for agreement between the warring parties lies squarely with the Government of the Islamic Front, which insisted on the military solution only, and mobilised its forces – youth and soldiers – for military action. It also tried to isolate the south from the rest of the world, except through the humanitarian aid agencies and church institutions in Africa and Europe, until lately when the American churches monopolised these contacts. African and Arab neighbours of Sudan have come up with various initiatives to solve the problem, notable among which was the Declaration of Principles (DOP) of the IGAD, and the Libyan Egyptian Initiative. The United States took an active stand in support of the IGAD initiative, when the Secretary of State Madeline Albright stated in Nairobi in November 1999 that the US will not consider any but the IGAD initiative. This position of the Clinton Administration was based on the study prepared by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, which was later adopted by the Bush Administration, and eventually led to the Machakos Agreement.

What Led to Such a Deterioration of the Situation?

The Sudanese Government did not recognise the IGAD Initiative except in 1998, with some reservations of course, and no pressure was applied towards the implementation of the Egyptian-Libyan Initiative. Both sides seemed to be playing for time as the prospecting for oil went on, and the Americans pressed for *détente* in the oil areas in the west of Sudan and the Nuba Mountains,

eventually securing a ceasefire agreement in 2002. This meant the failure of the constant aim of the Khartoum Government, of continued hostilities, and its succumbing to US pressure.

After almost two decades, many southern Sudanese intellectual elements with various visions had lost all hope of a peaceful solution, even within the limits of the position of the SPLM. We would remind the reader of the efforts of men like Alier, or Malwal, to accept a minimum of self-rule, the efforts of Francis Deng on integration and diversity in a united Sudan, and the movement of Lam Akool back and forth between the SPLM and government positions. No wonder the frustration they suffered, yet their various visions will still have some impact on the final solutions reached by the protagonists in Machakos.

We may refer to Alier's *Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured* and his recent withdrawal from the arena, which disqualifies him from playing a compromise role as a Dinka. Similarly Akool, who dismissed himself from the role of an intermediary between the two parties, or Malwal, Numeiri's onetime man, who became frustrated by both SPLM and Government, and who slanders the Arabs (in the Sudan Newsletter), after being a one-time member of the Sudanese Egyptian Integration Committee.

As for Francis Deng, he went as far as collaborating with the CSIS in shaping in 2001 the document defining 'the American Policy to End the War in the Sudan', which served as the basis for the mission of John Danforthe, President Bush's envoy to the Sudan, and the 'godfather' of the Machakos Agreement. This policy document came as a surprise, as it endorsed the principle of one state and two systems, a quick end to hostilities, adopting the IGAD Initiative, peace negotiations, self-rule in the south after fixing the frontiers, unity in a democratic secular state, separation between state and religion, the right of self-determination after a transition period, followed by a referendum in the south, and measures to help the marginalised populations in the north, especially the Nuba Mountains. The document even recommends the use of the 'carrot and the stick' as incentive for both Khartoum and the southern opposition.

This is the vision of the one-time advocate of integration, and unity and diversity, after his recent frustration. He presents such views to the Americans who have shifted from a position favouring division of Sudan to a position of keeping it whole to make it easier to exploit the country, now that the oil areas are spreading from the south to the west, with more being found in neighbouring Chad. Therefore, the 'fur' has been put on the agenda!

As for Dr John Garang, he retains his coherent position and, despite the frustration due to the actions of the Khartoum Government, he lends his support to the new dissident fronts in the west and the east. Another means of putting pressure on Khartoum was to seek some help from the new power trying to pacify the south for its petroleum interests, and apparently, this pressure was the only force that could lead Khartoum to Machakos. However, Garang assured the NDR that Machakos was imposed on both parties and its leaders seem to retain their trust in the man.

In the meantime, we believe we must give credence to what Garang exposed during his lengthy visit to Cairo in 1997, to both the Egyptian Government and the leaders of the NDR, and was published in a booklet by the SPLM office in Cairo. The booklet was entitled *John Garang: His Vision of the New Sudan and the Issues of Unity and Identity, i*n the light of his visit to the ARE (Egypt) in November – December 1997, and is especially significant because it came immediately before the document *Vision and Program of the SPLM (1998).* During this visit, Garang addressed the Sudanese masses, and met with government circles, Egyptian parties and NGOs, journalists and intellectuals. He considered his meetings in Cairo as a significant achievement of both the SPLM and NDR, saying in his Juba Arabic: 'This is a great opportunity… The Turabi people in Khartoum are unsettled today'.

During two weeks in Cairo, Garang exposed the main elements of his project for the state of the new Sudan that will encompass diversity, but exclude elements of separation. He even stressed the importance of cooperating with the traditional forces in Sudan, in contrast with the 'new' forces that would exclude them from the common action. Garang explained that he had to negotiate because he could not afford to be isolated, and that his acceptance of a confederal state in Nairobi, in 1997, was a tactical step to press the government of the Islamic Front to accept a unified Sudan, even if confederal, since it had accepted this concept in negotiating with separatist southern forces before. He stressed the necessity of armed action, which has to be spread into other regions of Sudan, then starting a popular uprising in Khartoum. He excluded the possibility of any army coup as the Islamic Front is in complete control of the army.

Garang assured all those concerned about the unity of Sudan that his movement was also concerned with this unity. In his discussions with the Egyptians, he touched on the issue of the Nile water and the Jongli canal, and confirmed his view that this canal is beneficial to the whole region and not Egypt and northern Sudan alone.

Garang asked Egypt and the Arab countries to provide humanitarian aid to the southerners, and not to leave the Europeans and Americans to monopolise this aid. He refuted the calumnies that try to mar the image of the SPLM in Egypt and the Arab countries by claiming it was a Dinka movement, anti-Islamic, or anti-Arab. He assured his audience that the SPLM belonged to the whole south and to other ethnicities in the west and the western part of the country. He said the leader of the forces in the Nuba Mountains and south Sudan was the Moslem Yusef Koh Mekki, and the leader of the liberated areas south of the Blue Nile was Malek Khafar, another Moslem. A third Moslem, Abdel Aziz Adam Al-Helw, is in charge of the NSB on the western front. The first blood drawn in the south was in battle against the secessionists. Garang ended his speech to a big rally in Cairo with: 'Turabi has become the eighth wonder of the earth. We shall exhibit him in the museum of history for the future generations to see the man who almost destroyed the Sudan'. Maybe the end of Turabi is a measure of Garang's perspicacity.

The Naivasha Agreement

Many heaved a sigh of relief when the 'preliminary' Final Agreement was signed between the Government of President Omar Hasan Al-Bashir and the SPLM at the end of the first week of June 2004, amid a demonstration of jubilation and optimism, and the presence of the IGAD African countries, Egypt, the Arab League, and the main sponsors of the agreements, foremost among whom were the US representatives. Many excerpts of the texts were published, as well as many optimistic declarations from all parties, which remind us of many such demonstrations which seldom reflect the realities of the situation, although they indicate the myriad of possible alternatives.

The first such optimistic declarations were announced with the signing of the Mashakos Agreement back in July 2002. However, it took about two more years to arrive at – again the preliminary – agreement between the parties, and we still have to wait until later in 2004 to come to the real beginning of the peace process. We even have to wait another six months for the start of a tentative real process when the protagonists lay down their arms after the final agreement on ceasefire arrangements. This will mean the start of a certain transition period of three years, followed by a more effective transition period for another three years!

An active implementation of the agreements is expected under the auspices of the US sponsor who indicated from the beginning its support of a 'One state, and two systems', which was the essence of the report of Mr Danforthe

which was the basis of the process of negotiations back in 2002. And here, we see Mr Danforthe becoming the US ambassador at the UN in recognition of his efforts. This, they contend, is the guarantee of the credibility of the agreements supported so heavily by the world Number One Power. Others consider that Egypt 'finally' attending the signing ceremony, together with the Arab League, enhances the credibility of the agreement still further.

However, before this agreement, we were wondering about another essence of the situation which is still open to questioning. We had commented on the Mashakos Agreement in 2002, saying it was the admission of two generals who were sick of an interminable war that military action will never bring the situation to a decisive end, and that it was time to stop the hostilities. Thus, it seemed nearer to a ceasefire than a lasting peace agreement, a ceasefire to gain a moment to breathe, or to take some steps for re-arrangements at home to prepare for other measures.

Some even thought it was a preliminary for some sort of secession on the part of the southerners, and a preparation for renewed hostilities on the part of the northerners, or the government. The follow-up of all subsequent phases of the negotiations was seen in the light of such expectations of the positions of both generals Bashir and Garang. At certain junctures, Garang would again be called the 'insurgent', or attention be drawn to Garang signing a cordial agreement with another 'insurgent' At-Turabi. Again, we note ups and downs in the assessment of Garang's position in accordance with his so-called ambiguous stance towards the NDR, during their meetings in Cairo and Asmara. Also, there were numerous mutual accusations of malicious interventions by Garang in Darfur in western Sudan, and by the government in the south. All this led to a degree of unease, and doubts about the seriousness of both parties, if it were not for the insistence of the foreign powers on one hand, and the steadfast position of certain concerned forces inside the country.

Now, we come to Nairobi in 2004 (Naivasha), and the warm meeting between Dr John Garang and the Deputy President Aly Osman Taha, and the ceremonies of signing another set of 'preliminary' documents in an atmosphere of wide smiles and rosy declarations about the end of all fratricide wars, and constant peace, and even stability in Sudan 'for ever and ever'!

Indeed, we have witnessed a step forward, from an agreement between the two generals, to an agreement between two political movements, viz the ruling National Congress in the north, and the SPLM in the south. This political turning point indicates a change in political concepts and not a mere

ceasefire, and thus lends much greater credibility to the present agreements. It also raises questions about the political robustness of both parties that have to implement the agreements during the transition period of six years, and the position of the foreign parties and the degree of their support in implementing them. It also raises the major question of the ultimate choice of unity or secession.

The first problem to be faced is the trust-building phase. Will this be achieved hopefully within the first six months, or will it be protracted over the whole transition period of six years as legally construed from the terms of the agreements, and up to the referendum on self-determination? Will the contracting 'persons' survive politically as long as the agreements themselves? Here, Dr John Garang looks to be in a more confident situation, holding important trump cards that allow him to consolidate his position with his army, political power and even his tribal backers, quite apart from the backing he enjoys on the part of the 'American Vision', his African alliances, and even his personal charisma in Sudan.

However, John Garang adopted his philosophy of the 'New Sudan', and made it well known early on, which prompted the secessionist elements of Anyanya to quit his ranks when he started his revolution back in 1983. There were even rumours that he had expelled them. In this context, he signed the Kokadam Agreement with the Mahdists, followed by the more significant Addis Ababa Agreement with the Democratic Unionist Party, a few months before the Bashir/Turabi coup in 1989. He was even making arrangements with the unionist Merghani to convene a constitutional congress endorsing the Unity of the Sudan in September 1989, which attempt was foiled by the coup in June of that year.

The obvious failure of any military solution, and the weakness of the northerners' alliance, has led to the recurrence of talk about the right of self-determination, which the government of Khartoum was the first to reintroduce at the negotiating table. The north was further weakened by the continued conflicts between the government and the various political factions, the latest among which was the conflict with Turabi himself, who stood behind all the recent weakening of the position of the north, in contrast with increasing stability on the front of the SPLM.

Judging by simplistic short-term expectations, we would expect any threat to the stability of the present agreements to come from the north, during the confidence building phase. There are other parties in Khartoum, and also in other regions, that look forward to some degree of participation or equal

rights, which fact was alluded to by Dr Garang all through the negotiations, and in the signed texts, in repeated references to principles of justice and democracy.

Similarly, special agreements were also signed concerning the Nuba Mountains (south Kurdufan), the Blue Nile and the Abei region, which constitute the peripheries of the south, and the probable sites of wealth, as well as armed forces separate from both north and south, and separate finances and administration. All this, within the framework of the interests of the Sudanese people and the spirit of joint responsibility and joint action, gives rise to hope for a better future based on justice, democracy and good governance. All such references in the signed texts go hand-in-hand with promises of building a national unity government, throwing over old differences, and joint action for achieving the interests of the people and the joint aspirations of the whole of the Sudanese people.

This lays down the basis for 'another' front for unity in the 'New Sudan', and not the Sudan of the salvation front, or of the ruling National Congress alone (incidentally, the SPLM was seriously considering announcing its transformation into a national party for the whole of Sudan). This would mean that the basic question of identity in Sudan will need to be reviewed, whether geographic, or unifying of society, as well as studying the differences between state and nation. Numerous new questions about the relation between the 'national body' and the existing socio-political unity based on diversity will have to be answered. These are not specific problems of the north but they have become a problem for the south. Both are asked to deal with other marginalised regions.

It remains to be seen whether the Government of Sudan will continue with a true confidence-building process, where President Bashir will start by conceiving a process of democratic alliance with all the Sudanese forces, or will he try to hold on to the status quo, just to cling to power for the longest possible time. In the case of the latter, Sudan will continue as a failed state – because of the continuing conflicts in the west (Darfur) or those which may start in the east – which may be a convenient situation to some of its neighbours, such as Somalia, Congo, Rwanda, or Ivory Coast, for obvious reasons. The crux of the matter is whether the Sudanese Government will implement the creation of the true unity government, as specified in the agreements, and not let the north become the scene of 'secessionist developments'.

Such attitudes were prevalent throughout both democratic and military stages of rule in the Sudan, yet we are 'surprised' when we are told of conflicts

between Africans and Arabs in Darfur, and marginalised Biga and others in the east, or even Nubians in the west and north. The northerners on their part only see the 'Fallata', or the 'boys', who abound in the regions but enjoy no citizenship rights, when indeed they make up the majority of the citizens. The history of Sudan witnessed many varieties of political rule in the old sultanates of Darfur, Sinnar and the Zandi, in the pre-colonial era in Khartoum. It is high time that our friends in Khartoum look at these other peoples in question, not as secessionists or insurgents, but as the protagonists of a worthwhile federal national unity. Whoever reads the text of the recent Peace Agreement in Naivasha (June 2004), and notes the number of references to the previous partial agreements and the ones that will follow, may be awed by the future prospects for Sudan. This, unless the present Sudanese Government announces a comprehensive plan for 'unity', or 'national reconciliation' for the next stage, something they have not done yet – maybe because of the events in Darfur. Many lessons could be learnt in Khartoum from the experiences of other countries, near and far, such as the Ethiopian example which recognised the right of self-determination to its regions back in 1991, and yet retains remarkable stability. The Nigerian experience of sharing oil revenues is also worthy of note, as well as the recent political alliance building in India. Similarly, the success of the African National Congress Government in South Africa in facing the legacy of the Apartheid Bantustans, where the correct administration of democracy allowed the ANC to defeat Chief Buthelezi in his Zulu stronghold, is worthy of contemplation.

The Government of Sudan – assuming it is serious in building a new democratic Sudan – has to face several situations both on the internal and external fronts. Some observers even express doubts about the seriousness of the Government in achieving national unity as a prerequisite to tackling these situations, having in mind real comprehensive unity, and not just the agreements with the south. It is the responsibility of the present regime in Sudan to determine the essence of the future social and political contract which will decide the choice of unity rather than secession.

It is one thing for the sole aim of the agreements to be just to keep the National Congress Party and President Bashir in power for six years, more and quite another to guarantee a real national unity in the Sudan. Such national unities elsewhere have led to fundamental changes in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, up to Sierra Leone and Mozambique. The recent texts keep referring to 'national reconciliation', 'constitutional changes', 'good local governance', 'social justice' and 'remedy of marginalisation'. The recent events reveal that

such problems have already materialised, by force in certain cases, and others are inherent in the political documents of the NDR, in preparation for political action. We cannot contemplate the use of exclusive acts such as the armed raids by the Jinjaweed in the west of Sudan, or the latent movements in the east. The Asmara or Cairo texts may contain better solutions than those in the Naivasha texts. What we look forward to is the wide vision in Khartoum, rather than the political inaction that some observers expect.

Here, Arab media should desist from spreading their usual scaremongering about the imminence of the secession of the south. Egypt already conceded the independence of Sudan back in 1953-56, and accepted the secession of Syria in 1961, yet both Sudan and Syria have remained staunchly beside Egypt through thick and thin. I do not believe the government in Khartoum is seriously anxious that any of its neighbours in Ethiopia, Kenya or Uganda may encourage any secession in the south when they are threatened by the same scourge. Even the problems concerning the waters of the Nile cannot be raised against Egypt or Sudan, except through huge development projects that cannot be tackled except by a big assembly such as the Nile Basin Initiative, supported by the World Bank.

Sudan is in great need of a comprehensive economic and political development plan, something that has been the object of numerous discussions in recent Arab meetings, and Egypt can – apart from vulgar propaganda – participate in such plans for the development of a new Sudan in cooperation with the Arab north. It may even take the initiative within the African framework to transfer the Sudanese issues from the isolated framework of the IGAD, to the more integrationist framework of the NEPAD, which aims at African development under the leadership of South Africa.

John Garang, the adept of the Dar es Salaam school, has often taken part in serious dialogue in Cairo and Tripoli and can play an effective role in the discussions within the Nile Basin Initiative, the COMESA and the group of the Sahel and Sahara. All these are assemblies intent on integration, and may thus help contain any secessionist tendencies, unless the governments entrench themselves behind narrow group interests, leading only to short-term solutions.

Rebuilding Sudan, the state and nation, is bound today with the historic decisions to be taken by the active actors, where its Arab-African identity does not depend on the composition of the authority in the country, and where the argument about the Arab or African ethnicities is simply idle talk. After all, most of these ethnicities are in very poor shape, and what matters is

tackling the new choices and activating the forces newly entering the political arena from the south and west of the country. An urgent task is to prepare for the joint management of the huge oil resources in accordance with a comprehensive development plan. Another task are the radical social, cultural and political transformations that transcend the selfish narrow ethnic and regional interests in favour of a new Sudan that encompasses the slogans of the SPLM of the south, as well as the truly modern forces in the north intent on real transformation.

Conclusion

I hope this study will not be considered as proof that Sudan is the country of lost chances. This will only come true if the political forces and the military institution fail to implement the necessary steps leading to a new democratic Sudan that secures the interests of all its citizens by consensus and not by force. Hopefully, the NDR, including the SPLM, will come to some form of comprehensive agreement with the Government in Khartoum, in order to thwart the real threats that hang over Sudan from the hegemonistic world powers, with the USA at their head.

10

African Renaissance in the Experience of the New Anti-apartheid Regime*

Introduction

This chapter attempts to look at the main tenets of the 'African Renaissance' project, presented by the then President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa some years ago to inaugurate a new phase of the history of that country, and at the same time to present himself as a new face different from the traditional ANC figures. Indeed, there is something new, since the project is not limited to social and political aspects, but encompasses new cultural and ideological dimensions, leading South Africa into the post-apartheid era. It is therefore appropriate to ask: What is new and in which context? Or we may even ask: Where to?

We may subdivide our study into two parts:

Part One

(i) The Renaissance Projects in Africa after Liberation
(ii) The Challenges of the New Project in South Africa
(iii) Post-apartheid South Africa

Part Two

(i) The Ideological World of Thabo Mbeki
(ii) Who is the African?
(iii) A New Nation
(iv) The Pillars of the Project:

* This paper was read in Arabic at the seminar of AAPSO Cairo on "Vision of Culture in the 21st Century", 6-7 November 2000.

a) South Africa and the African Continent
b) South Africa and the World

Conclusion

The National Project and the Policies of Globalisation

Part One: The Renaissance Projects in Africa after Liberation

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was a historic moment of radical significance to the capitalist world, since it meant an end to the Cold War and to the competition against socialism, as well as the hegemony of unipolar ideology. However, the downfall of apartheid a few months later (the release of Nelson Mandela in February 1990) was a moment of no less significance for all of humanity and oppressed peoples all over the world. This moment meant a great deal to liberation from colonialism, if not from imperialist domination in its globalised form.

Thabo Mbeki's project for African Renaissance comes in conditions that differ from those prevalent in the phase of national independence after World War II, or the years of national liberation. Those movements were called the national liberation revolutions, in contrast with their main supporter – the socialist revolution – and the social revolutions in the peoples' republics in that period of history. It is no coincidence that Mbeki does not often refer to this phase of history despite his numerous quotations from the history of civilisations.

Thus, we do not see here a model similar to the old nationalist projects such as the 'consciousness' of Nkrumah, the 'Ujamaa' of Nyerere, the 'African personality of Toure', or the 'national revolution' of Nasser that generated straightforward positions against colonialism. It would appear that the settler colonialism in South Africa would necessarily lead to a revolution that has national and social dimensions as the national liberation movement maintained for quite a long time. However, Mbeki's African Renaissance project goes beyond much of the old slogans of the liberation movement throughout its history.

The traditional liberation movements were straightforward because they moved directly from a state of traditional colonialism to that of a new political authority, under some charismatic leadership that led the nation along the path of independence and modernisation. Such leaderships generally created single political organisations of a totalitarian nature, favouring more or less independent choices, such as self-reliance, and the nationalisation of the basic

constituents of national wealth. However, such slogans could not supersede market relations, especially as concerns foreign trade, or the class situations, which led during the 1960s to all manner of deterioration of the national projects under foreign and domestic pressures alike.

In other words, the traditional national liberation project braced itself to face great conflicts, or become part of which, while the African Renaissance comes at a time when the continent faces the so-called second liberation wave. This wave was prompted by the movement of national popular congresses in West and Central Africa, or under populist slogans in East and Central Africa, but they did not assume general features comparable to the South African Renaissance. However, the peoples of the continent still aspire to a new social substance that has not materialised so far by the resistance movements in the old independent states having been shackled by the structural adjustment policies imposed by the international financial institutions. Similarly, Mbeki`s African Renaissance does not attempt to face the great struggles foreshadowed by apartheid before its downfall, as manifested by the national and social struggles of the people of South Africa before and after Sharpeville and Soweto.

The Challenges of the New Project in South Africa

Mbeki faced great challenges ever since he led the movement for a negotiated solution, starting from the mid-1980s. We shall confine ourselves to the internal factors that led Mbeki to formulate his new thought, within an international climate that led most protagonists, even the racist power in South Africa itself, to rethink its position. The original position of the ANC leadership was as strong and sharp as the struggle with the racist regime in power, and all parties sought a solution to the explosive situation. Yet, it was clear the continuation of such struggles would not further the interests of either party; both the multinationals owning the mining interests (Oppenheimer and De Beers) and the leadership of the ANC came to understand that the class positions would undermine the interests of all parties concerned. Such were the conditions that led to the assasination of Chris Hani, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of South Africa and a member of the executive of the ANC, and the conflict with Cyril Ramaphosa, the trade unionist leader, and such were the challenges that Mbeki deeply understood, and which underlined his African Renaissance project.

Mbeki noted the debate around the Freedom Charter which had been adopted by the representatives of the different social forces back in 1955 – the era of national liberation revolutions. This charter stipulated that South Africa

was the home of all who live on its soil, whites or blacks; that the people share the resources of their country; that nationalisation was contemplated; that land would be shared by those who till it; and that all ethnic groups had equal rights. Such principles meant the creation of a democratic state for all citizens, and were the basis for the socialist ideology that was adopted by the national alliance for four decades. The ideal that people had in mind was that of popular democracy, and not the traditional liberal democracy. All prospective economic policies had a socialist-inspired social content, in a country ruled not only by the local racist capital, but also by some multinationals. A country where 86.5 per cent of arable land was owned by a few million whites, while thirty million blacks owned only the remaining 13.5 per cent. Yet, violence was not advocated as the means to achieve such a transition, because the Ghandian non-violent means were predominant in the ideology adopted.

This was the first challenge to any new project in South Africa, as it also meant the predominance of the Marxist analysis of the forces in society in the literature of the ANC, as well as its close alliance with the Communist Party as they both shared a socialist perspective on the Soviet model. Later on, and in view of the intransigence of the racist minority, which seemed to rule out the possibility of forming one nation with them, the non-violent means were contested by many party cadres who favoured the armed conflict as the only possible way out. In this phase, the labour movement came forward, as also did the feminist role which had not figured prominently in the Freedom Charter. The Pan-Africanist Congress ideology which led to the Unity Movement also gained prominence at this stage which saw the bloody Soweto uprising in 1976. This all meant that black consciousness would raise the debate on the Freedom Charter, and about the new thought on the expediency of revolutionary violence, or the negotiated solution. The Soweto uprising imposed new ideas and new forces on the political arena throughout the 1980s, which were well publicised world-wide, and it was Mbeki who wrote to a seminar in Canada in 1978 about the 'historic injustice' and the class society dominated by the white bourgeoisie, allied with the white landowners, which imposes the revolution as a necessity and makes any compromise solution impossible.

Here appeared the new ANC slogan of 'Power for the People', and the slogan of the Communist Party of the 'Path to Power', which outstripped the Freedom Charter, and laid the foundation for new alliances which included youthful trends represented by Steve Biko and working class forces, as well as nationalist forces within a united front. This was more a crystallisation

of the violent struggle over half a century, rather than a prelude to a peace culture as promoted by world capitalism and the Perestroika of the 1980s. This challenge in South Africa put international capitalism as well as the local racists in an impasse which could only be solved by a compromise solution, and not by force. Such a compromise solution prevailed in the end, which led to the policy of truth and reconciliation to contain the consequences of apartheid, and eventually led to the African Renaissance project.

Post-apartheid South Africa

The international situation in 1990 may have created its local corollaries, especially in South Africa where the tensions were great and the demands after Soweto were very high. This could have meant a big obstacle to a negotiated solution, but we cannot forget the black bourgeoisie in South Africa, located in Soweto itself, in the neighbourhood of the white bourgeoisie in Johannesburg, and its need for some sort of stability. It took some eight years of the charismatic leadership of Mandela to sort out the differences between the principles of the Freedom Charter and the upshot of the Soweto uprising, and to reach the compromise of the African Renaissance project.

All through the negotiating period (1985-1989), Mandela and his comrades on Robben Island refused to condemn violence as was demanded by the apartheid regime in exchange for their liberation. Indeed, the slogan raised by Mandela as he left the prison was 'continued violence until the democratic transformation is accomplished', as he stated in his autobiography. However, three years after his liberation, he announced his 'new patriotism' as a transitional phase and included the 'sunset clauses' in the new constitution to reassure the white population, who participated in the national unity government. Thus, the ceiling of the Soweto demands was reduced so as to change the culture of violence into one of social and political peace. The first economic and social programs, and the democratic practices in the white-black relations, where Mandela had as deputies De Klerk and Mbeki, raised hopes of a peaceful social transformation as expressed in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994. This programme expressed a consensus on social justice, including free universal education, government housing, land distribution and invigorating public and private sectors of the economy. However, the strong position of local capitalism took precedence over the weight of the Freedom Charter and the Soweto movement, and led within two years only to the replacement of the RDP of 1994 by the Growth Employment and Redistribution Programme of 1996. This meant a new

opening on the liberalisation of the economy which went hand-in-hand with Mbeki's African Renaissance, but was quite new to the main partners of the ANC, the Communist Party (CP), and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), who complained that they had not taken part in the formulation of this programm.

Indeed, Mbeki had prepared the ground during the years 1994-1998, before assuming the presidency in 1999, for making such a radical move. He was able to face the challenge of accepting the conditions imposed by world capitalist globalisation on the national project, thanks to his long history as one of the bulwarks of the ANC, as he participated with Oliver Tambo over a period of four decades as a leader of the youth organisation, and as a comrade of M. Suezi who was responsible for the radical line adopted by the ANC. He was also a leading member of the CP, and was noted for ideological innovations in a movement known for its pragmatism. He was also noted for his academic background due to his studies of social sciences and economics at the University of Sussex in England, followed by a period of scientific and military training in the Soviet Union. All this gave him a prominent role in the external relations of the party, for which he was responsible during the 1980s. He was the representative of the leadership during the initially secret, then open, talks with the people in power (including business) from 1985 onwards, and he helped adopt a policy of a 'negotiated settlement' by the executive of the party, in the Harare Declaration of 1987. This declaration was later endorsed by the OAU, despite some opposition by certain elements of the union leaders, and the Communist Party, who did not agree to the mechanisms of the declaration, if not to its essence. Mbeki also advocated the early cessation of the armed struggle with the beginning of negotiations, as a gauge for a successful conclusion of such negotiations, while there was certain opposition for such cessation. He also recommended an end to the international boycott of the apartheid regime soon after the release of Mandela, again despite some opposition from the ranks of the party. The question is therefore legitimate: whether these attitudes spring from a correct assessment of the crisis of the racist regime and its supporters in world capitalist circles which would lead to the success of a negotiated settlement, or else whether it was an early decision that armed struggle against apartheid would not be greatly effective in the context of the present world state of affairs? Mbeki is actively elaborating on the answer to such a question being the basis for a constructive cultural debate about the African Renaissance project. His own participation in this debate far surpasses the efforts of any other leader in the country, or indeed, in all African countries.

No doubt, this project presents a big challenge in a country whose capitalists are the strongest in Africa, and where world capitalism has its biggest investments and strongest influence, and where the mechanisms of globalised liberalism are strongest. To some, such a project is a challenge to the national social thought in the current situation in the country. To others, it is simply a transitional stage after apartheid, to be followed by the internal ideological struggle.

Part Two: The Ideological World of Thabo Mbeki

Thabo Mbeki took great pains to make his ideas known, whether in print or verbally, making sure that he presents a lucid expression of his deep thinking. He had always been ready for debate about his thoughts ever since he became Deputy President in 1994, whether in the UN University in Tokyo, in Hong Kong or in Ghana. All this debate culminated in a big conference around African Renaissance in Johannesburg in 1998, and in publishing his book, in that same year, entitled: *Africa: The Time Has Come.*

He was always after new ideas to enrich his thinking, and believes the 21st century to be that of Africa, as a corollary to the old prophecy of William Du Bois that the 20th century would be that of colour, meaning the conflict between blacks and whites. Mbeki believed of course that such a conflict would end with the accomplishment of the universal African Renaissance. In-between Mbeki's first writings on the project in 1995 and his speech to the Conference on Racism in 2000, his ideas evolved visibly.

Some observers consider that presenting African Renaissance to replace the concept of the African Nationalism, or National Liberation, had its roots with some of the older leaders of the ANC such as Kasemi in his writings about resuscitation in 1906, or Anthony Limpedi, the leader of the youth in 1944. They even mention a precedent in the writings of N. Ezikiwe (1973), the Nigerian nationalist leader. Indeed, Mbeki revealed a knowledge of African realities from north to east and west, as much as his knowledge of the national history of the peoples of the south. Therefore, many expected that the policies of South Africa would proceed with this project to unlimited horizons. Yet, they are concerned that it is a far cry from the radical project that made up the dreams of the generations of the National Liberation Movement. There is also the concern that the discourse of Mbeki contained much implied content. We shall try in what follows to give an overall picture of his thinking.

Who is the African?

Mbeki tries from the outset to formulate a national consensus to make the basis for a national agenda that transcends the phase of the settler colonial regime, without stressing too much the naming of this phase, and confining himself to the reference to the painful period of oppression, relying more on the relative reconciliatory tone of the Freedom Charter of 1955. In his inaugural speech in the National Assembly that adopted the Constitution of 1996, he announces the first call for his Renaissance Project saying: 'I am an African', describing the constituents of the nation of South Africa. He evokes at one time the African in general, on the continent, but he notes that these elements are various, but make up one people. South Africa is the home of all who live on its soil, blacks, whites or coloureds, as he maintains. He is the African, descended from the Khoi and the San; he is the descendant of the Europeans who left their homes to make new homes on our land; he is the descendant of the serfs from Malaysia, and the Chinese and Indians; he is the descendant of the warriors led by Sekhukhune, the descendant of the victorious battles in Isandhlwana, and in Khartoum and Ethiopia of the Ashanti and the Berbers. He says that he is the descendant of the patriots who would not accept oppression, but also the descendant of those who put flowers on the tombs of the Boers in Saint Helena. He says he saw those who deny that God created man in his image, yet he declares there will be no discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, gender, or ethnic origins. He is the African who shares poverty and destitution on the level of the continent, and shares the pains suffered by the peoples of Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Burundi and Algeria.

Thabo Mbeki is fond of the history of the continent, and he refers to the histories of the African civilisations in Egypt, Nubia, Carthage, Benin and Makundi more than any other African leader. He quotes Sheikh Anta Diop on the creative historic consciousness from which the torch of the new civilisation will flare up. He notes the role played by the Christians of Ethiopia, the Moslems of Nigeria, and the historic roles of the universities of Alexandria and Fez; and he reminds us that the school of Timbuktu was flourishing at the time of the European renaissance in the 15th century. He wonders why there is presently backwardness, and he blames the African intellectual who forgets his heritage and emigrates to the West, causing an unnecessary brain drain. Yet, this discourse of this 'historic African' does not contain any substantial reference to the Arabs or the modern history of national struggle, and the lessons gained from it. One cannot fail to note the silence of Mbeki on the current history of the continent, despite his wide knowledge of its past history and its outcome at the present day.

A New Nation

Despite the insistence of Mbeki in defining the identity of the African in South Africa, on the old history in all parts of the continent, and its civilisation sites, he tries to avoid the newer phases of its history. When talking of the elements that make up the 'nation' which he inherited from the apartheid regime, he tries to go beyond modern history, or treats it in a critical manner in order especially to remove any racist, ethnic or linguistic minefields. Thus, he begins his speech at the Conference of African Renaissance (September 1998) by announcing a break with history. He stresses that the past periods of slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and constant marginalisation should not divert us from looking into our past achievements in art and literature, and our trust in our renaissance. The African intelligentsia should play its part in this task, and we are capable of accomplishing it. The break with history is 'the promise of a better future for our nation'. This is his favourite slogan.

He relies on achieving a process of negation to precede the act of rebuilding. This process of negating apartheid means it could be ignored rather than be kept constantly in mind. Similarly, he considers it expedient to ignore the fallacy that the Bantu are incapable of governing. Thus, he calls on both parties to ignore some parts of their past rather than to keep reiterating the past grievances, in order to build a stable society, one that is non-racist and non-ethnic.

In August 2000, he decides to convene the conference on racism to discuss 'putting an end to discussions on racism' as a social issue. He does not want to keep reiterating that blacks were subjected to discrimination, which might lead to a redirecting of discrimination against whites, with all the ideological, social and economic consequences of such reversed racism. He would not allow the continued debate to mar the achievement of national reconciliation and the construction of the rainbow state, noting that no society in this world is totally free from racism. Mbeki notes that the miracle of transition from apartheid to a non-racist society has been achieved, and goes on to consider the difference between historic collective responsibility and individual responsibility. He notes that some whites were victims of the injustice of practising racial discrimination against their own will, while others believed the argument that it was a legitimate defence against black aggressiveness. Mbeki quotes Mandela in his memoir who says: 'My message is the liberation of both aggressor and victim ….We are not liberated yet, but we have the will to be liberated' (1998).

In an important speech on nation building to a conference of black and white youth (June 2000), Mbeki warned against the continued absence of the

concept of nationhood except in the identity document, and the persistence of separate social psychologies of the different race and ethnic groups in society. Such a state is caused by the continued feelings of insecurity, which, while 'we trust our democratic constitution of 1994, guarantees such security and stresses the will for a life of equality and democracy, to supersede all obstacles to the building of a common history, and a new homeland.'

Mbeki here warns against the creation of new class differences between the rich and poor blacks, as was the case between the blacks and whites under apartheid. He stresses that the new nation cannot be built on the concept of two nations, perpetuating the conditions of discrimination, or on class differences among the blacks. He considers the convening of the conferences on nation building and on racism in close succession in 2000, an indication of the nation's will to proceed to the post-apartheid era, which favoured the concept of two nations, now tolerated no more. He insists here on the precedence of the political over the social, and the precedence of the national over the social renaissance, putting special stress on the concept of nation building. Mbeki says the country passes through the national renaissance experience which has a double task: achievement of the goals of the political and constitutional revolution in society and parliament, then the continuation and protection of the social, economic and cultural renaissance. He alludes to the role of culture, education and intellectuals against the heritage of apartheid, before insisting on the necessary social and economic measures (South African Renaissance, from the address to Transkei University, May 1995).

The Pillars of the Project

The ANC followed a distinctive method of building alliances which helped it gain the support of many elements of the nation, and helped promote slogans such as 'power for the people'. It also made it possible to rely on its Marxist class analysis and yet keep close to the traditional leaders in the Bantustans, or the church leaders such as Lutholi and Tutu. With such an ideal conception of the nation, it put forward its slogans of nationalising big business and building socialism at the time of its alliance, in the 1980s, with the trade unions (COSATU), the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the white base members of the Communist Party. This alliance was the driving force behind the Soweto Uprising in 1976, the meeting of thousands of civil associations in Cape Town in 1983 to form the front, and then the great strike of the miners, which mobilised 4 million workers in 1992, in support of the nationalists in their negotiation with the racist regime for a democratic constitution.

Such was the situation that confronted Mbeki, but matters changed between 1993 and 1998, as the negotiated settlement was not the purely local outcome of negotiations with apartheid, but rather the result of the intervention of the European businessmen and international mining companies that had started the talks in Lusaka in 1985. There was also the influence of the black bourgeoisie in Soweto, and the traditional leaders in the Bantustans, as well as the dire need for land that had to be satisfied. Retaining these two groups of actors in society in view, we may assess the extent of the political choices that had to be made in the transition, or final stages. Designating the confidence-building clauses in the transitional Constitution of 1994 as 'sunset clauses' may raise the question: what 'sunset' does it refer to? The sunset of apartheid to be replaced by a general national formation, or the sunset of the deep-rooted social realities that were addressed by the strategies of the ANC and its main allies, COSATU and the Communist Party, who actually make up part of the regime in power? Indeed, the conflict raged, as mentioned before, around two main documents: the first was the DPR, and the second was GEAR, which was thought to undermine the first. This was a fundamental choice decided by Mbeki, and contested at the time for not coming after prior consultations with the allies.

As we are not assessing here the political economy of South Africa, I shall leave aside the debate that took place with Mbeki's assumption of the presidency in 1999, and even before that, with the electoral campaign in 1998, which was expressed in the manifestations of the unemployed, and the stand from the land issue in Zimbabwe, which made the headlines. What strikes me in Mbeki's writings and in his general discourse is that he always tries to cut any relations with the past, even when writing on the strategic National Prospect in 1995, and on the Common Vision, and the Economic Transformation, etc (1995).

However, Mbeki makes the constitution the basis for his project, since the said constitution is a firm text that was endorsed by all the elements of the nation in a peaceful consensus. He considers that 'problems of ethnic diversity, and causes of strife can be treated constitutionally, by the action of cultural, language and religious rights committees'. He gives great importance to the human rights movement, and the good conclusion of the efforts of the Truth and Reconciliation Committees as indicated in the constitution.

In his new vision, Mbeki considers good governance, labour and businessmen as the components of the golden triangle, or the pillars of the new regime, that will carry out the social transformation and social revolution

after the achievement of the political and constitutional revolution. After stating his choice of pillars of the regime, he goes on to speak in general terms in his broadcast speech to the nation in August 1998, where he points out the role of the politicians, businessmen, youth, women, trade unionists, religious leaders and professionals, who from Cape Town to Cairo, and from Madagascar to Cape Verde, are concerned about the conditions in Africa, and have the will to join the popular Renaissance campaign (Mbeki 1998).

We note that Mbeki gives much prominence to intellectuals, women and youth as the bearers of the renaissance process, in contrast to the previous subdued interest of the ANC in these categories. Another point of interest, often repeated recently, is his rejection of the 'fortune seekers' in the military. He carried this aversion to the point of direct intervention in the military coup in Lesotho (1998), and his refusal within the OAU to recognise any military regime. Mbeki does not show – so far – any desire for totalitarian rule, as he forcefully rejects single party regimes. Indeed, he indicated in one of his speeches the possibility of the break-up of the ANC into several parties (meaning its break-up into its conflicting constituent trends), since democracy, in the final analysis, is multi-faceted.

In his search for the pillars of his renaissance project, Mbeki recognises the intellectuals, the scientists, youth, etc. but he does not consider these to be the real protagonists of the project: for he only considers them to be the 'men of the economy', or what he calls 'business'. He gives much prominence to the role of investment, and considers the 'market' a sort of new deity, and as a space worthy of being managed by responsible people, since the upper echelons of society cannot just live as parasites on top.

Mbeki often resorts to the new discourse of the recent international conferences about poverty, the conditions of needy children, and deficient nutrition. Yet, in his visit to Tokyo in 1998, he rejected aid as unacceptable charity, and calls for useful investment. He always calls for invigorating the economy by local and foreign investment (he often condemns the inaction of the black bourgeoisie), and seeks to encourage the private sector and to limit the participation of the state in the ownership of the economy, to the grief of those who still uphold the Freedom Charter!

Some researchers note his great support for 'black capitalism' as a solution for development, and fighting poverty in the black regions often neglected by 'white' capital. Indeed, the number of black companies rose from 11 in 1995, with a total capital of 4.6 billion Rand, to 28 major companies in 1998, with a total capital of 66.7 billion Rand. Similarly, their share in the public services rose from 2 per cent in 1994, to 30 per cent in 1996.

However, this flourishing of black businessmen is accompanied by an increase in unemployment, as the number of unemployed rose by a quarter of a million between 1994 and 1998, whereas GEAR calls for the employment of another quarter of a million more. Mbeki's men managed to present black businessmen to the congress of 1997 as having now gained a special social status. One youth leader even presented a paper in which he claims that the Freedom Charter itself encouraged capitalism, hence the state must support businessmen now. Mbeki now attacks COSATU and the Communist Party in his new programme, while one of his ministers attacked the 'extreme left', in a reference to these bodies.

South Africa and the African Continent

Mbeki remembers Nkrumah saying that 'Ghana cannot become independent unless all of Africa is independent', but he modifies it by speaking of common growth and African renaissance. He keeps talking about the regional role of South Africa within SADEC, and the joint projects, investments and infrastructure projects at the continental level. He considers the African renaissance to be a continuation of the development aspects and building of the infrastructure in the whole of the continent. He insists on building a modern economy, on giving free reign to the private sector, and on reducing the state control of the economy.

He refers here to South Africa's projects which extend from the SADEC countries to Ghana, Uganda, Senegal, Mali and Mozambique, and cover the fields of mining, communications and tourism. This means that African unity is not limited to the ideological and political spheres, but that it has its practical material basis in joint development and investment.

Mbeki speaks about the projects and investments of South African companies with no bad feelings about their ownership by the white or black bourgeoisie, and he even commends the growing black share in these projects, despite the blame levelled against him from members of his party, COSATU and the Communists for not showing any sensitivity on this score.

Mbeki considers that the fast democratisation of the continent is helping to secure stability for such growth within the framework of African Renaissance. He insists in most of his speeches and writings on the virtues of this democratisation instead of pointing a finger at those who impose it (alluding to the generalised attack on the structural adjustment policies). This is because he believes that African liberation from colonialism and neo-colonialism, and overcoming foreign diktats, is a function of Africans' feelings

of dignity and human rights, and of their cooperation with other countries of the South, and especially of Asia. He favours the cooperation of South Africa with Japan and the Asian tigers, and notes favourably the discourse of Mahathir Mohammad on Asian Renaissance, close to his own project.

Mbeki rejects all the armed conflicts in Africa, and supports the intervention to stop violence and find a peaceful solution to such conflicts. He favours the creation of regional peace-keeping forces, and says in Press Statement :Humanity needs to reconsider the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention in the internal affairs of states'. He also says: 'We must stop considering democracy and human rights as mere western concepts'. This may have been a forethought of South Africa's intervention in 1998, to put an end to the military coup in Lesotho. South Africa also supported the ousting of Mobutu by cooperating with Kabila. Such actions raise doubts among South Africa's neighbours, such as Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola, and point to the possibility of future interventions. Some even point out the similarity of such concepts with those held by the white Afrikaners about their zones of influence in southern Africa. What is more serious about such thinking is that it coincides with similar interventionist policies on a world scale, and his putting forward the 'new generation' of African leaderships to carry out the intervention at the behest of the world market.

South Africa and the World

Mbeki is intent on strengthening relations with the South, including South Asia and the Arab Gulf states. This is manifested in his discourse on globalisation. According to him, we live in a global village, and we should strive to transform this into a global neighbourhood, based on cooperation (with Japan) and mutual support (with Malaysia). We should not rely on technical assistance, for

> we are part of the world economy, and the globalisation process, and the market is the new God', [but the market means] people who take decisions, and who understand the mechanisms of the on-going process, and plan their intervention in it, and this is what we should do. And African Renaissance will accomplish that goal by struggle, for liberation does not come by itself [….] something new always comes from Africa […] and the next century is that of Africa (Mbeki nd).

Conclusion

The National Project and the Policies of Globalisation

When we review a project such as that of African Renaissance of Mbeki's South Africa, we may wonder if it is some sort of national project common in Third World countries. However, we soon realise that the size of the legacy of the imperialist capitalist interests inherited by the present regime after the 'reconciliation', the 'democratic transformation', and after the backward steps to the social programme, and noting the ideas put forward by Thabo Mbeki, does not indicate a positive answer to the query about a national state, leaving us looking for an alternative model. One wonders if the reason for this uncertainty is that we are still attached to our old ideas of 'independent development', 'self-reliance' and 'radical social transformations', the ideas about Arab or African unity and the progressive camp, let alone 'socialism'. However, we cannot escape the fact that the world is undergoing radical changes, and that such ready-made answers are no longer possible. Suffice it for a man like Mbeki to formulate a project for his country, similar to other national or local projects, at a time when such projects are hard to come by.

A country with the size and resources of South Africa, having such a long un-democratic history, and proud to be the land of Mandela, Tambo, Sisulu, Biko, Nzo, Hani, Slovo and Ramaphosa, is capable of producing a great national project that challenges the deterioration in the countries of the historic national projects. Indeed, national projects were never sectarian, or self-contained, as the experiences of China, Egypt, India or Yugoslavia clearly show. Certainly, they were never autonomous with respect to the hegemonic world capitalism that threatens the prospects of national independence.

Thus, we are apprehensive of the possibility of South Africa becoming the springboard for this destructive world capitalism that envelops societies in the name of the market mechanisms, globalised space, regional hegemonic interests, and that may seduce this or that national project to be integrated instead of maintaining its independence. The economy of South Africa inherited from the old alliance between apartheid and imperialist capitalism makes for the continuation of such alliances and obstructs their defeat by the bogus of reverse racism. It embellishes integration into the world market as a remedy for the period of boycott and the European capitalist growth. The Renaissance project itself may simply become a project for the integration of certain comprador elements into the world market, and not for the relief of those – the Khoi, the San and the population of Soweto – who were marginalised for hundreds of years, and leading them to the better life heralded by Thabo Mbeki.

PART 3

Times of Ideas

11

Culture and Intellectuals: Challenging Globalisation

Since it took its global capitalist form, the world order has not developed in an ideal, straightforward manner. It has been changing back and forth, between colonialism, imperialism and apartheid, as its various occidental powers kept moving between these forms, sometimes singly, and at other times in groups. Its centres moved between Europe and the United States, its forms varied from single or nation imperialism to the centralised form of today, and its aspects varied from colonisation and replacement of indigenous populations to simple occupation, and from expansion to hegemony from afar. As examples of such transformations, we have witnessed France changing from a typical colonial power to a hegemonic one, or an attempt at that; the US changing from hegemony to direct occupation; and apartheid transformed from a system in a single country to a world system applied by the triad, with the US as its leader to the Third World as a whole.

Such a characterisation is not just an enumeration of the various forms taken by the world system today but rather a means to determine the aspects of resistance and reaffirm national sovereignty built up in previous periods, and to look for new means of expression, a means to seek a new logic for resistance in a context of economic and political hegemony that impedes the crystallisation of the concepts and attitudes compatible with the present situation. Studies about the economic and political aspects are not lacking, while studies about the cultural aspect are not up to the necessary level. The explanation lies in a long history of interaction, both positive and negative, with the economic and the political, while the cultural remained in the background, concerned mainly with the sociology of consent, in contrast with the sociology of resistance. It

seemed easier to formulate the aspects of economic and political domination, while cultural domination was less obvious and somewhat lost in discussions of liberation, renaissance and modernisation, etc.

The main question today is to determine the modes of economic and political interaction on one side, and the modes of hegemony and resistance in the context of transformation of colonialism and imperialism in an atmosphere of globalisation on the other. This is due to the fact that the development of the world system has pushed forward contradictory modes, both on local or world levels. It is emphasising new modes of hegemony that seem to be similar to the old modes of consent to colonialism and imperialism, but which activate new dimensions of the sociology of resistance, which necessitates both collective action and fundamental revision of the role of culture and of the intellectuals in the Third World.

Reading the Bamako Declaration, in its insistence on the necessity of radical changes to the capitalist system, and advocating the creation of a political economic and cultural consensus that is an alternative to militarised and neoliberal globalisation, we must keep in mind that culture is not just a product of the social and economic factors, but the intellectuals must be at the fore of the alternative globalisation as one of the main social movements. The history of culture tells us how intellectuals reacted to the colonial and imperialist methods, both positively and negatively. This short chapter tries to deal with this question.

First: The Interaction Phase

We shall not delve deeply into the history of Africa or of world capitalism, but suffice it to say that the modern phase really begins with the end of World War I, rather than WWII. At that moment in history, colonial expansion had reached its limit, and a new phase of redistribution of colonies had been settled by the war. At the same moment, the great October revolution had exposed the secrets of the machinations of the colonial powers, the Komintern announced the Declaration of the Emancipation of the Peoples of the East and President Wilson had promulgated his famous fourteen points accenting the right of independence and self-determination. As a result, the peoples of the colonies started calls for independence and the building of new states and forms of self-government. We shall give precedence here to the present wave of aspirations that extend their roots back to that period.

The calls for independent states in Asia, Africa and the Islamic countries began between the two wars. There also started the formation of 'modern

societies', with the exodus of the rural or tribal populations to fast-developing urban centres. The embryos of the national bourgeoisies appeared (India, Egypt and West Africa). Some revolutions or insurgencies led to more or less advanced constitutions (Egypt and the Maghreb). Also modernisation attempts led to the creation of new secular forms of education in confrontation with the traditional religious forms (secular universities in Egypt, Uganda and Sierra Leone). Amidst this euphoria, there appeared many charismatic figures among the intellectuals (Taha Hussein and Aly Abdel-Razek in Egypt) proclaiming the ideas of cultural renaissance, the concepts of secularism and the separation of religion from politics. Also, the role of the national language in emancipation (Algeria with Ahmed Ben Bella), as well as forms of building national identity (Nigeria, Ezikwe and Tunis, Bourgeiba), were stressed.

The cultural movements tried to ensure emancipation once colonialism had been liquidated, without severing relations with the West, but rather trying to overtake it. Indeed, the great transformation movement in Asia (India) and even the first socialist state (the Soviet Union) aimed at no more than overtaking the advanced western powers. Again, Ataturk in Turkey attempted to adopt European manners and morals at one blow, while Taha Hussein and the secularist movement in Egypt advocated ties with Mediterranean and Greek culture and civilisation.

Thus, the modern groups did not have their own project apart from their aspiration for national independence within the framework of the world capitalist order, and trying to overtake its mechanisms of transformation and advancement. It seems the strength of the colonial phenomenon deeply affected what E. S. Macamo calls 'negotiating modernity', for the benefit of modernity and western influence among the cultural and political elites such as Senghor in Senegal (Macamo 2005). In the meantime, the traditional classes were allocated the role of dominating the rural areas dedicated to the cultivation of the crops of strategic importance to the colonial powers (Egypt, Sudan across Africa to the Atlantic, and Tanganyika).

During the whole of that phase, the intellectuals intent on enlightenment considered the local culture and heritage as an impediment to the process of transformation, especially under the influence of the colonial schools of anthropology and ethnology. The colonial authorities used these schools to range the modern government functionaries alongside the traditional strata, away from the intellectual elements, by resorting to indirect rule. Thus, the traditionalists held fast to the colonial rulers, while the intellectuals had no plans to sever relations with them. As an example, we find the bureaucrats

and the religious establishment in Egypt cling to Britain, the colonial power, which supported them (including the Moslem Brotherhood), while the cultural elite (and even parts of the political elite) looked up to France as their guiding ideal, because of its advanced culture and the heritage of the Saint Simonians.

Thus, the traditional was present on an equal footing with the colonial modernistic despite the frequent contention that these two trends were, prior to national liberation, in contradiction. Some intellectuals even ascribe to this hypothetical contradiction, the emerging democracy in the Third World. On the contrary, I believe that the interaction between the traditional and the modernistic, and its clever manipulation by colonialism, led to the question of 'identity' being closely bound with the traditional forms rather than becoming a force for transformation or social change. Thus, the question of identity sometimes became too involved in fundamentalism, whether Islamic (Algeria, and Maghreb in general), ethnic (Negritude, Bantuism, or Ethiopianism in East Africa), or Pharaonic (in Egypt). This gave preponderance to the cultural over the political, and grouping the intellectuals alongside the traditional politicians, and hence their failure to implement the project of the independent state, high on the agenda between the two wars. We may also refer here to the pan movements which started as movements for human emancipation from the bonds of colonialism (the pan-Islamic movement), or the emancipation of slaves and putting an end to the slave trade (the pan-African movement), but failed, between the two wars, to bring up before their societies' concepts of independence and social transformation. These pan movements, whether Arab, Islamic or African, all manifested their acceptance of the colonial anti-communist campaign (absence of a real role for the Arabs and Africans in the congress of the World Movement against Colonialism in Brussels in 1927), the cessation of the meetings of the National Arab Congress, after its foundation in Paris in 1913, the ideological struggle between Du Bois and Garvey, and the fundamentalism of C. R. James in the pan-African movement, etc.

It would have been logical that the cultural elite would be more aware of the dangers concomitant with the continued colonialism after the end of WWI than the forces of tradition. However, we find that certain elites retained the illusions of the possibility of modernising their state and society (compare with similar illusions today of certain democrats and liberals to achieve such modernisation in collaboration with imperialism). During that period, colonialism succeeded in gaining the support of the intellectuals in the Arab world for its mechanism for the liquidation of the Ottoman Empire,

when such liquidation could have led to the liberation of the Arab world and North Africa. There also persisted the vestiges of the call back to Africa, or getting rid of the leftist tendencies in the pan-African movement (the role of George Bademore and his colleagues in Europe).

Second: The Cold War and the National Liberation State

After WWII and the onset of the Cold War mechanisms, there occurred certain changes in the positions of culture and the intellectuals. Such developments continued up to the end of the 1960s, and in certain cases up to the mid-1970s; but in all cases, strong effects of the previous phase existed, even up to the present.

The colonial powers accepted the existence of independent states (the Anglophone or Francophone states), but refused the 'national states' (Egypt and Ghana), and in both cases sovereignty was a common factor, even if only formally in the case of the former. However, it is safe to state that the national liberation states gave the movement for independence a strong push forward, such that six states of the Group of Casablanca led all-African action until the creation of the Organisation for African Unity in 1963. The race towards independence was looked upon with derision by the nationalists. We may remind the reader here how France gave independence to 13 Francophone countries within a period of a few weeks in order to gain their votes in its favour against the independence of Algeria in the General Assembly of the UN in 1960.

Thus, this phase began by an exposition of the strength of the national state and its wide-ranging influence, starting from the Bandung Conference in 1955, on to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in Egypt 1956, the African support for Lumumba in the Congo 1960, and the construction of the high dam in Egypt and the Volta dam in Ghana. All such great experiences were carried out in the light of the great socialist construction in the Soviet Union, China and Cuba, and a vigorous war of liberation in Indochina enjoying the support of the socialist and nationalist forces.

How can we visualise the cultural structure in this period? The populist national states as described by Samir Amin, or the 'tropical leviathan' as named by Ki-Zerbo, stopped at the political concept, minimising social dimension for their culture. There was little place for cultural or social diversity in their epistemological structure, such as class struggle or feminist movements, for here we had the Arab nation and its resurrection, and there was pan-Africanism and its conscience. Thus, Arab or African unity was the aim of the mobilisation

of the peoples of the continent. We had here an ideological separation from the lofty realm of the world culture of the West, to the earthly particularity of the nation or the continent, which stresses political national or continental sovereignties, and the charismatic leaderships. Nevertheless, they also called for western rationalism and the discourse of modernism as a means for building their economies by industry and land reclamation, and even land reform, to enhance their situation among the group of non-aligned countries. While the western powers praised such reform in their previous colonies, the East put forward new concepts to support their newly found friends, such as the concepts of 'nationalist revolutionaries' or the 'non-capitalist way for development'. Thus, the non-aligned camp, intent on independence, gained a certain social dimension, as well. For here, we had the western concept of modernism (driving dependent capitalisms in Ivory Coast and Kenya) on one side, and the development state, with some welfare dimensions, represented by the Arab socialism and African socialism, and the conscience movement on the other side.

The 'modern state' seemed solid enough to assimilate culture as well as the intellectuals. It assimilated the concept of the nation and its unifying culture (Arab or Islamic), and the concept of African communalism or resistance as an overall concept. Thus, the intellectual became what Thandika Mkandawire calls 'the collective organic intellectual', who accepted, against his own wishes, the development state in place of colonial servitude, and thus became more 'organic' than an intellectual, or a thinker. According to Ki-Zerbo: 'The intellectual was asked to remain silent, because development was going on'. In the Arab world, the slogan was proclaimed: 'No voice shall be heard above the call for the battle'. Thandika puts it in a more frank form when he says: 'The intellectual became "yoked to power", as culture became a platform for politics'. An example of such is the use that Nasser made of Al-Azhar and that Senghor made of the Sofists.

However, we saw a reversal of attitudes: the traditionalist camp serves the continuation of colonialism and even imperialism, while the camp of modernity (which stood for dependence before) now serves the cause of non-alignment. Yet, this did not mean the emergence of an authentic democratic national liberation culture, as politics and the media had been nationalised (i.e. become the sole property of the state), just as the labour and peasant movements had been nationalised before. Yet, the intellectuals reproduced capitalist rationalism to support the plans of industrialisation, diversifying the foreign markets and modernising education, and opposing the takeover of certain governments by the military with US connivance.

Yet, the resistance front did not remain silent, and we may also attest that the concept of national liberation was not all the time just a negative refusal of colonialism, or the anthropological vision of societies. State capitalism in the national state was a unifying element. Although it retained a certain measure of dependence on the world market, it shook the structure of society, emphasising the role of labour and the middle classes, and it organised the peasantry in cooperatives that helped establish a certain degree of regulation of the market laws. This meant the appearance of new societal cultural values, in spite of the nationalisation of both politics and culture, which linked development with autocracy rather than democracy.

Doubtless, this pushed to the fore – despite the special honours bestowed by authority on its 'own' intellectuals – some important cultural phenomena. In spite of the 'collective organic', there emerged new independent universities (and more critical professors), and euphoria in theatre and cinema, as well as novel writing and novelists (some of whom gained great fame in later periods). Such phenomena were prevalent all over the continent.

Modern culture as well as resistance was telling its own narrative by writing against the colonial one, as Ashcroft says in 'The Empire Writes Back' (Ashcroft *et al.* 2002). We should mention here A. Cabral's thoughts on the culture of national liberation as a masterpiece (Cabral nd).

Not all of these intellectuals meant to support the position of the state, but the national states made use of such contributions in their resistance to colonialism and imperialism. This prompted the western cultural establishment to resume its negation of African history, and the existence of past African states, by negating all modern African cultural production. A provocative example of such negation was contributed by Larson in his *The Ordeal of the African Writer* (2001). In contrast, the Americans and the CIA gave special attention to the role of the middle classes and intellectuals, such that the Kennedy administration spoke clearly of the role of the middle classes and modern development in expanding world markets. However, when the national state stood in the way of the results it expected, we witnessed a reversal of the former assessment, the support of a series of coups d'état, and the pulling of many intellectuals towards what is now termed political reform.

Unfortunately, such dominance of the role of the state led inevitably to weakening important institutions whose role we miss today in the movements of resistance to imperialist globalisation, such as the parties, the trade unions, syndicates and cultural institutions. However, the national state did add a social element to the concept of sovereignty and independence, and broke the

colonial artificial isolation and frontiers to create continental conglomerations and unity institutions. It even took some of its original cultural contributions beyond its borders, without severing its relations with capitalist cultural mechanisms (Gandhism, Arab 'resurrection' or renaissance, African personality, the diaspora, etc.). Such a role may have put a certain restraint on the imperialist dialogue in favour of racist regimes, such as apartheid in South Africa and Zionism in Israel, when it kept harping on about the superiority of their model of economic growth, and democracy, in opposition to the model of the national state and its verbal discourse.

Third: In the Context of Globalisation

After repeated talk of marginalising Africa as a result of contemporary globalisation, as there was no need for its markets or raw materials, Samir Amin came up with an important contention – a part of his precedent theory of the relation between the centre and the periphery – that globalisation meant more integration of Africa in the globalised capitalist world economy, rather than marginalising it. He had previously stressed this thesis in his study on Eurocentrism, which made certain fundamentalist trends take the form of the reverse side of European idealist fundamentalism that negates history and dialectics.

As we are intent on the role of culture and intellectuals in the Third World, it seems that more integration is indicated, as well as the re-emergence of western idealism which negates the other. Although we are not concerned here with militarisation of globalisation or pre-emptive intervention as a newly adopted policy of globalisation, we may yet discern elements of cultural intervention that go hand-in-hand with economic, political and military intervention.

Globalisation has started a new phase of its evolution by a series of major revisions of previously accepted theses, and imposed such revisions on many intellectuals of the south, who are returning to the sociology of consent rather than that of resistance. We shall try here to enumerate some of the main revisions as food for thought in the present cultural situation in our Third World. One of these is the revision of the historical credibility of socialism, or building some new 'ideology' compatible with the new thesis on capitalism being the end of history. Thus, some even consider the concept of ideology to denote only the failure of socialism! Hence, many reservations on the concepts of class struggle and dialectical social analyses in general have become common. Similarly, concepts of the national state, borders, sovereignty, etc. are being revised and replaced by limited sovereignty, open borders and the right of

intervention. Thus, it has become easy to separate politics from social and economic action, and to block the activities of cultural policies in UNESCO in favour of openness of the media and the so-called universal cultural values. Even, such concepts as social, cultural and economic human rights are being curtailed not to go beyond what has been so far approved by the international community.

Many intellectuals of the Third World contributed to such revisions and 'additions' to various degrees, in the belief that the time was propitious for their dabbling into the world cultural arena. The chance to appear on the tribunes of the world media was so attractive that they would not mind showing the superficiality of their local cultures and their ability to be assimilated. Thus, we saw an over-abundance of the ideas of post-colonialism, post-modernism to reproduce the negation of history, and the negation of the state (the national one, of course!). We even saw the new ideas of anthropology raising the spectre of ethnic struggles in the place of traditional tribalism, while our nationalist intellectuals were talking about the demise of anthropology.

The discourse of post-colonialism determined the position towards the struggle against colonialism and imperialism, inasmuch as it expounded the thesis about the revision of national history, and of negating it. The acceptance of the new world values in the realm of culture and thought meant rejecting the old class analysis and treating the toiling classes as the poor of society whose problems can be solved by projects of eradication of poverty. Similarly, the problems of women who make up half of society are now treated as problems of gender. The essential aim is to generalise the use of a new terminology to be adopted by the Third World, and bring it in unison with the First World (world capital). In this manner, there will be no need to resort to pre-emptive strikes in order to achieve the integration with world capitalism. Indeed, the policies of globalised structural adjustment increased the rhythm of deformation of local social thought to such an extent as to achieve the reverse centralism by other means. Again the mechanisms of globalisation have achieved the same end by their own means: the huge amounts of petro dollars deposited in the banks of world capitalism enhance the dependence of the Third World (even as represented by its rich members) on the multinationals owned by the US and its close allies of the triad.

As history was besieged in its negation schools, so were other social sciences besieged in the study of the anthropology of poverty, or of societies subdivided into numerous ethnic minorities. When looking for identity, the study was drowned in a multitude of specific identities for women

and other social strata, each of which was endowed with its specific global framework, as part of globalisation. There is no more space for any African or Arab study outside the framework of globalisation. No scope exists for any writing outside this unique framework. No more cultural policy conferences are held by UNESCO – since Makhtar Mbow was ousted because of the limited courage he exhibited in performing his functions – with only some apologetic meetings for so-called dialogue of civilisations. Under the savage onslaught of capitalism, many people are marked as terrorists, intent on the destruction of western civilisation and its welfare societies. With the claim of the end of history, the dialogue of civilisations became a struggle between civilisations aimed at the destruction of the 'other', and not even an attempt at assimilating it as used to be the aim.

Such an atmosphere supports all manner of fundamentalist currents, from those emanating from the White House, to those of the groups of political Islam, Sofism in the countries of the South, including 'extremist groups', and 'bad Moslems': Bin Laden in the caves of Afghanistan and 'Sheikh Sherif' in Somalia, many of whom were trained and nurtured by the CIA.

The Third World intellectual is in complete confusion, unable to choose between the world human values as publicised by globalised world media, and research and publishing institutions, and the local cultures besieged by a plethora of fundamentalism, and a classically conservative heritage, constantly reproduced in the Arab world, or a gruesome struggle between ethnicities in Africa and Asia. The call for a 'national state' within whose borders the intellectual can fight for economic development in favour of the economic social and cultural rights of the masses, within democratic boundaries, meets with a deafening call by all globalised institutions demanding an end to the commitment of the state for development, or social services, to be replaced by ephemeral programmes to reduce poverty by the year 2015! These same institutions assert the priority of the rights of civil society over economic and social rights, and hence no more cultural services, because 'media consumption' has a priority over production of national culture.

Under such a climate, intellectuals were expected to fulfil their historical role of analysing their societies anew and to arrive at deep social explanations of the re-emergence of the religious currents as seen today, such as to replace all other social unifying factors (economic and social development, or even real capitalist growth). They were expected to take a more critical stand against structural adjustment policies; development relying on small and micro projects; development of tourist resources alone; relying mainly on foreign

investment with all concomitant conditions, and exorbitant debts, utilised by the comprador strata to impair the social structure.

Again such a climate favoured the great exodus, not only of skilled labour, but also of educated elites and intellectuals, many of whom become advocates of fundamentalism or alienation. Thus, the intellectual became more alienated than during the colonial period, when the trends of modernisation and enlightenment pushed towards massive education and industrial production, and hence towards more social cohesion and faster cultural development. On the other hand, facing globalisation, the intellectual talks to his people from 'outside', whether outside the local social context, from outside the borders across the satellite broadcasts, or through global media and research centres.

The political elite in the Third World is not much better off than their intellectuals, as they live the same conditions of isolation or revert to certain models of civil society, alienated to the heritage of the popular and democratic movements known to most of our societies. In most of the countries of the south, civil society institutions seem more of the bearers of a foreign discourse than of genuine social movements that can replace the lack of the role of political parties in the present period.

Yet, there was another response from the peoples of the Third World, encouraged by the obvious failure of IMF and World Bank policies in producing reasonable degrees of development or growth, to compensate for the heavy burden of foreign debts. Thus, within a short period of time, there emerged numerous small popular movements in the street, in the form of 'national sovereignty conferences', uniting the popular social movements with the question of sovereignty and democracy. Plenty of studies during the 1980s and 1990s describe this phenomenon. Some of these movements demonstrated a noted role of intellectuals in close association with social movements in Benin, Mali, Zambia, Congo and Malawi, as a response to the struggle of the people of South Africa against apartheid, which succeeded in suppressing that hateful regime at that time. Needless to mention that during the same period, the peoples of Latin America began a series of popular movements, also as a consequence of the failure of the structural adjustment policies, which resulted in significant changes of regimes that are giving an impetus to the movements for change.

Such a significant role of intellectuals on a national scale deserves to be borne in mind, before we criticise their past absence from collective action, on a continental scale at the time of the flourishing of the pan movements, in enlightenment processes, or in support of the populist states.

As the Bamako Declaration of the World Social Forum (WSF) (January 2006) raised a number of questions in the field of culture and the role of intellectuals, stressing the questions of education, communication and national languages, we believe that before discussing the question of marketing scientific knowledge and the products of culture, the essential role of culture in the political, economic and cultural consensus proposed should come first. Such a consensus cannot be achieved without a comprehensive integrated concept of culture, making it a fundamental tenet of democratisation to be taken into consideration by the democratic management of the media and culture. Thus, intellectuals may become active role players and not just a vanguard of the political process. We should therefore expect the mechanisms of the WSF to perform some other important functions:

(i) To make comprehensive and deep analyses of the social and cultural realities of the peoples of the south under the conditions of globalisation, where the masses are subjected to cultural alienation, which makes them open to cases of revisionism, and easy prey to fundamentalist and ethnic movements.

(ii) To conduct the widest critical discussion and debate about our ideological heritage in its reaction to colonialism and imperialism, as well as during the experience of the national state. This should include the concepts of the state and the nation, the questions of language, publishing and financing research, mass participation in civil society organisations, and the nature of the movement for democracy and its present social or new liberal concepts.

(iii) To urge intellectuals to participate in collective action within social movements, and not remain bound within their professional organisations and syndicates. We have all missed any collective position or declaration of a militant nature from African intellectuals, while there is an abundance of contributions from the so-called political reform meetings.

(iv) To urge continental research institutions and other cultural institutions to enhance their role in expressing the real problems of the peoples of Africa and the Arab world. Here, it may be pertinent to reintroduce the concepts of the pan movements, with new visions comprising the social and cultural dimensions, even if the political dimension lags behind.

(v) To urge the international and regional cultural organisations (UNESCO, AU and the Arab League) to revise their cultural agendas in favour of democratisation of cultural action and to draw democratic intellectuals into such a task, and not to rely on the cultural bureaucracy to create systems that change culture into a simple tourist product or a para-cultural product.

12

Frantz Fanon and the African Revolution Revisited at the Time of Globalisation*

Unchanged Agenda

What makes us recall Frantz Fanon now, particularly his memorable works on the 'African revolution' and the 'wretched of the earth'? Has Fanon been long gone already? It is barely a decade since racism disappeared from South Africa and since national popular conferences made their voices heard across the continent. It is barely a few years since the Durban anti-racism conference was held. Since Fanon wrote *Black Skin, White Masks* in 1952 and *The Wretched of the Earth* in 1961, hardly a decade has gone by without someone rediscovering the value of human consciousness and the need for a second wave of national liberation, for a continual African revolution in the broadest sense of the word: a catharsis.

As globalisation marches ahead, clad in arms, equipped with precise tools, versed in international machination, trumpeted by a pliant but wide-reaching media, how alienated have we become, caught in the iron grip of a new empire? How far do our 'peasants' feel the crisis overshadowing the fields? How far do the nations of the South feel the 'new apartheid' rearing its head in the international trade agreements? How far do we all feel the need for a 'new humanism?' And how much does the land of Algeria itself, in which Fanon wrote the bulk of his work, entice us to reconsider the 'problematic' of 'national culture'?

* This chapter was originally a paper presented at a CODESRIA seminar on canonical works in Accra in September 2003. It was also revised and selected for CODESRIA's 30th anniversary conference in Dakar on 10-12 December 2003.

The need to revisit Fanon's views has never been greater. And he is not the only one worthy of a fresh reading. The writings of Amilcar Cabral, Walter Rodney, and Claude Ake are as relevant today as ever. The language of the revolution has taken on new meanings, from Ben Bella to Nelson Mandela. And the spontaneity of the masses has left its mark in Seattle, Mexico and Porto Alegre. All these are reminders of Frantz Fanon, of the legacy – and controversy – he left behind. Here we are, in Africa – his beloved land – contemplating the meaning of his work.

In this chapter, I will go over some of Fanon's favourite topics and see how relevant they still are to the issues surrounding the process of globalisation:

(i) From Colonialism to Imperialism; Violence and Liberation
(ii) Alienation and Presence
(iii) Which Social Analysis?
(iv) The African Revolution and Fanon's Dialectics in a New World
(v) Fanon's Presence in the Arab World

From Colonialism to Imperialism; Violence and Liberation

Fanon was not just preoccupied with probing the political or economic origins of colonialism; he dealt with colonialism as a situation of dehumanisation caused by Euro-centricity and its negation of the other. He methodically applied psychological research – among other things – to the colonial phenomenon, focusing more on the general social situation than on individual case studies. This helped him identify the global aspect of colonialism. With the first wave of political independence in the 1950s, Fanon was able to grasp the meaning of neo-colonialism as it transpired in regimes that grappled, less than successfully, with the issue of liberation. The term 'neo-colonialism' had to wait for the All African Peoples' Conference in Cairo in 1961 to gain currency.

With this wide-reaching understanding of colonialism and imperialism, Fanon invented the terms 'containment' and 'negation' to analyse the situation in Third World countries ruled by colonial powers. He gave much thought to this state of affairs – which extended from the Caribbean to the Arab world and encompassed large parts of Africa – focusing particularly on settler colonialism and apartheid. Although some of his critics deny it, Fanon's insight went beyond these specific points, particularly as he discussed the Congo and other colonised regions. He examined the significance of 'colonial hegemony' in the colonised communities, their cultures, and the human situation in

general. He defined 'colonial violence' in a broad sense, incorporating the way in which blacks would assume 'white masks' as a result of the tension between coloniser and colonised.

This early understanding of the concept of negation makes Fanon both a philosopher and a sociologist. This concept was generalised by Walter Rodney and Amilcar Cabral a few years later, when they spoke of 'negation from history', in reference to the impact of colonialism on Africans. Fanon spoke at length about the alienation of the individuals and communities from themselves, not just from their homeland.

Were Fanon's social and philosophical ideas a case of a reverse racism? If so, the value of his work would be gone with the disappearance of settler colonialism and conventional racism. It wasn't. His work is still relevant, particularly his early humanist approach in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967). Fanon's work throws much light on the human conditions now imposed by the nations of the North on those of the South, or the 'apartheid on a global scale,' as Samir Amin and others would call it.

Fanon did not stop at the physical sense of racism. His lecture on racism and culture at the African Writers Conference in 1956 makes this abundantly clear. There is more to colonialism and racism than super- and infrastructures, he insisted in the course of his interpretation of the colonial phenomenon. The whites, who were invariably rich and in control of the super- and infrastructures, dominated the life and wealth of the colonial people. They were not just racists; they contained and subsumed 'the blacks and their homelands'. Fanon has thus responded early on to the scholars who, using social and class interpretations, reject the totality of colonialism and racism. He used social analysis effectively to further his 'national' interpretation.

Imperial containment, as described by Fanon, works in the physical, psychological, social and economic aspects of the life of the colonised. I am tempted to link Fanon's understanding of racism and the 'management of colour' with Gramsci's concept of 'hegemony' 1993. Fanon makes rare references to Gramsci, perhaps because the containment/domination concept of Gramsci does not fully explain the cultural complexities of colonial life in the Third World, in which Fanon was fully versed. Martinique, Fanon's birthplace, was for instance, so contained by France that it actually declared itself part of the latter. Fanon went beyond hegemony and containment to label colonialism an act of complete violence, an act that can only be confronted with revolutionary and spontaneous violence, the violence of emancipation and liberation, not just counter class domination, as Gramsci suggested.

The 'negation of the African soul' by the colonists is not just a material or social act. It is, Fanon maintains, an act of depersonalisation that can only be reversed through using revolutionary violence to cleanse. Here, Fanon turns 'consciousness' from an abstract term into an all-embracing force. He does not stop long at the consciousness of colour, or the issue of black versus white, during his North African phase. *White Masks* outlines a situation describing the way the dispossessed view the 'other'. Fanon was more interested in the overall colonialist process than in the conventional methods of apartheid.

According to Fanon, the white masks denote an insidious 'oneness' between the coloniser and the colonised. Whiteness becomes a symbol, a situation that cannot be terminated except through absolute violence, through the destruction of the society and state associated with this symbol. This is why Fanon linked liberation with emancipation, with a new humanity. This is why he opposed the ideas adopted by the assimilated classes on reform and gradual change. Fanon dismissed the philosophy of non-violence and looked sceptically upon the transition from one 'state' to another. 'The freedom of the state does not mean – as neo-colonial leaders' claim – the freedom of the human being,' he warned.

Fanon's contemporaries would remember how he railed, at the All African Peoples' Conference in Accra in 1958, at peaceful solutions and the non-violent approach. He was appalled by the influence Gandhi had on Nkrumah and other nationalists in South Africa and Kenya. The latter, at least for a while, subscribed to pacifist gradualism.

In the age of imperialist hegemony and powers, we find them recalling colonial violence in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and Guantanamo. Recalling Fanon, it is not just the 'colour' issue or militarisation of the colonial situation, it is also the containment he mentioned on a global level.

Alienation and Presence

Although not as cohesive as *The Wretched of the Earth*, *Toward the African Revolution* is perhaps the key to Fanon's lifework. In this thought-provoking book, Fanon's traces his journey as a revolutionary intellectual, a man of commitment, an individual who was alienated and found himself only through praxis. He merges philosophical ideas with psychiatric ones, drawing freely on his experience in the Antilles, Europe, North Africa, and the sub-Sahara. He comments on the Algerian revolution and then moves on to discuss revolution in Angola and to criticise Ghana. Fanon expresses sorrow over the death of Lumumba and is dismayed at the experience of the Congo with

the UN. He brings forth many new ideas, including the alienation of doctor and patient, coloniser and colonised. This latter idea Fanon first described in 'North African Syndrome', a study first published in *Esprit in Paris* in 1952 and republished in 1958 in *Toward the African Revolution*.

In *White Masks* (1952), Fanon discusses alienation due to the colour of the skin and the status of the western (northern?) coloniser. Drawing upon his experience with colonialism in Algeria, he concludes that individual alienation is both a human and a general phenomenon. A thorough reading of *White Masks*, the 'North African Syndrome' and *The Wretched of the Earth* makes it clear that Fanon gave prominence to culture over economy and science. His approach to the 'world colonialist phenomenon' has often been described as being 'culturist'. However, he spared no effort in uncovering the element of exploitation in physical and oppressive colonialism. Even so, the main thrust of his argument was that 'usurpation' or alienation takes place on the individual human level, as an act of overwhelming and direct violence. The collective violence among the downtrodden is a reaction to this act of direct violence. In Fanon's writing, alienation is described in individual terms, whereas oppression and counter-oppression are described in collective terms. And culture remains the 'vehicle of truth' in all matters concerning repression and rebellion.

Unlike most psychiatrists, Fanon did not confine himself to the pathological phenomena, but had a close look at the entire process of imposed and repressing modernisation, analysing its effect on women, for example, as well as individual technocrats who pose as mediators with the West. He kept track of how the indigenous culture tries to shelter its members from contact with modern culture in order to avoid contamination. When insecurity becomes the norm and one lives in constant, daily expectation of death, the indigenous culture becomes the ultimate safe haven.

Far from denouncing modernisation, Fanon saw it as a requisite for the formation of a true national culture. Elaborate references to this topic can be found in 'North African Syndrome' (1952), and 'Racism and Culture' (also in the letter of resignation Fanon submitted to the resident French minister). In the course of such works, Fanon describes how doctor and patient remain trapped in their preconceptions. He concludes that silence in the colonies is treasonous and that the patients should be led down the path to revolutionary awareness, for this alone would save them from self-destruction. At which point, Fanon trades post for position, turning from a philosopher and doctor to a journalist with the Algerian newspaper *El Moudjahid* (1958). He later became an emissary, then ambassador, of the revolution.

Modernisation, in Fanon's thinking, is inextricably linked with liberation. However, what type of modernisation should one pursue? Modernisation can be imposed from abroad (globalisation and the one village?) or it can be an essential part of the evolvement of national culture. How can the world transcend 'new apartheid', benefit from modernisation and world culture, and maintain a stance of liberation? Occasionally, Fanon will come across as conservative. This is why an intensive effort by Third World intellectuals is needed to update his ideas. To do so, scholars are advised to consult the works .Herbert Marcuse, who was sympathetic to Fanon's ideas; and Emmanuel Hansen (1977), who deserves a careful reading, as his writings during the 1970s are just as inspiring as Fanon's.

Fanon was neither a strategic planner nor an angry prophet, but his insights into culture remain relevant to this day. Speaking at a gathering of African writers in Paris in 1956, Fanon maintains that western colonialism has moved from a hierarchical view of culture (during the renaissance) to banishing the culture of certain communities (the colonised nations), and then to cultural relativity (anthropology). For him, the repression of 'cultural existence' is only a part of the biological and economic process of enslavement. Racism is born out of 'cultural hierarchy' (note the relevance to today's much-hyped clash of cultures). When culture is seen as something pertaining to one race to the exclusion of others, conflicts take on a crusader-like style. Racism, Fanon believes, is a systematic repression of the culture of the vanquished. Colonialist culture may not necessarily negate the vanquished culture, but it invariably manages to stunt the latter and limit the choices of the vanquished communities. This same trend is still in action today, in the early twenty-first century.

We should be aware here that Fanon was not that type of writer who is trying to theorise the 'non-western knowledge' or to build – as a fundamentalist – a 'reverse culture racism', despite his presence in traditional Islamic culture.

Fanon's concerns in the 'culture of the people' and in the spirit of spontaneity of the masses – particularly the peasantry with their conventional outlook – was tempered by his knowledge of the risk involved in 'the perpetuation of backwardness'. He spoke at length of the risk of ethnic isolation and the 'reverse racism' (which Sartre was encouraging him to endorse) involved in the question of 'colour'. Fanon warned of 'national culture' when adopted as an absolute value for northern and sub-Saharan leaders. In doing so, he was issuing an early warning to the Arabs and Africans of the pitfall of a national and continental sense of culture. For him, national culture is something that

should unfold, in a creative manner, during the process of revolutionary violence, as far as it is a product of the new national consciousness. In other words, national culture is born of the womb of the revolution and takes shape through self-awareness. Fanon foresaw that a crusader-style war may result from the persistence of backward cultural formulas. In particular, he spoke of a potential religious onslaught in Algeria and contemplated the implications of Negritude – advocated by his friend Cesaire – for Martinique and in Africa. He saw the mass appeal of both religion and Negritude and warned that their rise may isolate the intellectual strata, who – due to their false awareness – would drift closer to colonialists and to western culture. These strata, while calling for modernization, would adopt cultural ways that are alien to the domestic scene.

Fanon advocated a national culture that can evolve, and an international scene that maintains its sense of variety. He would not approve of the concept of a global village, nor the triumph of a single oppressive and colonial culture. His views on such matters deserve our full attention at a time of globalisation. We now have proof of how ethnic strife has undermined the stability of Africa and how religious fundamentalism has affected Arab and Islamic countries. We also have reason to believe that religious fundamentalism is making inroads into the western hemisphere.

One of Fanon's favourite themes was self-awareness among the masses. He remained an intellectual committed to the masses, a man immersed in praxis in the Marxist and Gramscist tradition. Although he believed in the role of an enlightened popular leadership, he was sceptical of those committed to the promotion of awareness among the people, for many among them, he suspected, were little more than self-seeking opportunists.

Which Social Analysis?

For all his interest in the class issue, Fanon did not conduct a dialectic social analysis of classes. Instead, he focused on the role of class in revolution and liberation. Profoundly knowledgeable about the development of Third World societies, Fanon was a structuralist revolutionary, not a sociologist or a political economist. He preferred to speak of social forces rather than class, although he was profoundly aware of the latter. He saw Third World communities as lacking any affinity with Europe's capitalist development and industrial revolutions. The aim of Third World countries, he maintained, was not to achieve western liberalism or even socialism, but to resist total containment by a capitalist system with a global agenda. Fanon was particularly adept at

describing the colonialist phenomenon and identifying its inherent violence and dehumanising effect.

As a nationalist revolutionary, Fanon chose not to examine the domestic social composition except to identify the elements of revolution and the susceptibility of various social groups to western domination. He wrote extensively on the situation governed by violence, racism and alienation, while devising methods for ridding the colonised of the oppressive presence of the 'great white error.' This is why Hansen describes Fanon's classifications as a description of the agents of violence, rather than a categorisation of classes (Hansen 1977). Fanon's vision was more powerful than his analysis with regards to the social forces in the Third World. In 1961, when he wrote *The Wretched of the Earth*, the national bourgeoisie, which he – too early – suspected of treason, had not yet basically appeared in the sub-Sahara, although it was already taking root in the Arab world.

Being a nationalist, Fanon zealously advocates a process of liberation both in his writings in *El Moudjahid* (1958-1961) and in his books. As his work took shape, colonialist powers were already offering formal independence to the colonies, imposing conciliatory leaderships, and guaranteeing the pattern of exploitation (this pattern continued through the nationalisation phase. The economy was handed over to so-called national bourgeoisie but in essence remained under colonial control). Fanon dedicated the strongest chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth* to the 'pitfalls of national consciousness' and the problems of national culture. He did so, in my opinion, because he was afraid of falling into the trap of deformed populism, although he did not escape altogether unscathed. Fanon's clash with European democrats and progressive figures was not over the scant support the latter gave to the revolution in Africa and the rest of the Third World. Rather, it was over their social dialectic analysis, which Fanon said was irrelevant in a Third World context.

I do not wish to give a detailed review of Fanon's social analysis or the elements of revolution and counter-revolution as he saw them here. However, let us pause to consider how much weight he attached to the revolutionary force of the peasantry, of women's power, and of the latent power of the lumpen proletariat. Let us also ponder his unflattering profile of the urban proletariat, which he suspects – as much as he does the national bourgeoisie – of identifying with the colonisers. Fanon was not a conventional dialectician, nor did he depend on history as an analytical tool. He felt the strength of the current 'colonialist phenomenon' and he railed against the rape of cities, and countryside alike, by capitalism. This is why he was interested in what he

refers to as the 'middle classes' but more often as the 'national bourgeoisie'. He blames this particular class for its identification with the racist colonialists and criticises its 'treasonous' failure to carry out its historic role as a national tool of progress.

Armed with this vision, Fanon concluded that the proletariat was a subsidiary force that sought the crumbs of colonialist bridges. The only redeeming elements of the proletariat are, for him, the revolutionaries, the women, and their supporters from the ranks of the lumpen proletariat. His view of cities is barely flattering. He was right, perhaps, as far as cities created by the colonialists or apartheid systems are concerned. However, for many historic cities, he obviously missed the mark. Having said this, Fanon's assessment of the indigenous bourgeoisie still holds true, from the point of view of material dialectics and considering the course taken by the current world capitalist order.

The indigenous bourgeoisie in the former colonies seems to have learned little from its European counterpart, and the world capitalist order is not allowing it to learn anything new, apart from what it learned between the two great wars. I agree with Fanon that, in its current state, the indigenous bourgeoisie is much worse than before, for it has succumbed to media, cultural, and consumerist invasions. It has adopted new patterns of consumption and embraced new lifestyles. It has also shown indifference, bordering on persecution, to the fate of the urban working classes. Its acceptance of the peace policies imposed on it from abroad has magnified its sense of inferiority versus the West. Its tendency to equate violence, or rebellion, with suicide is something that would have appalled Fanon. The Egyptian Camp David Accords, the Palestinian Oslo Accords, the Lancaster House and Komati arrangements in southern Africa, and the IMF and WTO treaties, are all cases in point.

Some of Fanon's ideas and early notions of national bourgeoisie and its socio-economic and political options are worthy of rehabilitation, regardless of how far one agrees or disagrees with them. It is perhaps such early ideas of Fanon that inspired his views of the countryside, local and global, and the power of the peasantry as a spontaneous force of rejection.

The power Fanon attributes to the peasantry has generated wide-scale debate. For some of his critics, the sanctity he accorded to this class and the spontaneity which rarely played the role he hoped for in the Third World, give his writings an a-historic touch, a hint of revolutionary romanticism. Yet, he may have an excuse, if one is to consider the developments that the Third World has undergone. The peasants, according to Fanon, are a revolutionary

class ready to embrace the revolutionary system and capable of retaining a communal spirit while upholding pre-colonial creeds and legacies. Unlike city dwellers, the peasants are not subjected to westernisation. Unlike the national bourgeoisie, they have no feelings of inferiority. Their folklore supports the notion of resistance and their impoverished status makes them ripe for revolutionary ideas as well as self-awareness. Fanon backed such views with examples from Algeria and Morocco, from the Mao revolution in Kenya, from the central and eastern Congo, or from the Matabele, Shona and Zulu history in southern Africa, showing the patterns in which the locals clashed with settler colonialism.

Fanon was not a great fan of conventional Marxism, nor of its European manifestations or the Soviet school that supported it. It was this Marxism, he argued, that provided protection for the petit or national bourgeoisie and its pitfalls. What Fanon truly admired were the far eastern revolutions, those in China and Indochina, where 'revolutionary consciousness' seemed pure and true revolutionaries were in charge. Therefore, Fanon was not a romantic rebel or an isolated intellectual, but someone intent on identifying a global pattern. He was also certain that colonialist violence would trigger spontaneous and systematic violence among the peasants, and that the violence would banish their sense of negation. This, he maintained, is something that should happen before the peasantry moves to the cities. Once they emigrate to urban areas, the peasants would become a tool in the hand of the bourgeoisie. Ultimately, they would only swell the ranks of the lumpen proletariat.

Not being a patient dialectician, Fanon failed to see the implications of the peasantry's isolation from the process of capitalist accumulation (Marcuse 1991 criticism hits the nail on the head on that point). He also failed to see that the peasantry's lack of alienation would limit their awareness of the on-going contradictions. Fanon did not realise that historical traditions, particularly in the Arab and Muslim countries in which he lived, would hinder the level of awareness required for the revolution he hoped for.

One must not forget that Fanon saw the Chinese revolution as a landmark in the confrontation of colonialism. This revolution popularised the idea of the peasant revolution and suggested a pattern in which the countryside would encircle the imperial cities, to use the words of Mao's doctrinaire Lin Piao.

Fanon was obsessed by notions of ending the 'old system', whether conventional or inherited from colonialism. Revolution, and revolutionary violence, he hoped, would bring down the inherited structures to the benefit of the more oppressed class, the peasantry. Unless the peasants are moved

by their revolutionary consciousness, their own social structure would not entice them into action. This is why the sense of consciousness, for Fanon, was existential rather than super-imposed.

From the ranks of the impoverished peasants, a new stratum emerges, one that caused controversy among Marxists and liberals alike: the lumpen proletariat. Marx was harsh about the lumpen proletariat, whereas Lenin was relatively sympathetic, for he saw this stratum as a revolutionary reserve that can be tapped by the Bolsheviks. In the lumpen proletariat, Fanon saw a great potential. Those countryside people, much praised by Fanon, seek the cities to make a living, but end up living in shanty towns bordering the cities, leaving their families behind. They, Fanon argued, were allies of the revolution because of their spontaneity, their courageous ability to rebel, and their resentment of the social colonial system. Unless the revolutionaries recruit the lumpen proletariat – as Lenin advised – the colonialists would. Fanon tried to figure out ways to keep this class separate from the petit bourgeoisie and the traditional proletariat. Perhaps his concern about this stratum should draw our attention to the armies of the unemployed in our midst, the millions of impoverished city dwellers who often – quite spontaneously – carry out bread riots, stage popular uprising against corruption, and mount protests against unemployment (an affliction they share with their peers in the industrial countries).

Studies in political sociology often warn that neo-colonial states and the local forces of globalisation may use this category of people to their advantage. They could recruit the lumpen proletariat as well as shanty populations during referendums or entice them to support the presidents against the opposition, etc. One must here recall Fanon's warnings about the role of this local bourgeoisie. Therefore, Fanon's critics were worried about the space Fanon gave to the peasants and their spontaneity but I do not think they are correct, as the globalisation impact nowadays on agrarian issues (WTO) are changing the rural structure and developing the consciousness of peasants. We may recall Samir Amin's current writings on these issues after Porto Alegre and Cancun, to remind ourselves of Fanon's arguments in this connection.

Having mentioned political sociology, perhaps this is the time to refer to the sociology of the revolution, as Fanon saw it, and the status he gave to women in revolutionary work – as opposed to the colonialists' attempt to alter the situation of women through modernisation. The last thing the colonialists want is a society wrapped up in tradition. Fanon, for his part, saw women as part of the cohesive social structure facing the colonialists, as part of the revolution. He was not interested in modernising women in the way the colonialists suggested.

It is easy to understand the modernist schemes of colonialists, who want to integrate the active forces of society in the capitalist economy. Fanon dedicates the most part of his book *Year Five of the Algerian Revolution* (1970) to the matter of women and family and their links with the revolution. When he speaks of the liberation of women, Fanon means their liberation from the colonialists' attempt to liberate them. This is why the above book was translated into Arabic, aptly, under the title Sociology of the Revolution (in Arabic). Fanon saw through this the French intentions, discussed often at the time by French sociologists and parliamentarians. The French, he maintained, want to destroy the so-called stagnant social environment and introduce European-style modernism in its place. The revolution had to encourage women to be liberated from this type of colonialist liberation. The dress code of women and their appearance alongside men on the Algerian street were hotly debated. The colonialists, Fanon claimed, wanted to lure Algerian men and women into a French lifestyle so as to create a new 'social condition' and thereby undermine the traditional society.

The colonialist interest in the lot of women was so great that the Algerian revolution had to give the matter considerable thought. Meetings of the higher bodies of the revolution were held specially to discuss this topic. The situation of women became central to the revolution, and various decisions were made concerning the dress code women should follow, their participation in combat, and their role in protecting the cadres of the revolution. The programme of the Algerian revolution contained analysis of these issues as early as 1955, only one year after the revolution started. Comprehensive war against colonialism meant that women should have a comprehensive role, not just be a reserve army for the revolution. It is unfortunate that the revolution – and also Fanon – were too busy formulating a solution for a specific era to conceive of a lasting political and social culture.

Those who know the nature of Arab and Muslim society would be surprised at how Fanon pushed the case of women to new horizons, far beyond anything yet accepted in most Third World countries. The way in which most Arab – and African – countries still deny the role of women in society, and their transformation and modernisation, is in sharp contrast with the ideas that Fanon advocated. Current debates about gender could use some of the insight of Fanon and the Algerian revolutionaries at that time, if only to break free from the limited formulas, those that confine gender to the question of poverty and unemployment and to programmes sponsored by international capitalism.

The African Revolution and Fanon's Dialectics in a New World

Fanon left the Antilles to fight with the Allies for promised liberation from Nazism and Fascism. Following the war, he was so frustrated by the realities of colonialism and the denial of self-determination for many nations that he decided to turn his back on colonial citizenship and extricate himself from the 'white great error', as he called it. Fanon went in search of another identity, one that he referred to as the 'new human'. Having tried unsuccessfully to find an opportunity in Senegal, and just at the time when his book *Black Skin, White Masks* came out, he landed a job in Algeria. In a letter he wrote when he was 27 years old, he remarks that colonialism and capitalist exploitation are world phenomena and that the confrontation of colonialism is a personal, national and world choice.

Having arrived in North Africa, Fanon abandoned his French citizenship to join the Algerian revolution. The situation in Africa and the Far East inspired him to voice strong opposition to the Antilles' decision to join the Francophones. He maintained that acceptance of colonialism is detrimental to individuals as well as nations. Because colonialism is a form of material and moral violence, he argued, it has to be confronted with revolutionary violence. Solidarity among the colonised is a form of absolute praxis, a true act of commitment, he stated. He had earlier on in his life concluded that resistance to imperialism is a global mission as well as an individual and collective task.

As a journalist with the Algerian newspaper *El Moudjahid*, Fanon played a major role in spreading daily awareness of the revolution. His semi-daily articles were later incorporated into his book *Towards the African Revolution* (1970). Fanon warned the revolutionary cadres and the Algerian liberation movement against liberalist deception, maintaining that the liberals speak out only because of the revolutionary violence that the colonised mount against colonialism. Colonialists do not understand the dynamism of national resolve and are bound to continue their violence. Meanwhile, the national bourgeoisie and its affiliated intellectuals would be desperately seeking reconciliation with the colonists. The national bourgeoisie is more interested in partnership with the colonists than in protest against them, he said. The colonialist powers understand this psychology of capitulation and allow a certain margin of opposition to take place, as they feel safe from counteraction.

In his constant search for a unified African stand, one with which to confront the unity of colonialism, Fanon maintains that it is untenable to have an Africa that fights colonialism and another Africa that collaborates with it. 'The colonialists are not going to withdraw easily', he said, pointing

to the situation in Congo and the assassination of Lumumba. Fanon was convinced that the unity of the African revolution calls for solidarity against settler colonialism as well as the new forms of colonialism (the latter, I believe, was in reference to countries that won independence only in name). He kept calling for the creation of 'another Algeria' in Angola, Congo and South Africa.

Fanon, who fought with the Allies against the Axis, was apparently hoping that European leftists, democrats, and working classes would act in solidarity with revolutions among the colonised nations. His disappointment was clear in paragraphs scattered through his books and in a whole chapter in *Towards the African Revolution*. This chapter is a worthy reference for anti-globalisation activists in the Third World, for it throws light on the nature of global alliances and clears away any lingering doubts concerning the position of European democrats. Fanon offers several hints here, some still relevant while others are controversial; the most aggressive is that colonialism creates a repressive presence that marks every European in the continent as a repressor. He argued against the apologists among the European democrats; they, he maintained, speculate on the natural end of colonialism, mentioning the Bandung conference, which he deals with aside from the issue of Algeria, specifically. Others argue that colonialism is connected to the ills of the French system or those who considered the assessment of the cost of war.

Some democrats prefer to keep their peace and refrain from supporting colonialism. Some prefer to focus on the Anglo-Saxon competition on an international level or towards the role of certain individuals, such as Gamal Abdel Nasser, etc. Some discuss alternative forms to maintain the ties with the metropolitan, while giving advice to the Algerian revolution, or criticising its methods whenever revolutionary action leads to casualties, and some begin using the term 'terrorists'. This is a rudimentary summary of Fanon's essay, which deserves the full attention of the anti-globalisation movement.

Colonialism is indefensible. This is a point on which Fanon was not ready to compromise, either with communists or democrats. As a result, he had trouble staying on good terms with Aime Cesaire. Up until the last days of his life, Fanon was arguing with Sartre over this matter; this alone indicates how much it meant to him. Fanon took part in every African conference he could attend, including those held in Accra, Tunis and Conakry. In Accra, his assault on the philosophy of non-violence prompted Nkrumah to change his position and support armed struggle, even within the framework of the Organisation of African Unity.

Fanon was particularly interested in furthering African support for the Algerian revolution, noting that political solidarity is not enough and that actual action is needed. He supported the idea of forming an African legion, composed of African volunteers, to support the movements of African liberation, starting with Algeria. When the Algerian revolution appointed him ambassador of the Algerian interim government in 1961, he visited Egypt, Ghana, Guinea and Mali, all the time making preparations to smuggle weapons to southern Algeria.

In the course of his struggle to rally solidarity with national liberation, Fanon discussed two important issues. One is major powers, socialist and capitalist; the other is the United Nations. He saw the Cold War and the conflict between the superpowers as a peaceful form of violence toward Third World nations, warning that the Cold War may impose certain choices on Third World countries and urging that nations choosing between capitalism and socialism should do so based on their own preferences. He viewed the Suez battle and Nasser as a model for Third World opposition to western imperialism, and the Budapest events of 1957 as a model for human liberation of communist totalitarianism. This epitomises his view of liberation as a human ideal. Not hiding his socialist leanings, Fanon maintained that socialism in Third World countries is possible, even necessary to avoid authoritarianism and prevent bourgeois control of the one-party system. While deeply suspicious of the Soviet system, Fanon acclaimed the peasant revolution in China as a triumph for human liberation worldwide.

Concerning the institutional international system, Fanon spoke at length of the United Nations. The UN intervention in Congo, which ended in the killing of Lumumba, made him see the UN practices as a model and vehicle for imperialist violence. Fanon's references to the UN in *Toward the African Revolution* are quite relevant today:

> The UN did not fail in Congo because of the difficulty of the situation, but because it is used as a legitimate cover by the imperialists at times when brute force fails. Partition, arbitration and mandates are international legitimate tools used to torment and crush the resolve for independence and spread chaos, plundering and havoc, as in the cases of Vietnam and Laos (Fanon 1970).

Lumumba was wrong to trust the UN, Fanon concluded. I wonder what his views would have been had he lived to see militarised globalisation and the events in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq!

Fanon was not a romantic sentimentalist, although many portray him as such in order to discredit him, to belittle his contribution to African thinking, and to question his relevance to events inside and outside Africa. There is no

room in this chapter to review the insightful debate on Fanon's theories by revolutionaries in Vietnam (Nghei), Dar es Salaam, Guinea-Bissau (Cabral), and Angola (Mario de Andrade). In the 1970s, this debate enriched the course of the Soweto revolution in South Africa. Fanon's political and social discourse inspired much of Steve Biko's ideas about black consciousness. Such matters call for a comparative study involving national liberation and civil rights movements of Afro-Americans, the Black Panthers, and other wings of the liberation movement among blacks in northern America. Surprisingly, or not, Fanon's topics are still there in Durban and Cape Town's post-apartheid universities as well as among the Afro-American groups and scholars. More surprising are the files of post-modernists and post-colonialism writers and their daily chatting on the internet (basically relevant to national culture and modernisation)!

Fanon in the Arab World

Despite the special status of the Algerian revolution in political cultural life in the Arab world, and the special nature of the July Revolution in 1952, its leaders Nasser and the Free Officers, the Egyptian national military, and its demonstration in the Arab world, left little room for much else. The July Revolution reached its climax in the first half of the 1960s, just as Fanon's star, as an intellectual figure, and works were on the rise. Several Beirut-based magazines and publishing houses were at the time actively promoting the works of Jean-Paul Sartre. The introduction Sartre wrote for *The Wretched of the Earth* called their attention to Fanon more than the Algerian revolution literature did, and they began translating his works. From then on, Fanon became well-known in the region. Some writers took special interest in *Year Five of the Algerian Revolution* (translated into Arabic as Sociology of a Revolution in 1970) due to its important analysis of the situation of Arab women.

I have consulted more than seven leading Algerian works on political culture and the Algerian revolution, all written between 1965 and 1983 by key intellectual figures in Algerian society . In five of these, there was no mention of Fanon altogether, either as a source for analysis or as a figure of certain influence. However, one well-documented academic study by Souliman el-Sheikh could not avoid mentioning Fanon as an authority on violence in the Algerian revolution. Hence, I would like to discuss briefly on his political cultures works. *Fanon and the Algerian Revolution* written in 1972 by Mohammad Al-Meili, a pan-Arab Algerian thinker, strongly makes the point of belittling Fanon's contribution to the Algerian revolution. The same book goes at length to prove that Fanon

benefited more, morally and intellectually, from the revolution than the other way around. *The Wretched of the Earth* is arguably Fanon's most popular book in the Arab world, perhaps because it appeared at the right time (1961). The rest of Fanon's work was published in Arabic only on – or just after – the tenth anniversary of the Algerian revolution.

How does one explain Fanon's spectacular absence from the depth of Arab political culture, both in North Africa and the Middle East? There are several possible explanations. One is that successful modern Arab revolutions, which recreated the national state after removing the colonial situation, were led mostly by the nationalist military, as in Egypt and Syria, for example. Nationalist military figures of the armed struggle also controlled the destiny of Algeria after independence in 1962.

This means that we are faced with the regulated army that achieves revolution from above with a view to launching national revival. It was therefore difficult to propagate the ideas of someone who favours spontaneous popular uprisings, speaks highly of the peasantry, and scorns the indigenous (national) and petit bourgeoisie. Fanon's ideas posed certain contradictions to the ruling classes. One cannot forget also that the Arab Left in general was a hostage to Marxist Stalinism and its internationalism. The Arab Left, largely close to the Soviets, hastily adopted the ideas of 'democratic revolutionaries' and used it to justify the rule of the national military and single party elites, as well as their chosen path of non-capitalist development. None of this sits well with Fanon's view of urban society and how corrupted it is by subsidiary nationalist bourgeoisie, or with his rejection of totalitarian parties, his denunciation of East European events, his criticism of French communists and democrats, and his views on the Soviet bloc.

The failures of the choices associated with the national state of the 1960s, and the liquidation of the legacy of such leaders as Nasser and Boumedienne, would alert the Arab world today – as happened elsewhere – of the importance of Fanon's views. Fanon wrote of the negative role of peasant-based bourgeoisie, explaining its eagerness for dependency programmes which is too similar to structural adjustment and globalisation programmes. At a time when Arab nationalists, Nasserite intellectuals and a small contingent of leftists are once again addressing the question of the national state, it is necessary to recall Fanon's works.

Conclusion

In the final lines of this chapter, I will turn to the question I posed at the beginning. Why do we need to revisit Fanon's ideas today? In my view, contrary to those who recall Fanon as romantic, Fanon offers excellent analysis of the spontaneous role of the marginalised masses and their movement toward potential consciousness and away from tangible subconscious. Lacking in political organisation and deprived of a democratic civil society and intellectuals speaking on their behalf, the masses of the Third World (particularly in Africa and the Arab world) are now prone to spontaneous uprisings, particularly in cities filled with the unemployed and the excluded surrounded by shanty towns. Their situation matches the one Fanon so aptly described.

As for the peasants, the circumstances surrounding the agricultural question worldwide, the actions of the WTO, the on-going exchanges between Europe and the US, food shortages, the alienation of African and southern peasants in matters concerning food supplies, all of the above is related to the mechanisms of world capitalism. All of this should remind us of the 'peasant question' that Fanon spoke about, as well as his references to the 'indigenous bourgeoisie' in 'dependent' countries.

The question of women and gender also recalls Fanon's ideas on the sociological position of women and the need for a comprehensive approach to address women's problems in developing countries. Women need more than just a few rights. They deserve more than nominal participation in power structures they did not help create. They need to be part and parcel of the structural change.

The bulk of Fanon's work and life focuses on 'imperial repression', a phenomenon now visible across the Third World. As the globalisation proceeds with overwhelming military force to negate people and societies and to suppress freedom and choices, one is tempted to foresee a 'second wave of national liberation', a conversion between the self-awareness of the intellectual and the collective awareness of the oppressed masses. In less than half a century, we are back to the questions Fanon raised in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) as well as being in need of a new Bandung.

The crisis of the agricultural situation brings us back to the roots of the peasant question. As the situation of the unemployed and marginalised in cities deteriorates because of current policies and as unorganised popular uprisings become regular events in the Arab-African region and elsewhere, Fanon's work becomes as relevant as ever.

13

Re-reading Amilcar Cabral: National Culture and Identity in the Age of Globalisation*

It is no coincidence that in the languages we are most familiar with, the word for 'culture' is linked with 'agriculture'. In Arabic, culture (*al-thaqafa*) and cultural education (*al-tathqeef*) referred originally to the pruning and tending of plants as they grew. These parallel concepts of culture and agriculture, growth and development, come together in the person of the engineer – and peerless leader – Amilcar Cabral. Anyone familiar with his work cannot have failed to notice the similarities between his agricultural knowledge and his insistence on the importance of national culture.

This chapter will not be a direct reading of Amilcar Cabral's thinking (something one can find in almost every language). I will, instead, attempt to re-examine some of his core ideas in the light of current circumstances in Africa and the Arab world in the age of globalisation, which seeks to cut us off from our basic intellectual inheritance, or in the words of Cabral, our 'heritage'.

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* This chapter was originally a paper sent to be read at the international symposium on Amilcar Cabral's legacy on 9-12 September 2004 at Cape Verde. In the circumstances of African national liberation I was, throughout the 1960s and during the beginning of the 1970s, the coordinator responsible for the Cairo offices of the African liberation movements, amongst which was the PAIGC. This allowed me to develop a special close and deep friendship with the deceased leader, Amilcar Cabral, who I met a number of times in Cairo, Addis Ababa and Dar es Salaam. The last time I met him was in January 1973 in Accra during a ministerial meeting of the Committee of Liberation of African Colonies, less than two weeks before his assassination. On that occasion, Cabral delivered a profound political text, clearly setting out his thoughts on the African struggle and world solidarity for the sake of national liberation.

This chapter deals with the following issues:

(i) Cabral's stance on culture and identity.

(ii) The challenges of globalization and the state of national liberation.

(iii) Some African and Arab issues treated in the light of Cabral's thinking.

Cabral's Stance on Culture and Identity

One cannot help but share Mario de Andrade's astonishment at the importance of culture in Cabral's intellectual life and at the various steps he took in founding the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), which collectively expressed the duality between politics and culture (Andrade 1980). For Cabral, the party was nothing more than one part of a cultural and political totality hastening the onset of a cultural time for the peoples of Guinea and the islands of Cape Verde. Cabral compared the process of enculturation and the role of culture in national liberation, as politico-cultural osmosis. National culture is that which creates a dialectic relationship between society and history. Cabral, an agricultural engineer, compared this to a flower produced by a long process of cultivation, or the passage of history itself. For Cabral, the national liberation movement was nothing more than the organised political expression of a people's culture during its struggle against the culture of the oppressors. National identity, therefore, is the product of cultural interaction between society and history through the on-going process of national liberation.

In addition to synthesising social history, culture and dialectics, Cabral linked history with the culture of resistance. Colonialist thinking and its anthropological methodologies denied African societies their place in human history by any means other than through the colonialist process, regarded by imperialists as modernisation, and by some Marxists as igniting class struggle. Cabral opposed both these explanations as he associated colonialism and imperialism with our negation out of history, 'not our entry into it'. For this reason, national identity can only be realised through the struggle against colonialism, and through the liberation movement concentrating on cultural heritage and articulating the particular characteristics of its dialectic.

The excellent text on 'National Liberation and Culture' that Cabral delivered to the Tricontinental conference in Havana in 1966, and then again at the UNESCO conference of 1970, speaks for itself. Cabral linked the analysis of society's social construct with its cultural component, and spoke of the need to give more importance to cultural diversity in political activity. In his social analysis, he contributed to the evaluation of the status

and roles played by the various African social classes and categories. There is no space here to discuss at length his bold re-reading of Marxism, but it is worth mentioning his refusal to sanctify popular culture as it stood, pointing out that it included both positive and negative elements to be identified and filtered by the national liberation movement during the process of popular struggle.

Dealing with Cabral's treatment of the petit bourgeoisie and their status in the national liberation movement is vital when discussing his bold approach to Marxist thinking. It exposed him to attacks from both traditional Marxists – especially Leninists – and some leaders of the national liberation movement in the other so-called Portuguese colonies.

Cabral saw the role of the petit bourgeoisie as a modern and modernising social force that could either be exploited by colonialists to run the country, or could be won over to the national liberation movement, both on the strength of their private aspirations which could be helpful for liberation process, and also on the basis of their post-independence role as one of the forces for motivating progressive development. This is with the proviso that the national liberation movement could succeed in making this class 'betray' their traditional role as described by certain Marxists. However, Cabral specifically meant a new culture of national liberation and the importance of the liberation movement formulating a new, wide-ranging, political culture, as he was aware that cultures, in their new incarnations, would impose their own new, non-traditional classifications.

In the age of globalisation we are witnessing the marginalisation of the middle class and the end of the petit bourgeoisie; a development in the interests of the business sector that had marginalised the working class itself and then extended the scope of this marginalisation. Because of this, the elements of the informal economy have become the most wide-ranging sectors in society, confronting contemporary dialectic thought with new and complex challenges.

At the same time, and in his discourse on Eduardo Mondlane 1971 in particular, he did not reject the class nature of culture, either locally or worldwide, or the importance of modernisation through which development would take place, from the village through to the level of global culture.

This 'political Cabral' is not the ideologue who adopted only the concept of 'the nation' and excluded social analysis, yet Cabral's conception of the unity of the nation with all its diversity and internal conflicts rested on a cultural and analytical approach to society and its various social formations, i.e. tribal

and ethnic ones. I believe that analysing Cabral on the basis of his distinctive approach to the societies of Guinea Bissau and the islands of Cape Verde is of great help when re-visiting his work, and that the failure of certain national liberation leaders to follow his ideas has led African societies into a swamp of tribal and ethnic ideologies, the effects of which we still suffer from today. The attention given by some intellectuals, such as Edward Said, to Cabral's work on 'national cultural resistance' has made his contributions to issues of identity and national culture a rich source for prominent cultural analyses (by Said and others) of the representation of the coloniser and colonised, and the alternate rejection and acceptance of these representations within both nationalist and colonialist cultures.

The Challenges of Globalization and the State of National Liberation

As Cabral himself did, I shall preface my discussion with a summary of the challenges of globalisation. Having analysed the role of capitalism in promoting strong production forces and relations in its own countries, and having described imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism, Cabral admitted that imperialism was a 'historical necessity', just as national liberation in its turn was a historical necessity that would destroy capitalism and bring about socialism. He then related how imperial capital never contributed to the development of production forces capable of realising progress in colonised countries as well as describing capitalist methods of exploitation etc.

But what does this have to do with our discussion of identities and national cultures? On this point, Cabral's thinking was more or less based on the idea of the colonial capitalist 'centre' and the peripheries or colonised 'limbs'; the prevalent school of thought at that time. This thinking was given credence by the relationships between the various colonialist states and their colonies. Pragmatic economics adopted a similar analysis that was validated by the presence of a number of different axes of economic power on the world level, including, of course, the socialist axis. For the international capitalist system, the actual or potential marginalisation of Africa was determined by the lack of potential for capitalist exploitation of its resources, or the fragmentation of its social classes.

Yet, the political economy of capitalism have moved beyond traditional imperialism (new liberalism) to reach new heights, and we find ourselves in a world united by brutal capitalism, a world in which Africa is no longer marginalised, but rather integrated into the world labour market. This has taken place within the framework of a neoliberal ideology that, day-in and

day-out, churns out ideas justifying integration under the umbrella of the capitalist centre – or rather, the new empire – as it militarises the world, unifies apparatuses of control and legalises it all within this same ideological framework. This demands the use of intellectual weapons that deal with those national cultures and identities defended by Cabral.

According to Samir, 'Imperial capitalism founded on rationalism and its sciences offers the Third World nothing but irrationalism'. We meet the old colonial rationalisations in new guises. Just as Cabral talked about 'expulsion from history' as being a product of colonial social sciences and a colonialist tool used against our peoples, so neo-imperialism is achieving the same result deploying post-modern schools of thought to reject the very concept of 'historicity'. And just as Edward Said has indicated that every people has its own narration when discussing imperialism's rejection of 'our peoples' narration', so neo-imperialism denies the validity of self-sufficient narrations, or rather, only recognises one narration – its narration about itself, its culture and its identity – whilst denying the narrations of 'the other' (i.e. our identity and culture). In dealing with these narrations, neo-imperialism is wary of the contributions of thinkers such as Cabral on issues of national identity and national cultures. This is because it fully understands the direct relationship between these identities, national liberation and the second wave of independence. It is in the interests of imperialism to disseminate more specific identities and their associated ideologies, from identities of gender, minorities and nationalities to tribal and ethnic identities.

We are confronted by a fragmentation that can only be unified by means of a single, global centre in which the social citizenship of a new democratic 'totality' or pan-movement identities have no place. Cabral had assigned the national liberation movement and the liberation culture the role of gathering together social diversity within the totality of a new society. Ideologically speaking, neo-imperialism is obliged to somehow avoid discussing social and class conflict on a local or global level. Therefore, it redirects its treatment into a discussion about the major civilisation types, failing to mention the great global blocs in the conflict between imperial capitalism and socialism as formulated by Cabral and others.

From here spring other ideas about 'the clash of civilisations', in which Africa lags far behind, and which say that we will be trapped in a never-ending cycle of conflict unless we cede victory to western modernism. Our societies are nothing more than out-dated or fragile entities that – to use Cabral's formulation – have been once more selected to make their exit from history.

Despite the fact that national identities and cultures are necessarily part of the logic of the clash of civilisations (giving this logic a chance for the moment), the main civilisational identities assigned in the context of this clash do not give us the opportunity – as Cabral would put it – to claim 'historical presence', but only to lose our place in history once again.

In essence, the portrayal of the world in terms of civilisations and their conflicts only leaves room for the western 'we'. Indeed, following September 11th, there was only room for the American identity. As the current American administration puts it, it is either 'us' or 'the others', and even this is a best-case scenario, as the rest of their ideological apparatus only recognises the formulation 'we': 'the West and the 'other' is the 'rest' – as the African thinker, Mahmoud Mamdani, put it. In my estimation, opposing this new line of thought is a natural progression from the ideas of Fanon, Cabral and Rodney at various times in the history of modern African thought.

Some African and Arab Issues Treated in the Light of Cabral's Thinking

Throughout the 1960s, Cabral was well known in Arab-African society, making constant visits to Cairo either to attend African or Afro-Asian conferences, or to meet Gamal Abd Al-Nasser. Some of the seminal works of Cabral and his party were translated into Arabic, and he was discussed in Arabic writings on Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.

Intellectuals in Egypt and Lebanon were chiefly interested in his texts on 'National Liberation and Culture', 'The Weapon of Theory' and 'The Social Formation of the Society of Guinea and Cape Verde'. These texts were translated into Arabic in a number of sources (see bibliography).

The dominance of colonial anthropology had a negative impact on the direction taken by the academia in Arab universities. For example, Cabral and Mondlani were not accepted into university curricula, although political culture – through political activism – became acquainted with them both through the aforementioned texts. Arab academic culture had previously excluded the revolutionary thinker Fanon due to the dominance of traditional Marxist thinking. Indeed, for a while, Samir Amin himself was suppressed in his own country for the very same reason. However, the translation of some of Edward Said's works in the 1990s gave these texts a new lease of life, associated as they were with the slogans of 'national culture' and 'resistance through culture'. These slogans were adopted by national groups that were influential in opposing both the treaties between Arab governments and Israel, and the growing American influence over cultural mechanisms and the loyalties of certain intellectuals.

So here we are, appealing to Cabral's ideas at a time of rampant globalisation! His conception of culture as a dialectic bond between culture and history is well worth invoking, particularly in North Africa and the Arab world where history has a particularly strong impact. At times, this impact conceals the process of interaction, and at others exposes it to stagnation, known as fundamentalism (Salafism) in the Arab region. The *umma* (nation) transcends history, society and culture to take Salafism as its identity. Cultural explication is its sole methodology, while society, with its diversity, its historical cultures and its social classes recedes into the background. It is as if society is banishing itself from history, with history grinding to a halt at some point in time with its religious and civilisation peculiarities described in purely cultural terms. This is the stance of Jihadist movements throughout the Islamic world, be they Wahabbi, Mahdi, Sanoosi or Fodi, all of which use the concept of *ijtihad* (i.e. renewal and Islamic awakening). The well-known intellectual Fawzy Mansour has described this condition as a kind of 'Arab departure from history' because Arab or Islamic commercial capitalism has not wanted – or has not been permitted – to enter the age of modern industrial capitalism. A form of 'self-expulsion' or negation from history has taken place, pre-empting European colonial capitalism's efforts to exclude the region from the arena of dynamic progress.

Cabral's analysis of 'the force of national culture' which limits the extent of the defeat at the hands of the aggressor culture may be correct here, as this is more or less what has happened. Cabral talked of the national liberation movement using culture as a tool for struggle and resistance, but was assassinated before he saw the extent of that interaction. We, on the other hand, have lived to see the reversals suffered by national culture: stagnation in the Arab world, and in Africa, a programme of globalisation that has destroyed the role of the nation state and paralysed cultural politics ever since the United States imposed sanctions against UNESCO in the 1980s. Some leaders of these international organisations have tried to uphold national cultural policies that protect societies and nations from disintegrating in the face of a global culture and media. Even superpowers such as France have expressed concerns of cultural imperialism, but in vain.

We must not forget here that Cabral talked about the duality of the cultural and the political, and tried to conceptualise some form of positive interaction between the two. This led him to discuss the positive and negative aspects of national cultural heritage so that it could continue to play a role in modernism and internationalism with a political, liberationist, activist awareness. Compare that to the current trend amongst the intellectuals of globalisation to reject the 'political' on the grounds that it is comprised of defunct ideologies that fell with the Berlin Wall!

Setting up barriers between culture and national politics and the failure to analyse social and cultural diversity in the framework of the 'cultural totality' discussed by Cabral had two results, both of which were obvious to the national liberation movement. The first was the disappearance of a national identity in a network of specific international identities (i.e. the woman, the environment, tribal, ethnic, etc.), and the second was the collapse of national identity (once again!) into a salafist past, sometimes of a religious nature, and at other times resembling a utopian golden age. All this has distanced society somewhat from the true movement for its reform, or rather, for its liberation from the new hegemony. The leading elements in society no longer strive towards a 'new totality', submitting instead to the following painful processes: firstly, inclusion into the 'world' community, and secondly, violent confrontations either from terrorism or by imposing reform by force, away from the sensitivities of rational modernism. This can be seen directly in the Greater Middle East initiatives and in imposed, formal political reform.

The Arab region – and within it, North Africa – is exposed to internal and external operations to destroy its inherited 'collective identity'. The reason for this is the absence of a role for national political culture in activating the relationship between the *umma* and society. Just as the unity of the *umma* is held sacred, so – within its political structure – are the figures of the Imam, the Caliph and the 'just tyrant'. Because of neoliberal policies, however, they have become no more than dictators, without the democratic justice and development necessary for the region's various social classes and areas.

This approach of sanctifying society's cultural component did not concern itself with a new social analysis. This analysis demanded the activation of roles for social movements and groups that expressed political, tribal or ethnic differences, allowing them to become forces for 'civil society' which took citizenship as a yardstick for democratic political activity, and which gathered everyone together into a renewed, modern socio-cultural totality.

In the light of static social concepts, there is no chance of entering into history with formal definitions of society, culture and democracy. For this reason, Islamists participate in the neoliberal capitalist project, using the old logic of commercial capitalism, and some leftists join in the process of modernisation with the logic of liberal democracy, which they played no part in renewing, and which is impossible to realise in the current social climate.

Identity and national culture have suffered savage attacks, presenting neo-imperialism with a land enfeebled and ripe for assault…. For many, the settlers' colonialism in Palestine is no longer comparable with the apartheid that the African peoples resisted for so long, since the Arab liberation movement has failed to stand

up for itself and the Palestinian movement itself suffers from the same corruption that afflicts neighbouring Arab regimes. Similarly, many no longer consider the American occupation of Iraq as an illegal assault and occupation, but instead as part of a necessary process of sweeping away the home-grown tyranny that afflicts the region as a whole. Indeed, it is associated with the logic of modernisation that – according to some – could help remove the tyranny of salafism.

Taking Africa as a whole, the concept of a pan-African movement has disappeared from political culture, just as pan-Arabism has disappeared in the north of the continent. This is because both have submitted to the absence of a duality between the cultural and the political. The words 'unity' and 'union' – and other expressions of cooperative Arab activity in Arab North Africa – are no longer associated with the idea of a pan movement. This has allowed the concept of Arab-African conflict to creep into certain regions, alongside the arrival of Islamic terrorism. Yet, those who concern themselves with tribal, civil and sometimes religious conflict have never thought to deal with these conflicts by raising the idea of an effective cultural and social totality.

The Arab and African mind has to understand nationalism, national culture and national identity by understanding the objectives of globalisation, which comes armed, with weapons, propaganda… and local agents.

Conclusion

To conclude my re-examination of Cabral's ideas in an age of globalisation, permit me to join Mario de Andrade in offering some quotes from Cabral's works that I believe to be a valuable instrument for analysing and confronting our current circumstances, about which no more need be said!

When discussing the confrontation of colonial culture, Cabral envisioned greater objectives for cultural resistance:

> Built on the development of popular culture and authentic, positive, cultural values… A national culture, built on history and the gains of the struggle itself… A scientific, technical culture compatible with the demands of progress… Development will come about through a critical understanding of human knowledge: the arts, sciences and literature… etc.
>
> A world culture, from the perspective of a healthy integration with the world around us, and a forward-looking vision for its development…. The life of the African peoples confronts the challenge of imperialism…. The challenge here is to fertilise history with an expression of our culture and African-ness, then to convert that into a leap forward, expressive of the culture of a liberated people….

14

The End of Anthropology – The African Debate on the Universality of Social Research and Its 'Indigenisation': An Essay Dedicated to Archie Mafeje*

A Special Relationship with Archie Mafeje

In Cairo, my acquaintance with Archie Mafeje started almost four decades ago; first as a young political militant in the leadership of the Unity Movement, one of the liberation movements in South Africa, and then as a prominent Professor of Sociology at the American University in Cairo in the 1980s. My personal acquaintance with him was as a political militant, when I was the coordinator of African liberation movements in the 1960s and 1970s, and later as a friend and an associate of the Arab African Research Centre (AARC) in 1995. All through his career, he was appreciated by Egyptian social circles as a critical intellectual and an astute observer of society. He always commanded a special social status as the husband of a prominent Egyptian researcher, Professor Shahida El Baz, and the father of a promising young daughter, Danna Mafeje.

I had the pleasure of taking part in the session held in his honour in Dakar by the Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA), because he was one of the prominent researchers in Africa, of the same stature as J. Ki-Zerbo, A. Mazrui and I. Shivji. During that meeting much was said

* A Lecture delivered at the Institute of African Studies, Cairo.

about his extensive career as a pioneer in laying the foundations of African ethnography and anthropology, since his Masters Thesis at the University of Cape Town, back in 1962, about local African society. We also noted how the University, under the influence of apartheid, refused to appoint him as a staff member, which triggered numerous demonstrations of protest by students from many universities. Such persecution forced him to go into self-exile, to gain his PhD from Cambridge in 1966, followed by a long trek among the universities of Holland, Botswana, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Namibia, to rest at last in the African Institute in Pretoria, in collaboration with the young scholars of the new South Africa, where he coached the holders of scholarships in a programme of higher education named after him, the 'Archie Mafeje Programme'.

In this brief introduction, we cannot review the extensive scientific contributions of Mafeje to the body of African studies. I can personally name at least ten books, apart from the scores of published studies and articles in Africa and abroad. However, Archie Mafeje must be read in the original to appreciate his debates over 'colonial anthropology', and the liberation of African social sciences. One should also read his analysis of modes of production in the African context, the economic, agricultural and social effects of colonialism in the African South, the ethnography of the agrarian question, the discourse of African intellectuals in the continent and the diaspora, and the devastating effects of structural adjustment programmes. We can never ignore the great efforts of Mafeje in the UN Economic Commission for Africa, CODESRIA, FAO, and other bodies in search of an 'alternative development for Africa', and his close examination of social protest movements from Soweto to the Great Lakes, and elsewhere.

I personally took part in translating his book on African social formations, which was published in Arabic in 2006, a few months before he passed away. I wrote the introduction to that book in Arabic, and would like to present here that introduction, in English, for the benefit of his students and friends in Africa and elsewhere, as a token of my great esteem for this distinguished scholar.

The End of Anthropology

The cry claiming the death of anthropology came several decades ago, from the European camp that saw the inception of this epistemological order under the name of 'colonial anthropology'. Thus, P. Worsely (of Britain) was the first to present a paper entitled 'The End of Anthropology' to the anthropological

congress in 1966. This concept was again discussed in an African congress in Dakar in 1991, where Mafeje announced the death of anthropology in Africa. He reiterated this concept in an important study (Mafeje nd)(CODESRIA Bulletin 1996), where he announced that anthropology had committed suicide, and that a new beginning of this science was to be heralded.

Anthropology is one of the social sciences most attached to the world's political and economic order, as it was closely linked to colonialism and to the expansion of industrial, then financial capitalism beyond the European boundaries. Thus, the anthropologist became a vulnerable colonialist as James Hawker once said (1963), as it was created by the colonial administration as a means to 'enhance' its effectiveness. Some young American anthropologists even considered it an imperialist science, as it was closely connected to the American wars of the 1960s. Such an assessment has meant different approaches to this science, from the French School (of Annales) on the one hand, and the Marxist School or that of historical materialism, on the other.

Such a varied outlook to this science may explain why its African protagonists declared its 'death' at their Dakar Congress in 1991 or in Mafeje's studies, in pursuit of a new birth on new foundations for its methodology and theoretical basis, and aiming at new social objectives. From such considerations we proceed to study the following aspects of anthropology:

(i) The main criticisms addressed to the objectives and methods of anthropology;
(ii) The attempts to reconstruct anthropology as a support for development in the post-independence state;
(iii) The efforts to transform the theoretical concepts and methodology after the declaration of the end of the old anthropology, then trying to indigenize it in the context of African realities.

This means debating the doctrine of universality of social sciences when applied to African societies, meaning the need to fragment epistemological disciplines for the benefit of globalising holistic scientific values. In such pursuit, various African parties look out for new traits of African anthropology, or ethnography as constructed by Archie Mafeje.

The Critical Standpoint

Some critics of anthropology stress the functional role of the anthropologist rather than the methodology of this science. This may explain the abundance of debate around the scientific personalities that contributed to anthropologic

research, such as E. Pritchard, Seligman, Nadel and Malinovsky, and others. However, their connections with colonial and imperial administrations were always mentioned with regret, as a mar on their scientific activity. Such a position led P. Rigby (1996) to mention that Pritchard's son helped the US forces in Vietnam in the 1960s as a continuation of his father's role in Sudan with the British forces! We also note Malinovsky's studies on acculturation in South Africa as a theoretical basis for the ideologies of apartheid there.

However, critical anthropology went further to more advanced critical perspectives although it remained reformist within the old framework. In this connection, there are several trends, such as:

(i) The Apologetic Stand: this continues the conservative position by maintaining that the anthropologist was a 'colonialist against his will', that many of them enjoyed their work, and were fond of the people they worked upon. Such a standpoint was taken to the extreme by Talal Asad (1973) who maintained that considering the old anthropology as simply 'colonial' was both arbitrary and naïve. In contrast, both Mafeje and Rigby considered such conservative criticism as a sort of self-defence, or protection of the scope of employment, which does not offer a theoretical or epistemological correction. Thus, they conclude by declaring the death of the science to give way to a new epistemological order;

(ii) Some researchers considered that 'renovation' if any, still came from the North, which means that African anthropology is void of substance as the African contributions are next to nothing, despite the efforts of the Nigerian Bassy Andah and the Ghanaian K. Prah. Thus, African anthropology still claims no African anthropologists. In the West, however, there appeared some real innovations as in *Reinventing Anthropology* by B. Schulte (1974), and *Writing Culture* by J. Clifford (1986);

(iii) What is common between the new northern renovation and the new epistemological order is that both pursue the school of modernism and post-modernism. Thus, the claim that the old anthropology was functional, or functional/structural such as to lead to fragmentation of epistemological methodology and rejection of inclusive studies of society and state, also applies to the post- modernist school, that tends to study local cultures and minorities, or fragmented themes of linguistics, literature or rationalities. Some noted that the North pointed its criticism to the Anglo-Saxon functionalism, trying to reform it, while the Francophone scholars did not resort to functional anthropology, as they had adopted the policy of integration that produced a sort of

cultural imperialism that leads to a call of cultural dialogue, and not getting rid of anthropology;

(iv) The critics of anthropology could not approach any of the schools of historical materialism, political economy or social historiography. Even, they would not approach sociology despite their claims of interdisciplinary methods. The Afrikaner and Afro-American intellectuals, in particular, play a negative role in devising a critical anthropology, either due to the romanticism of some, the developmentalism of others, or the involvement of still others in the imperialist anthropological institution.

Hence came the attack of A. Mafeje and B. Magubane on the old anthropology, and declaration of its demise, in order to put up the basis for a new African ethnography. Such an attack was motivated by the abuse of the system of apartheid of the so-called 'apartheid ethnology' to establish racial segregation, and it was only normal for South African scholars to proceed to such an attack.

The Attempt to Reconstruct Anthropology

African politicians played a role, directly or indirectly, in the attempts for 'self-emancipation' from anthropology by refusing to create studies of this discipline in the new universities in the post-independence states. This came about due to the direct experience of some of them (Kenyata, Nkrumah, etc.), or because of the conditions of building the modern state/nation, the need for developmental sociology, and evading the fragmenting anthropology of tribalism and racism. The Anglo-Saxon anthropologists tried to save their reputation when they adopted the theme of social change in their congress in Kampala (1959), but to no avail. The counter attack came from African anthropologists at their congresses in Yaounde (1989) and in Dakar (1991). In these congresses, the Africans raised the slogan 'post-anthropology', while some of them went to the extent of declaring the death of anthropology. Yet, the historians behind these attempts consider such moves for renaissance, or constructing development anthropology, to be still in the pragmatic stage, and do not constitute a negation of the old epistemological order, on the road to creating a new African ethnography.

In this connection, we would point out the pragmatic stand of K. Prah, who notes that British anthropology insists on functionalism as a non-historic order rooted in European culture. He concludes by urging Africans likewise, to study African culture within the framework of national construction, and delve deep into self-study, while constructing the African anthropology as an

interdisciplinary system that may make use of the Marxist methodology in social analysis of the salient social phenomena (Prah 1991).

Mafeje opposes the pragmatic stand, using as example the stand of A. Bujera (Kenya), who highlights the role of anthropology in development as being a recent trend in the USA, where investors plan to develop Africa with the help of the anthropologists. He contends that this field must not be left wide open to the westerners by themselves while they have little comprehension of African culture and ethnography. Some other scholars also opposed this developmental trend that has no theoretical basis, and accused its protagonists of presenting a new imperialist form of the old anthropology or at best, trying to utilise anthropology as a mechanism for some projects that the local bureaucracy cannot manage. Ify Amadiume proposed to the Dakar congress the liquidation of anthropology, to be replaced by African social history, or sociological historiography, which was a sure indication of her being influenced by Francophony and the French Annales School of social history, and the reliance on oral history, folklore and other popular arts as a source for the interpretation of society. The influence of the School of Cheikh Anta Diop on the anthropologists of Francophone West Africa was evident in the inclusion of the situation of women as a new topic for anthropology.

Dr Abdel Ghafar Ahmed (1973) took part in the debate about anthropology since his contribution in Talal Asad's book (1973), followed by a number of sociological anthropological studies on Sudan, from a critical viewpoint. Yet, Mafeje considers him a vulnerable developmentalist 'against his will', despite his open criticism of colonial anthropology and traditional functionalism. Ahmed documented his contributions on the subject in *History of Anthropology and Development in the Sudan* (2003), building on the premise that the old anthropologist was indeed an unwilling colonialist, because of the context and political environment in which he worked. The developmental approach, however, comes in the context of the total society in the modern state, rather than the fragmented society. This change in approach is applied to his studies on unity and diversity in the Sudanese society. Thus, Ahmed made his theoretical and field contribution on the theme of the disintegration of the authority of the tribe, and assessing the authority of the elite on a political and class basis, and as the foundation for the hierarchy in society as a whole, and not the tribe as an isolated entity as traditional anthropology does.

Therefore, Ahmed's studies reflected his efforts to develop anthropology rather than declare its demise or negation. Thus, the titles *Sudan: Unity in Diversity* (1992), The *Changing Systems in Rural Areas* and *The History of*

Anthropology and Development Planning in Sudan (2002) point to the possibility of transforming the role of anthropology in the social context of Sudan.

What End for Anthropology?

Talking about the end of anthropology does not mean its complete negation, but rather the negation of its functional non-historical legacy and its methodology that refused any historical approach, let alone the social history or the total social edifice. While the rejection was aimed at colonial anthropology as mentioned above, the attempts at its transformation came from the North in the form of modernistic or post-modern methods that led to the reference to 'post anthropology'. Such attempts led, in turn, to the fear that 'imperialist anthropology' would come to replace the old 'colonial anthropology', as propounded by the French and Marxist schools. However, most African scholars consider all such attempts as northern attempts at reproduction of the old theme under new global conditions.

Here, stress was laid on the necessity to indigenise the social sciences in the African anthropology congresses (Hountondji 1993; Mafeje 1996). They refused to accept the holistic European advance while refusing such totality for African society or that European post-modernism could lead to the old colonialist fragmented empirical outlook, to be applied to Africa and the Third World alone while western society would benefit alone from globalisation (Mafeje 1996). Samir Amin also reiterates this theme when he writes: 'The capitalist society of the centre, based on rationality, is now exporting irrationality only to our world in the south'.

Reconstructing the Old Concepts

Such refusal came first as a rejection of the old concepts of traditional anthropology. This was the work of young African anthropologists who rejected the concepts of 'tribalism' and 'the characteristics of human races', and other such concepts that they attributed to colonialism and its lackeys. We shall review in brief some such contributions.

P. Rigby denounces such attempts in his *African Images* under the title 'The Racist Ideology Creates the Legend of the Hamites' (1996), where he denounces the extravagance in extolling their social ascendancy over their neighbours due to their Caucasian ancestry, etc. He points out the discourse about the peoples of East and Central Africa, where some colonial anthropologists proposed the utilisation of some such groups to dominate other groups for the benefit of the colonial power. The anthropological studies asserted that this group (the

Massai) was superior as Hamites over their neighbours of the Nilotes. The same theory of racial superiority of the Hamites was also extended to Rwanda and Burundi where the Tutsi were utilised to dominate the Hutu in accordance with the recommendation of another anthropologist. Such claims called for a special assessment of the physical, psychological and mental characteristics of the Tutsi to explain the continued discrimination to their benefit, and their domination of the Hutu, and even explain the post-independence struggles and colonialist interventions. Here, we find Rigby tracing the Hamite myth:

In the 19th century, J. H. Speke applied it in 1865, for the first time, on the studies about East Africa. The anthropologists adopted this legend once more in the 20th century until 1950, in the form Hamite Nilotes. This last form was applied in 1953, in the ethnographic survey of Africa under the direction of Galvier and his wife. This survey tried to establish the 'inferiority of the Negro Race' by claiming that the history of East Africa cannot be explained except by an invasion by Caucasian whites! (Rigby 1996).

Mafeje, Southall and others – according to Rigby – refuted the Hamite myth, but it continued as some popular mythology in the historiography of East Africa. Cheikh Anta Diop also refuted the mythology of the Hamites, by stating that the claim that the Dinka, the Shiluk, the Noweir or the Massai have a Caucasian origin is tantamount to claiming that the Greeks are not white! Such claims amount to saying that any civilised group in Africa has a non-African origin, meaning that the Dinka or the Massai are different from the 'primitive' masses around them. Indeed, such groups have a very long history in Africa.

This was also a denial by the Seligman's school, which claims that the pastoral Hamites came in waves of migration from the Caucases passing through North Africa and the Nile valley. This school reached such conclusions after the study of the animistic tribes in Nilotic Sudan, and the claim that the intermingling between these superior immigrants and the local Negroes produced the Massai and the Baganda, and later, the Bahima, etc. Such claims – according to Rigby – were passed on to the followers and colleagues of Seligman, such as Malinowsky and Pritchard.

The contribution of Mafeje in challenging the colonial anthropological concepts appeared first in his study on the ideology of tribalism (1971, followed by the study of the ethnography of the region of the Great Lakes (1991). He considers that it is not easy to separate social sciences from ideology; that had the Africans written their history, the results would have been different, and thus we should look for the motivation behind such writings.

In this connection, he makes the following analysis, in which he notes that the western system of concepts leads to the cropping of the term 'tribalism' in any study, using the colonial European terminology about Africa. Even a century later, European ideology still sticks to the term tribalism to describe the African society. The British insist on the use of the term and their students in East Africa and the South use it after them, despite the fact that the southerners never use this term, but refer to the 'nation', the 'people' and the 'clan', or sometimes to the 'land' (of the person). Anglo-Saxon anthropology always looks for pure tribalism that fits the policy of indirect rule advocated by Lord Lugard and Sir Donald Cameroon. Some anthropologists thought such policies helped conserve social consistence and stability. Later, when these anthropologists started studying urban societies, they attributed some folkloric phenomena penetrating urban society such as dancing of rural origin, as an indication of persistence of tribalism in an urban context (Mitchell's study on the dance of the Kalela in the copper belt), to evade any reference to social or class distinction in the towns.

When anthropologists started the study of social change, they again referred to tribal resistance to change, rather than its disintegration or loss of stability. Watson even refers to tribal stability in conditions of monetary economy. Here, we find a divergence between politicians and anthropologists, the former attributing the failure of attempts at modernisation to tribalism, while the latter think that tribalism lies behind the success or failure of modernisation, as the case may be.

It remains to answer the query whether tribalism may exist without tribes. If we accept the classic definition that 'tribes are self-sustained groups with little or no external trade', then anthropologists will have to explain whether all African political entities are tribes. What about the large kingdoms such as the Lwabola or the Zulu? Or shall we accept calling them 'super tribes' as some anthropologists do? Schapira tried to evade the discrepancy by calling the tribes 'separate political groups' that administer their affairs without foreign intervention. Thus, the tribe is considered as being above all known forms of human organisation. Culture as a criterion of assessing the tribe was only introduced with the advent of modernism, and the contributions of political and social studies (J. C. Mitchell, M. G. Smith).

According to Mafeje, the anthropologists' concept of the tribe, large or small, may be acceptable for pre-colonial societies, where the tribe lived in relative isolation as an entity defined in time and locality, and conducted a subsistence living economy. Such a definition cannot, however, be applied

after the intrusion of European colonialism, and their inclusion within the capitalist monetary system and the world market. The new division of labour, and the new modes of production and distribution, gave African societies a new, radically different basis. Thus, it is no more a question of scope, but rather qualitative changes of the social and economic order. One cannot totally deny the role of the tribe in Africa, but we must differentiate between resorting to one's tribe as a token of integrity and self-esteem, and using it as a means to remain in power, in the capital of the modern state, or exploiting one's tribesmen in the context of a modern society.

To simplify Mafeje: tribalism becomes an ideology with no objective existence as claimed. It becomes some sort of false consciousness of the so-called members of the tribe, and an aberration that the elite resorts to while exploiting their tribesmen. It is ideology in the Marxist sense, but also ideology for the Africans who share the western ideology with their colleagues in the West.

With social change, people often belong to the region rather than the tribe, such as the Transkei in South Africa, or the immigrants in Cape Town. Thus, the concept of region comes before that of the tribe, as has the criterion of culture that the British anthropologists ignored because they were isolated from structuralism. In South Africa, the Xhosa speakers share a common culture over a very wide region, even though they belong to different political entities. Culture is utilised in South Africa to attain a higher social status, so can we call this tribalism too? Indeed, some still call it tribalism!

Why stick to the concept of tribalism so much in an urban context and a market economy? Mainly because it helps embroil the nature of the economy, and the power relations between the Africans, and between them and the capitalist world, as the concept of feudalism was used in Latin America to cover up imperialist capitalist relations.

Mafeje introduces the concept of 'regional characteristics' in order to facilitate situating the cultural elements in a wider society, as well as understanding the class transformations in that society. He maintains that anthropologists need to use a concept that may be generalised to cover human societies, and that tribalism cannot be such a concept. In his book *The Theory and Ethnography of African Social Formations* (1991), Mafeje believes that the first generation of European ethnographers in Africa contributed a considerable body of material that became classics in their fields. He also believes they adopted certain fixed concepts, such as the tribe, the clan and the lineage. They also resorted to opposing categories for classification such as acephalous states in contrast to centralised ones, and patriarchal societies

in contrast to matriarchal ones, also pastoral versus agricultural societies, etc. All such classifications were looked down upon with disdain by the British anthropologist E. Leach who named such methods 'butterfly collecting' (Mafeje 1996. Apart from the clearly organic outlook of the functional structural anthropology, all such classifications are of an empirical and even static nature, trying to crowd various objects in a tight bag. They also create working modes of thinking that lead directly to an ahistoric stand. We note here that in biology, such methods of classification were abandoned for the more dynamic reactions of biochemistry that we meet in all forms of life. In human societies, some social phenomena may seem as various types, but in the final analysis they are found to be different manifestations, or permutations of the same phenomenon, such as types of existence or social classifications. All this makes us wary of falling into the snare of evolutionism or historicism.

Such studies may add to our acquired knowledge, but they have little effect on the classic ideological systems, as they use the same classified categories to reach almost the same results. Moreover, ethnographic description or theorising is far from their centre of attention.

However, such criticism does not by necessity include all historians of African societies, as we find in *Modes of Production in Africa* (1981) by Grummey and Stewart (ed.), a great effort by the authors to theorise African history. They tried to apply the concepts of historical materialism to the pre-colonial African history, using accepted epistemological concepts, and arrays of Marxist concepts such as 'modes of production', 'classes', 'surplus value' and 'capitalist production relations', to explain that history. They show a serious effort to lure English-speaking historians away from their empiricism, without showing a similar will to learn from African ethnography except to extract the greatest amount of historical 'facts' and explaining them by pre-accepted standards and classifications.

Mafeje says in the present study that he intentionally tried to evade all such generalisations. He takes African ethnography as a standard, with which he tries to assess all previous concepts that he does not take for granted. Using such a method, some epistemological hypotheses *per se*, including Marxism, become subject to doubt, and must be subjected to cultural discussion, as Y. Tandon remarks. Instead of being swamped by theoretical theses, Mafeje takes one fundamental thesis and subjects it to his method of doubt and examination. He applied this system to Samir Amin's thesis on the tributary modes of production (Amin 1973), whose history is different from that of the perspective of European history, and as such must be judged by its own terms.

I agree with Mafeje that the main aim of his study is to establish a conceptual formulation of some of the phenomena and social relations in black Africa, which had been examined in a biased manner by non-Africans for a long time. The aim is to show that most of these concepts were misrepresented to prove the lack of correlation between the universal language of social sciences based on the European historical experience and the local language as understood by the imperialists.

The problem, as we see it, is the authenticity of the social sciences, as some of their texts have no historical context; and in order to grasp them fully, we must comprehend their historic context. The point here is not that social formations are governed by the related ethnography, but that the latter explains social classification, codes of social conduct, and the ideological reproduction. A given social stratum need not behave in a certain manner anywhere in the world. African capitalists may set aside the possibility of doubling the surplus value, for reasons of kinship. In Buganda, the proprietor chiefs will gain more value from making political dependents than from squeezing out their labour force. To evaluate these development aspirations, all such ideas are relevant, credible and even objective. We must bear in mind that all local dialects, as well as all languages, can mislead, and what may guide the analyst is the context. When we read local tongues, we do not face an object that is clear *per se*, and this is exactly the error of both the empiricists and the globalists. The deciphering of the symbol usually means an expert translation of an ambiguous language, to make it more lucid. Thus, when we insist on comprehension of local dialects, we have no intention of discarding the current scientific social language, rather we insist on a clear understanding of local experience, and hence better credibility and objectivity. From the point of view of social theories, this implies a thorough process of examination, classification and re-arrangement.

Speaking on the liberation of the discipline, Mafeje recalled that among those who showed interest in developing a radical social theory in Africa and anywhere else, Samir Amin occupies a distinguished place. Because he cannot be considered among those who decline details and go forward to present issues of forgone conclusions, he will always be consulted for his critical thinking and looking for new ideas. Although such ideas may not always be fundamental, they generally present logical conclusions.

Hence, Archie Mafeje does not uphold the idea of the end of anthropology in order to liquidate an epistemological order, but rather to put in its place a more appropriate alternative to the concept, that in his opinion leads to anthropological theorising of another kind.

15

Samir Amin: Coming Late to the Arab World*

Arab culture adopted a striking stance by disregarding certain prominent worldwide thinkers. It was not due to ignorance but to reasons related to the prevailing intellectual, social and political structures. This can be applied to Gramsci and Franz Fanon as well as Samir Amin for a certain time. Despite numerous causes that involved all the three respectively, the nature of the prevailing intellectual structure in the region remains a common element. We will present this briefly and focus on the presence of Samir Amin in the Arab world.

The connection of the middle class that established the Arab communist movement with the concepts of modernisation and 'catching up 'with the West, as well as its need for strong support against British and French colonialism, facilitated its linkage with Soviet-Leninist Stalinist ideas. Consequently, it was subjected to the Komintern schemes and its exclusive positions towards the 'others' even from the Marxist-Leninist circle. Hence, Gramsci, Fanon and later Samir Amin were excluded and confined by regional communist organisations and were restricted from interaction with intellectuals in these organisations or those in general in the region, unless within narrow limits.

Gramsci strongly rejected Stalinism and presented a flexible formulation of ideological hegemony. Fanon gave precedence to peasants and the national issue and not to middle and petit bourgeoisie in cities, which produced most of the Arab communists. Thus, they were put within limits. It is logical that there was more than one reason, bearing in mind the nature of the social bourgeois

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revolution in the region as well as the concepts of the July Revolution and the weakness of the leftist movement itself. As for Samir Amin, many of these elements applied to him and incited his exclusion by the Arab world from the time of his departure from Egypt in 1960, during Abdel Nasser's crisis with the communists, until his return in the 1980s.

This situation changed dramatically due to the wide-ranging dissemination of his translated works, followed by his strong presence at the outset of the 1990s and his election as President of the Arab and African Research Centre in Cairo.

Circumstances of Absence and Presence

In a long dialogue between Samir Amin and myself (Sharawy 1994), my questions were posed on his departure from and return to the Arab world, and especially his differences with the Soviet viewpoint prevailing in the region as well as his conflict with Nasserism. Samir Amin clarified these points and shed light on certain developments that involved him. I quote:

> Perhaps the answer to this question is composed of two parts, one is personal, regarding my character, with its scientific and cultural components, and the other is political.
>
> On the personal part: I was born in Egypt and always considered myself as an Egyptian and an Arab. I never imagined that I would not return to my homeland although my education was western. I was educated in the Lycee School in Egypt and later left to France where I completed my higher studies. I intended to return and live in Egypt. I returned after receiving my doctorate in 1957 and joined Al-Moassassa Al-Iktissadia (Economic Institution) in 1957 until 1960.

We now come to the political aspect, that is, post-1959 and the system's orientation towards the right.

> I had to emigrate for obvious reasons. I thought that I would only be leaving for a short period. I never chose to merge into western society during my absence from Egypt but believed that it was better to do so with societies closer to ours – Arab and African – and closer to myself. I proceeded in this course for many years but never intending to sever relations with the Arab world and Egypt.
>
> As for my position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and socialism and my differences with the communist movement, I was a member of the Egyptian communist movement earlier – not since the outset. I personally started with the Communist Party (El Raya) since its inception in 1951. I was twenty years old and believed that I had communist tendencies even before that, not since childhood of course but since secondary school, I was always a leftist.

> However, the basic problem we confronted in Egypt and the Arab world after World War II was whether there was a possibility for a national bourgeois change. Was there scope for such a change in Africa and Asia or was revolution possible by means of action in rural areas? That is socialist revolution in several stages, meaning that the bourgeoisie in our countries was basically similar to a compradoric bourgeoisie. Therefore, the national bourgeois project was an illusion and would only lead to failure and, consequently, to a return to compradorism.
>
> Mao Tse Tung's book has become familiar to us since 1952 after it was translated into Arabic on 'new democracy' as a strategy or a main strategic line to realise this integration between the national movement and socialist revolution in stages. The book stated that there was a national democratic phase in the first stage, led by the toiling masses under the leadership of the Communist Party.
>
> The Egyptian communist movement during this period, especially 1945-1946 to 1952, had adopted a different theory from that of the international communist movement at the time. It deemed there was still a margin for national bourgeois liberation with a democratic content that is the presence of other popular social forces in this movement.
>
> I believe that history proved that this concept was wrong. Yet, within a short period of time, circumstances changed, at least outwardly, that is there were several socialist revolutions on the one hand and national liberation movements on the other (Amin 1994).

Even during the first part of the conflict with Marxists, Samir Amin did not totally disappear; for he published his first book *Monetary and Financial Trends in Egypt in 1957* in Cairo in 1959 when the July Revolution in Egypt nationalised foreign companies as a step before wider actions in 1961-62. This took place during arguments within the Egyptian communist movement on the nature of the Free Officers' State. Was it a national capitalist state or bureaucratic bourgeoisie? Even, this dispute was stopped by the detention of Egyptian communists for five years, from 1959-1964.

However, it was not a coincidence that Samir Amin left Egypt in 1960 and published his book on Egypt under Nasserism (Amin 1964), under the pseudonym of Hassan Riyad, as a critique of state capitalism and the bureaucratic class. This was followed by a critique of 'Soviet Socialism' in Paris for two decades. He returned to Egypt at the end of the 1980s and published his book (in Arabic) *From a Critique of the Soviet State to a Critique of the National State*. I believe this book summarises the nature of his journey from and to the Arab world. Many developments occurred in the region itself between these two journeys on the one hand, and in the thoughts of Samir Amin himself on the other.

In Egypt and certain national states in the region, 'Arab or Islamic socialism' were discussed at length in the context of political culture when the charter on national action in Egypt was based on the alliance of working forces that also includes soldiers and local capitalist advocates. This culminated in Egypt, Syria and Algeria, with the domination by military and local capitalism at the expense of democratic evolution.

Soviet thinking influenced this formulation, based on 'democratic revolutionaries' and the theory of 'non-capitalist path', and on supporting these national regimes militarily and economically. All this did not help in the total liberation of the relationship with the international capitalist camp as much as matters did that evolved within the context of political balances in accordance with the principles of non-alignment.

This tight framework did not permit the infiltration of Samir Amin's ideas into Egypt and Arab Mashreq (the eastern Arab region) for a long period that stretched until the late 1970s. Such change became possible due to the Communist Party dissolving itself in Egypt in 1965 to ally itself with Nasserism, as well as those restricted by the Syrian and Iraqi military, the Algerian liberation army and, to a lesser extent, sectarian strife in the Sudanese society.

Samir Amin was aware of the concept of the national state and its progressive measures and he presented models of the national state through his studies on Guinea, Ghana and Mali as opposed to the neo-colonialist capitalist model of the Ivory Coast. Nonetheless, his criticism of Soviet influence and its objectives, and placing his model among the trends of the capitalist state, were not welcomed by the traditional Arab Left who had been satisfied with their presence in cultural and media organs in the Arab region, to the extent that Samir Amin was deprived of knowledge of Arab leftist culture, with its influential outlets such as *Al Talia* magazine, *Al Kateb* in Egypt and *Al Tareek* in Beirut, etc.

Although he was absent in the Arab arena, Samir Amin was radically changing in Europe following his theory of 'accumulation at the global level' and his book on inequitable evolution (Amin 1974). Hence he was linked with many Marxist debates internationally at the end of the 1960s as well as dialogue with the Dependency School. However, his analyses on both levels did not penetrate into the Arab region easily for certain regional considerations. It is necessary to note these considerations to explain the absence and presence of Samir Amin:

(i) The domination of the national issue and involvement in the Arab-Zionist conflict and repercussions in terms of giving priority to the 'national' over the 'social' in general and viewing the socialist camp within a national and not a social context. This is in addition to

modernisation trends in the national project, historically, that deemed the West as more beneficial in this course, according to the theory of 'catching up' which was not far from Soviet orientation itself.

(ii) Pressure brought to bear by conservative social forces and strong cultural heritage against dissemination of dialectical materialism and forbidding the teaching of it to their sons in socialist countries during the Nasserist era and replacing it sometimes by local and fundamentalist ideas. Therefore the Marxists' task, even within the Soviet framework, was constantly faced with problems.

(iii) Importance of the non-aligned discourse to justify limiting relations with the socialist East, its laws and transactions (66% of Egypt's trade in the 1960s was with the West).

(iv) Effects of the Arab armies' defeat by Israel in 1967 paralysed confrontation with the United States and growing international capitalist movement before the Soviet camp. This motivated national states to think of reviewing the moderate strides taken towards socialism.

(v) The Sino-Soviet conflict – ideology and influence – seemed to be more of a difference between two countries than a philosophical debate. This mixed up the ideological position with the political stance of both Marxist forces and national governments and affected Samir Amin for a long time.

The five points mentioned above need not be linked to the nature of the problems met by Samir Amin's thinking under these specific circumstances, as he was considered by the traditional Left as part of the hostility against the Soviets in the West. That is why he only approached Arab thought during the mid-1970s and later. It was then that social and cultural causes that brought about the failure of national experiments (especially after the 1967 defeat) were reviewed. Moreover, literature written under the name of Mahmoud Hussein was propagated among many leftist elements, especially youth, on class conflict in Egypt. His analysis of bureaucratic bourgeoisie in national states which led to this defeat, in addition to animosity expressed by writers against relations with the Soviet Union, as well as Anwar Abdel Malek's articles on the united democratic front and political Islam, were well read. However, many people were surprised by the 1973 war that reactivated the conflict between Arabs and Israel, and the relative Arab superiority in this conflict. This reactivated the 'modernisation' school within the framework of total Western confinement. At the same time, oil and petro dollars as well as the Islamic awakeness led by Gulf models of life launched a campaign against

the cultural and political national and social progressive ideas. The role of the Soviet Union was undermined and restricted under this atmosphere. The role of Marxists was also weakened by Sadat's sweeping aggressive policy and its close links with the United States, as well as its 'openness to the West' instead of Nasserism's 'relative closure'. Thus, it was natural for Samir Amin to appear in the new leftist circles with his theory of capital accumulation, his analysis of the centre and periphery and also the relationship between old and neo-colonialism and dependency discourse. Simultaneously, wings of the leftist and communist movements held conferences on the Asian mode of production and called upon Samir Amin's formulations.

Hence, Samir Amin's presence in the political arena differs from Gramsci and was considered by Taher Labib as a 'cultural' presence, following the 1967 events in the Arab East (Labib 1994).

Amin's Presence in the Maghreb (North Africa)

Samir Amin's early presence in Maghreb countries was different from that in the East, because in North Africa (Maghreb), his arrival was not linked politically with the traditional Marxist movement as much as with academic thought and the students' movement. I believe that his presence was facilitated because these countries' citizens read French easily, and hence had access to his early writings on the Maghreb economy and later to his books on the modern Arab nation.

Maghreb Countries: University students focused on their studies in the early 1970s with a new spirit because it answered both Marxist interpretations and the traditional communist movement of social and political development, according to the views of the youth. In fact, its answer to the interpretations of other eminent thinkers who were committed to the prevailing political and cultural authority on a social structure was consistent with 'statism' (Al Arawi 1977). Therefore, it is not surprising that Samir Amin's book on modern Maghreb was republished more than three times in the 1970s (Amin 1966). In this book, he links the nature of French colonialism, the composition of the elite and authority in North African states after independence and their impact on Arab-African policy of North African countries, with the context of modern colonialism policies that were imposed for changes or development in social trends on the elite who accepted or rejected these ideas. This analysis boosted Samir Amin as one of the most prominent thinkers accepted by young researchers and the Magreb students' movement for a long time, especially during the 1980s. Yet, although I reviewed more than one work on general or

political sociology in Maghreb (Al Arawi), Algeria (Al Kenz – Djaghloul) and Tunisia (Al Hermassi), I did not find Samir Amin as a reference in their works, although I knew that they recommended their students to read his books. Therefore, I was not surprised by the results of a survey on the instruction of sociology in Tunisia Tahir Labib (unpublished paper) that Samir Amin was at the top of the list of favourites of the students among 13 Arab and international scholars, preceding Marx, Ibn Khaldoun, Max Weber, etc.

In fact, Labib's study on Tunisian students indicated that the three most popular references among Samir Amin's books were the Arab nation, the contemporary Arab economy, and class and the nation, before the book on modern Maghreb. I believe that Labib's study undertaken in the 1980s is but an indication of a period when the Tunisian intellectuals focused on the Arab nation, reacting to the Francophones, and sought refuge in the presence of the League of Arab States in Tunisia during this period.

Amin's Presence in the Mashrek

The presence of Samir Amin in the eastern Arab world or what can be called the Cairo-Beirut axis has increased since the outset of the 1970s, following his absence during the Nasserist period as well as the absence of the Marxist Left itself that experienced the same fate.

Regarding the Cairo-Beirut axis, Samir Amin's presence progressed at first in the academic field and then in the general political culture; his books, which were scarcely published during the 1970s, increased in the 1980s and intensified in the 1990s because he wrote and published them directly in the Arabic language. He also participated in debates and discussions in cultural seminars in more than one Arab country.

(i) The academic community in Egypt expressed certain interest in Samir Amin's ideas since the beginning of the 1970s. Their interest in the Dependency School was prominent in social thinking. Although Sadat's open-door economic policy raised the issue of dependency in Egyptian thinking and because the new generation of Egyptian academicians in sociology or economics are not French speaking, most of the scientific works in Egypt that quoted Samir Amin were referring to his English translations. Hence, reading Samir Amin was associated with reading Gunder Frank, Walerstein and other thinkers of this school who were directly exposed to some Egyptian scholars (Sayed Al Husseini and Ahmed Zayed). Debates in national academic works in general revolved around the answer to modernisation and its relationship

with development, following the campaign launched against Nasserist options. Although there was a desire to confront emerging dependency forces by theoretical attack (Sayed Al Husseini) and defence of planned development before the hegemony of international capitalism (centre) over countries such as (periphery), several studies were directed towards criticising the role of the Nasserist state and its despotism. This was particularly in the rural areas in terms of the tributary system which Samir Amin explained within the role of the state in the East (M. Auda and Zayed). Simultaneously, political and sociological theoretical studies did not stop examining the status of the state in the Third World within the concept of the Dependency School (M.K. El Sayed and Salah Abu Naar). The issue of the 'state' within the framework of dependency theories remained a matter of concern to certain academicians. This was due to the onslaught of structural adjustment programs and privatization of the public sector accompanied by the withdrawal of the state from its former significant role in the economy and social services. It was reflected in the studies by academicians until the outset of the 1990s by developing the theory of dependency to the study of the world order criticising Abdel Khalek Abdalla 1974, Ahmed Thabit and Farag Abdel Fattah Farag, etc).

(ii) Samir Amin was also absent during the 1960s and part of the 1970s in the field of thought that approached his ideas on capitalist production and delinking with the world capitalist system. A prominent Egyptian scholar (Adel Hussein) addressed the dependency of the Egyptian economy in a significant work without referring in his theoretical part on dependency to Samir Amin, whereas he based his research on Brebish and Mirdal, etc. The same occurred with an eminent Lebanese scholar who dealt indepth with the mode of production and innovated a new term, 'colonial mode of production', without indicating any knowledge of, or referring to, Samir Amin (Mahdi Amel 1978), although he discussed the production mode which was analysed by Samir Amin. Ahmed Sadek Saad, the well-known Marxist thinker, also wrote profoundly in the 1970s on Egyptian and Arab social history in the light of the Asian mode of production and dealt with the tributary system which he considered had contained Egyptian history in a bid to precede with his theory on moving towards socialism. However, he argued in this respect with French Marxists without mentioning any knowledge of Samir Amin's theories (Saad 1976).

(iii) Nonetheless, the phenomenon of Samir Amin's absence from Arab political and social thought did not last for long. In fact, he reappeared and progressed with the changes that occurred in civil and cultural organisations outside the scope of traditional leftist parties since the 1980s and throughout the 1990s. In particular, this followed the negative impact of impoverishment policies, also on an international economic level, on political decision-makers apart from the spreading influence of fundamentalist currents at the same time. Thus, ideological and popular resistance against neo-imperialism and fundamentalist leaderships will mount. Samir Amin's translated works into Arabic played a role in crystallising many of the ideas from intellectual works by famous scholars or by means of periodicals and leftist cultural institutions.

It is possible to enumerate a number of examples in various countries in the region related to Samir Amin's intensive presence in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. In Lebanon, the *Al Tareek* magazine that expressed Arab communists and leftists in general focused on discussing Samir Amin's translated works. Special files on his thoughts were prepared and published directly, giving full prominence to his ideas on the transitional phase to socialism as well as on his theories on the nation, autocentric development, the popular and national democratic alternative or the theory on the possibility of 'delinking' with world capitalism. Numerous books on these issues were written in many parts of the Arab world between those who disagreed and agreed with Samir Amin's theories.

Also in Lebanon, the well-established Center for Arab Unity Studies gave prominence to Samir Amin's theories on the Arab nation and ideas on national popular alliance, as well as inviting him to some periodic seminars. Yet, the Lebanese study that discussed his ideas by analysis and criticism came in the context of 'Arab culture and ideology' by Fahima Sharaf Eddeen, especially after Amin's book *in Arabic: A Theory on Culture* was published, and within the Arab cultural movement's concern on addressing the fundamentalist issue and its cultural framework.

(iv) In Egypt, Samir Amin's presence strongly returned to the cultural arena after being kept away by academic studies, following the wave of research on dependency in the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. The Arab and African Research Centre was an active forum for Amin`s

activities since it published and discussed his article 'The National Popular Democratic Alternative' 1992 Many discussions revolved around it under the difficult conditions confronted by the popular political movement in Egypt, namely the emergency laws and exchange of violence with the state, particularly by Islamists. The centre published the above-mentioned article by Samir Amin with his other writings on criticism of the Soviet experience and the nation state. Then the centre focussed again on this issue as a basis to discuss political alliances in Egypt (Shukr 1994) which was continued in his several studies on civil society and popular action. Then other theories of Samir Amin came up by being presented directly or through discussions on his analysis of colonialism, imperialism and social movements. His ideas and modern theories on globalisation were also addressed in a large seminar held in his honour by the Arab Research Centre on the theme 'Globalisation and Its Social Dimensions in the Arab World' in 1998. During the 1990s, Samir Amin wrote directly and also supervised a series of important books on civil society and the state in Egypt, Lebanon, Mashrek and Maghreb, as well the following journals: *Quadhaya Fikriya*, *Azmina Muasra*, *Sutour*, *Adab wa Naqd* and *Alyassar*. He entered into debates with Egyptian intellectuals, which indicated that he was maturely understood. In fact, Samir Amin enjoyed the level of participation and the fora which enriched his presence in Arabic, and made him easily understood in Egypt, especially as books in foreign languages, including his own, were inaccessible.

(v) Perhaps Samir Amin's works or what was written about him in Arab capital cities cannot be adequately recorded as regards to the extent of his presence in Arab countries. Yet, it must be underlined how much he was appreciated publicly in a gathering at a Syrian university and Damascus Book Fair, as referred to in *Al Nahg*, a famous cultural magazine there.

Even in the Gulf region, he was well presented by some intellectuals, especially Abdel Khalek Abdallah in his book *Political Dependency*.

(vi) It can be stated that Samir Amin returned to the Maghreb region after a long period of absence from the first wave in the 1970s. Although his articles were published in many magazines (*Al Wehda* in Raabat, and *Arguments* (Otroha) in Tunisia), he was reviewed by a prominent scholar who was studying private production trends in Tunisia before capitalism, its impact on the Al Khammasa community and its system

in agricultural production (*Al Hadi Al Taymoumy*). The scholar also wrote a comprehensive book in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, entitled *Controversy on Imperialism*, in collaboration with Samir Amin.

Institutional Presence

It must be noted that Samir Amin's presence in the Arab region was not confined to his presence as a thinker in academic or cultural fields. His institutional presence was also significant because he is very charismatic; his discourse gained more prominence with his physical presence in addition to his intellectual participation. It is difficult here to record all his articles and studies demanded by many journals and newspapers as formerly mentioned, but he also actively participates in seminars and symposia in Cairo, Beirut, Damascus and Tunisia. He has been a member of the Board of the Arab African Research Centre since 1993 and its president since 1997, thus strengthening the field of African studies between the main activity of the centre and promoting relations between it and the Third World Forum in Dakar. Moreover, Samir Amin's presence was also significant in the Executive Committee of the Arab Association for Sociology (Tunisia), as well as in the Arab Council for Social Sciences. All these are active in the Arab cultural movement and Samir Amin's presence consolidated their progressive orientation at a time when numerous non-governmental Arab cultural institutions rushed towards globalisation and its activity circles.

Samir Amin's Arabic Literature

The books in the Arabic language by Samir Amin numbered about twenty-five between 1957 and 2002 (see bibliography), seventeen of which were translated from French or English while about eight were published in Arabic even if their origin was in another language. It is possible to classify the list of his works in Arabic as follows: one in the 1950s, one in the 1960s, one in the 1970s, four in the 1980s, ten in the 1990s and up to 10 by 2002. This classification initially indicates that the academic school was aware of him in the 1970s through his non-Arabic books and he was better known among the Arab populace in the 1980s, reaching a peak in the 1990s because his books were directly written in Arabic.

The second comment in this respect is not very different from the first, in that it commenced with translations, in the 1970s, of his theoretical academic studies on 'accumulation and inequitable exchange' and 'inequitable evolution'

as well as books published on the Arab nation, like *Class and the Nation in the History and in the Imperial Period* (1980). This was in answer to the needs of the Arab reader on the two subjects that were widely discussed in the 1970s: the new policies of Sadat on catching up with American orientation, and mitigating Egypt's national identity. Here, Samir Amin found himself inside and outside the traditional academic scope and within the political movement debates, especially during the generation of the 1970s debate on modes of production and the capitalist world order.

The third comment is related to Samir Amin's reaction to what had prevailed in the region in terms of dialogue on the role of culture or fundamentalist currents and their escalating influence. He realised that the economic or political interpretation was insufficient in terms of events occurring in this complex region and therefore translated his writing on Eurocentricity and counter fundamentalism entitled *Towards a Theory on Culture* (Amin 1989), as well on dialogue of the state and religion, and even wrote articles on religious innovation and creativity.

He has continued writing on Islamic history as well as popular alternative and national popular alliances. He participates in discussions on the concept of the nation state and has written on globalisation and hegemony up to the militarisation of globalization that crowned his cultural presence in the Cairo conference on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in October 2001, and his popular lectures in the Cairo Library, following this conference.

16

Not an Autobiography of the Author*

I

One morning in the winter of 1947, the village of Abu Kolos, Denshway (Mid Delta) was surprised to see Haj Mohammad Sharawy moving to join his other children in Cairo. His obvious purpose was to continue the education of his young boy in government schools. The boy had memorised the greater part of the Quran, and finished part of his elementary schooling. The father intended to send the boy to Al Azhar for his further studies, but the mother stood firm: she will not have her boy become another Faqih as she wanted him to continue as an Effendi like his older brother and brother-in-law.

The family settled in the popular quarter of Sayeda Zeinab, and subsisted on the meagre income of letting part of their modest house and on the modest rent from a small piece of land in the village. The boy joined the primary school at an age somewhat older than his school mates, and this resulted in some isolation and, hence, spending more time on reading.

The old Haj, who was notable in the village as a venerable man of religion and a wafdist, became just another citizen in the big city, but he soon died in 1949 when the boy was only 14 years old. During the late 1940s and the early 1950s, the boy attended the prayers in the Zawya of Al Sonna Al Mohammadia and the premises of the Misr Al Fatah Party, or the Green House in Moneera where he listened to the fiery speeches of the leader, Ahmed Hussein, every week and bought the party paper *Al Ishtiraki* every Thursday. He was agitated by the words: 'Your subjects, your Majesty'. Later, he was also roused by the epistles of the martyr Hassan El Banna; and armed with such sources, he edited a bulletin published by his friends in the neighbourhood under the name *Al*

* This text was read to some friends who were generous enough to attend an Iftar in my honour arranged by Salon El Nadim in Ramadan of 2007.

Shola (The Beacon). On the cover page, he put the photos of the nationalist leader, Mostafa Kamel, followed by the then foreign minister, Mohammad Salah Ed Dine after he rejected the pact with Britain and the USA, and then that of Mohammad Naguib after the July Revolution.

Between 1953 and 1955, he joined the Moslem Brotherhood where he read all the literature by El Banna, Al Ghazali, Sayed Kotb, Mohammad Kotb, Al Bahi Al Kholy and Sayed Sabeq. This was a normal thing in those days, and is still the root of fundamentalism in today's youth. In those early years of the July Revolution, he joined the Wafdist/Brotherhood demonstrations, calling for a return to party politics, and a return of the army officers to their barracks. By the time the young man was entering the university, matters had settled down and the officers had consolidated their rule. He chose to study Sociology after it was separated from Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts.

When, in 1955, his home was invaded by the police in search of a Moslem militant, the officer was surprised to find a manuscript entitled: 'The Bloody Conflicts and their Effect on the Islamic Mission'. When he was sure that it was my own thoughts, he left me alone, but the same was not true in my conflict with Islamic culture and politics as I joined university.

This experience in defying the constants of religious tradition helped me go further on the road of freedom of thought, and the cafeteria of the Faculty of Arts was the ideal place for such free debate. After the war of 1956, it was the venue for meetings of the leaders of nationalist youth and the new poets to discuss the articles of Al Adab of Beirut about the cultural situation in Egypt, and the dedicated intellectual according to Sartre. The book that had the greatest influence on our youth was by Mahmoud El Aalem on the *Egyptian Culture* (1954), and Abdel Azim Anis, and the comments on that book by Taha Hussein, the "Future of Culture in Egypt".

It was a very rich experience for me in the Philosophy Department, moving between Aristotle and Logical Positivism. In the Sociology Department, I sailed between anthropology and primitive cultures. However, the social hypocrisy in this department and its meddling in social fieldwork made me hate the department, while I clung to the realm of philosophy and literature, together with progressive colleagues of Arabist leanings.

In the Faculty, the communists could not attract me as easily as the Moslem Brotherhood had in my teenage years. They seemed to believe that the July Revolution could be led to real socialist paths once it had moved firmly on the path of national liberation. So, they urged their base in the direction of general political action, while I looked for deeper cultural education from

them. Marxism remained, for me, one of the philosophies I studied just as other modern ones after I had read *A History of Atheism in Islam* by Abdel Rahman Badawi (1945). This thirst for further study was the reason why I remained in the leftist sphere, even after my comrades were arrested after my graduation, and after being taken up by my duties with Mohammad Fayek in African affairs.

The July Revolution had liquidated the university staff, leaving it prone to the pragmatists and careerists who took over, but this had not occurred to the same extent with general cultural life. The positive stand of the Marxists towards the revolution after Bandung and the Suez War meant that some leftist intellectuals still remained in office; for example Rushdi Saleh, the real founder of folkloric studies, who had edited *Al Fagr Al Jadid* back in the 1940s that had opened its pages to all progressive thinkers to expose their modernist thought. The man welcomed me as a diligent student of anthropology and sociology even before I had graduated. I would also mention some ideological support from a different directions that I got from Dr Abdel Aziz Al Ahwani in studying folklore. I spent two years after my graduation in 1958 under the leadership of Rushdi Saleh in the Folklore Centre, where I studied our heritage and anthropology that I aspired to follow as my career. This study made me connect the experiences of peoples with their folkloric heritage more than with politics. This vision was later rectified after reading the book by Yuri Sokolov (1970) on the subject that I translated with Abdel Hamid Hawas. This book gave a much deeper look into folklore as a comprehensive expression and arena for class struggle.

II

As soon as I set foot on this realm, I found myself attracted to another sphere by forces that I could not resist. One evening, I went to meet a true liberal Mohammad Abdel Aziz Ishaq, who attracted me to a group of youths, mostly from British and French colonies and Southern Sudan, who met in the premises of the African League. Thus, I worked in the morning with the oppressed of the popular culture, and in the evening with the representatives of the oppressed peoples in Africa! The frustration of Rushdi Saleh with the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Culture was relatively compensated for by the energetic efforts of Abdel Aziz Ishaq and the activity of African politics. The publication of the periodical 'African Renaissance' by the African League, and the active efforts of Mohammad Fayek who was attached to the bureau of President Nasser, attracted me to a new line that held much promise, although it was far removed from my original cultural aspirations.

My evening activities with my youthful African friends did not disrupt my official connection with the Folkloric Centre whose inauguration I attended with Rushdi Saleh in 1960, hoping it would become an academic institution that I would be proud to help create. Saleh had to struggle with the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Culture and the Minister himself who looked disdainfully on popular culture. He sent me with an old fashioned recorder and a borrowed technician from the broadcasting authority to collect all sorts of popular folklore from all corners of the country, after exhausting the popular quarters of Cairo and other cities. I was soon joined by other energetic youth, among them my friend Abdel Hamid Hawas, and we collected much of the folkloric heritage, encountering such names as Abdel Hamid Younis, Zakarial Hegawi and Mahmoud Reda and his popular dance troupe.

At the time the rising bourgeoisie was eager to find new avenues to explore, such as folklore, some were looking for new sights, others wanted to revolutionise the popular heritage, and some were merely looking for tourist attractions, but they never contemplated the creation of an academic institution. After two years of such efforts, I asked Saleh if he really thought I could look forward to an academic future, but his reply was not to expect much along this line.

I must admit, however, that my study of popular culture with the methodology of Saleh and my close contacts with leftist African liberation movements taught me how Marxist methods could be effective, in contrast to my brief contact with the conflicting Marxist organisations in the prisons that I was spared from being interned in because of my short-lived relations with them.

III

The work with the African League attracted me to continue in this line, where Mohammad Fayek took me from Abdel Aziz Ishaq to translate important articles and news about African colonies in newspapers coming from either Europe or the colonies themselves. To be able to do so, I had to join the evening classes of the Faculty of Languages (the Alsun School) for two years where I studied English literature and I translated, in conjunction with my colleague Hawas, a book on anthropology by Sokolov. Thus, I got involved in translation work with Fayek, but we also met the African youth agitating for the independence of their countries. These young leaders came to the African League where their best contact was Fayek, and I had to translate, as best I could. However, my knowledge of their liberation struggles and political aspirations was of tremendous value to me and meant a wealth of human relations as well as

information about African problems that was lacking then, and unfortunately still is. We cannot forget that Nasser's Egypt had just come from Bandung in 1955 and hosted the first Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Conference in Cairo in 1958.

From translating, I moved to an official post in 1960 in the Bureau of African Affairs that was in direct contact with the President. This meant a serious responsibility at this early stage of my life and a lot of effort and stress. My reward was the good results I was able to achieve as an overseer of the East African students in Cairo, then as a researcher in the African Affairs Institution, and then as the coordinator of all African liberation movements in Cairo. This work which was a very rich human experience for me continued until the 1970s.

This rich political and cultural experience needs a volume to be recorded, and such a record would be valuable for the whole country and not only to those who took part in it. One important feature is that this activity never suffered from the conflicts between the decision makers as was the case in Arab affairs. The position of Fayek at the political centre saved us from any conflicts although there were many bodies concerned such as those of foreign students, the workers general union, the Islamic affairs, etc. Some of these groups were openly reactionary while others were progressive through their political formation. We were also spared any possible adverse intervention from quarters that had the right to intervene, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Socialist Union. The former only took care of administrative matters, while the latter intervened only at ceremonial occasions! Such freedom of movement reduced not only the numbers of cadres required to do the work, but also any popular awareness of our achievements.

At the time, we were taken up by the 'fast-changing' events that Egypt was at the 'centre' of: trying to save the Congolese Revolution and Lmumba in 1960-61; convening the first African Unity Conference in 1962-63; trying to save South Africa from apartheid; trying to join Africa to the non-aligned movement in 1964-65; and supporting the armed liberation struggle around Africa, and in particular in the Portuguese colonies.

In Cairo, there appeared in succession some 25 representative bureaus of African liberation movements, some of which were presided over by deputy leaders or general secretaries. I had, in my capacity as member of the African Affairs Authority, to follow personally the problems of all these bodies with Egyptian bureaucracy. I also followed angrily the Soviet-Chinese conflict over supporting the various African liberation movements. Some had Soviet support,

and therefore had more support from Egypt, hence better chances to be heard worldwide. The others got more Chinese support through Tanzania, but both claimed our support in general spheres where we were anxious not to have any dissidence that would mar the overall conflict with imperialism. My greatest problem was to prevent any such disagreements from surfacing up and spoiling the whole glorious picture. I am sorry to state that this stage of our history, full of patriotic struggle and in which Egypt played an important if not a leading role, got so little attention from our cultural circles, and only some newspaper applause that covered a degree of ignorance of African vitality and turned the matter into forms of phony propaganda, some of which I really regret.

At the time many of the representatives of the African liberation movements and students would converge on my home, such that it became difficult to differentiate between the roles of the militant, the researcher, the official and the friend. My family had to put up with all this confusion, but I believe my other colleagues also faced similar situations. This continued until Sadat came and put Mohammad Fayek in prison for no valid reason and ousted me from my position, in the midst of his onslaught on all our African relations. He threatened to fight Ethiopia, and even fought against some liberation movements, such as in Angola and Congo. Yet, I continued with some friends, some of whom are still with us today, to keep our cultural relations in the African society alive. Thus, I retained the role of the militant and researcher, after being ousted as an official and expert!

All the African leaders went back to their countries where they became presidents, ministers or political prisoners, while I was detailed to the Sudanese Affairs Ministry where I started new relations with Sudanese intellectuals since I was reluctant to cooperate with the Numeiri regime in the integration programme. I admit that this period too was rich in the formation of new cultural relations with circles hitherto unfamiliar to me. Thus, I made friendships with Mohammad Omar Bashir, the genius of African studies, the poet Mohammad Abdel Hay and the researcher Abdel Ghaffar Mohammad Ahmed. In Juba University, in the early 1980s, I made friendships with Abdel Rahman Abu Zeid and Farouk Kduda, such that I seem to be a partisan of the cause of South Sudan. This period of retirement also gave me the opportunity to renew my relations with many Africans in the Group of African Political Studies where I tried in vain to entice them to study the miserable Arab-African relations.

Frustration is not the only memory of those glorious years of national liberation struggle in Africa since much was indeed achieved during those years

even if it was not fully recognised by the media or the cultural circles in Egypt. Thus, I believe that my contribution in some ten volumes about Africa and Arab-African relations, and some translated works, plus some modest academic contributions was not enough to compensate for the generalised poverty of knowledge about this southern dimension of our people's history.

I may now sum up the conclusions of my modest experience in the spheres of folklore and relations with Africa, by stating that Egypt does not possess any real discourse, whether official or popular, towards folklore, nor does it possess a strategic penchant towards African cultures or relations. The limited elite that worked in these spheres did not believe our society has put to use any of its efforts in this connection. Proof of such a contention is the absence in Egypt of any institution for the true study of folklore, or any institutions for African research and action. The responsibility for such poverty lies with the lamentable degradation of our middle class and its deformed modernism, and the obsession of our intellectuals with the media instead of creating cultural institutions. Our scientific endeavour, if any, is limited to educational institutions. The greatest calamity stems from Egyptian capitalism that has lost all national aspirations or rationality, as we see all the time. The only nonsense we hear in this respect is some pretensions about the supposed proliferation of Islam or Arabism in Africa.

In the 1970s, some other intellectuals and myself felt that we could not let all the efforts of the two decades of African action be wasted and go into oblivion, so we resuscitated the role of the African League by reconstituting the African Society to resume what could have been ignored by the previous stage in cultural efforts that could be the basis for the national action. When I told some of the former responsible persons of such efforts, they were surprised and gratified that we were trying to fill the gap left by our previous efforts. I met with a richer experience than expected in contact with the cultural arena and in taking African relations to the academic circles. I met many African intellectuals in political and social sciences such that I enjoyed this new experience despite many personal difficulties in my life. My personal experience was enriched by my close contacts with Archie Mafeje in social analysis, and Mamdani, Issa Shivji and Nabudere in political science. We read Cheikh Anta Diop, Agabi and Ki-Zerbo on history and Senghor in poetry. The comradeship with Archie Mafeje in Cairo was no less interesting than that with Samir Amin and Fawzy Mansour in Dakar, and with Ibrahim Sakr and Abdel Malek Oda and scores of other brilliant intellectuals in Cairo. All these gave liveliness to the African presence in Cairo despite the lack of an appropriate discourse.

IV

It seems that we have to evaluate the 1970s from more aspects than that of Sadat, since there were more turn-arounds than the Sadat virtual coup d'état, and these were mostly positive. Such was the political and ideological diversity that was inaugurated and resulted in demarcation of left and right. The Palestinian question was put on the agenda of general debate at the cultural and popular levels.

My fate was to join the realm of national culture, and I was surprised to find that the schools of leftist thought that have to be brought to the attention of our popular masses are much wider than the limited struggles in which some of our comrades were completely involved. There was little knowledge of the rich experience of the Left in countries like India, South Africa, Brazil, etc. that is still going warmly on despite what is sometimes said about the collapse of socialism.

In a previous stage, national activity seemed nearer the work of technocrats while, in contrast with the Sadat period, it took on the form of a progressive struggle. Thus, there was the support of the student movement in the early 1970s; the re-establishment of the communist movement; then the mobilisation of the intellectuals around the nationalist objectives with the creation of the Writers Union; and support for the Palestinian Question and opposition to normalisation of relations with Israel after the Camp David Agreement. All these were nationalist struggles to keep the nationalist ideology alive and activate the nationalist role of the intellectuals. I shall not go into the details of all these conflicts, but surely I was deeply involved in the nationalist traditions, and felt that we had to resist the calls to depoliticise cultural work. Such calls were a corollary of the previous domination of the media on nationalist activities, and the exclusion of many leftist intellectuals from public action.

I never felt, like many friends, that the 1970s with all the new phenomena that started in them was much different from the nationalist traditions I had experienced in the 1960s. Indeed, Egypt had seen – especially from 1967 onwards – diversity in literature, theatre, cinema and intellectual circles, a diversity that is incompatible with a totalitarian regime. However, the mechanisms of this period still need deeper analysis.

From the early 1970s, the reactivated presence of the Islamist movement brought to the fore new questions about the role of the nationalist intellectuals, and their choice between tradition and modernity. The Left was taken up

by the problems of re-establishing its ranks and of the coalition within the Tagamu Party. Inside this turmoil, there were the problems of the reactivation of the Egyptian Communist Party around some of the old militants, while the Communist Workers Party was the place for the younger generation, together with variations such as the adherents of Hadeto, the Workers Vanguard, or the debate about the position with regard to the bourgeoisie and its historic role. As a bureaucrat, I felt nearer to those who grew up within public action as myself, as I never felt happy with underground work. I thought the masses needed a general political culture that was as scientific, enlightened and revolutionary as each intellectual could contribute in that direction.

Such feelings may explain my approval of the dissolution of the Egyptian Communist Party in 1965 against all leftist sentiment that condemned that action. I thought it was better for the militants to be immersed in the midst of the popular masses even though they could not stand firm against the overwhelming popularity of Nasserism. Their noticeable cultural presence in the late 1960s no doubt helped the re-establishment of their parties in the 1970s. Despite the heroic sacrifices endured by the underground militants, their work isolates them from public work and responsibilities.

The more open atmosphere that followed corroborated my viewpoint and removed any remorse I might have felt for not joining their ranks. By contrast, the Islamists who had better contacts with the popular masses and who possessed a culture open to political organisation and reappraisal, confined themselves to secrecy and manoeuvring with ambiguous alliances, and there was a lack of a distinctive political, social or economic programme acceptable to the people.

This atmosphere had its negative effects on the Committee for the Defense of National Culture that was created after the Camp David Agreement in 1979, and on the strong urge to counteract the efforts to normalise relations with Israel and to domesticate Arab culture to accept Zionism. The committee was the venue for conflicts between secrecy and legality, between Arabism and Egyptian nationalism, between Arabism and Islamism and between tradition and modernity. My experience with the Tagamu Party that sponsored the committee was very bad, just like the experience of alliances within the left movement in general, yet the leadership of Latifa Al Zayat was an inspiring example of straightforwardness and honesty in honouring alliances. The founders and promoters of the committee had to face a lot of conflicting trends, such as giving priority to the political over the properly cultural. There was also much mutual distrust between the Nasserists and the Marxists, apart

from the abhorrence of the Islamists from any leftist trends in culture. This was especially annoying because confronting Israel and Zionism on religious grounds was ineffective and embroiled their role as agents of imperialism in the region. Such ideologies proved their failure in the case of Pakistan and Iran which claimed to be founded on such grounds, but finally had to emerge as national secular states. Nevertheless, the committee got enthusiastic support from the mass of intellectuals, and was a bright progressive feature of the Tagamu Party itself.

The group working with Latifa was like a fighting contingent, and I had to play the role of mediator or compromise finder, a role not always commendable, but sometimes necessary. Thus, the committee had to fight the well-known struggle against normalisation, and re-establish predetermined facts such as that the Palestinian question is also an Egyptian issue. When the committee decided to take concrete action by opposing the participation of Israel in the Book Fair in 1981, we were all dispatched to Qalaa prison. I was dismayed when some did not appreciate our stand although they would boast about it later.

As a result, I was ousted from my post in Sudanese affairs (for the second time) and also from the secretariat of the African Society. My social position was saved, however, by the Sudanese brothers giving me a staff job at Juba University where I saw the beginnings of the unrest in Southern Sudan. I remained there until the Sadat administration put my name on the list of conspirators in the so-called Apple 19 plot, together with all the active members of the committee. I had to quit Sudan for fear that the Numeiri Government would hand me over to the Egyptian authorities.

Again, the late Mohye Ed Dine Saber, the Director of the Arab League Education Culture and Science Organisation, generously welcomed me as an expert on Arab-African cultural relations in Tunis. I worked there from 1982 to 1986, but kept in close contact with the cultural scene in Egypt, and wrote about those who acted to relieve their sense of guilt in mixing up political matters with party politics that I thought was not right. The period in Tunis was lively, with political and legal public action, and I was satisfied with my stay there.

This period was also rich in proving the depth of Arab-African cultural relations, despite many conservative concepts on the Arab side that led to lack of seriousness towards strengthening such relations. The reason for such laxity was the deterioration of many Arab regimes during the 1970s that led to a deterioration of political positions such that the only remedy had to be undergone in the cultural arena. Thus, my role became more personal rather

than a reflection of official policies, despite the numerous official institutions inaugurated at the time. No wonder then that Israel was back on the scene so forcefully in the 1990s.

V

After my return from Tunisia, I had the invigorating experience of founding the Arab Research Centre, which was its first name. This was closely related to that of the National Cultural Committee as regards Egypt's relation with the imperialist powers as well as with Arab and African countries, but we tried to avoid the previous problems, by accommodation rather than compromise. The first contacts took place at Latifa's home as well as Dar Assakafa Al Jadida, the Tagamu and even the Committee itself. To get £50,000 (from 30 contributors) to start the project seemed like a miracle, but that miracle was repeated two years later by becoming £100,000. In 2005, a third miracle was buying our own premises and the number of sponsors rose to 75, including communists, Marxists, liberals, nationalists and progressive capitalists. I was not alone of course, and my deepest thanks go to all who contributed to the endeavour. I would specially mention those of them who have passed away: the late Dr Fouad Morsi, Latifa Al Zayat, Nabil Al Hilaly, Abdulla Al Zoghbi, Mahmoud Al Aalem and Dr Abdel Azim Anis.

AARC is a leftist institution that commands enough respect and stability to keep it going. It tries to respond faithfully to the research requirements of the Left, it is open to all trends, and it encourages free dialogue in Egypt and elsewhere. Thus, I shall only mention its success in making wide contacts with the scientific and cultural circles in the Arab and African countries, while the official relations suffer many setbacks, in particular at the cultural level. The brilliant group of intellectuals who sponsored the activity of the Centre at various stages gave weight to the values it promoted in society, and the sharing between Egyptians and Africans was very remarkable, although somewhat late. No doubt, the contribution of Samir Amin and Fawzi Mansour greatly corroborated my own African relations in the African and Third World circles and induced many others to add their efforts to these cooperative endeavours that gave results that surpassed my wildest dreams.

VI

In conclusion, why is it that political and cultural life in Egypt seems stagnant, while society appears to be boiling up with social unrest? When will this stagnant pond join the live waves of the ocean? I ask myself such questions

when I feel the effects of my Arab-African culture boiling inside me and trying to spill out.

When the rhythm of popular national conferences in Africa was rising in the 1990s, two texts were issued simultaneously (without any prior coordination), one in Nzongola Ntalaga in Congo and the other from Fawzy Mansour in Cairo. They both called for a 'second wave' of national liberation. As imperialism globalises its domination of the world, political and social liberation from this domination must become global too. Thus, many people are rising in protest, calling for real sovereignty over their destinies and not just nominal independence this time. As we too suffer from the same problems, we must rouse the popular masses to fight for their rights. Gathering large masses in national sovereignty conferences is not an easy task, a task that needs a culture of change, of insurrection, but practice will surely make it more fruitful.

Again, the question of the national state is a thorny one – the independent, democratic, social state – yet it is an urgent requirement in confrontation with the attempts at fragmentation and constructive chaos. I wonder sometimes why the Left shuns the question of the state. I believe the Soviet Union, and even China, was a national state, and no more. Many leftists deplore the insufficiency of the state in fulfilling many of its social responsibilities. Others keep chanting the bleak rhetoric of liberal democracy, such that I cannot fathom what they are after. They seem not to imagine a national independent state caring for the needs of the popular masses unless it were an authoritarian one, hence this contradiction with democracy.

The state, as it stands in Egypt, will not evolve easily towards the call for democracy. The heritage of the Islamic 'nation' is replete with non-democratic practices, and some studies even tell us of a complete lack of democracy at certain stages of its history, such that some claim that democracy is not a popular claim or aspiration.

In contrast, in my African experience, I find Archie Mafeje's claim that the distorted capitalist state can only produce distortion. Another African scholar, the Nigerian Peter Eke, lamented the distorting colonialist capitalism in his country. He found there were two worlds in the country and not one world, even if we consider class or tribal cleavages. This thinking may go against the usual class distinction for some time, as indeed there are two worlds that will not easily meet.

I suggested lately that we stop studying poverty as we already know enough about it. What needs more study is this distorting capitalism: how can some

spend £22 billion to build a phantom city whose owners have other property in similar walled cities where they isolate themselves from the rest of the people? Some answered: it was a sort of apartheid in Egypt, and when we look at the other side of the coin – the miserable conditions of the inhabitants of Doweiqa – we see a real apartheid. If Samir Amin is concerned about apartheid at the world level, we find that it starts here in our city, in Madinaty.

Where then is the state? Sometime ago, some Somali traders wanted a state of their own making. They grouped some of their subordinates in Kenya and created a state in exile, and announced for themselves a parliament of that state, and the head of that 'state' announced he would soon visit his 'capital' Mogadishu! In a conference in Addis Ababa, some laughed at this fictitious state. I told them I knew other countries whose rulers live in beach resorts and walled cities, and deign to come to visit us from time to time. These are the new apartheid cities, and this is the self-isolating state. We need a big popular alliance to gather the conference of national sovereignty, and create our own state, and call it what we wish.

VII

My final conclusion is to thank some who witnessed my journey from the beginning until near its end. I wish that the lady who carried her few belongings to bring me to the capital to meet modern times was still alive to see the result of her efforts from which she personally gained nothing. She remains a symbol of the persecuted Eve.

My small family was extended to reach the limits of Africa, North and South, and East and West. We welcomed revolutionaries and freedom fighters, and intellectuals and artists at our home, and shared with them the hard times and the good ones. All through this, Tawhida was a true mate and not only a good media and legal professional. Also, Ayman and May seem to bear hardships more than me. While I feel disheartened, they show more faith in a better future, and the grandchildren seem even more ambitious. The friends from the African liberation movements were always asking whether Ayman and May were going to become politicians. So, when they both chose medicine, I would answer that they would become writers!

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