THEMES IN AFRICAN AND WORLD HISTORY

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PREFACE

The three papers following offer broad overviews of some of the major themes of African History. The essays are written for the general reader and for use as introductory or supplementary readings in college and high school courses in African, Afro-American, and World History.

Principally, however, this publication is addressed to fellow teachers responsible for World History and Afro-American History courses in colleges and high schools. Notwithstanding that my specialized field is African History, I consider World History the most important subject I teach young Americans. When I arrived in Korea in 1954, I was almost completely uninformed concerning Asian societies and cultures, and unprepared and untrained to learn much from observation and experience. Another generation of Americans debarked in Viet Nam no better prepared, and perhaps even more ignorant and culturally arrogant vis-a-vis other cultures. The findings of the American Council on Education in 1977 that only three percent of American undergraduates were enrolled in any course dealing with international affairs or foreign peoples and cultures, and that less than five percent of individuals preparing to teach kindergarten through 12th grade had any exposure to international studies or training, suggests that Americans will long remain ill-prepared to understand a rapidly changing and increasingly integrated world.

The first two papers were published in the January 1970 and January 1969 issues of The History Teacher, a journal admirably dedicated to bridging the gap between specialized historical research and the broader interests of college and secondary teachers. I am grateful to the editors for permission to reprint my articles in this publication. I am likewise indebted to Patrick O'Meara, Director of the African Studies Program, for providing an inexpensive format to make the papers available to teachers and students. The second printing provides an opportunity to revise the papers and add new material. The first and second essays are substantially rewritten. I hope the publication will continue to serve its intended purposes, and I welcome communications from readers suggesting possible future revisions.

I am indebted to Sue Hanson for typing and editorial assistance, to Merry Merryfield for encouraging me to undertake the revisions and for pedagogical advice, and to Phyllis M. Martin, Patrick J. Munson, Richard E. Stryker, and Phyllis Yuhas for information and advice concerning subject matter and analyses. The maps were prepared by Cathryn L. Lombardi and were originally published in Africa, edited by Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara (Indiana University Press, 1977).

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A Schema for Integrating Africa into World History

World History can be one of the most stimulating and rewarding courses a teacher is ever called upon to offer, and at the same time one of the most frustrating experiences imaginable. One of its chief attractions is that it provides a unique vehicle for viewing human affairs in a time perspective. Such a course can present analyses and insights not offered in the synchronic approaches employed in the social sciences which have successfully 'upstaged' history teaching in recent decades. Capable and imaginative students instinctively respond to a course which offers an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the historical processes that have made the modern world. But the difficulties of teaching World History are as manifest as the advantages. Many teachers are daunted by the task of mastering what seems to be an impossibly large corpus of knowledge, as well as keeping abreast of the flood of new materials and recommended teaching strategies. As a result, numerous teachers do not want to offer World History, and morale is low among some who do.

Many of the difficulties in teaching World History stem from the fact that it is a relatively new field of instruction and suitable materials and approaches are still in the planning and testing stages. It can be argued, too, that until quite recently there was no really persuasive rationale for teaching World History courses, whether in high schools or colleges. Textbooks and teaching plans reflect that the genesis of most such courses was the gradual recognition that the standard "Western Civilization" approach needed to be expanded to include other parts of the world of increasing significance to Americans. The response to this need was in many cases temporary stopgap courses which become permanent offerings in the curriculum. School curriculum coordinators organized new lesson plans and publishers added new chapters to standard textbooks, but in most cases little was done to integrate the new material with the old in any systematic or meaningful way. Teachers and students are given additional information to master but little guidance how to go about it. Many World History course outlines and textbooks are hodgepodges of disparate and discrete information, unrelated readings and confused objectives. Some courses may be categorized as "so many weeks" assigned to "representative" countries, areas or continents — expedience disguised and dignified by the catch-all honorific of a "culture areas approach." Such courses should be abandoned. The perpetuation of a separate areas approach runs diametrically counter to what should be the most significant contribution of a World History course, that of fostering an understanding of the principal inter-relationships between peoples, countries, and continents. An alternative, integrated, approach to World History, which is entirely suitable for college, high school and junior-high school courses, has been available for some years.

William H. McNeill pioneered a fundamentally different approach, first in a seminal masterwork, The Rise of the West (University of Chicago Press, 1963), and subsequently in A World History (Oxford University Press, 3rd ed., 1979), a textbook designed for college use. McNeill's exposition is grounded on the shared relationships between peoples, states, and continents, instead of emphasizing their

individual characteristics and separate histories. Fundamental to this approach is McNeill's emphasis on the significance of cultural diffusion in history. McNeill gives unprecedented attention to the diffusion of food crops, political systems, military technologies, and pandemic diseases which frequently spanned great distances, often from one continent to another. Such interrelationships and shared cultural developments — the common heritage of humankind — are the stuff of World History, and the concepts and generalizations which derive from such an approach provide new and exciting teaching opportunities.
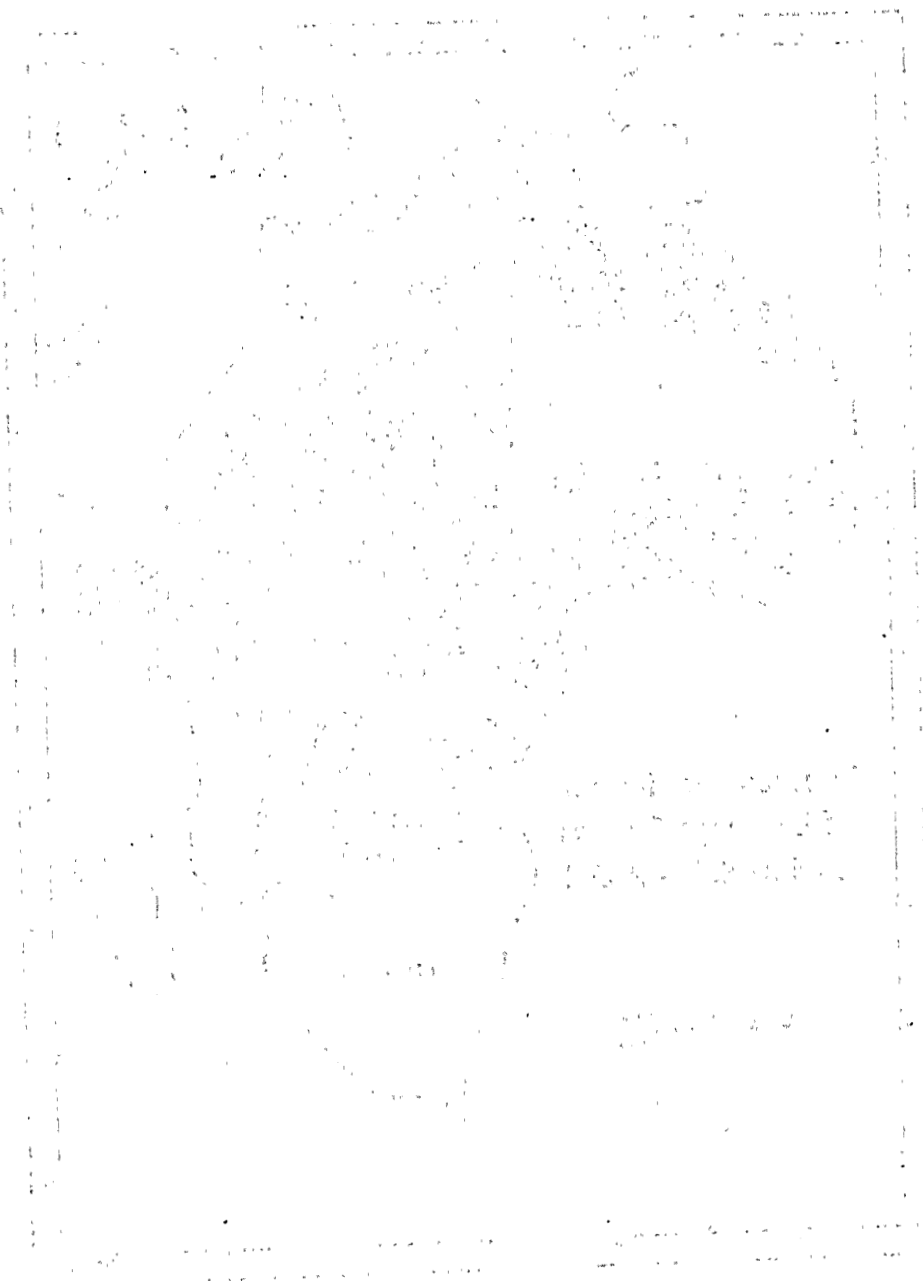
To be sure, teachers on first being informed of the McNeill approach sometimes express more of a sense of dismay than emancipation inasmuch as they feel cast loose from familiar moorings implanted in high school and college history courses. Gone are "feudal pyramids," the kings of England and France, national histories and the comfortable, unreflective tradition of dealing with "our" people and their European antecedents in contrast-and-comparison with other societies around the globe. The fact is that the range of concepts and historial knowledge to be mastered, while different, is no more difficult than traditional teaching methods. And, once mastered, the McNeill approach yields far better understanding of broad historical processes and provides a mode of inquiry which has many comparative and cross-cultural applications.

The schema which follows is designed to extend and amplify the limited coverage alloted to sub-Sahara Africa in McNeill's text, A World History. Teachers wedded to the "culture areas" approach — whether by choice or otherwise — will find that many of the topics discussed following can be incorporated into existing courses using this method: 1. Paleolithic and Neolithic times; 2. Egypt, the Nile valley, and the Horn of Africa; 3. West Africa and trans-Sahara trade; 4. East Africa and Indian Ocean commerce from pre-Christian times to the Portuguese; 5. African 'landlords' and Portuguese 'strangers'; 6. The 'South Atlantic System' from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries; 7. European imperialism, decolonization, and the problems of less developed countries.
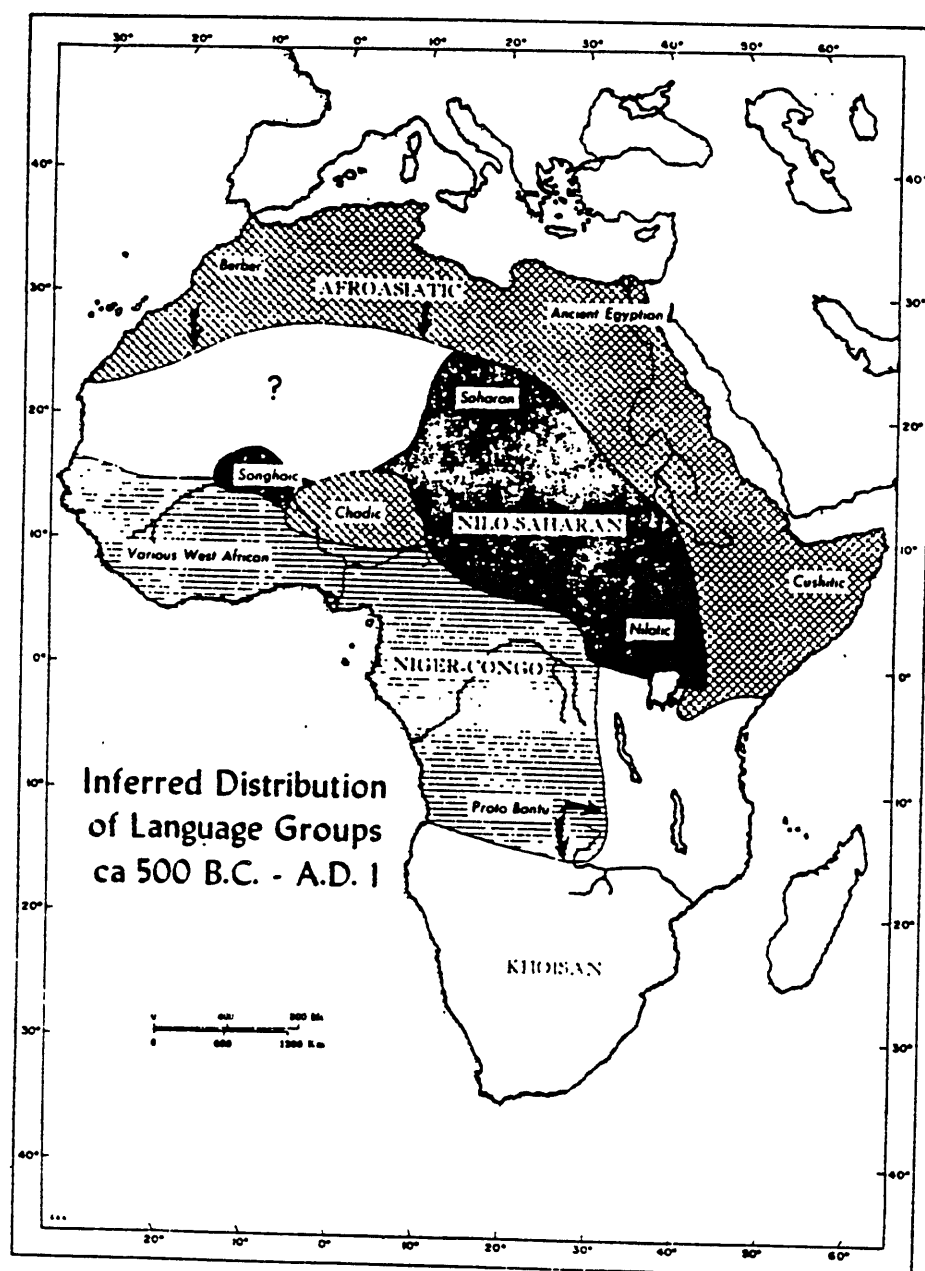
1. **Paleolithic and Neolithic times**. In recent decades archaeologists and paleontologists have substantially established that humankind evolved on the African continent and that most of the major developments of Paleolithic times (c4,000,000 years ago to c10,000 B.C.) occurred there. Tool-making and the evolution of societal organization were pioneered by hominids living in Africa. The African continent provided a hospitable environment for human evolution, in contrast, for example, to the glacial advances and retreats in Europe during Pleistocene times.

From c9000 B.C. until c6000 B.C. and from c5500 B.C. to c1000 B.C. the Sahara Desert received considerably more rainfall than it does at present (two to three times the c4 inches it receives today), resulting in a savanna environment with numerous streams, shallow lakes, and swamplands that attracted human migrations from the north and south and westwards from the Nile valley. People living in the Sahara and a wide belt of territory extending southwards along the upper Nile valley and into the lakes region of East Africa shared a way of life that J.E.G. Sutton has characterized as the "Aquatic Civilization of Middle Africa". Groups settled along lakes and watercourses subsisted on fish, shellfish, hippos, crocodiles, and

other aquatic fauna, besides hunting game in neighboring savannas and collecting a variety of plant foods. Sutton tentatively associates the people of the Aquatic Civilization with the Nilo—Saharan language family (Map #1 and Map #2).

Inferred Distribution
of Language Groups
ca 500 B.C. - A.D. 1

MAP #1

Language Families
of Modern Africa

- ▦ Niger-Congo
- ▨ Nilo-Saharan
- ▧ Afroasiatic
- ☐ Khoisan
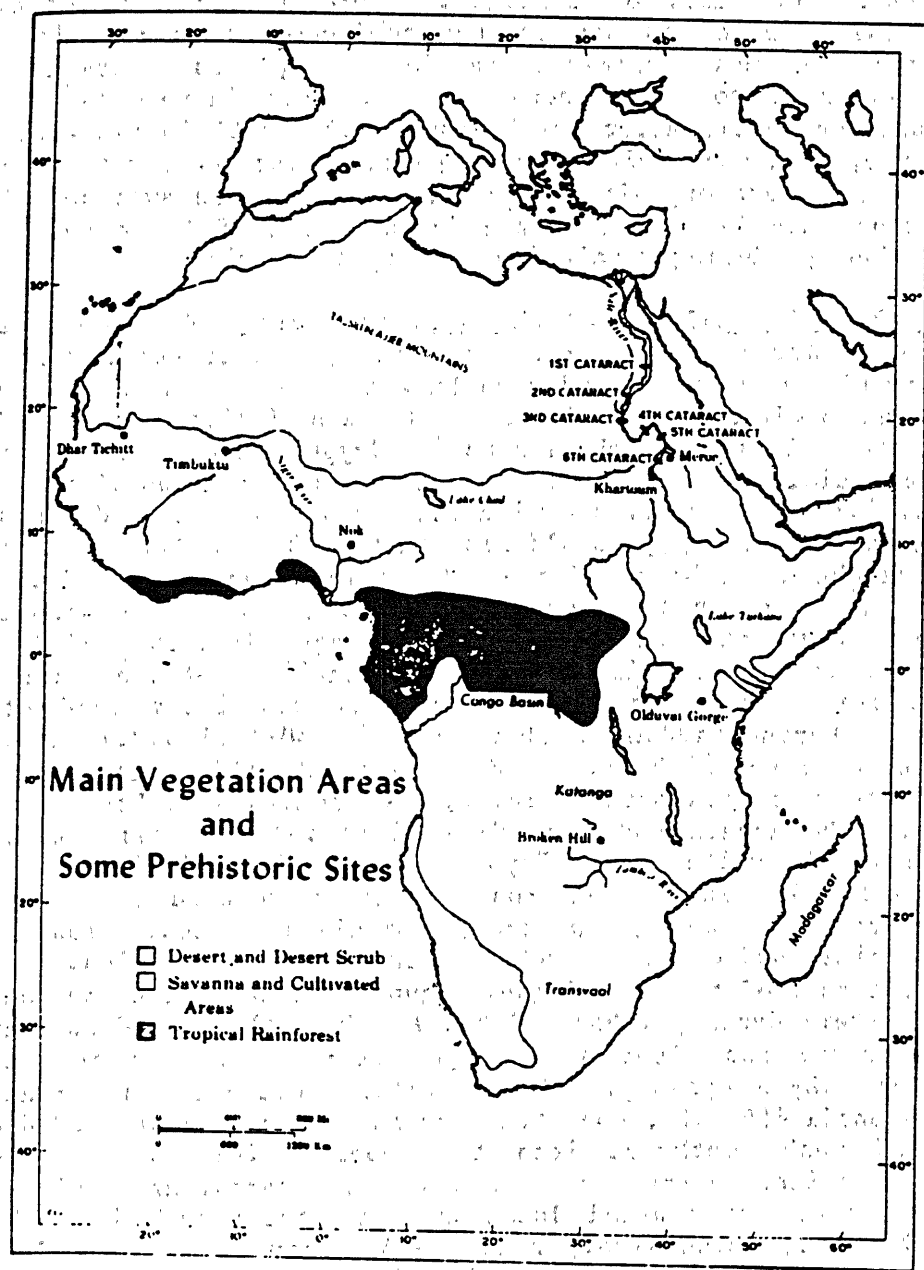
After Greenberg, 1966

MAP # 2
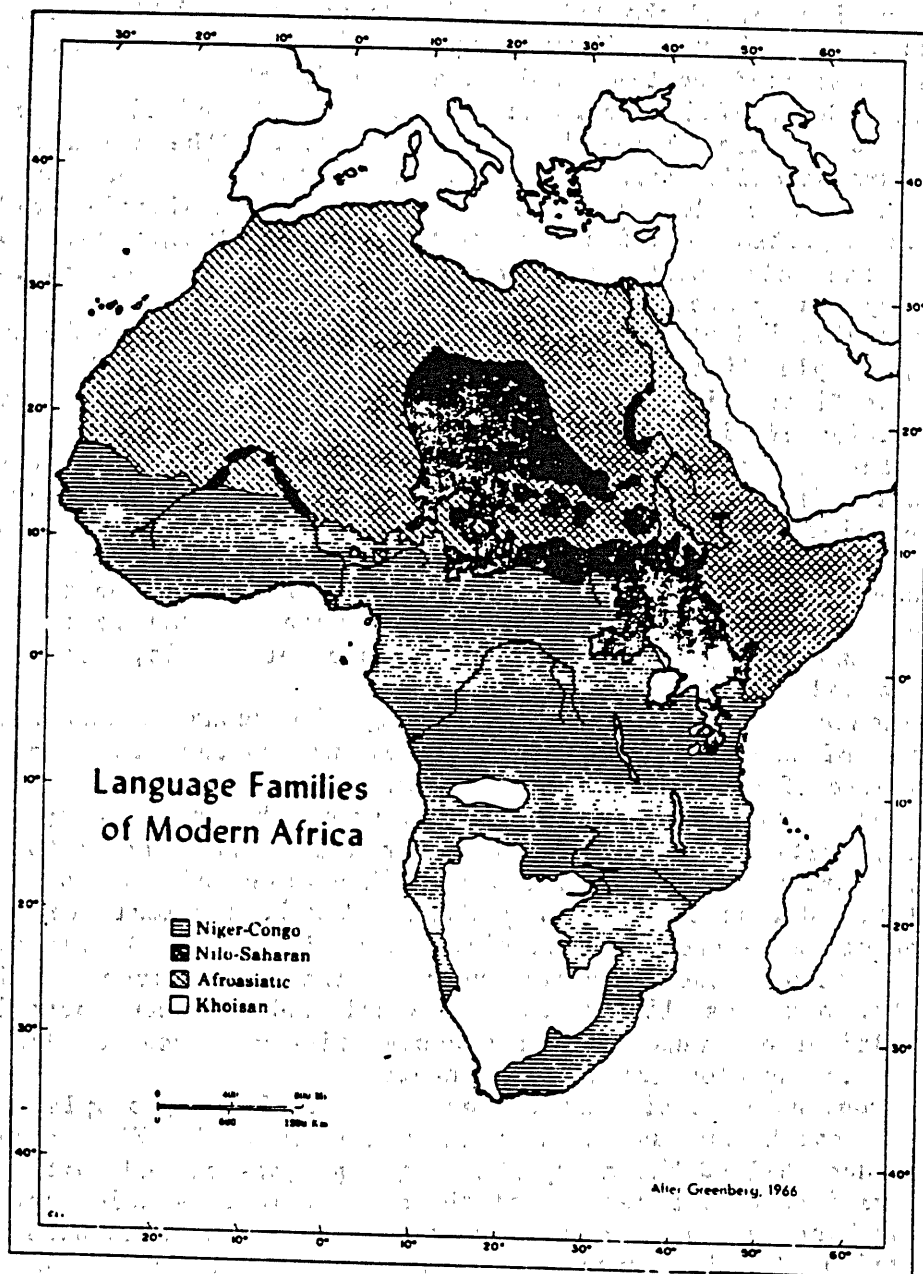
A dry phase extending from c6000 B.C. to c5500 B.C. greatly attenuated the areas of the Sahara that supported the aquatic lifestyle, causing groups to expand their reliance on hunting and gathering wild grains and other plant foods, or migrate to better watered areas. The aquatic environment in the Sahara expanded again during the period termed the Atlantic Wet Phase (c5500-2500 B.C.), but not to its former extent. Many groups, including new migrants from the south, practiced hunting and gathering in the savannas, while migrants from North Africa introduced a pastoral way of life. Scenes of humans and animals living in the Sahara during the Atlantic Wet Phase are dramatically portrayed in rock paintings and etchings in parts of the Sahara that are too arid for human habitation today. Hunters are depicted stalking the rich fauna, including antelopes, buffaloes, and elephants, and pastoralists herded multi-colored cattle, sheep, and goats.

During the period of increasing desiccation following the Atlantic Wet Phase, people living along the receding shorelines of shallow lakes at Dhar Tichitt in Mauretania (Map #3) and elsewhere intensified their collection of wild grains and began to domesticate them. Barley and wheat, the staple grain crops of the Nile valley and North Africa, did not thrive in the Sahara or the sahel, so from c1000 B.C. onwards (if not earlier) people living in these areas concentrated their efforts on domesticating indigenous species of millet, sorghum, and rice. These grains came to be cultivated across a wide band of sahel and savanna extending from Mauretania and Senegal in the west to the Sudan and Ethiopian highlands, where another grain, tef, was domesticated and widely grown.

Much remains to be learned concerning the economic and social consequences of these developments. It is noteworthy, for example, that the people of the earliest sub-Saharan civilization identified to date, the Nok culture of northern Nigeria (from the 6th century B.C., or earlier), cultivated sorghum and millet (Map #3). Except for the area of the inland delta of the Niger (heartland of the Mali and Songhai states during the second millenium A.D.), tropical soils are not as productive as the rich alluvial soils along the Nile River, or the soils along the Mediterranean coast of North Africa. Consequently, Africans living in the sahel and savannas practiced shifting cultivation, which supports comparatively sparse populations and inhibits the development of urban centers.

As environmental conditions worsened in the Sahara, people began to move out north and south, and eastwards into the Nile valley. These included Nilo-Saharan speaking groups associated with the "Aquatic Civilization"; ancestors of the Berbers (Afroasiatic language family); and Mande speaking groups whose descendants settled widely in western Africa (Mande languages constitute a subfamily of the Niger-Congo language family). See Map #1 and Map #2. The tsetse fly, the vector for sleeping sickness which lives in woodland-savanna ecologies, inhibited the spread of pastoralism in areas receiving more than 40 inches of rainfall a year. During the past two millenia changing rainfall patterns have caused the "tsetse fly line" to oscillate north and south within a c200 kilometer-wide belt extending across Africa between 10 and 15 degrees north latitude.

Main Vegetation Areas
and
Some Prehistoric Sites

□ Desert and Desert Scrub
□ Savanna and Cultivated
   Areas
▨ Tropical Rainforest

MAP # 3

Africans living in rain forests and along the margins of the savannas may have practiced proto-agriculture beginning several thousand years prior to the Christian era, but dates are yet to be determined. In West Africa, oil palms and African yams were protected by brush clearing, and Africans systematically collected a wide variety of plant species, many of which are still resorted to as "hunger foods" in times of shortage. Unfortunately for Africans living in rain forest and wet savanna environments, except for the African yam the most valuable species of plants suitable for domestication were not indigenous and were not introduced to the African continent until after the beginning of the Christian era. As a consequence, Africans living in many parts of the continent remained hunters and gatherers exploiting the abundance of food available from the rich flora and fauna, until the introduction of Asian cultigens promoted a food producing revolution in tropical Africa.

2. **Egypt, the Nile valley, and the Horn of Africa** The Nile valley connects North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, and together with the Red Sea provides a water corridor linking the peoples of Africa with those of the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Indian Ocean. From earliest known times the inhabitants of Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia shared commercial and cultural exchanges with one another, with Africans living to the west, and with the peoples of the Middle East.

During the time of Egypt's Old Kingdom (c2680-2260 B.C.) Egyptians traded along the upper Nile and probably overland across the Sudan to the southwest, although the latter remains the subject of scholarly speculation. Egyptian mariners undertook voyages down the Red Sea to the coasts of Yemen and Eritrea ("land of Punt") to obtain myrrh (an aromatic resin to burn as incense in temples), ivory, and other commodities. During Middle Kingdom times (c2050-1785 B.C.), traders in the state of Kush which developed south of the third Nile cataract served as intermediaries between Egypt, the highlands of Ethiopia via routes along the Atbara and Blue Nile river valleys, and societies living west of the White Nile. Egypt's New Kingdom (c1580-1085 B.C.) conquered and ruled Kush. Numerous Egyptians settled in Kush, as administrators, merchants, priests, soldiers, etc., fostering economic, social, and cultural exchanges throughout the region.

After the fall of the New Kingdom, Egypt came under the control of a Libyan (Berber) dynasty (c950-730 B.C.). In c751 B.C., Kush's army invaded northward and after a campaign lasting a number of years, expelled the Libyan dynasty. Kush's rulers controlled a re-united Nile valley until 656 B.C., when the Assyrians invaded Egypt and drove the army of Kush southward into the Sudan. The state of Kush continued its existence for some thousand years thereafter, exploiting the advantages of its central location along the upper Nile. Kush traded with Egypt, successively ruled by Assyrians, Persians, Greeks (Ptolemaic Dynasty), and Romans; with Egyptian, Greek, and Roman seafarers at Red Sea ports; with the inhabitants of Ethiopia via the Atbara and Blue Nile valleys; and with Africans living southwards along the White Nile and to the westwards across the savannas for distances yet to be determined by scholars. Meroe, the capital of Kush from the sixth century B.C., was a major center of iron production, and one of the conundrums of African history is Kush's role in the diffusion of iron-making techniques to sub-Saharan Africa. (Map #3).

Seemingly the most important factor in Kush's decline was the rise
of the state of Axum in the Ethiopian highlands during the early
centuries of the Christian era. Axum prospered from commercial links
with Kush via the Blue Nile and Atbara river valleys, with southern
Arabia and the Indian Ocean trade complex, and with the growing
numbers of vessels dispatched down the Red Sea from Egypt. The
expansion of Axum's trade and territorial control along the Red Sea
coast, combined with destructive raiding by Beja nomads living in the
eastern desert, stifled Kush's commerce and contributed to a long
decline that culminated with the destruction of Meroe, probably by
Beja raiders, in the fourth century A.D. The state of Kush ceased to
exist, but the commercial and cultural linkages previously described
continued down to modern times.

3. <u>West Africa</u> and <u>trans-Saharan trade</u>. The concept of the
Mediterranean Sea as linking — not separating — peoples is a useful
theme in teaching world history and serves as a lead-in to discussion
of commercial and cultural links between North Africa and sub-Saharan
Africa. One important topic is the development of Phoenician and
Greek trade diasporas across the Mediterranean. From c1000 B.C.
Phoenicians began trading at Gades/Cadiz in southern Spain for silver
and tin, and at Lixus/Larache on the Atlantic coast of Morocco where
they could obtain copper mined at Akjoujt in Mauretania and, more
speculatively, gold transported along a route linking the Senegal
River. Following the founding of Carthage in c814 B.C., Phoenicians
founded other trading posts southwards along the coast of Morocco.
Most historians give credence to Herodotus' account of Hanno's
expedition along the coast of West Africa around 450 B.C., Hanno's
objective being the (vain) attempt to reach gold deposits being worked
south of the Sahara.

Depiction on Saharan rocks of Berbers using horse drawn chariots
for hunting and raiding date to approximately 600-400 B.C. and attest
to at least sporadic trans-Saharan contacts during Phoenician times.
Rock etchings and paintings indicate two chariot routes, one linking
the bend of the Niger with the Gulf of Syrtes, and a second linking
the Senegal and Niger rivers with southern Morocco. These contacts
likely facilitated the spread of knowledge of iron-working across the
Sahara, perhaps by groups of itinerant smiths. Archaeological
evidence from Dhar Tichitt in Mauretania indicates that during this
period Berber raiders conquered the cultivators and pastoralists
living along the desiccating lakes in the western Sahara and sahel
zone (Map #1 and Map #3).

Trans-Saharan contacts apparently became sporadic and perhaps
ceased after c300 B.C. as the Sahara Desert became increasingly arid.
Phoenician settlements along the coast of southern Morocco seemingly
were abandoned before the destruction of Carthage by Rome in 146 B.C.

Camels were introduced to North Africa and to the sahelian zone
south of the Sahara during Roman times, but the development of
trans-Saharan trade on a sustained basis by means of camel caravans
seemingly dates to the period of increasing rainfall after c300 A.D.
that culminated in the c700-1100 A.D. wet period. Trans-Saharan
exchanges of commodities such as gold, ivory, captives, malaguetta
pepper, etc., for cloth, swords, horses, paper, and other luxury goods
were made possible by the prior development of commercial networks

that linked the different ecological zones of West Africa, networks that date from the early centuries of the Christian era, and probably earlier.

The augmenting volume of trans-Sahara trade contributed to the rise of African empires which dominated commerce in the savannas south of the Sahara. These included the states of Takrur (?-12 cent.), Ghana (?-12 cent.), Mali (13-15 cent.), Songhai (14-16 cent.), and Kanem Bornu (9-19 cent.). These empires guaranteed security for commerce over wide areas and fostered an expanding network of trade routes which connected with states developing in the forest areas to the south. Many of the rulers of the savanna empires became Muslims and some made pilgrimages to Mecca. Their dazzling retinues and open-handed generosity in their passages across North Africa served to enhance the tales of fabulous wealth of the Sudanic kingdoms which spread through the Muslim world and became the subject of rumor and speculation in medieval Europe as well.

European knowledge of trans-Saharan commerce gradually increased from the time of the Crusades as the Italian city-states gained naval supremacy in the Mediterranean and augmented their trade with North Africa. The Hilalian Arab invasion of North Africa during the eleventh to thirteenth centuries disrupted trade routes linking the Middle East and contributed to Europeans' success in developing commercial ties with the Maghreb. African gold was increasingly diverted to Europe, as witnessed by the fact that a number of European states commenced minting gold coins in the thirteenth century, including Florence (1252), France (1254), England (1257), and Naples (1278). The epic narrative of Portuguese exploration and conquest takes on a new dimension when it is appreciated that the goal of Prince Henry and his associates at the outset was not fabled India, but the more practical and realizable ambition of bypassing North Africa intermediaries by pioneering a sea route to West Africa to obtain gold, malaguetta pepper, ivory, captives, dyewoods, and other commodities.

4. **East Africa and Indian Ocean commerce from pre-Christian times to the Portuguese** There are many advantages in treating the Indian Ocean as a single unit in a World History course. Commercial ties between the Horn of Africa, southern Arabia, the Perisan Gulf, and India have very ancient origins, and trade with the East Coast of Africa was a natural outgrowth and expansion of these long-existing trade patterns. The paucity of archaeological exploration and surviving documentation precludes much speculation on the period prior to the Christian era. However, the extension of commerce from the Horn of Africa along the East African coast apparently was given considerable impetus by the development of Graeco-Roman commerce down the Red Sea and across the Indian Ocean to India in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. The state of Axum, forerunner of the empire of Ethiopia, rose to importance during this period, and gained control of much of the trade previously carried on by the state of Kush.

Sometime during the early centuries A.D., Indonesian mariners ventured across the Indian Ocean and settled along the coast of East Africa and on the island of Madagascar. They are credited with introducing a number of food crops indigenous to Southeast Asia, including bananas, plantains, Asian yams and coconuts. The diffusion

of these cultigens had enormous influence on the history of sub-Saharan Africa, and the principal beneficiaries were expanding groups of people speaking Bantu languages.

The migrations of Bantu-speaking groups eastwards and southwards from the area of Cameroon and Central African Republic date to perhaps as early as 1,000 B.C. Their acquisition of Asian cultigens in the early centuries of the Christian era is credited with enabling them rapidly to populate large areas previously sparsely inhabited by Khoisan speaking San ("Bushmen") hunters and gatherers in East, Central, and Southern Africa and Khoi ("Hottentot") pastoralists in Southern Africa, (Map #1). San speaking groups were absorbed by Bantu speakers, relegated to lands unsuitable for cultivation, or pushed ahead of the Bantu speaking groups that advanced southwards. Bantu speakers' knowledge of iron working enabled them to clear and cultivate savanna and forest alike, enabling them to encroach into the Central African rain forests previously inhabited only by pygmies. Today, Africa south of the equator is principally inhabited by people speaking some two hundred Bantu languages which belong to the Niger-Congo language family (Map #2).

Little is yet known concerning the early period of Bantu settlement along the East African coast, but commercial relations with Arabs, Indonesians, and other Indian Ocean seafarers evidently expanded. When permanent Swahili communities developed is a matter of scholarly debate, but archaeological and documentary evidence attest that from the tenth century onwards there were a growing number of permanent settlements inhabited by a mixed population of Africans, Arabs, and Afro-Arabs engaged in commerce who spoke a distinctive Bantu language, "Swahili" (which means "coastal") that served as the lingua franca for trade along the coast of East Africa from Somalia to Mozambique.

By the fifteenth century there were several dozen Swahili trading communities along the coast and on offshore islands such as Kilwa, Zanzibar, and Pemba, the largest being Mombasa with an estimated population of 10,000 inhabitants at the close of the century. Traders living in these communities obtained ivory, captives, and other commodities from neighboring African societies, but the most valuable commerce was the gold obtained from the Monomotapa state that controlled a huge territory between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers and neighboring lands to the north and south. Zimbabwe, the capital of the empire (whence derives the name of the modern state) was the magnet for Swahili and Arab traders who ventured up the Zambezi, Buzi, and Sabi rivers to barter for gold, ivory, copper, and captives. Among the commodities brought to East Africa to purchase its exports were metalwork and rugs from Arabia and the Persian Gulf, cottons and beads from India, and silks, brocades, and porcelain ware from China, shards of which have been found in such quantities as to cause one archaeologist to assert that East Africa's past is "written" in Chinese porcelain, i.e. that it will help scholars in dating excavations.

5. <u>African 'landlords' and European 'strangers'</u> The story of Portuguese overseas ventures is generally recounted from a Euro-centric viewpoint, ignoring significant aspects of African (and Asian) responses. But it was Africans, not Europeans, who for centuries controlled commercial and social relationships.

Atlantic reconnaissance and settlement commenced more than three-quarters of a century prior to the time of Henry "the Navigator" of Portugal. Many of the pioneers of Atlantic exploration and settlement were Italian mariners, entrepreneurs, and experts in sugar production, and the development of sugar plantations on Madeira, the Canary Islands, the Cape Verde Islands, Sao Tome (and eventually in Brazil and the West Indies) represents an extension of the spread of sugar production across the Mediterranean Sea from the time of the Crusades.

Gold was a major objective of the Portuguese reconnaissance along the coast of West Africa. A trading post founded in the 1440s on Arguin Island off Cape Blanco was successful in siphoning off some of the gold carried across the Sahara; another established at Elmina on the "Gold Coast" was the means of obtaining an estimated half-ton of gold annually. Portuguese established in these and numerous other "factories" founded along the coast of West and West Central Africa bartered for gold, captives, malaguetta pepper, ivory, dyewoods, and other products. Commercial and diplomatic relations with the large and highly organized states of Benin and Kongo initially promoted great expectations for trade and for cultural imperialism, but these ventures were relegated to secondary importance as the exploitation of the Indian Ocean world came to dominate Portugal's naval and commercial strategies.

Portuguese fleets quickly achieved dominance of the sea lanes of the Indian Ocean, and subdued Swahili communities vulnerable to naval gunfire. But Portuguese efforts to control Swahili coastal commerce and trade along the Zambezi River had only limited success, and an attempt to conquer the Monomotapa Empire was a disastrous failure.

Neither the Portuguese or the Europeans who followed them were able to achieve a dominant position in their relations with Africans. Except in South Africa where European-introduced diseases decimated Khoi and San populations, Africans constrained Europeans to adhere to traditional 'landlord-stranger' relationships: Europeans had to comply with African demands as to where they might trade, what rents they must pay, etc., and while living ashore they were subject to African 'landlords' and their judicial processes. Such remained the case until the nineteenth century when Europeans acquired overwhelming military power and could defeat Africans and seize their territory.

Portuguese were the principal European agents introducing new cultigens to Africa. They disseminated such American plants as maize, manioc (cassava), peanuts, pineapples, and tobacco, and speeded up the diffusion of Asian cultigens in West Africa by stocking their settlements with mangos, coconuts, Asian rice and other valuable plants that quickly spread among neighboring Africans. The foregoing became staple crops for many African societies, and are credited with contributing significantly to population growth.

Portugal's dominance of the sea lanes of the Atlantic and Indian oceans waned at the close of the sixteenth century when military and political disasters at home contributed to decline and weakness overseas. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Dutch, French, and British rivals had supplanted Portuguese and their Luso-African descendants in most parts of West and West Central Africa, had negotiated new contracts with African landlords, and were increasingly concentrating on the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In East Africa, it

was the rising Arab state of Oman that from the close of the seventeenth century drove Portuguese from the coasts of Somalia, Kenya, and Tanzania, restricting Portuguese and Luso-African commerce to the area of Mozambique.

Only during the second half of the nineteenth century did Europeans come to possess the combination of greatly superior weaponry and a measure of prophylaxis against tropical diseases that enabled them to conquer and occupy African territory and subordinate Africans to their designs. Prior to that time many African states obtained European firearms in commerce and advanced their own "imperialistic" designs vis-a-vis other societies, investing their lands and enslaving or otherwise exploiting their people.

6. The "South Atlantic System" from the Sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries Too much and too little has been written about the slave trade. Research during the past two decades has drastically lowered previous "guesstimates" of the number of captive Africans transported to the Americas; working estimates are now in the range of nine to ten million for the entire period from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Increased attention is being focused on such topics as comparative death rates among Africans and Europeans carried to the Americas, contributions made by Africans in the New World, and the transmission and retention of African culture. There is significant new research on the internal slave trade in Africa and on the characteristics of slavery in Africa itself.

Treatment of the slave trade now includes discussion of the following attributes and capabilities of Africans: (a) Africans had a much lower death rate from endemic diseases than Europeans, malaria especially--in all, a factor of a three or four to one advantage; (b) Unlike European laborers, Africans were skilled in tropical agriculture; (c) African laborers were a cheaper investment over the long run than indentured servants, convicts or prisoners of war, because their servile status was made permanent and passed to their children, and because they were readily obtainable in exchange for European manufactures in a seemingly inexhaustible supply--the latter (false) opinion being an indirect tribute to the capabilities of African middlemen and the ruthlessness of those who enslaved their fellows by whatever means. In sum, the use of captive African workers offered distinct advantages over the employment of whites. It is perhaps ironic that from a demographic viewpoint the drain of human beings to the New World was in part mitigated by the growth of population in Africa following the diffusion of American and Asian food crops.

Who was enslaved in Africa and sold into the trans-Atlantic (and trans-Saharan and trans-Indian Ocean) slave trade? Just whom one might expect, and in ways similar to those which compelled many Europeans to "emigrate" to the Americas: firstly, people from other societies, whether captured in war or raids, by kidnapping, or acquired by purchase; and secondly, criminals from one's own society and such unfortunates as "witches" and other social deviants. Intensified demands for labor in the Americas from the beginning of the seventeenth century were reflected in higher prices in Africa and created circumstances that many societies found impossible to resist or control. Some groups organized for warfare on a more-or-less
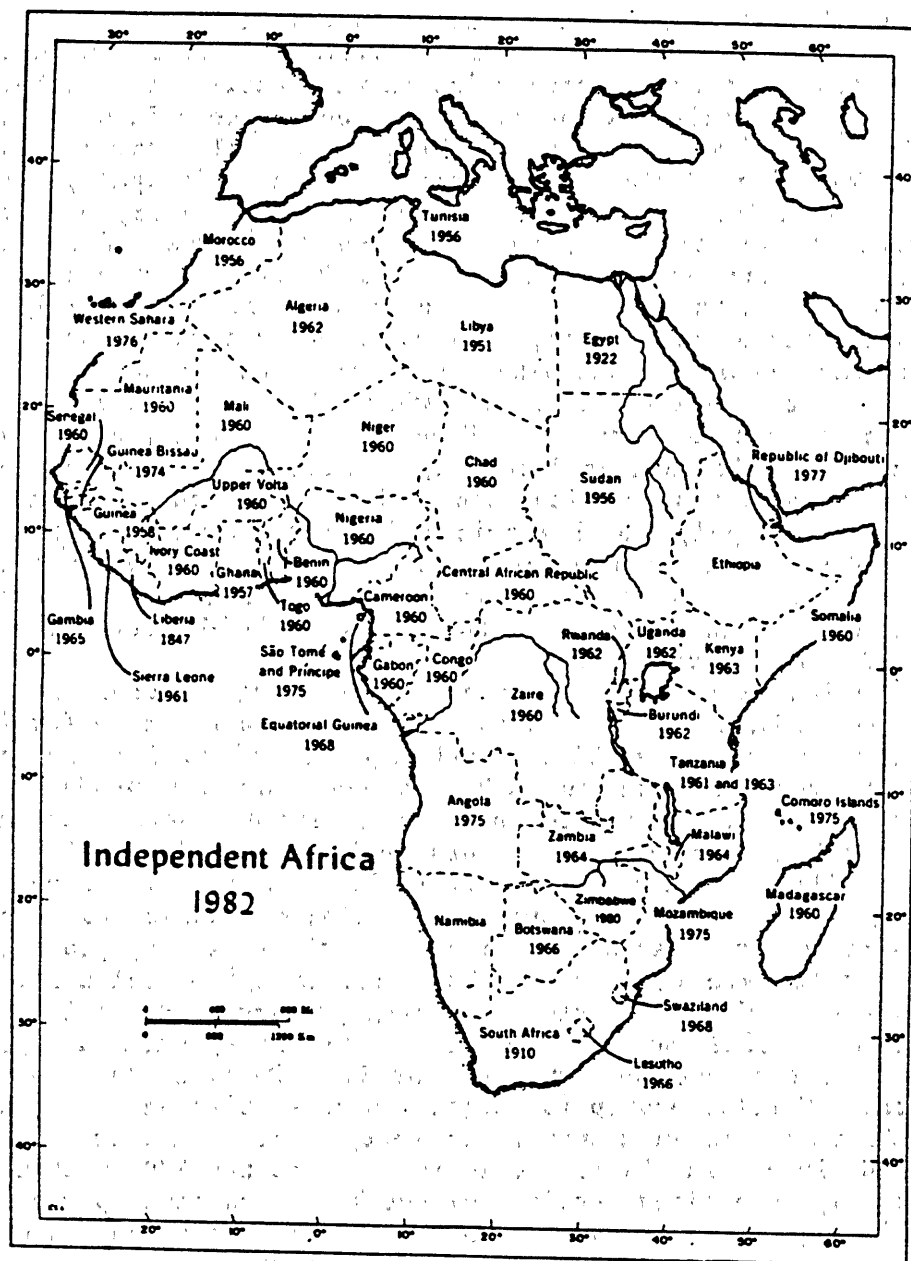
continuing basis; some elites raided their own subjects for sale to slavers; and many societies came to exact enslavement for crimes and offenses hitherto punished by fines or other forms of retribution.

Slaving in Africa did not always cease or diminish concomitantly with the suppression of the Atlantic, Saharan, and Indian Ocean slave trades during the nineteenth century. Many captive Africans were confined to slave villages where their labor was used to grow food, or peanuts, coffee, and other export crops, or collect palm oil, rubber, and other sylvan products sought by Europeans in what was termed "legitimate," i.e. non-slave commerce.

The system of slavery which developed in the United States is better understood when compared with the experience of Africans in other areas in the Americas. In Brazil, Cuba, the West Indies, and elsewhere, diverse demographic, cultural, and institutional circumstances combined to create conditions of slavery considerably different from those which developed in the United States. Slaves in these areas often retained many components of their African cultures, including social and religious practices, elements of African languages and speech patterns, and a rich and creative heritage of music, dance and oral literature. The special features of the American experience, in kind or degree, are more clearly delineated when they are examined against this broad spectrum of acculturation in the New World.

7. _European imperialism, decolonization, and_ **the** _problems_ **of** _less developed countries_ African societies were unable to contend with the overwhelming military force possessed by Europeans in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and rapidly succumbed to invasion, Ethiopia being a significant exception. It is no less important to appreciate that Africans were successful to varying degrees in other forms of resistance than opposing Europeans in foredoomed military engagements. States located some distance from the coast often had the opportunity to frame successful strategies to bend to inevitable conquest in such ways as to keep their polities intact. In contrast to polities that were shattered fighting last ditch battles, these states could negotiate many benefits during the colonial period, especially since European administrators were very thin on the ground and generally found it to their advantage to rule through existing political structures and in many cases to strengthen them.

Colonial boundaries, as is well known, were settled in Europe to suit European purposes, with little or no concern for the Africans involved (Map #4). Some ethnic groups were partitioned by boundary lines, some separated into three different colonies, Somali were fragmented across five boundaries, and Mande and Fula speaking groups were distributed across many different colonies. Most ethnic groups ended up in the same colony, but along with a random sampling of former friends, enemies, and unknowns. In retrospect, one of the most significant consequences of the partition of Africa in the last quarter of the nineteenth century is that it reduced hundreds of autonomous or semi-autonomous states, ethnic groups, villages, pastoral groups, etc., to some forty territories administered by three European languages. In retrospect, even this number of states seems too many, but the drastic reduction of political units conferred many long range benefits in fostering political, economic, and social development.

Independent Africa
1982

Morocco 1956
Tunisia 1956
Western Sahara 1976
Algeria 1962
Libya 1951
Egypt 1922
Mauritania 1960
Mali 1960
Niger 1960
Chad 1960
Sudan 1956
Republic of Djibouti 1977
Senegal 1960
Guinea Bissau 1974
Upper Volta 1960
Guinea 1958
Nigeria 1960
Central African Republic 1960
Ethiopia
Ivory Coast 1960
Ghana 1957
Benin 1960
Togo 1960
Cameroon 1960
Somalia 1960
Gambia 1965
Liberia 1847
São Tomé and Principe 1975
Gabon 1960
Congo 1960
Rwanda 1962
Uganda 1962
Kenya 1963
Sierra Leone 1961
Equatorial Guinea 1968
Zaire 1960
Burundi 1962
Tanzania 1961 and 1963
Angola 1975
Comoro Islands 1975
Zambia 1964
Malawi 1964
Namibia
Zimbabwe 1980
Botswana 1966
Mozambique 1975
Madagascar 1960
Swaziland 1968
South Africa 1910
Lesotho 1966

MAP # 4

Colonial rule, economic development, social changes, the rise of nationalism, and the surge of independence movements following World War II are themes that may be treated on a broad comparative basis with developments in North Africa and Asia. Many political, economic, and social patterns imposed during the time of colonial rule continue to the present and will persist for the forseeable future; they are the subject of a large and contentious literature concerning "neo-colonialism" that is treated in the essay following.

The most salient feature of post-independence Africa is the close economic ties that most ex-colonies maintain with their former rulers, both on a one-to-one basis and through the European Economic Community (EEC). These continuing economic (and political, social, and cultural) links with European countries derive principally from competition between less developed countries to sell primary products that are generally in oversupply in world markets. Except for a few scarce minerals, the Africa continent produces no minerals or vegetable products unobtainable elsewhere in the world, generally in unrestricted quantities and at competitive prices, a circumstance that goes a long way towards explaining the disinclination of business interests to invest in African countries where the political situation is unstable, or feared to become so. Crops such as coffee, cocoa, and oil seeds, and minerals such as iron ore, bauxite, and copper compete with exports from Latin America and Asia, which competition is exacerbated by oversupply and low prices in world markets since the 1960s. Low demand for primary products, declining terms of trade vis-a-vis manufactured goods, and the fifteen-fold increase in oil prices since 1973 blighted programs for economic development and all but bankrupted many African states.

African, Asian, and Latin American states largely dependent on primary products have so far been unable to achieve effective marketing arrangements to stabilize and improve prices for minerals and vegetable products such as OPEC commands for oil production. Consequently, African countries have maintained their economic affiliations with former colonial powers both on an individual basis and through affiliation with the EEC as associate members. In return for allowing European manufacturers privileged access to their countries, Africans are guaranteed markets for their primary products, reciprocities that have been widely denounced as a "neo-colonialist" strategem to keep African countries producing primary products instead of becoming industrial powers capable of competing with European countries and other nations in the world. However defined or justified, the EEC relationship is subject to renegotiation every five years, and African countries acting in concert with members of the EEC's former Caribbean and Pacific colonies (termed the ACP countries) have effectively exercised their collective bargaining power to improve marketing arrangements, negotiate loans and development projects, and ensure that the poorest countries receive aid funds when they are overwhelmed by disasters.

While some African states (e.g. Nigeria) and some regions (e.g. Southern Africa) deserve special study in terms of their intrinsic importance and special American interests, a world history approach that focuses on the attributes that African States share with less developed countries in other parts of the world contributes to understanding the larger trends and processes that are shaping the contemporary and future world.

"Current events," i.e. wars, army coups, famines, refugee problems, and other disasters that are sporadically reported in American media, provide little understanding of what is going on in Africa or any other part of the world. It is not what makes headlines that is most significant in learning; rather it is the processes of change, less dramatic but no less intrinsically interesting. What is important is how Africans (and people in other less developed countries) modify and adapt traditional institutions, social practices, and cultural noms and those implanted by colonial powers; how Africans deal with ethnic and religious particularisms and the divisive nationalisms derived from the colonial partition; how Africans increase productivity and cope with the challenges of high birth rates, rapid population increase, and lagging food production—for some countries already issues of critical importance; and how African states and pan-African institutions expedite inter-state and inter-regional commerce, movement of labor, and sharing of water, electricity and other resources.

The foregoing preoccupy leaders of less developed countries world-wide, and what one learns about developments in Africa informs about other parts of the world, and vice-versa. Just as leaders of less developed countries have in recent decades found it in their interests to act in concert in the United Nations and to convene meetings with representatives of developed countries to address issues of global significance in what has come to be termed the "North-South dialogue," so too can Americans learn to study Africans and other peoples from a world perspective. America's future, no less than that of other nations, depends on increased world trade, ongoing scientific advances applied to industrial and agricultural productivity, the eradication of hunger, poverty, and disease, and the resolution of international conflicts—all of which are issues that must be addressed in a global context.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Perhaps the best general introduction to Africa is Paul Bohannan and Philip D. Curtin, Africa and Africans (American Museum Science paperback, 1971). Three widely used college texts are Roland Oliver and J. D. Fage, A Short History of Africa (Penguin paperback, rev. edition, 1978); Philip Curtin, Steven Feierman, Leonard Thompson, and Jan Vansina, African History (Little, Brown, and Co. paperback, 1978); and Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara, eds., Africa (Indiana University paperback, 1977).

Ongoing archaeological research on the origins and development of humankind are reported in the National Geographic Magazine. The Journal of African History publishes periodic surveys of archaeological research and lists of radiocarbon dates; the JAH and the International Journal of African Historical Studies are the principal journals for "keeping current" on historical scholarship. Basil Davidson, African Kingdoms (Time-Life books, 1966) is inexpensive and provides well selected photographs and illustrations covering many of the topics treated in this essay. Harold K. Schneider, The Africans: An Ethnological Account (Prentice Hall paperback, 1981) is a useful reference work on many aspects of African life and livelihoods, with numerous maps and illustrations. To gain

an appreciation of the interdisciplinary approach of African specialists, teachers of World History courses will realize many advantages from attending workshops or taking courses at universities with African Studies Programs.

Students unfamiliar with World History approaches and dubious concerning "heavy" topics listed on a syllabus can be "eased" into a course with a preliminary assignment incorporating such short and stimulating readings as Ralph Linton, "One Hundred Per Cent American," The American Mercury (1937), 427-429; R. Buckminster Fuller, "Remapping Our World," Today's Education (Nov.-Dec. 1974), 40-44; 107-110; Horace Miner, "Body Ritual among the Nacirema," American Anthropologist (1956), 503-507; and William Arens, "The Great American Football Ritual," Natural History (Oct. 1975), 72-80 (for a copy of my current syllabus send a self-addressed stamped envelope). A useful assignment for the second class meeting is to ask students to make up short lists of current trends that will continue to influence the world of the future. These range from the promise of biotechnology, computers, rising energy costs, women's liberation, the internationalization of sports and music, etc. Students' discussion of their lists one-by-one going around the class provides the opportunity for each student to introduce him/herself to the group, and allows teachers an opportunity to interject comments concerning the historical background of such developments and to emphasize the point that the course concerns the present and future world as well as past times. Renewed discussion of present and future trends makes a suitable final session ending a course.

Tropical Africa: The Colonial Heritage

In the attempt to impart some perspective on contemporary Africa, it may be useful to introduce an historical analogy from long ago. Perhaps it is an analogy and perhaps it is not; in any case it is the sort of grace note that historians are occasionally tempted to give to their efforts and which raises the hackles of social scientists who accord it a special kind of disapproval reserved for the worst "flights" of historical fantasy. One might begin with the occasion of the Roman soldiers leaving Britain in 407 A.D., after centuries of rule over the savage, warring people of the British Isles. One imagines that as the last of the Roman troops were ferried off one of them must have glanced back over his shoulder at the semi-civilized barbarians gathered on the beach and said to a buddy, "They'll never make it!"

Who would blame him for such a judgment? The Romans had experienced mixed success in enforcing peace and "civilizing" the peoples of the British Isles. The islanders had been brought into contact with Roman civilization, but after four centuries they were half-"civilized" at best—and, one might say, half-corrupted as well. Those most affected included those Britons who lived around the Roman army camps, who were doubtless the most corrupt of all. (Those are the type of people termed "urban influentials" in modern social science jargon.) One imagines that the Roman soldiers accorded much more respect to the hearty, "unspoiled" savages in the interior. This is often the case with representatives of a colonizing power; they develop a dislike for those who emulate their own behavior patterns and extol instead the rude, simple qualities of the unacculturated barbarian, including the chaps in England who painted themselves blue and indulged in all sorts of "unspeakable" religious rites. So it should be no wonder that a Roman soldier would have said, "They'll never make it!" And truth to tell they didn't make it. Not for a thousand years! Many marks of civilized life disappeared from the British Isles never to be regained—such attributes of civilization as straight and well-made roads, central heating, and imaginative and tasteful cookery; all these disappeared when the Roman soldiers left. Who could have guessed, who could have dreamed, that the British Isles would eventually produce a Shakespeare, a Churchill, ... the Beatles?

The Romans had only four centuries to do their best, or their worst, working with a rather limited potential of some of our (W)ASP ancestors. The time span for European imperialism in Africa is much shorter, less than a century in most parts of tropical Africa.

European conquest and colonial rule When Europeans partitioned Africa in the last quarter of the nineteenth century they were motivated by a variety of purposes. As in most human endeavors their reasons were mixed, ranging from naked greed to disinterested altruism. There is no need to describe in detail the special varieties of wickedness of the imperialists who wanted to paint the map red or green or some other color, or the get-rich-quick economic buccaneers who desired to exploit Africa's resources, or the businessmen who wanted to "peg out claims" for the future, or the missionaries who hoped to bring the gospel to millions, or all the others who joined in for excitement,

adventure, profit, or from the attraction of the new and exotic. The point that should be stressed is that, whatever the reasons for Europeans getting into Africa were, one fact was very soon clear to all: that with the exception of a few areas, the continent was not teeming with easily exploitable riches. The soils of Africa are relatively poor; many areas lack exploitable minerals; and the continent's population was much fewer than was originally believed and quite unskilled for European purposes. The colonial powers very soon realized that it was going to cost a great deal of money just to create the infrastructure necessary to exploit those resources most readily available. The "Old Coasters," men who had long traded with African middlemen along the edges of the continent, could have informed their governments of these realities if they had been asked. But part of the explanation of the "Scramble for Africa" is that nationalism and other emotional factors often caused the participants to ignore known and demonstrable realities.

When the situation came to be reassessed after the partition was over, it is not surprising that European countries adopted colonial policies designed to minimize their expenditures. Pay-as-you-go development became the policy of every colonial power. In other words, there was to be none of the "pump priming" economic assistance which became fashionable after World War II; each colony was expected to pay its own way. And, as might be expected, resources for economic development were extremely limited. The little money available can be judged from just one example. Around World War I, some twenty years after France had created its West African Federation (the present-day countries of Mauretania, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Dahomey and Niger), the total value of imports and exports for this huge area (eight times the size of France) was only $60,000,000 a year. The revenue which accrued to the French colonial government, principally from customs returns, was about $10,000,000 a year. Such sums are worth much more in today's dollars, but they still represent meager amounts to pay the salaries of colonial officials, police, and soldiers, to build ports, railroads, bridges, hospitals, and schools, all of which—and more—had to be done if development was to take place. If the government of a colony attempted, as sometimes happened, to borrow money to expedite some project, it had to borrow either from the home government or from the international money market in Europe and had to pay the going interest rates. Low-interest rate loans or grants-in-aid from the metropoles or from international agencies did not exist.

Money then, or rather the lack of it, was the number one problem of colonial rule. What is amazing in retrospect is the extraordinary impact those sums that were invested had on the lives of Africans. One means of obtaining revenue was by customs duties; an indirect manner of taxation and also a means of practicing neo-mercantilism. Customs duties were enacted which favored the trade of the metropoles and discouraged products from other countries. French traders and exporters had the advantage in the French colonies, English in the English colonies, and so forth.

Another way of raising revenue, although in relatively insignificant amounts, was by imposing direct taxes on Africans. These were termed "head" taxes and "hut" taxes, depending upon whether they were on the individual or on his abode. Collecting direct taxes

is not an easy way to raise money, but it was justified as necessary for colonial development. In order for Africans to pay monetary taxes they had to become involved in the money economy; and the only ways Africans could earn so many shillings, francs, or whatever, was either to collect sylvan products such as rubber or raise crops for sale to Europeans, generally at prices pegged unfairly low, or to go to work for Europeans at extremely low wages. The imposition of taxes forced Africans in growing numbers to leave their homes and migrate to those areas where Europeans required labor for mines and plantations, and to construct roads, railways, and colonial settlements. This sort of population movement is termed "target labor" because the individuals involved had a primary goal in mind, in this case to earn sufficient money to pay their taxes, and those owed by other people. Africans who did not pay were seized and put to work at forced labor. They were made to serve as bearers, or as laborers building roads, public structures, or similar projects.

One way or another the colonial administrations put their subjects to work. These measures were rationalized as being for Africans' own good, for how else could colonies--Africans' homelands--be developed and started on the road to "progress" and "civilization"? Furthermore, Europeans anticipated that Africans would respond like other peoples the world over: they might start out as reluctant target labor, but they would soon develop an augmenting number of consumer wants and remain in employment longer than they needed simply to pay their taxes. Inevitably, Africans earned additional income in order to purchase cloth, blankets, foodstuffs, cookware, and other consumer goods, which of course served European purposes. One cannot fail to note that in "developing" colonies there was always a nice congruence between what was "good" for Africans and what was good for Europeans as well.

There is much discussion in scholarly literature concerning systems of colonial rule. The distinction is frequently argued as to whether Africans were ruled "directly" or "indirectly." Details aside, the principal fact to grasp is that resident Europeans were so few from reason of lack of money that colonial governments generally found it expedient to rule through existing African political structures. Where there were stratified societies with rulers or "chiefs" all that was needed, in theory at least, was for a European administrator to "advise" them along desired lines of policy. Where "chiefs" did not exist among acephalous, or "stateless," societies, Europeans in some instances appointed them, and the imposed system actually worked quite well in some cases. The key person in the system of delegated authority was the European administrator to whom an African ruler or "chief" was responsible: the British District Officer, the French _Commandant de Cercle_, and so on. These functionaries often presided over wide areas -- administrative units in some cases as large or larger than the states of Rhode Island and Delaware--exercising police, judicial, and other powers to such an extent that they were sometimes termed the "last untrammeled kings on earth." African rulers and "chiefs," termed "executive agents," were placed in the awkward position of mediating between the colonial authorities and their own peoples. If they served their European masters well, they were rewarded with part of the taxes they

collected, use of forced labor for their own purposes, and other perquisites. Uncooperative or incompetent rulers or "chiefs," in contrast, might be removed from office and replaced by more pliable tools, but mutual accommodation on both sides was usually the most satisfactory arrangement. By such means a handful of Europeans could administer hundreds of thousands of square miles. In Northern Nigeria, the most famous example of indirect rule, some two hundred British colonial officials directed the lives of seventeen million people. Similarly, three thousand Frenchmen ruled the fifteen million people scattered across the huge expanses of French West Africa. But "direct" power—police and soldiers—was available to back up these "indirect" arrangements. Thus, African subjects of the colonial powers would probably express derision for scholarly quibbles over the differences between "direct" and "indirect" rule.

Economic Development and Dependency Relationships   How rapidly changes occurred in a given colony depended upon its resources and the exploitation fostered by European entrepreneurs. British development policy in West Africa can be characterized by the memorable phrase of Al Capp's "General Bullmoose": what was good for business was good for the country. Ports, railroads, and roads were concentrated in the most productive areas and the rest of a colony was neglected. There were exceptions, such as British and French colonies in the interior of the continent, where expensive railways and roads had to be constructed to link colonies with the coast. Belgium concentrated its efforts in Zaire in mineral-rich Shaba (Katanga) and around river ports such as Kisangani (Stanleyville), Kinshasa (Leopoldville), and Matadi. Portugal was itself so poor that it left the exploitation of Angola and Mozambique largely to foreign capital, mainly British and South African, until the 1930s when the Salazar dictatorship promoted Portuguese interests vis-a-vis those of foreigners.

All manner of monopolistic practices were carried on by the European shipping, commercial, and banking interests which dominated the colonial economies. Amalgamations among trading companies gave rise to large scale commercial combinations, steamer lines organized shipping pools to allocate profits, and one or two banks exercised control over the financial transactions of a colony or several colonies. While the lion's share of a colony's wealth was creamed off at the top by European business interests, other foreigners competed with Africans at the retail level. These included Syrians and Lebanese in West Africa, and "Asians" (Indians, Goans, and Pakistani) in East Africa. African middlemen and would-be entrepreneurs were hard pressed to survive, caught between these resourceful competitors and the European wholesale firms which dominated external trade.

In such fashion Africans were increasingly tied to world markets as the twentieth century progressed. The average colony was fortunate to have more than one or two primary products, vegetable or mineral, to sell in world markets. Since soils are relatively poor in most parts of the continent, it took years of experimentation to develop suitable cash crops in some areas. Even today, in many African countries one or two crops or minerals may account for forty or fifty, or even eighty to ninety percent of the value of the total exports, which makes African states extremely vulnerable to changes in world prices.

Viewed in descriptive and graphic terms, European imperialism created "dependency" relationships between metropoles and colonies, between the European "core" and colonies on the "periphery" (Figure A). Economic, social, and cultural relationships were so strongly forged that it would prove virtually impossible for Africans (and other colonial peoples) to break them upon attaining political independence, to the extent that they were motivated to do so.

FIGURE A   FIGURE B   FIGURE C

European Metropole

Colonies   "Core" in a Colony   "Regional Core"
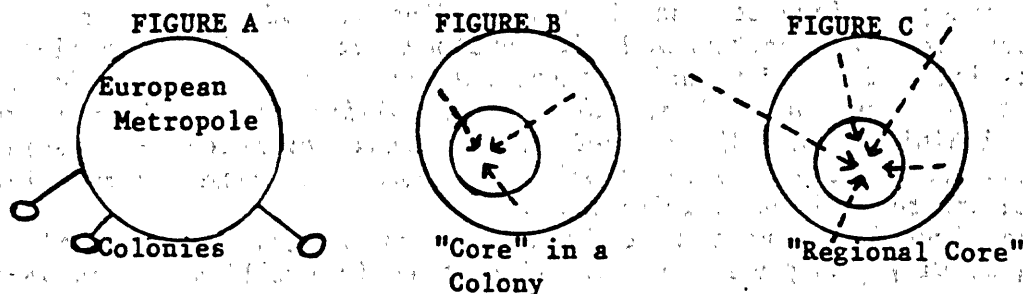
The "core-periphery" model may be carried one step further, depicting a "core periphery" within each colony to represent the chief area of European exploitation (Figure B). This second "core" represents where plantations, mines, administrative centers, principal ports, railheads, and other infrastructure were concentrated. Africans living in other parts of a colony, its "periphery," were relegated to becoming migrant laborers travelling dozens or hundreds of miles to work in the "core" area, compelled by the need to pay taxes and attracted by wage employment as a means to purchase necessities and luxuries. (The arrows on Figure B)

Some colonies developed several "cores," and such exceptions to the "model" identify colonies with exceptional resources. In such cases the "cores" became potential areas of contention between competitive African elites in the period following the achievement of independence, e.g., Zaire's Katanga mining region vs. Kinshasa, the administrative center, railhead, and chief river port; and Nigeria with its three regional "core" areas, West, East, and North reinforcing ethnic particularism. Conversely, some colonies had poorly developed "cores," possessing few European enterprises, minimal administrative centers, and minimal infrastructures. The populations of such colonies were constrained to migrate to other colonies to find employment, contributing to what may be termed "regional cores" (Figure C).

"Regional cores" include the plantations of Ivory Coast, which attracted migrant laborers from interior colonies, especially Upper Volta; the "Copper Belt," including Zambia and the Shaba region of Zaire, which derived its labor force from colonies in central and eastern Africa; and the most dynamic, South Africa, which employed large numbers of migrant and contract laborers from southern and central Africa.

Such patterns continue today. "Core" areas and "regional cores" have changed little since African colonies attained independence, and hundreds of thousands of Africans continue to be labor migrants. Many countries remain economically dependent on the proceeds of one, two, or several primary products, and price fluctuations in world markets

can make or break a national budget, bring hope or despair to economic planners, and help sustain leaders in power or contribute to their downfall.

Economic, social, and cultural changes were most pervasive in the "core" areas of each colony—in the administrative centers, ocean and river ports, railheads, mines, and plantations, and such remains the case today. Such areas are multi-ethnic, with heterogenous populations, African and non-African, that foster a universal outlook encompassing indigenous and foreign influences of many sorts, in contrast to the particularistic outlook of a single society. Opportunities for individual achievement are far greater in "core" areas than in migrants' home areas where ability and initiative are often inhibited or discouraged by elders, hierarchical social organizations, occupational specializations, and other ascriptive impediments to individual initiative.

The first individuals to migrate to towns, mines, and plantations were generally young men who came without their families or who were too young to have families. Those who returned a second time invariably remained longer, not only to make money for taxes and other necessities, but also to acquire more European manufactures and consumer goods. The fact was quickly appreciated that the longer one stayed the more skills one acquired, job skills, language skills, and social skills, which allowed for higher wages and greater opportunities. As the twentieth century progressed, not only did more and more men come willingly, but they stayed longer and, increasingly, they brought their families.

It is crucial to appreciate that Africans who came to the towns, plantations, or mines never cut themselves off from their traditional societies. They might work for a few months and go back home for a time. They might live in towns for years and go back infrequently. By the 1930's and 1940's some men began to live large parts of their lives more or less continuously in urban areas, but they too always kept their ties with their home areas. They were careful to keep up the social, religious, and ritual ties which ensured the retention of their traditional status, rights to land use, and other privileges. Often their wives remained in the countryside part of the year in order to work the land and raise their children. Conversely, Africans staying in "core" areas were expected to be hospitable to relatives and other members of their ethnic groups when they came to seek work or visit. Kinship and ethnic affiliations were of crucial importance in minimizing and ameliorating the disruptive consequences of labor migration. For migrants, such ties remain indisputably the most important aspect of their lives.

While new experiences, changes in outlook, and different patterns of life were concentrated in the "core" areas, they were not confined there. Rural areas were affected in varying ways and to varying degrees by the activities of colonial administrators and missionaries, by the cultivation of cash crops, expansion of road networks, etc., and by the influences conveyed from "core" areas by labor migrants. In retrospect it is striking how pervasive such changes and influences were in preparing the way for the development of political parties and the rise of independence movements after World War II.

Social and cultural changes   One of the most important agencies for
change was Christian missionaries. The evangelization of Africa has
been described as the interaction of two sets of deviants: the
missionaries on one hand and those in the African societies who most
readily responded to them on the other. The point of this apothegm is
that by the end of the nineteenth century, and certainly by the first
decades of the twentieth century, those who went out to Africa as
missionaries were not, for the most part, really representative of the
modern, urban, industrial, twentieth-century world. Missionaries were
often drawn from fundamentalist sects in rural areas of the American
South and Midwest, Scotland, and other places on the periphery of
European industrial regions. Often they were self-consciously out of
step with modern times, decrying the changes which were
revolutionizing their own countries. In like manner, the earliest
African converts were generally individuals who were not members of
elites and were often not doing well in their own societies. Men and
women with high status positions in a society or who are in process of
achieving other social goals are not the sort of individuals who are
most quickly won by a new religion. Those who first responded to the
missionaries' endeavors were often slaves, criminals, and other social
deviants -- just as was true in the early days of Christianity in the
Middle East.

The principal motivation of missionaries was, of course, the
evangelization of Africans. The better to achieve this goal they
undertook a number of activities which were attractive both to
Africans and to the colonial governments. Foremost among these was
education. Colonial governments welcomed missionaries, for they
founded schools, built workshops, established clinics and hospitals,
and promoted agricultural innovations. Missionaries naturally
demanded in return that Africans espouse their particular faith, and
it should be noted that the Europeans and Americans who evangelized
Africans demanded much higher standards of piety than was required of
their own ancestors in Europe by missionaries from the Roman Empire.
Instead of a group acceptance of the new faith, followed by a gradual
adaptation to new beliefs and practices such as took place in the
forests of Europe, missionaries in Africa in the nineteenth and
twentieth centuries frequently demanded individual conversion
experiences on the part of their converts. Protestants in particular
demanded that African converts not only accept the articles of faith
but exhibit manifestations that the experience of religious conversion
had shaken them to the core of their being. Moreover, missionaries
expected as a matter of course that converts adopt European standards
of dress, housing, food, and general patterns of living. In
polygamous societies, a man had to give up all but one wife,
regardless of the social, economic, and political consequences. (The
twentieth century American practice of "sequential monogamy" was not
an option offered by missionaries). Put in crude terms, missionaries
regarded Africans as bottles, to be turned upside-down and emptied of
savagery, then righted and filled with a proper sort of Christianity,
which included a very heavy mixture of contemporary West European and
American mores.

Africans complied with missionary demands to a remarkable extent.
African beliefs concerning a "high god" and moral and ethical behavior
often closely paralleled those of Christian (and Muslim) teachings,
and African societies were open to new ideas, having previously
adopted religious concepts and practices from each other (which they
continued to do). Syncretistic practices were of course unacceptable

to missionaries, and wherever they could employ sanctions, they coerced their converts to conform exclusively to acceptable European practices -- which highlights a key issue much debated by missionaries: how "European" had Christianity become, and how "Europeanized" must Africans (or other non-western) groups become in order to be considered "true Christians"? Africans also acquiesced in missionary demands for a number of practical reasons, among which were the educational advantages provided by missionaries and the opportunities for self-improvement which literary and technical skills provided.

It is clear, too, that one of the attractions for educated Africans becoming Christian preachers, priests, and teachers was that it gave them opportunities for leadership roles which were otherwise denied them under colonial rule until political parties were permitted after World War II. Where too little initiative was accorded leaders of African congregations, they and their followers might break with missionaries (and their financial support) to form independent or "Ethiopian" churches. Some prophetic and charismatic men and women conceived new churches, incorporating reinterpretations of Christian doctrines along with African beliefs and practices. Prophet William Wade Harris in Ivory Coast and Liberia (1910s), Simon Kimbangu in Zaire (1920s), Alice Lenshina Mulenga in Zambia (1950s and 1960s), and numerous others had wide influence. These "Zionist" movements attracted followers from mission churches and from "Ethiopian" congregations, as well as Africans not previously evangelized by any Christian group. "Ethiopian" and "Zionist" churches became increasingly numerous during the second half of the twentieth century and today constitute the most rapidly growing Christian congregations in contemporary Africa.

Muslim clerics likewise profited from the opportunities afforded by economic and social changes disrupting former patterns in African societies and were even more successful than Christian missionaries in influencing and converting Africans. Muslim clerics possessed several advantages vis-a-vis European missionaries. They were fellow Africans, had similar lifestyles, and were generally more amenable to converts retaining African social patterns and cultural practices. But if Islamic tolerance of polygyny provides a significant advantage for Muslim clerics "competing" with Christian missionaries (to the oft-expressed dismay of the latter), Islamic strictures are hardly less demanding than those of Christianity, including required daily ablutions and prayers, and forsaking spirits and tobacco. And during colonial times, Muslim clerics labored under the handicap in most areas of not providing "western" education that was highly prized by Africans, a disadvantage that is reflected today in the disproportionate representation of Christians in top positions in government and the private sector. Since independence, the spread of government schools in predominantly Muslim areas has greatly improved educational opportunities for Muslim children, but significant disparities still exist in many countries, especially with respect to the education of girls and women.

To summarize, the colonial partition of Africa shattered existing political, social, and economic circumstances by consolidating thousands of different polities into a few dozen colonies. The development of infrastructure -- railways, roads, ports, and telegraph and telephone lines -- revolutionized communications, as in

different ways did the imposition of European languages, administrative and business practices, educational institutions, and religions. Africans in growing numbers were compelled to enter the money economy and were linked to world markets, either by producing cash crops· or by working for Europeans, Asians, Levantines, or other Africans. If most Africans were employed only in the lowest echelons of government or business enterprises, obtained only rudimentary command of European languages, and received only primary educations in missionary or government schools, such nonetheless had revolutionary consequences and fostered far-reaching changes.

The foregoing changes are frequently lumped together by the catch-all inclusive term "modernization," which has replaced "civilized" in ordinary usage, if not in implied intent. But there is an "underside" to modernization, for along with the introduction of European institutions, skills, and social and cultural patterns came many of the intransigent problems of the "modern" world: urban slums, broken families, prostitution, alcoholism, etc., all of which accompanied "development" in Europe and the United Staes and remain matters of concern. Colonized peoples in Africa and elsewhere in the world were unable to prevent such perverse consequences of the changes forced upon them by their exploiters; nor, of course, could they share the opportunities and advantages of such changes to the same extent as the free citizenry of European countries and the United States.

Political movements and the achievement of independence World War II marks a watershed in African history. The war years introduced new influences, especially in the French and British colonies, and the ramifications of the war and its aftermath prepared the way for Africans to organize movements to further their economic and political interests.

Africans living in French colonies received an unexpected political education from the confrontation of the Vichy and Free-French partisans. English-speaking Africans took to heart the inspiration of the Atlantic Charter. Hundreds of thousands of Africans served as soldiers in the armies of the Allies in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, and profited from the experience. A return to the pre-war status quo in Africa would have been impossible, even had the colonial powers not been left as substantially weakened by the conflict as they were.

Not only were France, Britain, and Belgium far less powerful in a material way, but they were wounded in a very deep psychological sense as well. One of the prerequisites for colonialism is self-confidence, and the cultural arrogance and racism characteristic of nineteenth century Europe go far to explain why Europeans believed that they were divinely ordained to conquer and rule over other peoples. When colonial rule was established over Africans at the close of the nineteenth century, most Europeans complacently assumed (if they thought about the matter at all) that their rule would last for many generations, if not centuries. By the close of World War II, Europeans' sense of superiority was as badly shaken as was their economic and military power.

Britain, France, and Belgium faced immense problems of reconstruction following the war, especially France and Belgium. There was the developing Cold War, which dramatized their greatly

reduced power and status in a world dominated by the American and Russian superpowers. They were challenged by independence movements everywhere: in India, Indo-China, Indonesia, Malaya, Palestine, Morocco, Algeria, etc., suppression of which demanded financial, military, and other resources that European countries now possessed in very limited amounts. By contrast, the colonies in sub-Saharan Africa seemed to present no immediate problems, but a revolt in Madagascar in 1947 that was savagely suppressed by the French and incipient political activities in many colonies showed that Africans must soon be reckoned with as well.

The European governments that confronted these challenges (with the exception of Portugal) differed considerably from those which had presided over the colonial empires prior to World War II. In Britain, the Labor Party came to power in 1945, while France was governed in the 1940s and 1950s by a series of unstable coalitions which included Socialists and Communists. These post-war governments granted Africans many liberties that they had not known before, notably freedom to form labor unions and political parties. They also allocated significant amounts of investment capital to their African colonies, including funds received from the Marshall Plan. To be sure, these funds were intended primarily to benefit the mother countries, either by stimulating a greater flow of resources to the metropole or by earning foreign exchange -- dollars in particular -- through the sale of primary products, but this investment was no less important for its impact on the colonies themselves.

All of these developments stimulated a growing political awareness on the part of educated Africans. Especially in the most advanced French and British territories, newly formed political parties began to articulate grievances and demand reforms. At first, African demands were generally limited to specific grievances such as the abolition of forced labor, equalization of pay and opportunities in the civil service, increased political representation, and similar short-range goals. Only gradually did Africans begin to focus on the issue of independence.

Political leadership naturally came from the "new" elite educated in missionary and government schools rather than from the traditional ruling classes. Members of the new elite had to lead for they spoke the languages of the colonial powers and understood the issues involved. They had to lead, too, because many of the old elite -- the rulers and "chiefs" -- were discredited by long years of collaboration with the colonial administrations. It is not surprising that the most rapid political mobilization took place in the economically more advanced colonies or that most nationalist leaders came from the urban centers where Africans had most fully participated in the modernizing experience. There numerous ethnic and multi-ethnic organizations existed, including self-help associations, sports clubs, churches, schools, and (after 1945) labor unions, all of which could be utilized for political purposes. Members of the new elite founded their parties upon such organizations, uniting groups across ethnic divisions against the common adversary, the European colonial rulers.

The rapidity with which this happened amazed observers, especially since the African leaders in the urban areas quickly gained the allegiance of rural folk whom Europeans thought to be indifferent to "radical" ideas and subservient to rulers co-opted by the colonial

governments. The nascent political movements effectively used family and ethnic links between town and countryside to mobilize supporters even in the most remote areas, where traditional leaders often strongly resisted the challenge to their authority.

Such was the pervasiveness of change that everywhere people wanted "modernization," at least to the extent that they understood it. People wanted more change, not less. They wanted more schools, more roads, more trade, more jobs, more of everything Europeans had introduced. The emerging political elite promised to achieve these goals and gradually united their achievement to the winning of independence: economic development would proceed even more rapidly once Africans were in command of their own destiny! Thus the political mobilization of the African masses represented an affirmation of modernization, not an atavistic appeal for a return to pre-colonial conditions -- just as was true for independence movements in other parts of the world.

As African nationalism gained momentum during the post-war years, the colonial governments at first used repressive measures. Where violence flared it was suppressed by force. There were strikes, riots, and unrest in many areas -- Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, to name a few -- and open rebellion in several colonies. Thousands of people -- more than fifty thousand, according to some estimates -- died in the revolt in Madagascar in 1947, and the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya in the early 1950's received world-wide publicity. Soon, however, European efforts at repression gave way to accommodation.

Involved in fighting colonial wars in other parts of the globe -- Vietnam, Algeria, Malaya, Suez -- and forced to recognize the consequences of their depleted wealth and power, both Britain and France were understandably fearful of being drawn into guerilla wars of indeterminate length with disaffected African populations. For these and other considerations, they began to plan for a peaceful transfer of political sovereignty which would damage as little as possible the other ties binding their colonies.

Beginning in 1957 with Ghana, led by Kwame Nkrumah, British and French colonies in Africa were accorded internal self-government and then independence in rapid succession, in some instances more rapidly than African leaders themselves might have wished. It is significant, however, that when the Union Jack and the Tricolore came down over government buildings, other flags remained flying. These were the ensigns of shipping companies, trading firms, and banks, which remained under European control and, with few exceptions, remain so to the present day -- a theme that will be discussed following.

There were important exceptions to the expeditious transfer of sovereignty on accommodating terms. Belgium and Portugal failed to appreciate the realism of British and French strategists. Belgians long maintained a false sense of security, confident in the farsightedness of their strategy of not creating elite cadres (which must be accounted a success, for only several dozen Congolese had graduated from college at the time of independence and there were no African physicians, engineers, agronomists, or army officers). In 1960, in the wake of disorders, Belgium reversed course and granted the Congo independence with almost no preparation. The country collapsed into civil war and anarchy and Congo, now Zaire, has never recovered from the debacle, disaster compounded by the dictatorial and corrupt misrule of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

The Salazar-Caetano dictatorship in Portugal steadfastly refused to concede the right of Africans to self-determination, claiming that their colonies were integral provinces of Portugal. There were large numbers of Portuguese settlers in Angola (c335,000 by the 1970s) and Mozambique (c220,000 by the 1970s) to sustain the government's determination to resist African liberation movements, but virtually no settlers in Guinea where Portugal was likewise forced to fight, lest granting Guinea's independence stand as a precedent for the two much larger and more valuable colonies. The three colonial wars lasted until 1974, when Portuguese army officers who despaired of continued fighting toppled the Caetano regime and expedited the independence of the African colonies. Most of the Portuguese settlers in Angola and Mozambique fled to Portugal, leaving behind ruined economies that the victorious African liberation movements have yet to rehabilitate. Angola and Mozambique lack educated and skilled people and the financial resources needed to repair and rebuild, and are plagued by ongoing warfare with opposition groups which are supported by South Africa to keep the countries destabilized and counteract the influence of Russians and Cubans.

Portugal's intransigence with respect to Angola and Mozambique long served to protect the interests of the c225,000 whites in (Southern) Rhodesia who took pre-emptive action in 1965, unilaterally and illegally declaring their independence (UDI) from Britain. Sanctions imposed by Britain and other nations had little effect on the white settler regime led by Ian Smith so long as Portugal and South Africa supplied Rhodesia. The independence of Mozambique, together with improving military effectiveness on the part of the African liberation forces, turned the tide, prompting British diplomatic initiatives in 1979 and Zimbabwe's accession to independence in 1980.

To return to the "core periphery" model previously described, what the leaders of independence movements captured, or were bequeathed, were the "core" areas developed by the colonial powers, which they have since maintained much the same as before. If at first the elites that led the independence movements acted in what they perceived as their nations' best interests, control of the "core" areas soon became for many leaders and their entourages the means to personal aggrandizement, while the interests of people living in the "periphery" areas were neglected much as they had been in colonial times. Whether or not the leaders of the newly independent countries could have followed other political and economic strategies is a matter of continuing controversy.

What is certain is that European governments formulated contingency plans that were designed to protect and perpetuate the "core" areas and their links to the metropoles. France's policy of "balkanization" is the most blatant example. Prior to granting independence to its colonies, France dismantled its West Africa federation (8 territories) and Equatorial Africa federation (4 territories) to ensure that it would afterwards deal with each country on a one-to-one basis (an elephant and a mouse), not with a West African federation with half France's population that might have made common cause with the smaller federation and Madagascar in dealing with France, Europe, and the rest of the world. More characteristic of the period of decolonization were the professional and personal

initiatives taken by French and British administrators, missionaries, educators, businessmen, and others to smooth the transition to independence and foster continuing ties afterward.

During the period leading up to independence for the African colonies, France joined with West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg to create the European Economic Community (EEC), or "Common Market." The Treaty of Rome establishing the EEC in 1957 incorporated the European states' respective colonies as associate members. What to do concerning this affiliation became one of the most important issues confronting the African states on attaining independence.

With the exception of Sekou Toure of Guinea-Conakry, the leaders of the former French, Italian, and Belgian colonies decided that it was in their nations' best interests to maintain affiliation with the EEC, along with close political, economic, social, and cultural links with their former metropoles. They thereby perpetuated both the long existing "core-periphery" relationships between metropoles and colonies and the recently established supra-national EEC association. Eighteen former African colonies formally ratified a convention of association with the EEC on December 20, 1961, which became effective on June 1, 1964.

Interdependence and reciprocities are the key elements of the association, which is subject to renegotiation every five years. European countries retain privileged access to African markets for their manufactures and other commodities, while African states are guaranteed sales of specified quantities of primary products at higher than world market prices. In addition, the EEC provides African nations with development funds, technical assistance, and other benefits over and above what France or other countries may provide to former colonies on an individual basis.

Whether the foregoing arrangements represent self-serving expediency and the perpetuation of colonial dependency ("neo-colonialism") or a sensible bargain negotiated by far-sighted African leaders remains in the balance. For the new African States, the daunting alternative of cutting economic links with European metropoles and the EEC would have meant entering world markets in competition with Asian and Latin American countries at a time of declining prices for primary products. As discussed following, the provision that the association with the EEC is renegotiable on a five year basis has been of considerable significance.

Independence and afterwards. The new African elite took power with an overwhelming popular mandate and endeavored to achieve their promises to speed modernization. Whatever nationalist leaders' private assessments of economic prospects may have been, they had sold — and oversold — citizens of their countries on the prospects of rapid economic development and had no alternative but to try to make good on their promises. During the first years of independence African leaders benefitted from considerable outside assistance in pursuit of their goals, as the former colonial powers, United Nations agencies, the United States, the Soviet Union, and other industrial nations proffered financial and technical aid. But within a few years, economic conditions began to deteriorate in most countries.

Many of the development programs initiated in African countries after independence failed or were only partly successful, in many instances for the same reasons that many projects had failed or been disappointing during the colonial period: few exportable resources, shortages of skilled and educated people, infertile soils, droughts, pests, and plant and livestock diseases. These obstacles to economic development had not diminished with independence and could not be overcome with zeal and determination alone.

The planning and implementation of development programs were complicated by the predeliction of many leaders for experiments in "African Socialism"; having experienced some of the worst excesses of "robber baron capitalism," they were determined to try new economic and social initiatives. Implementation of "planned" economies and government-managed enterprises (parastatals) had the consequence of imposing insuperable burdens on inexperienced administrators. And there were too few economists, agronomists, technicians, and other skilled personnel required for efficient mobilization of resources, even when their numbers were bolstered by outside "experts" — which latter were sometimes equally inexperienced and mistaken in their judgments. In some instances donor countries funded unfeasible projects or supplied inappropriate technology and equipment.

Failures and disappointments led to disillusionment and loss of confidence in government leaders. As time passed there was increasing profiteering and bureaucratic corruption in many countries. And, unfortunately for Africa, the flow of foreign aid and investment proved far less than anticipated, as donor countries became preoccupied with other parts of the world (e.g., the Middle East and Viet Nam) and investors became increasingly wary of involvement in politically unstable less developed countries.

Tragically, too, during the 1960s African economies were adversely affected by erratic and generally declining world market prices in primary products. Price declines with concomitant loss of revenues forced governments to curtail development plans and reduce expenditures on schools, medical facilities, and other government services, to the consternation of their citizens. The quandries confronting African decision makers may be appreciated from statistics concerning the decline of primary product prices from the peak years in the 1950s to the mid-1960s; e.g., tea prices fell 16%, coffee 19%, cotton 43%, sisal 59%, and between 1955 and 1965 the price of cocoa fell from £500 per ton to less than £90. Increased production to offset falling prices had the consequence of glutting world markets, contributing to further price declines. With such disappointments and worsening economic conditions few "fathers of their countries," whether George Washington or Kwame Nkrumah, could have realized the inflated expectations of their people.

Few did. Kwame Nkrumah was removed from the presidency by members of Ghana's armed forces at the beginning of 1966, one of a wave of army coup d'etats in the mid-1960s that swept from power many of the men who had led the independence movements. Those who organized the coups capitalized on growing disillusionment in the over-expectant hopes fostered by leaders, the frustrations engendered by single parties stifling dissent, the dissatisfaction of farmers with the marketing boards which purchased cash crops, and the widespread knowledge that many leaders and members of government had betrayed their trust by personal extravagance and aggrandizement, by fostering nepotism, and by other corrupt practices.

The army officers (and in some instances, non-commissioned officers) who swept politicans from power represented another segment of the new elite but one no better qualified by training or experience to cope with manifold economic and social challenges. Few military leaders were more successful than the civilians they displaced. The most grossly inept and oppressive dictators included two military men: Idi Amin Dada of Uganda (1971-1979) and Jean-Bedel Bokassa (1966-1979) of the Central African "Empire;" they and Nguema Masie Biyoto (1968-1979) of Equatorial Guinea squandered the wealth of their states and terrorized the citizenry.

Since the mid-1960s there have been military take-overs in many countries. Some countries afterwards returned to civilian rule, e.g., Sierra Leone in 1968 after a series of coups; Nigeria in 1979; and Ghana in 1977 and September 1979 (reverting to military rule in June 1979 and December 1981). Only a handful of African leaders who founded independence movements survived the 1960s and 1970s, a disparate group espousing different ideologies and methods of rule that defy categorization: Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast; Ahmed Sekou-Toure of Guinea-Conakry, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Hastings Banda of Malawi, Sir Dawda Jawara of The Gambia, and most remarkably, Leopold S. Senghor of Senegal who resigned in 1981, the only leader yet voluntarily to relinquish power to ensure a smooth transition for a successor.

There were some notable "success stories" in the 1960s and 1970s. President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast sagely orchestrated French aid and investment to expand exports in coffee, cocoa, timber, and other commodities, greatly expanded the country's infrastructure, and spurred the development of processing plants and other industries. President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, who had been imprisoned by Britain during the Mau Mau "Emergency," similarly encouraged European investment, assiduously promoted tourism, and presided over a government that rivalled Ivory Coast as the most capitalist-oriented in Africa. Nairobi and Abidjan became centers of communications, trade, and banking and the African headquarters of many European and American firms; as such, they furthered the progress of Kenya and Ivory Coast as "regional cores," building on developments from colonial times.

Nigeria, the most populous African state, was threatened with disintegration by the Biafran War (1967-1970), but emerged with a revised federal system incorporating nineteen states that shared powers formerly allocated to three polarized regions. The nation-wide disbursement of revenues from oil production has spurred economic and social as well as political integration. Nigeria in itself represents the most important "regional core" in tropical Africa, and Nigeria and Ivory Coast acting in concert provided the principal impetus for the creation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975.

Other African states were generally less well endowed with resources, less fortunate in the elites leading their governments, or a combination of these and other factors. Elites in some of the poorest countries concentrated on retaining, or capturing, the "core" areas for the advantages to be derived in jobs, housing, schools, medical services, and other amenities, abandoning even the pretense of fostering improvements in the lives of people living in the "peripheral" regions of the countries.

Economic conditions worsened in virtually all African states during the 1970s and early 1980s. Primary product prices were generally depressed in world markets, while massive increases in oil prices raised energy costs enormously and contributed to spiralling costs of manufactured products. Conditions in numerous countries were exacerbated by natural and human-caused disasters. During the late 1960s and 1970s drought ravaged sahelian countries from Mauretania and Senegal to Ethiopia and Somalia. Other countries were likewise afflicted by sporadic droughts, by locusts, and by epidemics of human and livestock disease. Many countries were embroiled in warfare. Wars of liberation in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe; war over the disposition of the territory and people of Spanish Sahara; wars between Ethiopia and Somalia, and Tanzania and Uganda; and internecine conflicts in countries such as Uganda, Angola, and Chad were not only destructive for the countries concerned, but spawned thousands of refugees, disrupted rail and road communications, interfered with programs to eradicate human and animal diseases, etc., all of which had serious consequences for neighboring countries. In 1982, the Phelps-Stokes Fund estimated that there were 6.3 million refugees in Africa.

Individually and collectively African governments could do little to prevent or resolve these conflicts or ameliorate their consequences. The Organizatin of African Unity (OAU) was founded in 1963 with a charter to "promote unity and solidarity among African states"; however, governments are unwilling to permit interference in their domestic matters, and reluctant to intervene in inter-state conflicts. The OAU secretariat in Addis Ababa lacks substantive powers which are effectively reserved to heads-of-states meetings where it has often been impossible to reach consensus on critical issues, or, if decisions are reached, to obtain the support or compliance of member states afterwards. If the OAU's role is at present largely symbolic, it serves as a valuable forum and as an emblem of the goal of continent-wide unity.

Except for countries producing oil, steeply rising prices for petroleum products all but bankrupted many African states during the 1970s and 1980s. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) obtained a four-fold increase in oil prices in 1973-1974, and by 1980 a barrel of oil cost fifteen times what it had cost in 1973. Many African states were forced to expend more than fifty per cent of their foreign exchange earnings on petroleum products and borrowed heavily from banks that were "recycling" OPEC deposits. Oil price rises contributed greatly to world inflation, increasing the prices of manufactured goods, while the deepening world recession contributed to a decline in purchases of primary products and further depressed prices. In 1982 it was estimated that terms of trade for primary products vis-a-vis manufactures had decreased by 30% in the previous decade. Many African countries time and again were unable to meet government payrolls, reduced social services, and curtailed development projects, especially in "peripheral" areas. The money of many countries is no longer freely convertible into leading world currencies, a notable exception being the CFA franc used by French-speaking countries and backed by the Bank of France. As bank debts come due, many governments are forced to reschedule payments incurring heavy burdens of indebtedness that poorer countries will never be able to repay, with consequences that remain to be determined.

The devastating consequences of world inflation and concomitant depressed prices for primary products combined with bureaucratic mismanagement may be appreciated from the predicaments of one country. In 1981, Tanzania spent 60% of its export earnings on petroleum products. Whereas in 1972 five tons of tea would purchase a tractor, by 1979 thirteen tons were required; and three times as many cashew nuts and ten times as much tobacco were needed to import a seven-ton truck. Less easily described in such graphic terms is what the consequences may be for individuals and families growing tea, cashew nuts, and tobacco. During the same period, state-controlled companies and agricultural projects proved grossly inefficient with many costly failures, besides which Tanzania fought an expensive war to overthrow Idi Amin Dada, all of which contributed to the virtual bankruptcy of the country's economy.

If huge increases in petroleum prices and the widening disparity between the prices of primary products and manufactures were beyond the control of African governments, a general decline in the rate of increase of food production was not. In the 1960s and 1970s development plans generally neglected the agricultural sector of the economy (except for state run farms, that have generally been mismanaged, inefficient, and wasteful of resources) in contrast to investment in infrastructure, manufacturing enterprises, hotels and other expensive facilities to stimulate tourism, plus housing and other amenities for government officials and employees. These and other expenditures, mostly in "core" areas, stimulated continuing labor migration from "peripheral" areas, depleting the number of cultivators and inhibiting increased productivity.

As economic conditions worsened, governments became increasingly concerned that the large numbers of unemployed or marginally employed people in urban areas would foment civil unrest and revolution. To forestall, or respond to, mounting dissatisfaction in "core" areas, governments resorted to maintaining low food prices by means of food imports (low priced rice from Asia, notably) and use of American food-for-peace aid. As economic conditions worsened, leaders subsidized prices of staples, adding to the burden of government debt.

The consequence of such policies was to discourage food production by cultivators in "peripheral" areas. Unable to compete with the subsidized prices of food sold in "core" areas and confronted with spiralling costs for farm equipment and spare parts, gasoline, and fertilizers (many of which are petroleum-derived), farmers had little incentive to increase production either of foodstuffs or cash crops, and in some areas reverted to subsistence cultivation.

What makes lagging food production an issue of critical significance is rapid population growth in most parts of Africa. Statistics are unavailable or are of dubious reliability for many areas, but the consensus is that the population in almost all African countries is increasing at an annual rate of over 2% and that many countries have rates of increase over 3% annually. The dilemma for African governments is how to stimulate food production in "peripheral" areas without raising food prices for people living in "core" areas thereby risking civil disorder. Where food subsidies have been reduced or announced, public unrest has followed. An increase in the price of rice was a major factor in the overthrow of the government of Liberia in April 1980, and rice shortages

contributed to a coup in Guinea-Bissau in November of the same year. Leaders in other countries have been careful not to court the same fate. United Nations agencies, the World Bank, USAID, and other international and national organizations are currently according high priority to increasing food production in African countries, but projected population increases seem likely to surpass agricultural productivity for the foreseeable future, affording a grim prospectus for many of the poorest nations.

None of the foregoing is unique to Africa. Such are common patterns in "third" and "fourth" world countries on other continents and constitute the principal issues associated with the "North-South" dialogue between developed and less-developed nations. Unique to the African continent, however, are the congeries of intractable problems associated with white-ruled South Africa, economically the most powerful state on the African continent, where 4.7 million whites control the destinies of 20 million Africans, 3 million Coloureds (people of mixed ancestry), and 1 million people of Asian descent.

South Africa dominates southern and central Africa with its mining and industrial economy, its production of surplus food grown with low paid African labor, and by the economic influence it wields from employment of migrant laborers from other countries. South Africa adds to these advantages by policies which destabilize and disunite neighboring African states by means of economic and political pressures. South African support for opposition movements such as UNITA in Angola led by Jonas Savimbi and the Mozambique Resistance Movement (MRM) impede national unification and economic development, and sabotage of communications networks by members of opposition groups fosters continuing dependence on South Africa's railways and ports.

South Africa's internal policies, most notably Apartheid (separation of races), the exclusion of Africans from South African citizenship, and the creation of "independent" African satellite states, are condemned by African countries and most of the other nations of the world. Yet neither Africans living in South Africa, the governments of independent African states, nor those of other nations have found effective means to cause South Africa to change its racist policies. Appeals to the United Nations, to western European countries, and to the United States are effectively neutralized by countervailing lobbying by South Africa, by the opposition of powerful international business interests profiting from present conditions in the southern Africa "regional core" dominated by South Africa, and by western military analysts who regard South Africa as an invaluable bulwark against communist influence and subversion in Africa. "Cold War" strategists skillfully seconded by the activities of the South African information service (including filler material provided American newspapers and teaching materials sent to schools) stress the importance for the western alliance of the flow of "strategic" minerals from southern and central Africa and the safety of the Cape sea route, both of which are currently "protected" by the strongly anti-communist regime in South Africa. Focusing on the purported advantages of the status quo, such arguments disregard or gloss over the consequences of South Africa's internal and external policies, and the recent far-reaching changes in southern Africa: the "buffer" states of Rhodesia, Mozambique, and Angola have been stripped away,

and they and other "Front Line States" now offer sanctuary for South African liberation movements. During recent years the racial situation in South Africa has become increasingly polarized. The time may not be far off when there is widespread civil unrest in South Africa or full scale war between South Africa and neighboring states, or both at the same time. Few would wish to predict what policies the world powers and their allies may follow in such contingencies.

To recapitulate, many inheritances from the colonial past remain since independence; some have been modified; others are substantially unchanged. In the political sphere, to the Pandora's Box of European-imposed boundary lines has been added the contested disposition of the territory of former Spanish Sahara and Libya's claim to a mineral-rich slice of northern Chad. The Ethiopian-Somalian boundary, unresolved in colonial times or following Somalia's accession to independence, has been the cause of much bloodletting and millions of people have been made homeless. South Africa has created new boundary lines by creating African "homelands" and gradually transforming them into "independent" states that the world community has refused to recognize. South Africa, moreover, has yet to end its occupation of Namibia, former German South West Africa, which was obtained as a League of Nations mandate following World War I.

In the economic and social sphere, leaders of African governments, whatever their political ideology, have maintained the "core-periphery" dichotomies inherited from the colonial period. They and other members of the new elite and their extended families monopolize the privileges of the colonial rulers they supplanted and with whom they continue to maintain a wide range of political, economic, social, and cultural associations. By contrast, Africans dwelling in "peripheral" areas and lacking political influence continue to be deprived of resources vis-a-vis the "core" areas. In many countries, Africans living in "peripheral" areas lack incentives to increase production of cash crops or foodstuffs for sale in "core" areas, and some have reverted to subsistence agriculture. Such inequities promote continued labor migration to "core" areas, especially to the capitals of countries where government is invariably the largest employer. Cities in many countries have sprawling shanty towns lacking adequate water supplies, sewage facilities, medical services, and schools; they are inhabited by unemployed and underemployed adults, rootless youths who are semi-literate and unskilled, and numerous malnourished children, many of whom receive little schooling.

The future derives from the present and the past What of the future, given such daunting prospects for many African countries at the outset of the 1980s? Much depends on the ending of the world recession and the improvement of prices for primary products.

Unfortunately for African nations and other less developed countries, the World Bank's forecasts for the 1980s and 1990s predict low growth rates for the world-economy. These projections mean continuing bad times for less-developed states world-wide, especially for non-oil producing countries. With generally depressed markets for primary products, the poorest countries will be hard-pressed to maintain their present circumstances, and this only by significant improvements in governmental efficiency and decision making and

continuing aid from developed countries at current or increased levels. Indeed, some analysts despair that people in less developed countries, especially those living in "peripheral" areas, can improve their lot until there are far-reaching structural changes in the world economy. Given such discouraging projections for the foreseeable future, much will depend on the capabilities of African leaders, in the policies they formulate for their own countries, and in the relations they foster with neighboring states and countries in other parts of the world.

Prospects for less developed countries with oil reserves are considerably better, given World Bank projections for ongoing increases in energy prices. In recent years, significant quantities of oil have been discovered along the coasts of west and west central Africa which ensure additional income for a number of states. Their strengthened economies can significantly affect those of neighboring states, from the remittances of labor migrants and from purchases of foodstuffs and other commodities. Nigeria and Ivory Coast are already "regional cores" for West Africa; Cameroon, Gabon, and Angola can increasingly serve the same role for West Central Africa.

Many African countries possess great mineral wealth, and ongoing prospecting has located important new deposits in recent years. Their exploitation awaits increased world demand. Even modest improvements in world trade and more stable prices for minerals and other primary products would be of significant consequence for many African countries, as would improved international commodity agreements and long-term contracts negotiated as part of the "North-South dialogue." More predictable market conditions would make vastly easier the planning of government budgets and expedite development projects. Much can be accomplished in such circumstances by progressive leaders capable of harnessing Africans' strong commitment to improved standards of living.

More efficiently administered technical aid, especially applied to agriculture, can relieve present and projected food shortages and provide the respite needed to implement measures to reduce population increases. During the past two decades countries in east and south Asia have demonstrated that fertility rates can be significantly lowered and population increase slowed while at the same time improving agricultural productivity in conditions not dissimilar to tropical Africa. African countries can follow such examples, adapting and modifying Asian and other programs, starting from much lower population bases and population-land ratios.

Substantial increases in agricultural productivity can be achieved in many African countries by the application of techniques developed elsewhere in the world during the ongoing "Green Revolution." Most Africans farm their own land, and there are few disincentives to enterprise such as absentee landlords, chronic indebtedness to money-lenders, etc., such as exist in South Asia and elsewhere. Lacking financial resources and trained personnel, only a few African countries have yet made effective use of the high yield hybrids, fertilizers, improved irrigation techniques, pest control measures, etc., pioneered in other parts of the world. Most, if not all African countries can feed their present populations and more, and some countries have the potential to meet regional food needs for the foreseeable future. Huge, lightly populated Sudan with its vast soil and water resources may become the granary of the Middle East, besides producing much greater quantities of cotton, sugar, and other cash crops than at present.

Africa's sahelian and savanna regions have enormous potential for livestock production that can be achieved with expanded programs of eradication and control of trypanosomiasis, rinderpest, and other diseases, and by herd improvements through selective breeding. Africa can contribute significantly to increased world protein consumption by greatly augmenting present exports to Europe and the Middle East and by developing markets in Eastern Europe, Russia, and South and East Asia.

An improving world economy will benefit the tourist industry, blighted by recession and higher airfares due to increased petroleum prices and inflation. Notwithstanding that tourism is acknowledged a mixed blessing to the countries involved, it can be a valuable means of acquiring foreign exchange for countries with beaches and game parks protected from poachers, which attract sun-starved northern Europeans on winter holidays and camera-toting Americans and Japanese.

The extent to which individual African states will be able to take advantage of opportunities in the years of slow world economic growth projected for the 1980s and 1990s is problematical. The poorest states, especially those wracked by wars and civil strife, may remain impoverished and "undeveloping" for years to come, plagued by misgovernance, bloated and inefficient bureaucracies, bankrupt treasuries, undisciplined armies, corrupt police forces, decrepit infrastructure, grossly inadequate health and educational programs, crime-ridden cities in the "core" areas, banditry along the roads, and neo-subsistence patterns for people living in "peripheral" areas. For the people living in such countries, the principal economic outlets will continue to be labor migration to areas of economic development, wherever they may be found, however distant -- a reversion to conditions not dissimilar to pre-colonial times and the early decades of colonial rule.

On the multi-national level, if the likelihood of effective continent-wide leadership by the Organization of African states is problematical, prospects for regional groupings are quite promising. One consequence of the devastating 1968-1973 sahelian drought was the formation of a permanent inter-state committee of eight West African states to combat drought conditions in the Sahel (CILSS) together with European donor countries (Club du Sahel), focusing on food production and other aspects of economic development.

Another example is the states along the Senegal River (Senegal, Mauretania, and Mali) which are working in concert with donor countries in Europe and the Middle East and international agencies to build dams, produce and distribute electricity, and plan irrigation projects, which undertakings foster the growth of a Senegambia "regional core." Such combinations of African states have clear and over-riding purposes, and if present arrangements prove unworkable or ineffective, the countries involved must needs work together to develop more suitable organizations.

On a larger sphere, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), founded in 1975 and led by two "regional cores" (Nigeria and Ivory Coast) and comprising sixteen states, has undertaken the challenge of co-ordinating economic policies, and fostering regional planning by such means as progressive lowering of tariffs, reducing hindrances to labor migration, and improving road networks. These initiatives are paralleled by an organization of nine states in central and southern Africa. The Southern African Development

Coordination Conference (SADCC) formed in 1980 includes Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, and has as its objectives regional development and "economic liberation" from South Africa, the latter objective certain to be opposed by South Africa by various means. Much depends on a modus vivendi with South Africa, whether a short term "armistice" or the progressive reconciliation of issues on a long-term basis.

Besides the United Nations, the most important international association for most African states will continue to be their affiliation with the European Economic Community. There have been notable developments in recent years. Britain's entry into the EEC in 1973 made its former colonies eligible for association, most notably Nigeria, the most populous state in sub-Saharan Africa, and, in 1980, Zimbabwe, another important market for European countries. The former African colonies associated with the expanded EEC (10 countries in 1982) together with former European colonies in the West Indies and Pacific Ocean now number more than sixty nations and are collectively termed the ACP countries. Acting in concert, the ACP countries exercise far greater "clout" vis-a-vis the EEC countries in quinquennial negotiations than was the case in the 1960s. Besides mandating increased development funds, the 1975 and 1980 EEC-ACP conventions included for the first time emergency relief for the poorest countries from disastrous fluctuations in world market prices in certain commodities (Stabex for commodities and Minex for minerals). Another new clause permits ACP manufactures free entry to EEC countries. If the latter EEC concession is of only token consequence at present, it may have considerable future importance as ACP countries pursue industrial development.

The foregoing testifies that the colonial heritage indisputably continues to be of salient importance for African countries in economic and political matters. The same is true in other spheres: in enduring links in education, language, and cultural ties, the "moonbeams" of shared historical experiences.

Viewed in larger perspective, Africans' prospects for the future are inextricably linked with those of Americans and people of other nations of the world, whether "developed" or "less developed." For all share the same inextricable and growing links with the world-economy and the same hopes for increased world trade, ongoing scientific advances, and suppression of world conflict. In a rapidly changing world, with scientific breakthroughs in agriculture, treatment of disease, and the ongoing development of new technologies to meet human needs, current perspectives concerning African development in the short-run may prove overly pessimistic; and as for the long-term, what historian can fail to hear the echoes of the remark made by that Roman legionnaire departing from Britain so long ago: "They'll never make it!"

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Exposition and analysis of the problems of less developed countries comprises a large and tendentious literature. The framework of the foregoing essay owes much to two scholars: Ann Seidman's insightful seminar presentation at Indiana University in September

1970; and Immanuel Wallerstein's stimulating analyses, most concisely expressed in "The Three Stages of African Involvement in the World-Economy," in P.C.W. Gutkind and I. Wallerstein, eds., The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa (Sage Publications 1976).

For background reading on the period covered by this essay see relevant chapters in Martin and O'Meara, Africa and sections of other books cited in the Bibliographical Notes following the first essay.

For an admirable discussion of much relevant literature, consult Frederick Cooper, "Africa and the World Economy," African Studies Review, XXIV, 2/3 (1981). A wealth of statistics and analysis is presented in the World Bank's Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action (paperback 1981; reprinted 1982). World Bank forecasts for the 1980s and 1990s are conveniently summarized in a twelve-page pamphlet, "World Development Report, 1981." The worsening circumstances in most less developed countries in recent decades are delineated in Assefa Bequele and Rolf Van Der Hoeven, "Poverty and Inequality in sub-Saharan Africa," International Labour Review, Vol. 119, No. 3 (May-June 1980), 381-392; and Keith Griffin, "Economic Development in a Changing World," World Development, Vol. 9, No. 3 (1981), 221-226.

Two books that may appeal to advanced students are John Ellis, The Social History of the Machine Gun (Pantheon, 1975) and Naomi Caiden and Aaron Wildavsky, Planning and Budgeting in Poor Countries (Wiley, 1974). Ellis' book includes numerous illustrations and will bemuse readers with the tragically unlearned lesson that after cutting down non-whites for decades, Europeans fighting World War I seemed astonished to learn that machine guns were no less lethal against each other. The droll-but-serious "Prologue" of the Caiden and Wildavsky book may stimulate students to peruse other sections of an informative introductory work on economic development. Colin Turnbull, The Lonely African, a sensitive and perceptive study by a British anthropologist, is highly recommended for background reading on the period of transition from colonial rule to independence.

"Keeping current" on African affairs requires reading a superior newspaper that focuses on contemporary world inter-relationships, such as the Christian Science Monitor or the highly recommended English weekly news journal, The Economist, which is available via airmail at a reduced teacher and student subscription rate. Two free U.S. government publications that are especially useful are AF Press Clips, compiled weekly from a number of newspapers and journals by the Department of State (Washington, D.C. 20520), and Agenda, a monthly publication of the Agency for International Development (Office of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20523), which features short photo-essays concerning problems of less developed countries and development projects world-wide.

The publications of the University Field Staff International (prior to 1982, American University Field Staff) are written by scholars with many years' experience in the parts of the world they cover. Reports on Africa by Richard Critchfield and J. Gus Liebenow are especially recommended; their perspectives -- historical, current, and future -- ensure that their writings have continuing value.

Ongoing developments in Southern and Central Africa are delineated by experts in two volumes edited by Gwendolen M. Carter and Patrick O'Meara, Southern Africa: The Continuing Crisis (Indiana University Press, 2nd Edition, 1982) and International Politics in Southern Africa (Indiana University Press, 1982). Both volumes are available in paperback.

Novels written by African authors are one of the best means of gaining insights into the manifold changes Africans have experienced in the past two or three generations. Especially recommended are Camara Laye, The African Child; Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart and No Longer at Ease; Ferdinand Oyono, Houseboy; James Ngugi, Weep Not Child; and Joseph Mwangi Kariuki, Mau Mau Detainee (all but the first are available in paperback in the Heinemann African Writers Series). Three of many fine novels that describe life in South Africa are Ezekiel Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue; Alan Paton, Too Late the Phalarope; and Andre P. Brink, Looking at Darkness. V.S. Naipaul, A Bend in the River, portrays some of the vicissitudes Zaire has experienced since independence.

The foregoing may be effectively combined in World History courses with novels depicting similar circumstances in other parts of the world in colonial and post-colonial times, such as George Orwell, Burmese Days; Kamala Markandaya, Nectar in a Sieve, about changing life in rural India; and Carolina Maria de Jesus, Child of the Dark, about life in a 'third world' urban slum (Sao Paulo, Brazil).

A worthwhile project to prepare students for lectures and discussions concerning the contemporary world is to assign brief (five page) papers describing less developed countries of their choice. Students should attempt to answer as many of the following questions as they can, using standard reference works.

When did the country become independent?

What form of government did it have at independence? Now?

What social classes or ethnic groups control the government, armed forces, and religious and educational institutions?

What are the country's principal exports? Total amounts and %'s.

Who owns the principal resources: mines, plantations, etc.?

The principal economic ties are with which countries?

Does the country belong to a marketing arrangement for its primary product(s)?

What are the consequences of the "Green Revolution?"

What are the consequences of the OPEC oil price increases?

Role in the North-South Dialogue?

Role in the Laws of the Sea conferences?

Foreign Aid: from which countries? How much?

Population and rate of population increase?

Invariably students compare their findings with others, and share their dismay in class at not being able to "find" basic information, or express puzzlement at widely divergent statistics concerning

demographic matters and estimates of other sorts. Such remarks provide an opportunity for teachers to query as to why such might be the case for specific countries, or to observe that planners must somehow make decisions in such circumstances (analogous to playing the game of croquet in <u>Alice</u> <u>in</u> <u>Wonderland</u>).

Alternatively, students may prepare papers on major groupings of less developed countries, describing their inter-relationships with world markets and developed countries, e.g., the ACP (African, Caribbean, and Pacific) countries and their association with the EEC (European Economic Community); ASEAN (Association of the Southeast Asian Nations); and the Andean Pact countries in Latin America. Such papers provide invaluable "specifics" so that students better appreciate the generalizations conveyed in assignments and lectures.

A fruitful subject of discussion for advanced students is to introduce them to the philosophical and moral quicksands of whether "economic development" and "modernization" for less developed countries necessarily means that "they should become more like us"(?). This provocative theme can be introduced at different points of a World History or African History course, for example while dealing with Europe's transformations during the Renaissance and Reformation, or when discussing missionary objectives in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Extended discussion is best saved for the end of the course, when students have completed assignments and are better prepared to grapple with the issues involved.

One means to encourage students to pull-together and reflect on what they have learned in reading assignments, lectures, discussions, novels, and research on specific countries is take-home final examination questions such as the following:

Required Essay. Answer all parts (a,b,c). No more than <u>eight</u> pages total. Parts a and b count 15%; part c counts 10%.

    a) Describe the chief economic characteristics of "less developed countries."

    b) What are some of the chief social and demographic problems confronting most ldc's?

    c) Why is the "internalization" of "Western" social practices and cultural values an issue of debate?

You may use examples concerning the country you studied.

Write an essay on the following. The limit is <u>seven</u> bluebook pages.

    Imagine an African man or woman eighty years of age living in a village one hundred miles or so in the interior of either West or East Africa. What changes in his/her "traditional" way of life has he/she observed or participated in during his/her lifetime?

    Cite examples from the novels or autobiographical literature you have read for the course which aid non-Africans in understanding the manifold changes Africa has undergone in the past eighty years. Be as specific as you can.

List the novels and autobiographical literature you have read for the
course, underlining one word for brief reference in your essay
(example: Achebe, <u>Things</u> Fall Apart). Discuss <u>two</u> of the following
topics, citing examples from the books. You are encouraged to include
material from Turnbull's <u>Lonely</u> <u>African.</u>

Labor migration   "Westernization"
European rule   Themes selected for treatment by
Missionary activities   African authors; values
Independence movements   projected in novels
Education in European-type schools

The limit is <u>eight</u> bluebook pages.

The African Heritage and the Slave Trade

> What is Africa to me:
> Copper sun or scarlet sea,
> Jungle star or jungle track,
> Strong bronzed men, or regal black
> Women from whose loins I sprang
> When the birds of Eden sang?
>
> Countee Cullen, Heritage

Until comparatively recently, Afro-Americans have known almost nothing about the African continent and its peoples, and, with few exceptions, taken little interest in their African origins. Such information concerning Africa which Black Americans did acquire over the years was generally untrue, or grossly misrepresented, and derogatory to themselves as well as to their African forebearers. This rejection of their African heritage was a reflection of the experience of Black people in America: the trauma of the African slave trade, the nature of the slave system in America, the ignorance of all Americans, white as well as black, about Africa, and, most important perhaps, the long-persisting efforts of Afro-Americans to assimilate into the dominant white culture and eradicate all associations with the African past. The long, unhappy era of self-rejection, fortunately, has ended, and Afro-Americans in the present era are re-examining their African heritage and reformulating their relationship with white Americans.

To appreciate the American stereotype of Africa in all its perniciousness, one need only cite a passage from a sensational best-seller of generations past, the Reverend Thomas Dixon, Junior's The Clansman, published in 1905. (Ten years later the novel was made into a highly acclaimed motion picture, The Birth of a Nation, which received the approbation of no less a personage than the historian-president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, a friend of Dixon from university days.) The subject of Dixon's book was the genesis of the Ku Klux Klan, the white supremacist organization which appeared in the American South after the Civil War, in the so-called Reconstruction era, and set about to intimidate former slaves who seemed to entertain ideas about racial equality. Viewing its members as men consumed with a spirit of patriotism and the ideals of Christianity, the author portrayed the Klan as an organization dedicated to defense of "the southern way of life" -- the way of white supremacy -- against upstart freedmen and conniving white "carpetbaggers" from the North. In a particularly melodramatic passage one of Dixon's dramatis personae delivers one of the most categorical and damning statements on Africa's past which exists in print, an uncompromising and Jove-like judgement which stigmatizes Africans as less than human. In so doing, of course, the speaker justifies the perpetual dominance of Black people by the white race.

> Since the dawn of history the Negro has owned the
> Continent of Africa -- rich beyond the dreams of
> poet's fancy, crunching acres of diamonds beneath

his bare black feet. Yet he never picked one up
from the dust until a white man showed to him its
glittering light. His land swarmed with powerful
and docile animals, yet he never dreamed a harness,
cart, or sled. A hunter by necessity, he never
made an axe, spear or arrowhead worth preserving
beyond the moment of its use. He lived as an ox,
content to graze for an hour. In a land of stone
and timber, he never sawed a foot of lumber, carved
a block, or built a house save of broken sticks and
mud. With league on league of ocean strand and
miles of inland seas, for four thousand years he
watched their surface ripple under the wind, heard
the thunder of the surf on his beach, the howl of
the storm over his head, gazed on the dim blue
horizon calling him to worlds that lie beyond, and
yet he never dreamed a sail! He lived as his
fathers lived — stole his food, worked his wife,
sold his children, ate his brother, content to
drink, sing, dance and sport as the ape!

What is so extraordinary about such arrant nonsense is not that so
many white Americans believed it but that so many Black Americans
accepted it as well, and continued to do so until recent times.

Acceptance by Blacks of the notion that they derived from a
grossly inferior culture was, in truth, a backhanded tribute, first,
to the efficiency of the slave system in North America and, second, to
the enormous assimilative capacity of the dominant white culture.
Slave owners in the Old South so effectively mixed ethnic groups and
destroyed African social institutions, languages, names, and religions
that, to an extent unparalleled elsewhere in the New World, the
African heritage became almost completely forgotten, and, in time,
despised. Long before their emancipation from bonded slavery,
moreover, Afro-Americans responded like most other immigrant groups in
North America — Germans, Irish, Poles, Italians — and began rapidly
to acculturate to the accepted norms of the dominant white,
Anglo-Saxon culture. And, like other immigrants, Blacks also eagerly
assisted in dismantling and effacing their own heritage.

Indeed, Afro-Americans seemed to try even harder than did other
immigrant groups. And in what seems in retrospect an almost pathetic
effort to assimilate into white culture, they straightened their hair,
whitened their skin, and selectively married the lightest among
themselves. They modeled their behavior patterns on prevailing white
mores. "White was right!" Insofar as they were financially able,
Afro-Americans enthusiastically subscribed to the materialistic
aspects of American culture: they purchased the most popular or
fashionable make or model of every conceivable commodity, whether
automobiles, television sets, corn flakes, after-shave lotions, or
Scotch whiskeys. Looters in the Detroit riots of the summer of 1967
were observed to steal the top brand names first! Afro-Americans, in
short, did everything they could to become as American as anyone else.
And undoubtedly they, like other hyphenated Americans, would have been
successful if only they could have changed the color of their skin.

At the same time that they were assimilating into the dominant white culture, most Black Americans, as mentioned, were accepting uncritically the prevailing white stereotypes of Africa. Accordingly, they almost universally were rejecting their African heritage as something shameful and humiliating, and seeking to divest themselves of any association with the so-called "Dark Continent." The handful of Afro-Americans who behaved differently did so less from being informed about Africa than from the shrewd assumption that because "Whitey" had demonstrably lied about so many other things he probably had distorted the truth about Africa as well.

Often as not, black children received their first lessons in the inferiority of things African in their own homes, and reinforcing their prejudice at an early age were school textbooks which depicted Africans as the most primitive people on the globe. Exposure to various media fixed such impressions almost irrevocably on the minds of black youths. There were "adventure" novels dealing with African subjects, religious pamphlets which appealed for funds to evangelize the benighted heathen in Africa, comic strips like The Phantom and Sheena, Queen of the Jungle, and perhaps most influential of all, newsreels shot in Africa and movies, particularly those of the never-ending Tarzan series which played to insatiable audiences, black no less than white. Such presentations almost invariably portrayed Africa as "jungle" inhabited by assorted "natives," that is, groups composed of primitive, child-like innocents with improbable ratios of barebreasted, nubile young females, or, alternatively, half-crazed savages who practiced unspeakably barbaric rites and were kept in check only by the unflinching courage of Great White Hunters, the civilizing influences of self-sacrificing missionaries, and dedicated colonial administrators who had taken up "the white man's burden."

A few Afro-Americans triumphed over such brainwashing and learned something about what Africa was really like. Still, for the great majority of Blacks, subjected as they were to an unending barrage of prejudice and misinformation, any mention of Africa and Africans -- just as with white Americans -- brought instantaneously and unthinkingly to their minds such shameful images as "savage," "jungle," "cannibal," "primitive," "heathen," "naked," "pagan," "uncivilized," and other debasing stereotypes. Harold Isaacs, who investigated this phenomenon at the close of the 1950s, made the following analysis in The New World of Negro Americans:

> In the American Negro universe the word "black"
> became the key word of rejection, an insult, a
> fighting word. Prefixed to any name or obscenity,
> it multiplied the assault many times. I suggest
> that every time black was used or perceived this
> way, the word African came after it, whether it was
> actually spoken or not, whether it was there or
> remained an echo in the mind. For the Africans
> were the blacks, the source of all the blackness,
> the depths from which all had come, and from which
> all wanted to rise. Africa was the "darkness" they
> wanted to leave behind in order to rise to the
> "light" of the white man's world, his religions,
> philosophies, his ways of life.

Black Americans accepted such views about Africa, lacking information otherwise and engulfed by the dominant white culture. In *Nobody Knows My Name*, published in 1961, James Baldwin evocatively described Afro-Americans' "social panic," fearing to lose status on the American "ladder" leading to success.

> This really amounts sometimes to a kind of social
> paranoia. One cannot afford to lose status on this
> particular ladder, for the prevailing notion of
> American life seems to involve a kind of
> rung-by-rung ascension to some hideously desirable
> state. If this is one's concept of life, obviously
> one cannot afford to slip back one rung. When one
> slips, one slips back not a rung but back into
> chaos and no longer knows who he is. And this
> reason, this fear, suggests to me one of the real
> reasons for the status of the Negro in this
> country. In a way, the Negro tells us where the
> bottom is: because he is there, and where he is,
> beneath us, we know where the limits are and now
> far we must not fall. We must not fall beneath
> him.

Baldwin's analysis may, perhaps, be taken one step further following Harold Isaacs' analysis: if American whites needed Afro-Americans to define the bottom limits, so Afro-Americans may have needed Africans to occupy the rung below them.

As recently as the early 1960s -- a light-year ago in American race relations -- students at Lincoln, Howard, and other Negro universities and colleges derided newly arrived African students with such insults and epithets as "jungle-bunny," and refused to socialize with them as equals. (For their part, African students, coming as many of them did from independent nations ruled by Blacks, sometimes proclaimed superiority over Afro-Americans as products of a society dominated at every level by whites.) Lamentably, stereotypes and misconceptions concerning Africa continue to be perpetuated in advertising, cartoon strips, films, and other media. African students participating in "outreach" programs may still be asked, "Is is true that Africans live in trees?" One adept West African commenced the re-education process by catering to American chauvinism; he responded to New York state schoolchildren by replying, "Yes, and in my country the U.S. Embassy is in the tallest tree!"

The recent past, fortunately, has brought innumerable changes in the ways Afro-Americans regard themselves. As a result of concessions won by the equal rights movement, gains in the economic realm, and, most important perhaps, the new seriousness with which their white countrymen view them, black Americans have come to feel a new sense of pride and self-confidence. And a great percentage of them, particularly those who are young, now accept and, more than that, glorify, their blackness or degree thereof. Black Americans also have developed a new respect for Africa and Africans, and have experienced deep satisfaction in the achievement of national independence by African peoples and the admission of new African nation-states to the United Nations.

Still, many Afro-Americans have not yet redefined their relationship with the African motherland and its disparate peoples, cultures, and languages. Here in truth remains one of the challenges facing Black intellectuals.

The re-education of black Americans — of all Americans — about Africa has hardly begun. A broad and concentrated scholarly effort, both interdisciplinary and international in scope, has in recent decades greatly increased previously existing knowledge about Africa and brought about a restructuring of previously existing patterns of scholarly analysis. One notable result has been the discrediting of many long-standing racist and colonialist stereotypes. A continent long denigrated as having "no history" has been shown to have had a remarkable past. Paleontologists and archaeologists have established that humankind had its origins on the African continent and that most of the major human developments of Paleolithic times (more than three million years ago to about 10,000 B.C.) evolved there. Far from being isolated, the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa have for thousands of years engaged in commerce and participated in a wide spectrum of cultural exchanges with the Mediterranean world via the Nile Valley and trans-Saharan caravan routes and with the trading peoples of the Indian Ocean.

In refutation of those who have asserted that sub-Saharan Africa had no civilizations, there has appeared in recent years an extensive literature, popular as well as scholarly, on such states as Kush, which dominated the upper Nile Valley from the time of Egypt's Middle Kingdom until after the beginning of the Christian era; Axum, in the Ethiopian highlands; and, in West Africa, Ife and Benin. These civilizations had complex and sophisticated social and political organizations and rich cultural traditions which gave birth to works of art counted among the world's treasures. This is not to mention, of course, the hundreds of less renowned societies which produced sculptures, masks, and art forms in stone, terra cotta, bronze, wood, cloth, and other materials which today are assiduously sought out by collectors and have had profound effect on modern art world-wide.

Besides demonstrating that sub-Saharan Africa has a rich cultural heritage, recent scholarship has provided Afro-Americans with new perspectives on the Atlantic slave trade, an historical nightmare which should be made known for what it was — and was not.

The first slaves of white men in America, inevitably, were Indians. But almost as soon as they set foot in the New World, white explorers and settlers from Europe transmitted diseases endemic to Europe and Africa which rapidly attained pandemic proportions in the new environment. Seconded by malnutrition caused by the disruption of Indian societies, such diseases had almost incalculable demographic consequences. Those Indians who survived, or were pressed into European service before they were stricken, were in many cases unwilling or incapable of working in accord with European purposes. Many had lived as hunters and gatherers or were only part-time agriculturalists, were unaccustomed to the routine of daily labor, or were unsatisfactory in other respects. Indian slavery, as a consequence, failed to become a fixture in the white man's society in the New World.

The Portuguese and Spanish were the first to introduce captive Africans to the New World, but it is worth noting for comparative

purposes that the English for a time sought to meet the increasing demands for labor in their colonies in the West Indies and North America by means of various types of white servitude, as Eric Williams has emphasized in his celebrated work <u>Capitalism and Slavery</u>. Common types of unfree labor shipped to America included bonded servants, criminals, and Irish and Scottish prisoners of war who were dispatched to the West Indies following Oliver Cromwell's military triumphs in the middle of the seventeenth century. However, the supply of poor people, criminals, and prisoners of war was grossly insufficient to meet demands for labor in English America. During the eighteenth century, moreover, English economic theory came to recognize the advantages of keeping the worthy poor at home to provide a supply of cheap workers for domestic industries. Most important, planters in English America, as time passed, became convinced that black slaves from Africa were a more profitable investment than were white servants from England. Accordingly, the English, to satisfy their needs for labor in the West Indies and North America, turned increasingly to Africa.

Why did planters in both English America and Latin America consider Africans a superior investment?

First, there was seemingly an inexhaustible supply of African laborers. There wasn't, of course, for many parts of sub-Saharan Africa were lightly populated, but that many Europeans believed such to be the case testifies to the trading capabilities of African middlemen who supplied European slavers. Second, captive African workers seemed a better investment than white indentured servants because they were bartered in Africa for European manufactures at relatively advantageous rates of exchange, were not emancipated after a stipulated period of service, and laws enacted in the colonies stipulated that their servile status descended to their children. Third, Africans were skilled in tropical agriculture, with which Europeans were totally unfamiliar. Finally, Africans had a comparatively high resistance to tropical diseases, especially malaria. Philip Curtin has estimated that first-generation Afro-Americans, because of the advantage of being transported from one tropical disease environment to another, had a survival rate in tropical areas in the New World of more than three to one over first-generation Euro-Americans. (That advantage, however, proved only temporary, for after several generations both whites and blacks tend to have roughly the same death rate in the same environment. The importance of environmental factors in rates of survival is reflected in an interesting statistical projection: although fewer than five per cent of the slaves shipped from Africa to the Americas landed in the present-day United States, their descendants now comprise the largest single group of blacks in the New World.)

Because of the seemingly insatiable demand for capitve Africans in English America, Spanish America, Brazil, and the French West Indies, the Atlantic slave trade expanded rapidly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Curtin, in his book <u>The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census</u>, has estimated that prior to the year 1770 more black Africans than white Europeans arrived in the Western Hemisphere. Curtin estimated that in the 350-odd years between Europe's discovery of America and the suppression of the slave trade in the ninteenth century between nine and a half and ten million Africans survived the

trans-Atlantic passage to the Americas. Note that these estimates refer only to the Atlantic slave trade; millions of other Africans were transported across the Sahara Desert and the Indian Ocean to markets in North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and islands with plantation economies in the Indian Ocean.

The organization of the Atlantic slave trade is most easily described by the time-worn phrase "the triangular trade," which refers to a typical slave vessel's voyage, first, from Europe to West Africa, then to America with a cargo of captives and, finally, home to Europe. There were other "triangles," including one commencing in New England. And many slave vessels simply sailed back and forth across the Atlantic from Brazil and other colonies. But the European triangular route most conveniently illustrates the principal features of the trade and the economic exchanges which took place.

On the first side of the triangle slave ships usually departed Europe during the autumn or winter months so as to arrive in West Africa during the dry season when the paths of trade to the African interior were open and climatic conditions in West Africa were at their most healthful. A slaver's outward cargo normally included assortments of goods of European growth and manufacture, for example, wines, brandies, guns and gunpowder, Venetian beads, swords, cutlasses, knives, pots, pans, and hardward of all sorts. Because many African communities preferred to have their own skilled smiths work metal into domestic implements and weapons, cargoes included iron bars and copper rods. Slavers delivered to Africa, via Europe, products of colonies in America and South Asia; these included tobacco and rum from the Americas and cotton cloth from India. Africans were especially particular about cloth, and Indian cottons were unmatched in quality and price by European manufactures down to the early nineteenth century.

When the slaver arrived in Africa from Europe its cargo was bartered for captives, either in direct trade with African middlemen or through European or Eur-African intermediaries established in forts or factories along the coast. The ship's doctor would make thorough physical examinations of all slaves offered for sale, and individuals with defects would be accorded lower prices or rejected altogether. Slaves often were branded after purchase and payment for them withheld until they were safely loaded aboard the ship; otherwise African middlemen might surreptitiously exchange sick or infirm slaves for healthy ones, or arrange that canoes transporting the slaves to the vessel be upset so the slaves would be "lost," recovered, and sold again. Europeans practiced similar deceptions: they diluted brandy and rum with water and other adulterants, mixed charcoal with gunpowder, and used fraudulent weights and measures.

Slaves usually could be taken aboard ship and confined with little difficulty. Since most captives were so prostrated by grief and terror as to be incapable of resolute action in their own behalf, few escaped before debarkation. Most captives had never seen the ocean or a white man before their purchase and few had the slightest conception of the fate which was in store for them. Some believed that they were being taken by the whites to be killed and eaten, a fear which in no way diminished when they caught glimpses of European sailors drinking

wine and eating salt pork. A belief widespread among many African societies that sustained captives during this period of trauma and afterwards in the Americas, was the conviction that after death their spirits would return to Africa for reincarnation in a new generation.

Who was enslaved in Africa? Just about who might be expected. Most important of all, members of _other_ ethnic groups. African societies rarely sold their own people into slavery, and then only criminals and social misfits; rather they sold their neighbors, or unknowns, obtained either by warfare or trade. Of those Africans captured in wars and raids and sold into slavery, the great majority were people from the lower ranks of society, for, by paying ransom, societies often redeemed captives who were members of their elite. Generally, more men than women were sold into the Atlantic slave trade, women being retained in Africa because of their importance as cultivators and because their offspring would increase the numbers and strength of the societies that held them.

In addition to people captured in warfare, criminals and deviants, as mentioned, were enslaved. Indeed, harsher justice was meted out in many African societies as the demand for slaves increased, and in such circumstances the penalties of banishment and sale became more frequent and arbitrary and covered a greater number of crimes and social offenses. Some captives were transported hundreds of miles to the coast and sold several times along the way, but most came from areas close to the ocean and navigable rivers.

Many African societies held "domestic" slaves, but generally speaking their conditions of servitude were in no way comparable to those found on plantations in Brazil or the West Indies or South Carolina. Given the limited economic and role differentiations in most African societies, slaves in Africa normally worked at many of the same tasks which occupied other members of the community. In some highly stratified societies slaves were assigned occupations such as guardians of the ruler, counselors, and tax collectors. In some African societies, especially those which underwent considerable transmutation in the course of carrying on coastal trade, there was a good deal of social mobility, and talented slaves sometimes rose to the highest positions of leadership.

Once "trade" slaves were attached to an African society, they were by degrees incorporated into it as members. Considered "kinless" persons at the outset of their servitude, slaves progressed toward freedom as they established ties of community and kinship. Such ties were established in a variety of ways: by marriage to a member of the community, by bearing the child of a free man; or, in the case of a child, growing up in the community and going through the usual rites of passage along with other village children. African societies had strong sanctions against selling domestic slaves who had established ties with family and community. Generally, only those who assaulted or threatened violence against their masters or other free persons in a community, or otherwise displayed incorrigible anti-social tendencies, would be liable to sale into the Atlantic slave trade.

In buying captives in Africa, European slave traders distinguished between different societies. Captives from some ethnic groups fetched premium prices while others were held in low repute by planters in the Americas because or real or imagined attributes. Ashanti, for example, were favored as work gang supervisors and for service in the

Dutch military forces in the East Indies. Wolof women were sought as ladies' maids in the French Antilles for their unsurpassed knowledge of feminine artifices. Ibos, by contrast, were considered a poor monetary risk and difficult to transport because they were reputed prone to fits of depression and suicide. Captives ultimately sold in the United States came from many West African societies, plus some from the area of modern-day Zaire and Angola.

Since it was impossible for any one European state to control the seas along the entire coast of West and West Central Africa, every country with any pretension to colonial expansion at one time or another participated in the slave trade, including Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, France, England, Denmark, and Sweden. Forts and factories of the slave traders were established on land for which the resident Europeans paid an annual rent. Europeans were contstrained to pay rent for the land they used for trading establishments, to make a variety of other payments to African landlords, including export taxes on slaves, special gifts on the opening of trade and the closing of trade, as well as additional presents or "shake-hands" to African notables to smooth negotiations.

Coastal societies generally did not allow Europeans to trade inland; they reserved the profits of middleman trade for themselves. Europeans sometimes tried to redress their disadvantages ashore by kidnapping Africans on board their vessels, bombarding coastal towns, or otherwise capitalizing on their power afloat. The traditional African response to such treachery was to inflict retribution on the next vessel of the same country which happened along to trade, or in some instances the next whites of any nation. As Africans the length of the coast were wont to declare: "The sea may belong to the white man, but the land belongs to Africans." Not until the latter part of the nineteenth century did Europeans gain control of land of Africa.

What were the effects of the slave trade on African societies? The most obvious consequence was the loss of population. Besides the estimated nine and a half to ten million captives who crossed the Atlantic safely, perhaps a million and a half to two million others died during the passage. In addition, untold millions perished in slave raids, during transport to the coast, and in the forts and barracoons awaiting shipment. The effects of malnutrition, disease and privation on societies stripped of their most productive members are as yet incalculable, and perhaps always will be. An historial irony -- if such exists -- is that introduction in Africa of such New World food crops as maize, manioc, peanuts, sweet potatoes, and the pineapple, plus the ongoing diffusion of Asian food crops introduced in Africa earlier, contributed to restoring population losses due to the slave trade.

The voyage across the Atlantic in a slaving vessel -- the second side of the "triangle" -- is widely referred to in literature as the "Middle Passage." Regarding conditions aboard slavers during the Middle Passage, a few apologists for the slave trade presented a picture of well-fed and happy slaves, reconciled to their fate, some even singing and dancing in recreational periods aboard ship as they crossed the Atlantic. Such accounts hardly squared with reality. Reality consisted of extremely cramped and often squalid holds, seasickness, chains and shakles, savage punishments for attempted rebellions, the ravishing of women, and other brutal and coarse treatment on the part of crews.

There is an extensive and growing literature on those infamies, and readers are cautioned to discriminate between eyewitness descriptions and purported historical reconstructions. Many of the most lurid accounts of the Middle Passage were composed by abolitionists in the nineteenth century to fan public outrage against the slave trade. Very few abolitionists, of course, had any personal knowledge of conditions aboard a slave ship. Accounts by angry publicists, moreover, are misleading because they invariably ignore or distract the reader's attention from the fundamental consideration on which the slave trade rested, namely, that every concern for profit, professional advancement and the personal safety of the ship's company dictated that reasonable care and attention be given to the health and safety of the slave cargo. Ships' officers and doctors, for that reason, were given bounties determined by how successful they were in prosecuting their voyages with dispatch and minimum loss of life. Slave ships were crowded, but not to a significantly greater extent than troop transports, emigrant vessels, or convict ships, and available evidence indicates that prior to abolition of the slave trade slavers compiled comparable records for preservation of life in transit -- because it paid them to do so.

A good deal of thought and organization, of necessity, went into transporting hundreds of captives across the mid-Atlantic in the crowded confines of a sailing vessel. Most important, there had to be enough food and fresh water to sustain captives and crew for five or six weeks or longer. During the voyage slaves normally received two hot meals a day and, unless weather conditions did not permit, were brought up on deck for fresh air and exercise. Those who, out of grief or terror or rage, refused to eat or exercise were punished, usually by whipping, until they did as they were ordered. Captives were given salt-water baths, and while they were exercising on deck their quarters were cleaned and aired, not to make life more comfortable for them, but to reduce the likelihood of an outbreak of disease aboard ship. Disease was the great scourge of slavers, and any captive who was found ill was isolated. If a slave came down with a particularly lethal or crippling disease, notably smallpox or eye infections causing blindness, which might spread to the rest of the cargo, he or she might be cast overboard -- one of the indisputable "horrors" of the Middle Passage.

According to all accounts, the highest death rate aboard slave ships was among white sailors rather than black captives. Estimates are that one seaman in five died during the triangular voyage, mainly because, unlike black captives, they possessed no immunities to tropical diseases encountered on both sides of the Atlantic. Knowing the risks -- and also rarely promised bonuses, as were ships' officers, for a successful voyage -- ordinary seamen as a rule detested serving aboard slavers. As a result, seamen often were shanghaied aboard slave vessels in European ports or in other ways coerced into service on slavers.

When a vessel arrived safely in the Americas and unloaded its human cargo, it might be laden with sugar, rum, tobacco, and other plantation crops for the passage across the Atlantic to Europe, the final side of the "triangle." The entire triangular voyage normally required about a year. And it garnered substantial profits -- that is, if the slaver managed to avoid shipwreck, slave uprisings, epidemics, and capture by men-of-war of hostile nations, privateers, or pirates.

Stripped to its basic elements, the slave trade provided European entrepreneurs with the hardy and experienced labor force required to exploit the resources of the New World. The agricultural, commercial, and industrial development of the Americas and Europe accelerated as a result, while the African continent received only marginal benefits. In return for the loss of millions of young men and women, African societies obtained for the most part luxuries and non-durable merchandise which were consumed, used up, or worn out.

Where in the Americas did slavers deposit their cargoes of involuntary immigrants to the New World — immigrants whose descendants would by the twentieth century equal about one third of the black population of sub-Saharan Africa?

Although in the present day roughly a third of the black population in the Western Hemisphere lives in the United States, very few slavers, after completing the Middle Passage, dropped anchor in ports in North America. The overwhelming majority instead steered to Brazil or the West Indies. Many of the captives destined to work on farms and plantations in Virginia, South Carolina, and other southern states were unloaded first in the West Indies and "seasoned" before being shipped to North America.

North America in fact received only a comparatively small number of the captives — fewer than five per cent, according to the best estimates. This was so because the lower mortality rate among the slave population in North America, as compared with tropical areas in the Caribbean and South America, simply meant that North American slave-owners required importation of fewer replacements than did their counterparts elsewhere in the Americas. (The comparative trickle of slaves into the present-day United States, incidentally, resulted in correspondingly less renewal of African social and cultural attributes in North America than in other parts of the New World.) The overwhelming majority of Africans brought to the present-day United States, moreover, arrived in North America before the War of Independence. Which means that, in terms of time, black Americans of the present era have deeper roots in North America's soil than do scores of millions of their white countrymen — white countrymen who have sometimes viewed them almost as aliens in American society.

As mentioned, approximately ten million Africans were carried to the Americas, a migration of immense proportions that had incalculable economic, political, and social ramifications in the countries of their ultimate destination. Indeed, scholars have only begun to study the enormous contributions to New World societies by men and women of African descent — not only the building of economic structures, but in the social and cultural spheres as well. For as the eminent historian C. Vann Woodward has commented in "Clio with Soul," "So far as their culture is concerned, all Americans are part Negro."

Still to be determined is the extent to which mutuality of interest among Blacks of the diaspora can be fostered and maintained. For culture no less than color is significant in human affairs, and it is evident that the latter alone will not be sufficient to establish meaningful long-term relationships between Africans and the descendants of Africans in other parts of the world. When Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver returned to the United States from exile, he stated that the "Back to Africa Movement" is dead, and related that there were "cultural chasms" between black Americans and

Africans: "I felt as distant from some Africans as from some people in Asia." Kwame Toure, formerly Stokley Carmichael, who married an African and who lived in Africa a number of years, would emphatically disagree. Ever succinct, Dick Gregory bemusedly related that visiting Africa he received the greatest shock of his life when he found out that he was a "chocolate-colored American white man."

Newly found interest in the land of their ancestors has motivated many Afro-Americans to identify with and champion the new African nation-states. Many Afro-Americans have visited Africa, as scholars, Peace Corps volunteers, and as tourists. Afro-Americans traveling to Africa with little or no knowledge of the countries visited have experienced many of the frustrations and misunderstandings of tourists everywhere. Some have espoused a permanent return to the motherland. Their expressions of enthusiasm have at times disconcerted and puzzled Africans. If Afro-Americans have been welcomed in Africa as visitors, only those individuals possessing investment capital or expertise needed by developing countries have been encouraged to remain.

One of the principal determinants in future relations between Africans and Afro-Americans will be the effectiveness of Black Studies and African Studies programs and Black-controlled media in educating Afro-Americans about African societies and cultures. For most Afro-Americans know little about the continent and are sometimes as prone as are their white countrymen to misunderstand the values and aspirations of Africans. The late Tom Mboya of Kenya expressed that truism after an abrasive exchange with black militants in Harlem in the summer of 1969:

> What is unrealistic about the proposal [to return to Africa] is the ease with which some black Americans think they can throw off their American culture and become African. For example, some think that to identify with Africa one should wear a shaggy beard or a piece of cloth on one's head or a cheap garment on one's body. I find here a complete misunderstanding of what African culture really means. An African walks barefoot or wears sandals made of old tires not because it is his culture but because he lives in poverty. We live in mud and wattle huts and buy cheap Hong Kong fabrics not because it is part of our culture, but because these are conditions imposed on us today by poverty and by limitations in technical, educational and other resources. White people have often confused the symbols of our poverty with our culture. I would hope that black people would not make the same error.
>
> Our culture is something much deeper. It is the sum of our personality and our attitude toward life. The basic qualities that distinguish it are our extended family ties and

the codes governing relations between old and young, our concept of mutual social responsibility and communal activities, our sense of humor, our belief in a supreme being and our ceremonies for birth, marriage and death. These things have a deep meaning for us, and they pervade our culture, regardless of tribe or clan. They are qualities that shape our lives, and they will influence the new institutions that we are now establishing.

If few Black Americans are presently informed about Africa, the number is steadily increasing due to the efforts of Black Studies and African Studies programs and the thousands of Africans who attend American colleges and universities and serve as interpreters of African culture to Americans (and on their return home, of American culture to fellow Africans). So long as their dream of a life of dignity and equal opportunity and justice in the United States remains unfulfilled, moreover, Afro-Americans will strive to learn more about their ancestral homeland. For as W.E.B. DuBois wrote in 1903 in The Souls of Black Folk:

One ever feels his two-ness — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife, — this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wished to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American,...

DuBois wrote the foregoing sentiments two years before the Reverend Thomas Dixon published the ignorant diatribe previously quoted. There is, of course, no question as to which man's vision, DuBois's or Dixon's, most influenced race relations in the United States in the twentieth century. Still, DuBois also asserted in The Souls of Black Folk that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colorline, — the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea." Since the end of the Second World War the people of the United States, whites as well as Blacks, racists as well as reformers, have become increasingly aware of the accuracy of DuBois's prediction and have come to realize that the way in which that problem — the problem of prejudice — is met will be of monumental importance to their republic and also to Africa and the world.

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