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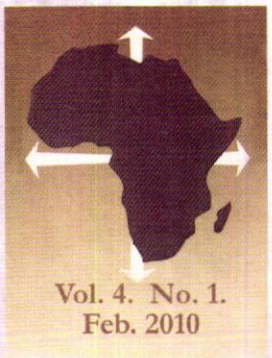

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Trial and Tribulations at the International Criminal Court:
The Thomas Dyilo Lubanga Trial

Masha Fedorova

On 26 January 2009 the first trial before the permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) finally began. The road leading to the prosecution of Thomas Dyilo Lubanga, the President of the *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC) accused of the war crime of conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen and using them to participate actively during the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2002-2003, has been long and winding. In fact, the trial almost did not start at all. In various ways this landmark case is unprecedented, leading to a number of 'firsts' in international criminal law.

In April 2004, the Democratic Republic of the Congo referred the situation in its territory to the Prosecutor of the ICC under article 14 of the Rome Statute, which entered into force on 1 July 2002. The Prosecutor started an investigation into the DRC situation and on 10 February 2006 the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I issued a sealed warrant of arrest against Lubanga. On 17 March 2006, Lubanga was transferred to the ICC, after having being detained from 19 March 2005 in Makala, Kinshasa. Lubanga was thus the first person in custody of the ICC, a young international organisation with world's attention directed at it.

Another 'first' is the possibility for victims to participate directly in proceedings of the ICC. As far as their personal interests are at issue, victims may present their views and concerns to the Court (article 68(3) Rome Statute). This unparalleled development of the position of victims in international criminal law is a major innovation as compared to other institutions of international criminal judiciary. Neither the *ad hoc* International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda (ICTY and ICTR) nor the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) allow victims to take part in the proceedings as participants; instead, they could only participate as witnesses. Moreover, the victims' participation regime imbedded in the hybrid common-civil law procedural model of the ICC does not 'match' any

of the domestic civil law tradition experiences. From the outset this ambitious endeavour of victims' involvement in the proceedings before the ICC has, understandably, attracted a lot of attention and controversy.[1] The ICC judges have struggled with the implementation of participatory rights of victims and different Chambers have engendered some divergent decisions interpreting the indefinite law on the issue.[2] Thus in practice the 'victory for victims' rights' has 'proved to be a tortuous path marred by controversial due process issues.'[3]

A further 'first' in the Rome Statute is the statutory obligation of the Prosecutor to 'investigate incriminating and exonerating circumstances equally' (article 54(1)(a) Rome Statute) and the right of the accused to have access to exculpatory evidence in the possession or control of the Prosecutor (article 67(2) Rome Statute). This too represents an unprecedented development as compared to its two *ad hoc* predecessors. The Prosecutor is no longer merely a party to the proceedings, but is seen as an "impartial truth-seeker" or an "organ of justice" arguably in line with the fundamentals of the inquisitorial model of criminal proceedings.[4]

The scope of the Prosecutor's duty and the accused's right has been ostentatiously tested in the Lubanga case. The trial was scheduled to start on 23 June 2008 (after an initial postponement), however, on 13 June 2008 Trial Chamber I imposed a stay of proceedings. According to the Trial Chamber the 'trial process has been ruptured to such a degree that it is

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1 See *e.g.* B. McGonigle, Bridging the Divides in International Criminal Proceedings: An Examination into the Victim Participation Endeavor of the International Criminal Court, 21 *Florida Journal of International Law* 63, 2009; S. Vasiliev, Article 68 (3) and Personal Interests of Victims in the Emerging Practice of the ICC, in: C. Stahn and G. Sluiter (eds.), *The Emerging Practice of the International Criminal Court,* Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009, p. 635-690; A.H. Guhr, Victim Participation during the Pre-Trial Stage at the International Criminal Court, 8 *International Criminal Law Review* 109, 2008. C. Stahn, H. Olásolo and K. Gibson, Participation of Victims in Pre-Trial Proceedings of the ICC, 4 *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 219, 2006; S. Zappalà, *Human Rights in International Criminal Proceedings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

2 See *e.g.* ICC, *Situation in Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Decision on the Applications for Participation in the Proceedings of VPRS 1, VPRS 2, VPRS 3, VPRS 4, VPRS 5 and VPRS 6, Pre-Trial Chamber I, 17 January 2006; ICC, *Prosecutor* v. *Lubanga, Situation in the DRC*, Decision of the Appeals Chamber on the Joint Application of Victims a/0001/06 to a/0003/06 and a/105/06 concerning the "Directions and Decision of the Appeals Chamber" of 2 February 2007, ICC-01/04-01/06 OA8, Appeals Chamber, 13 June 2007; ICC, *Situation in Uganda*, Decision on victims' applications for participation a/0010/06, a/0064/06 to a/0070/06, a/0081/06 to a/0104/06 and a/0111/06 to a/0127/06, Pre-Trial Chamber II (Single Judge), 10 August 2007; ICC, *Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*, Decision on victims' participation, Trial Chamber I, 18 January 2008.

3 M. Jouet, Reconciling the Conflicting Rights of Victims and Defendants at the International Criminal Court, 26 *Saint Louis University Public Law Review* 249, 2007, p. 259 and 262.

4 G. Turone, Powers and Duties of the Prosecutor, in: A. Cassese, P. Gaeta and J.R.W.D. Jones (eds.), *The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court: A* Commentary, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, p.1165.

now impossible to piece together the constituent elements of a fair trial.'[5] Fair trial was made impossible by the Prosecutor's inability to disclose potentially exculpatory evidence and evidence relevant to the preparation of the Defence to the accused. The information was contained in numerous documents obtained by the Prosecutor from several sources, particularly from the United Nations, under confidentiality agreements (article 54 (3) (e) Rome Statute) and these providers refused to consent to the disclosure of these documents to the Defence or the judges. Article 54 (3) (e) allows the Prosecutor to 'agree not disclose, at any stage of proceedings, documents or information that the Prosecutor obtains on the condition of confidentiality and *solely* for the purpose of generating new evidence, unless the provider of the information consents'.[6] The Trial Chamber characterized the Prosecutor's practice of regularly using the confidentiality agreements in order to identify the evidence to use at the trial as 'wholesale and serious abuse' as the possibility to obtain information under the 'cloak of confidentiality' is intended to be used restrictively and only for the purpose of generating new evidence. The only remedy according to the Trial Chamber was to suspend the proceedings and release Lubanga.

The Appeals Chamber endorsed the Trial Chamber's decision to stay the proceedings; but it overturned the decision on immediate and unconditional release of the accused, ordering the Trial Chamber to determine the matter anew, in light of the new developments.[7] According to the Appeals Chamber the stay ordered by the Trial Chamber was conditional and not definite. In the meantime, the Prosecutor has found himself in the position to disclose all the necessary material to be evaluated by the Trial Chamber. Consequently, on 18 November 2008, in an oral decision the Trial Chamber lifted the stay as 'the reasons for imposing the stay, and thereafter for retaining it have fallen away' and the trial was set to continue. Throughout the procedure, Lubanga remained in custody, as the Trial Chamber suspended his immediate release until the issue had been resolved by the Appeals Chamber.

In his Separate Opinion Judge Pikis dissents from the majority decision of the Appeals Chamber. He emphasizes the definitive character of the Trial Chamber's decision for a 'stay of proceedings for impossibility to hold a fair trial brings the proceedings to an end'. The Trial Chamber has actually noted that there was no prospect that the situation would be corrected in a visible future. A stay of proceedings for an indefinite time with the possibility to lift the stay at any time in the future goes against the basic understanding of the minimum rights of the accused in a criminal process. Even if considered a possibility, the release of the accused would still be inevitable as the ICC can only hold individuals in custody for the

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5 ICC, *Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*, Case No. ICC-01/04-01/06-1401, Decision on the Consequences of Non-disclosure of Exculpatory Materials Covered by Article 54 (3)(e) Agreements and the Application to Stay the Prosecution of the Accused, together with Certain Other Issues Raised at the Status Conference on 10 June 2008, Trial Chamber, 13 June 2008.

6 Emphasis added.

7 ICC, Appeals Chamber, Judgment on the appeal of the prosecutor against the decision of Trial Chamber I entitled "Decision on the consequences of non-disclosure of exculpatory materials covered by Article 54 (3)(e) agreements and the application to stay the prosecution of the accused, together with certain other issues raised at the Status Conference on 10 June 2008", *Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*, Case No. ICC-01/04-01/06 OA13. 21 October 2008.

purposes of standing trial. Moreover, if the Chamber intended to reprimand the Prosecutor for his dubious practice in regard to the confidentiality agreements, it could definitely have done so in an explicit manner: either disclosure or the proceedings will be stayed. This critique of the Appeals Chamber, however, is surpassed by the commendable commitment of the judges to protect the rights of the accused in the first place. At the same time, these decisions demonstrate the immense importance attached to the prosecutions before the International Criminal Court.

After the tribulations in the pre-trial process, the trial has had an equally remarkable start, dubbed by one newspaper as 'an inauspicious start for a noble project'.[8] In the presentation of the Prosecutor's case, the first witness to testify before the Court revoked his earlier statement that he was recruited by militia, claiming that he was instructed by an NGO on what to say. The Court was criticized for not foreseeing that the young witness might have been affected by Court's warning that his testimony might lead to criminal prosecution back home, and by being visually exposed to all present in court, including Lubanga. Two weeks later, the witness did testify about his time in Lubanga's militia training camp, this time the people present in the courtroom were reduced to the 'bare minimum' and the witness was not directly visible to Lubanga (the view was blocked by a curtain, but Lubanga could see the witness on a monitor). The issue of protection of victims and witnesses before the international criminal institutions is as essential as it is challenging due to the high profile cases before the ICC and the unstable situation in the conflict areas. The practice of the international criminal courts reveals how delicate the balancing exercise is between providing adequate protective measures for victims and witnesses testifying before them and ensuring that the rights of the accused to a fair and expeditious trial are fully protected.

Generally, the ICC met with considerable reproof, for instance that the ICC badgers poor African countries, that the ICC is politicized and that prosecutorial policy impedes effective peace negotiations. Since the Prosecutor's announcement of an indictment against the Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir last summer the emotions have been stirred up around the world. On 4 March 2009 Pre-Trial Chamber I issued a warrant of arrest against the Sudanese President, the first time ever against a sitting head of state, for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Darfur, but excluded the genocide charges submitted by the Prosecutor (lack of proof of specific intent, Prosecutor appealed that part of decision). The controversy surrounding this historic decision is immense and goes directly to the heart of the Peace *versus* Justice Debate: the push for international justice in the sense of criminal prosecution would stand in the way of effective peace negotiations in the troubled region of Darfur. Following the decision al-Bashir expelled all the aid groups from the region of Darfur, consequently, a major rebel group in Darfur, the Justice and Equality Movement cancelled the peace talks with the Sudanese government. Moreover, the legal issue of diplomatic immunity of a sitting president poses an interesting question in the realm of contemporary international law. This bold decision also exposes a crucial weakness of this newly-established institution, namely the absence of coercive powers and thus the dependence on state cooperation for proper functioning. The Arab leaders form a united block

[8] The Times newspaper, 2 February 2009.

behind al-Bashir opposing the warrant of arrest issued by the ICC and thus the implementation of the warrant seems unfeasible.

The unfolding of the first, long-awaited Lubanga trial fuels the concerns surrounding the effective and impartial functioning of the Court. However, such critique is to some extent anticipated of a touchstone institution that is expected to pave the way, but which has still to learn by doing. The Prosecutor Moreno-Ocampo said: 'The first trial is the first trial, so I think it's very, very important for the court to show how well it works.' And indeed, the Lubanga pre-trial shows the ICC judges' commitment to their responsibility to oversee that the trial is fair for the accused on the one hand, while not underestimating the overall importance of the prosecutions before the ICC on the other. The strong reminder of the Prosecutor's duties under the Statute can only be commended. An obvious but inescapable conclusion is that the ICC needs time to implement all its 'firsts'.

John Hope, the Prince Who Refused the Kingdom[1]

Henry Louis Gates Jr.

For decades, John Hope Franklin railed against the often segregated academic field of "black studies," deriding it as intellectual Jim Crow. But there would be no black studies without him, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

When I was 20, I decided to hitchhike across the African continent, more or less following the line of the equator, from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. I packed only one pair of sandals and one pair of jeans to make room for the three hefty books I had decided to read from cover to cover: Don Quixote, Moby Dick and From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans. I read the latter - the black-and-white-bound third edition of John Hope Franklin's 1947 book - while sailing down the Congo River and recovering from a nasty bout of dysentery. It became such a valued reference for me that I kept it, for years, in the bookcase at my bedside.

Like just about every black student at Yale in 1969, I enrolled in the Introduction to Afro-American History survey course, taught quite ably by William McFeely, who would later receive a Pulitzer Prize. At the end of each class, someone would find a way to bring up the fact that while our subject matter was black, McFeely was quite white, and hadn't he better find a way to remedy that fact? With the patience of Job, McFeely would graciously grant his accuser the point and add that he hoped to put himself out of a job just as soon as a black historian could be found to take his place. He would then remind us that the textbook

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[1] "John Hope, the Prince Who Refused the Kingdom" by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Copyright (c) by Henry Louis Gates, Jr, 2009. Originally published on TheRoot.com. Wednesday 01 April 2009. Reprinted by permission of the author.

around which our course was structured, From Slavery to Freedom, had been written by a black man, a black man who had been trained at Harvard.

John Hope Franklin was the last of the great generation of black historians to follow in W.E.B. Du Bois' footsteps and earn their Ph.D.s from Harvard in the first half of the 20th century. After Du Bois came Carter G. Woodson (the father of Black History Month) in 1912; Charles Wesley in 1925; Rayford W. Logan in 1936; and Franklin in 1941. Both because Franklin was the youngest member of this academic royal family and because he was lean and elegant, poised and cosmopolitan, many of us in the younger generation came to refer to him as "the Prince."

Despite all of the important work done by his four predecessors at Harvard, Franklin was the first to publish a comprehensive and popular story of the Negro's place in American life. From Slavery to Freedom was not just the first of its genre; it was canon-forming. It gave to the black historical tradition a self-contained form through which it could be institutionalized - parsed, divided into 15 weeks, packaged and taught - from Harlem to Harvard, and even, or especially, in those places where almost no black people actually lived. Every scholar of my generation studied Franklin's book; in this sense, we are all his godchildren.

But Franklin's relationship with Harvard was a complicated and tense one. Because Harvard had trained him as a historian, Franklin aspired to become the college's first black history professor. By the late 1960s, that dream certainly seemed to be within his grasp, especially after he had integrated the history department at Brooklyn College in 1956, then moved to the Midwest in 1964 to integrate the history department at the University of Chicago, just a year after Dr. King's March on Washington.

While my classmates and I down in New Haven were busy busting William McFeely's chops for being white, Harvard had the good sense to invite John Hope Franklin to become the first chairman of its Afro-American studies department, which it started in 1969 along with Yale and most other research universities.

But Franklin had an understandably principled opposition to academic segregation or "ghettoization" of any kind. He was suspicious about the uneven and troubled origins and stated intentions of the nascent field of Afro-American studies. He agreed to hold his nose if the faculty hired to teach in the new department were jointly appointed in the departments in which they had taken their degrees. With Franklin's pedigree, a joint appointment should have been a natural.

But the tenured faculty of history at Harvard, including some who were his classmates while he pursued the Ph.D., refused. His appointment, were he to accept the offer of chairman, would be solely in the Department of Afro-American Studies. Franklin angrily rejected the offer, calling it the most egregious insult of his academic career. Although he would accept an honorary doctorate from Harvard in 1981, in large part as a snub to the history department, Franklin never forgave his professional colleagues for the insult. In fact, he took a certain perverse pleasure in talking black scholars out of accepting tenured professorships at Harvard, including most famously William Julius Wilson and Cornel West in the 1980s. When Drew Faust was inaugurated two years ago, one of the few featured speakers was John Hope, who spoke "on behalf of the history profession." This painful

history, of which only a few of us were aware, made President Faust's gesture inviting him to speak all the more poignant.

The experience with Harvard's history department also deepened Franklin's initial skepticism about the entire field of black studies, making him, until the '90s, an ardent foe if it was a subject area set apart from and not integrated with the traditional disciplines. I once heard a black nationalist assistant professor at Yale in the late '70s refer to him derogatorily as "John Hopeless Franklin." But for Franklin, there could be no black history without "history," as it were, and on this point he was unequivocal. For most of his career, Franklin saw black studies as the unfortunate correlative of Jim Crow segregation, self-imposed by well-meaning but naive black students and complicit black professors eager to get lucrative jobs at historically white institutions.

John Hope and I had met at Yale in the early '80s, over a small dinner attended by the great historians David Brion Davis and John W. Blassingame, after a lecture Franklin had given on campus. Davis turned to me during dinner and asked if I had ever discovered how I had been selected in the first group of MacArthur Fellows. As I attempted to say no, John Hope, from the far end of the table, thundered out that he knew precisely how I had been selected, because he had done the selecting! It was a bit like winning the fellowship all over again. Blinking back tears, I told him how influenced I had been by From Slavery to Freedom, and that I had carried a copy of the third edition, published in 1967, with me across the Continent, reading every word. (I didn't tell him that I felt that edition was his best, and that subsequent editions - when the subtitle was changed to "A History of African Americans" - perhaps responding to the pressures from publishers to make textbooks more "readable," more accessible, seemed dumbed down, a long way in style from the densely rich narrative blend of documented facts with philosophical speculation and musings that characterized the black-and-white edition.) We stayed in touch after that, mostly by phone. One day in 1988 he called to ask me to accept an offer that had just been extended by Stanley Fish, the chairman of Duke's English department. In 1982, Franklin had become the first black professor to hold an endowed chair at Duke.

My tenure at the university was regrettably brief. Still, it gave me time to get to know John Hope better, to listen to his stories about school and segregation, about the academic life before Brown v. Board of Education and his role in and perceptions of the civil rights movement. Best of all, I loved his anecdotes. His favorite story was about the day in the spring of 1939 when he met W.E.B. Du Bois. Franklin - who, by the way, was named for John Hope, who taught his parents at Roger Williams University in Nashville before serving 25 years as the president of Morehouse College, then Atlanta University - was a graduate student at Harvard, doing research in North Carolina for his thesis on the Free Negro in North Carolina before the Civil War. He was taking his evening meal in the segregated Arcade Hotel when he spotted the great Du Bois dining alone in a corner. Cautiously, tentatively, he approached his hero. Du Bois' gaze was riveted on a book. In his autobiography, Mirror to America, Franklin described what happened next:

Seeing Dr. Du Bois dining alone and reading, I decided that this was an opportunity that I would not less pass. Crossing the dining room, I approached his table and spoke to him, giving him my full name. Surely he would recognize the fact that I was named for one of his

closest friends and hearing it would embrace me. He did not even look up. Then I told him that I was a graduate of Fisk University, class of 1935. That, I assumed, would bring him to his feet singing 'Gold and Blue.' Again, he continued to read and eat, without looking up. Finally, as a last resort, I told him that I was a graduate student in history at Harvard and was in Raleigh doing research for my dissertation. Without looking up from his book or plate, he said, 'How do you do.' Dejected, I retreated, completed my dinner, and withdrew from the dining room.

John Hope loved to tell that story, always ending it with "Of course we became close friends later, when he and his wife, Shirley, lived in Brooklyn and I was teaching at the College." He told the story as a way of explaining why he was so very generous with younger colleagues. Myself included.

Two years ago, Butler University invited us both to campus for a dialogue. I agreed, but only if I could play the role of interviewer and if we could talk with no strict time limit attached. John Hope regaled a standing-room-only crowd for over two hours with stories about his family, his education, his political beliefs, his triumphs and disappointments. And then we dined together, sharing a bottle of Margaux, followed by a cognac.

He congratulated me on recruiting Bill Wilson and Cornel West to Harvard despite his best efforts to dissuade them from coming. I congratulated him on receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom; he returned the compliment about my receipt of the National Humanities Medal. I congratulated him on Duke's creation of the John Hope Franklin Research Center and the forthcoming edition of From Slavery to Freedom, being revised by my colleague Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, the first black professor ever to receive tenure in Harvard's history department. I told him how much I valued the old third edition, the one with the black-and-white cover, and that I deeply regretted that it had gotten misplaced somehow. He told me he was proud of what my colleagues and I had created at Harvard. I shared with him the faculty's decision to co-name the library at the Du Bois Institute in his honor. He promised to visit, which he did after his speech at Drew Faust's inauguration. He seemed touched by the gesture.

A few days later, a FedEx envelope arrived at my house in Cambridge. Inside was another package, carefully wrapped in brown paper, the way antiquarians in England wrap books that they mail. When I give books as Christmas presents, I wrap them the same way. There is something wonderful about that brown wrapping paper. Inside the paper was a signed copy of From Slavery to Freedom, the black-and-white paperback edition, dated 1967, the same one that Professor McFeely had assigned us back at Yale. It was signed, "With affectionate best wishes." It sits in the bookshelf by my bedside.

Links:
[1] www.theroot.com/views/john-hope-franklin-1915-2009
[2] www.theroot.com/views/john-hope-franklin-obama-presidency
[3] www.theroot.com/views/our-lifetime

Welcome to the Fold, Brother Rawlings

Akwasi Adu

I find it healthy when a person reminds another person considered as a friend, that the friend is veering off-course. It is in the light of this that I find refreshing, the recent criticism of the performance of the President Mills' administration by the ex-President, Flt Lt. JJ Rawlings.

According to the news, the former President has made the following comments about the current government:

- That the pace of the President Mills' government is too slow;
- That "there was a lot of mediocrity" in the selection of ministers by President Mills;
- That President Mills has "lost moral control" which has resulted in other people "dictating to him" and "calling the tune";
- That "things are going in the wrong direction".

He went further to remind President Mills that "people (probably with President Mills in his sights) were not elected as independent candidates but on the ticket of the NDC". In this connection, Flt. Lt. Rawlings called on the leadership of the party to make their voices heard.

I totally agree with Flt. Lt. Rawlings on most of these points. For example, ex-President Kufuor had started nominating his Ministers within ten days of taking office in 2001, although there had been a second-round ballot (just as in 2008). Within a few days of taking office as Chief of Staff of then President Kufuor, Jake Obetsebi Lamptey "hit the ground running" by chasing ex-NDC Ministers for state cars. In addition, the then President Kufuor's new security personnel invaded the residence of Ex-President Rawlings with a platoon of soldiers, scooped up Odinga Lumumba from next door and kept him in solitary confinement for two years without trial. Odinga was only released when he was about to die. He never recovered from his ordeal and died two years later in his home country, Belize.

As early as 7th February 2001, President Kufuor dismissed the Managing Directors of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB), State Insurance Company (SIC), the Deputy Managing Director of SIC, the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Director-General of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT), the Chief Executive of the National Insurance Commission (NIC) and the Director of Commercial

Banking of the National Investment Bank (NIB). Among cars that were seized from former NDC Ministers was that of Mr. Sallas Mensah, MP for Oda, which he had bought from CEPS and paid the duties on it. At that time, there was no cry of witch-hunting. President Kufuor also declared that the economy was in "tatters". This is not very different from "the country is broke" as stated by Ms. Hannah Tetteh in 2009.

I appreciate that, behind the censure of President Mills by Flt. Lt. Rawlings is an inherent acceptance that it is fair enough to publicly criticise a political friend even if that friend is the President or Head of State. It would be good if such criticism is not seen by anyone as an act of unfriendliness on the part of the ex-President. It is most likely that the motive behind his frustration is not out of mischief but out of a genuine yearning that things that ought to be done by President Mills must be done in good time. It is in view of this that I definitely agree that it is morally right to point things out if you think that your friend is going wrong.

What baffles me is that it had to take Flt. Lt. Rawlings more than twenty-six long years to realise this ethic. Could anyone imagine how our then Chairman of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) reacted when his friends criticised the direction of the PNDC in 1982? The following account answers the preceding question.

In 1979, a group of young people, in the wake of the June 4 1979 uprising, FOUNDED an organization that they called the June Four Movement (JFM). Although the name emanated from the inspiration that the FOUNDERS took from the uprising, no member or functionary of the AFRC was initially personally related to the organization. By 1980 the government of the Peoples' National Party (PNP) was in full swing to discredit the AFRC and demonise its ex-Chairman, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. These founding members of the JFM decided to bring Flt. Lt. Rawlings under the umbrella of the organization in order to shield him from attacks of the then government.

It was on the platform of the JFM that Flt. Lt. Rawlings re-established his credibility. He proclaimed his determination to fight for the economic, social and political interests of the downtrodden people; "the masses", as he used to say. It was this credibility which provided him with the spur to stage the coup of 31st December 1981. It was therefore not a surprise to some of us when two other leading members of the JFM ended up as members of the initial PNDC.

By June 1982, the leadership of the JFM outside the PNDC had started to express concern about the direction and character of the PNDC. When our quiet expressions of concern about the PNDC's plans to surrender the economy to the IMF and the World Bank went unheeded, the leadership of the JFM, together with our fraternal organization, the People's Revolutionary League of Ghana (PRLG) took our concerns to the workers and the general public (just as Flt. Lt. Rawlings did to the President Mills' government last week).

By September 1982, Flt. Lt. Rawlings could not take our public expressions of concern any longer. He summoned some of the leadership of the JFM to his office in Gondar Barracks. It was an experience that has since had a profound effect on me in dealing with political issues.

At the meeting, Flt. Lt. Rawlings could not contain himself as he emitted brimstone and fire at us with threats designed to frighten us. As he went on and on, he turned to me and said "And you Kwasi Adu, we are aware of your behind the scenes activities. Stop them!" I did

not understand then, so I asked what he meant by my "behind the scenes activities". "The things that they used to talk about during the PNP days", he replied. I did not still understand so I persisted, "I was not a member of the PNP, so how could I have done things behind them?" He snarled back in response, "As for me I am telling you; there are some people who when you criticise they react rhetorically. But there are some who don't; they ACT!" With the heavily armed soldiers that he had brought to the meeting, the meaning of this was not lost on anyone. At some stage, he looked at us and stated "the sight of you fills me with anger". "You have the pen, and I have the gun", he threatened. At that stage, things became even clearer.

I was shocked that now, the sight of JFM leaders, including myself, was filling him with anger. I, who had taken his wife and children into hiding, on the morning of the coup on 31st December 1981, in the face of a swarm of personnel from the Military Intelligence and Special Branch around his house, was now a pariah? All of this was because he had now found new friends, who were "calling the tune" in his government? I looked at him and was about to say something, but my courage deserted me; so I could only murmur it to myself under my breath: "God never sleeps".

To those who may be doubting what I am saying, they may wish to read Mr. Zaya Yeebo's recollection of this event in his book. "Ghana: The Struggle for Popular Power" and sub-titled: "Rawlings: Saviour or Demagogue" (1991; published by New Beacon Books, London) pages 127-129. I wish to quote some of the relevant parts.

"But before the end of the meeting, Rawlings changed his mind and instead extended an invitation to all leaders of the JFM to a meeting at his Gondar Barracks office on 22 September 1982. Johnny Kwadjo, Ofosu Taata, Kwesi Adu, Nyeya Yen, and myself attended that meeting.

We waited for him a long time, then he suddenly burst into the conference room looking tense and jittery. We all stood up as a sign of respect, but he signaled to us saying, 'Sit down, sit down.' In his now familiar theatrics, he took a hard look at everybody, while pulling hard at his cigarette. When it was finished, he crushed the stub with a force that was certainly not required for the dead end of a cigarette. Still no word from him. The conference room was surrounded by heavily armed soldiers who made sure we knew they were there.

Rawlings was in a tense mood and paced up and down the conference room. After a while, he took off his dark glasses, revealing his blood-shot eyes, and looked at us again and again. No one said anything to him. After sometime, he pointed to Taata and asked, 'Are you Taata?'

'Yes,' Taata replied.' Leave the NDC immediately,' Rawlings ordered. (The NDC was the body that was formed to replace the Interim National Coordinating Committee – INCC- of the Defence Committees-KA)

We burst into laughter because Ofosu Taata was not a member of the NDC. He was the Managing Editor of the Workers Banner. (The Workers Banner was then the mouthpiece of the JFM ; KA)

This mix-up unsettled Rawlings for a while. He stood there in a pensive mood for a while, then burst out.

'The sight of you all fills me with anger,' he snarled. We laughed. After several incoherent ramblings about articles in the Workers Banner, our anti-IMF position and our support for PDCs and WDCs, he then turned to Kwesi Adu and said: 'We are aware of your behind-the-scenes manoeuvres'. We were surprised at his bellicose rhetoric, but no one said anything.

Rawlings continued, 'You guys had better put a stop to that thing, you are out of touch with reality.'

'What thing?' someone asked. 'The Workers Banner,' Rawlings replied.

Johnny Kwadjo asked, 'What am I doing here since I am not a member of the editorial board?' 'You are a member of a certain collective,' Rawlings reminded him.

For a moment it was difficult to believe that power and its acquisition could transform a person so quickly. The Rawlings, who used to come to the JFM meetings full of humility begging for support and sympathy, had been transformed. We looked on.

Referring to the Workers Banner, he said we could have written such things in Limann's time. I asked 'What is the difference?' but he ignored my intervention and continued, 'Whether the paper will come out or not depends on the next issue. There are others who can use the paper better.'

No one said a word so he continued: 'You have the pen, and I have the gun.' After this, he was about to storm out when Taata got up and said, 'Jerry, we cannot settle matters this way.' He hesitated, and Kwesi Adu added, 'But you have not listened to us.'

Attempts to reason with him or to get him to explain the source of his anger failed."

That was my "brother" JJ Rawlings in 1982. At that time, he could not take kindly to public criticisms from his friends. It appears that after twenty-six years, he has finally seen the light: that it is okay to criticise a friend. However, this realization (on his way to Damascus) has come too late for some people, including my old friend, Kwame Adjimah, who, I understand, was shot dead by a member of the PNDC. Kwame's only "crime" was that he was part of the JFM that had criticised the PNDC.

Kwame Adjimah, on the morning of the 31st December 1981 coup, when the public reception of the coup was, to say the least, lukewarm, went to the JFM farm in Kantamanso to rally the Nungua members of the branch of the JFM (then harvesting cassava that morning) to come to Accra to demonstrate in support of the coup. Mr. Adjimah was arrested and detained in early 1983. He escaped from prison in the wake of the Jiwah coup attempt in June 1983. According to the information, he was re-arrested somewhere in the Volta Region, brought back to Accra and executed in a gruesome manner by a member of the PNDC. Mr. Adjimah was first shot on the kneecaps. As he fell, he clutched the feet of this PNDC assailant and begged him not to kill him. The PNDC member then pointed the gun close to Mr. Adjimah's head, and blew his brains out. The darkness fell on Kwame Adjimah only because he had expressed views contrary to those of someone whom he had considered as a friend.

In view of my Brother JJ Rawlings' present outlook towards President Mills, I believe that he will now admit that the way Kwame Adjimah was treated was not a good way to treat a friend who criticised him in public.

Flt. Lt. Rawlings is reported to have also said that "there was a lot of mediocrity" in the choice of Ministers by President Mills. I wonder how many members of the AFRC could

have endured a parliamentary vetting for Ministerial jobs. Moreover, one of his PNDC Ministers mixed cement and forced another person to drink it. That victim died soon after, because the cement formed a concrete in his stomach. That cannot be said to be a mark of excellence with respect to the calibre of a Minister that my Brother Rawlings chose. It becomes a sad state of affairs when the pot begins to call the kettle "black".

On the issue of people outside the NDC "calling the tune", my Brother Rawlings should now sympathise with the FOUNDING members of the JFM who were used by Rawlings to win and retain power at the end of 1981 but who woke up one morning to find that other people were now "calling the tune". In the last week, I have been wondering why, in dispensing his "medicine" to President Mills, Flt. Lt. Rawlings did not taste it first to see whether it tastes nice.

My personal take on the President Mills administration is the proliferation of blocs that are fighting for turf around him. At the last count, I managed to identify seven of such blocs. It appears that the frustrations of some of these factions in not gaining what they consider as "the upper hand" is what is giving grounds to public outbursts and leaks. While they fight around the President, the remainder of the political field, as well as the ball, has been left free for the NPP to play.

If these things are so frustrating for Flt. Lt. Rawlings to the extent that he has no option but to go public with his criticisms, all I can say to him is: My Brother, welcome to the fold. You now know how it feels like when your political friend abandons you and rather turns to "outsiders" who begin to "call the tune". At least in your case, you will not have to suffer the shocks and threats to which you subjected some of us when you were on top as Head of State.

Interview with Afro-Peruvian Activist Jorge Ramírez

Lily Céspedes and Jorge Ramírez

"We want win respect for our rights and to have an important political presence"

Afro-Peruvians continue to struggle for the recognition of their rights, respect for their culture and to an education that takes their identity into account. Of the 28 million Peruvians, just 10 percent are estimated to be Afro-descendents, most of whom live along the coast. Jorge Ramírez, president of the Black Association for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights, or ASONEDH, and of the National Network of African Diaspora in Peru (Afro-Peruvian Network) spoke with Latin-American Press collaborator Lily Céspedes about Peru's black movement.

What is the history of Afro-Peruvian organizations? When did they come about and why?

Starting in 1950 various organizing processes began in Peru to fight discrimination and to strengthen our identity and self-esteem. During the 1950s and 60s, there were some important experiences. The first was the Cumananá group, led by siblings Victoria and Nicomedes Santa Cruz. They carried out an important work by compiling and disseminating Afro-Peruvian culture's contributions, using black Peruvian dance, music, theater and song.

In the 1960s the Melamodernos formed, led by lawyer Juan Tasayco, who, inspired by the civil rights movements in the United States, proposed demanding our civil and social rights as citizens in Peru. Tasayco was one of the pioneers of the sentiment of citizenship that today motivates many Afro-Peruvian organizations.

In 1972, the Black Youth Cultural Association was created. In 1983, the Afro-Peruvian Research Institute emerged, through which came about experiences of participatory research,

above all in the rural communities of the southern coast of the country, affirming their identity, history and contributions. This conscience of blackness was a fundamental factor in the later formation of autonomous organization experiences by these residents.

In 1986, the Francisco Congo black movement was founded, which does grassroots work, with experiences in training for small business development and the promotion of Afro-Peruvian women. In 1990, the Black Human Rights Movement was founded, now the Black Association for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights, which seeks to contribute to the development of conscience, legal aid, respect for fundamental rights for Afro-Peruvians and fight against racism.

Later came others such as the Black Peruvian Women's Development Center, the Ebony World Youth Association, Cimarrones, Lundu, the Pluriethnic Assocation for Community and Social Development, the Center for Ethnic Development, Todas las Sangres ["All Bloods"], Orgullo Negro ["Black Pride"], Mama Ine, the Association for the Development of Afro-Callao People, the Millenium Theatre, Black Woman and Development, Afro Pastoral and the National Afro-Peruvian Movement.

What are the demands of the Afro-Peruvian movement?

Under the issue of health care is the [distribution of] information about sickle-cell anemia as an illness particular to Afro-descendents. In citizens' participation there is citizen-bound [or –oriented] education, and in politics, we're seeking politically inclusive participation. We want to win the respect of our rights and to have an important political presence. In addition, ASONEDH is dedicated to legal defense in cases of manifestations of racist or discriminatory attitudes. We are pushing for the state to launch education programs with an identity element and for Congress to write stronger laws against discrimination.

What has the Afro-Peruvian Network achieved in the two years since it was created?

It has contributed to strengthening the sensitization process through central government and local regional government bodies (Ica, Metropolitan Lima, the Lima provinces, Arequipa, Tacna, Huaraz, Callao, Lambayeque and Tacna), being the regions where ASONEDH's work is concentrated, and as a result, we have the recognition, support and participation of different rural Afro-Peruvian organizations and of local authorities.

The process of improving the work of 50 rural Afro-Peruvian leaders to help them promote democracy and governance has continued.

We promoted the participation of women through democratic processes and of 40 rural Afro-Peruvian organizations around the country. We have also incorporated young people on the boards of directors of different rural Afro-Peruvian organizations.

Local authorities, such as mayors, city councilors, district governors, school principals and other social and political actors have been incorporated into Afro-Peruvian organizations from their towns and into the Afro-Peruvian Network.

We also promoted the participation of seven Afro-Peruvian leaders of the communities and rural organizations in the last municipal elections [in July 2007] as candidates to mayoral offices, of which a member of the Afro-Peruvian Network was elected mayor for the Malacasi district in Piura.

Other leaders of rural Afro-Peruvian organizations hold public positions in their respective districts, such as justices of the peace, governors, lieutenant governors and municipal employees.

What do you take from the Afro-descendant organizations of Colombia or Ecuador? Are there any plans to work together?

There are quotas in place for the election of Afro-Colombian lawmakers, and Afro-Ecuadorian organizations have joined together. We're currently working on forming the Network of Afro-Descendent Organizations of the Andean Region. — *Latin-American Press.*

Paris Liberation Made 'Whites Only'

Mike Thomson

Many who fought Nazi Germany during World War II did so to defeat the vicious racism that left millions of Jews dead. Yet the BBC's Documentary programme has seen evidence that black colonial soldiers - who made up around two-thirds of Free French forces - were deliberately removed from the unit that led the Allied advance into the French capital. By the time France fell in June 1940, 17,000 of its black, mainly West African colonial troops, known as the Tirailleurs Senegalais, lay dead. Many of them were simply shot where they stood soon after surrendering to German troops who often regarded them as sub-human savages. Their chance for revenge came in August 1944 as Allied troops prepared to retake Paris. But despite their overwhelming numbers, they were not to get it.

'More desirable'

The leader of the Free French forces, Charles de Gaulle, made it clear that he wanted his Frenchmen to lead the liberation of Paris.

Allied High Command agreed, but only on one condition: De Gaulle's division must not contain any black soldiers. In January 1944 Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Major General Walter Bedell Smith, was to write in a memo stamped, "confidential": "It is more desirable that the division mentioned above consist of white personnel. This would indicate the Second Armoured Division, which with only one fourth native personnel, is the only French division operationally available that could be made one hundred percent white." At the time America segregated its own troops along racial lines and did not allow black GIs to fight alongside their white comrades until the late stages of the war.

Morocco division

Given the fact that Britain did not segregate its forces and had a large and valued Indian army, one might have expected London to object to such a racist policy. Yet this does not appear to have been the case. A document written by the British General, Frederick Morgan, to Allied Supreme Command stated: "It is unfortunate that the only French formation that is

100% white is an armoured division in Morocco. Every other French division is only about 40% white. I have told Colonel de Chevene that his chances of getting what he wants will be vastly improved if he can produce a white infantry division."

Finding an all-white division that was available proved to be impossible due to the enormous contribution made to the French Army by West African conscripts. So, Allied Command insisted that all black soldiers be taken out and replaced by white ones from other units. When it became clear that there were not enough white soldiers to fill the gaps, soldiers from parts of North Africa and the Middle East were used instead.

Pensions cut

In the end, nearly everyone was happy. De Gaulle got his wish to have a French division lead the liberation of Paris, even though the shortage of white troops meant that many of his men were actually Spanish.

The British and Americans got their "Whites Only" Liberation even though many of the troops involved were North African or Syrian. For France's West African Tirailleurs Senegalais, however, there was little to celebrate.

Despite forming 65% of Free French Forces and dying in large numbers for France, they were to have no heroes' welcome in Paris.

After the liberation of the French capital many were simply stripped of their uniforms and sent home. To make matters even worse, in 1959 their pensions were frozen. Former French colonial soldier, Issa Cisse from Senegal, who is now 87 years-old, looks back on it all with sadness and evident resentment. "We, the Senegalese, were commanded by the white French chiefs," he said. "We were colonised by the French. We were forced to go to war. Forced to follow the orders that said, do this, do that, and we did. France has not been grateful. Not at all."

You Will Get Your Visa After Six Months, Sir

Nuruddin Farah

Africa's colonial boundaries are remnants of history that the continent would rather forget given that they are a cause of bloody conflicts besides being impediments to the free movement of people and goods in the continent. A personal experience by celebrated author ***Nuruddin Farah*** *captures this absurdity.*

Some 38 years after his death, Ghanaians have finally decided to honour the memory of their first President, Kwame Nkrumah with a national holiday on September 21 this year, which incidentally would have marked the 100th anniversary of his birthday. The day has been declared a public holiday and aptly named Founder's Day.

A larger than life figure, Nkrumah is credited with leading Ghana to independence from the British and championing a United States of Africa besides being a founder president of the Organisation of African Unity, now African Union. The Africa Nkrumah envisaged is far from being a reality as the experience of writer Nuruddin Farah shows.

Below we run, in his own words, an account of his frustration with Africa's artificial borders which, in Nkrumah's vision, stood in the way of continental unity. Nuruddin Farah writes: "In 2007, I telephoned the Consulate of Botswana in Cape Town on a Wednesday to inquire about a weekend visa to Gaborone as I meant to attend the wedding of a close friend's daughter there. In reply to his question about my status and place of residence, I said that I was a permanent resident of South Africa and that I held three African passports and named these and the governments, which issued them.

He asked why I had not applied for a visa earlier, and I responded that I had just got back from a book promotion tour that had taken me to the USA, Canada, and Europe. He said I would have to wait for four to six weeks to get a visa issued on any of the three passports I held. I was tempted to stress my disappointment by asking why his consulate was giving me a hard time about a weekend visa, while the British, the French, the US, the Swiss and

Canadian embassies would not hesitate to issue me with five-to-ten-year duration visas within a few hours and while I waited. However, I thought better of it, maybe because I doubted he was the kind of reader that might enjoy my writings.

I got in touch with my friend whose daughter was getting married and a professor friend of mine who was expecting me to give a lecture at the University of Botswana to let them know that I was cancelling my trip. The professor suggested that his department apply on my behalf and recruit someone higher up in the government to intervene. That way, the consulate would issue the visa and I would attend the wedding and later in the week speak to the students and staff of the English Department. I said that the idea of going that route did not appeal to my sense of self-honour, and insisted that I would cancel my visit.

Six months or so later, I was a guest of the Federal President of Germany together with several African Heads of State among them the President of Botswana. On the second day, during coffee break, the President of Botswana asked if I had ever been to his country, given that I lived so close to it, in South Africa. I replied that I had not; he wondered why not. I related to him what happened when I applied for a visa several months earlier whereupon he called his assistant, a lady, whom he instructed to take down my details and to make sure that I received a visa and a letter of invitation. He wanted me to promise that I would call on him once I got to Gaborone.

I declined to offer my details to the assistant. After all, my intentions were lofty, not personal, and I wanted him to see the absurdity of his government's visa policies and to consider changing them, as it affected other Africans. In effect, I was pointing to him the set of circumstances that had led to my needing his facilitation, when Europeans, Americans, and many other nationalities from outside Africa could enter Botswana without requiring visas.

Given the opportunity, I might have referred to the to the arbitrary carving up of the continent at a meeting in Berlin, in which European colonial powers established borders within it, dividing our peoples into entities bearing hyphenated identities – British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, Ethiopian-held Somaliland, Kenyan Somaliland and French Somaliland – and creating never-ending conflicts.

Perhaps implicit in my refusal to accept the President's offer was this unspoken assertion: that the borders in Africa are stakes driven through our peoples' hearts. In the Horn of Africa alone, border disputes have caused so much havoc, accounting for several all-out wars as well as the continued war of attrition between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

When I think back on my encounters over the years with sundry consular and immigration officials from various African countries, I cannot help wondering what might have become of Africa if Europeans had not imposed on our continent the maps we have today.

It follows, too, that Africa would occupy a more honourable place in the world if millions of our able-bodied men and women had not been removed to other continents as slaves, and if the savageries of Euro-greed in the insatiable shape of, to give an infamous example, King Leopold of Belgium had not been visited on the Congo. It has always been my contention that had Europe not interfered with our history and had we pursued its natural course, then we too would have developed in the same way as other continents.

Colonial subjugation and the mapping of the continent did contribute to the deceleration of our organic development as people. The mapping of Africa at the turn of the nineteenth century tethers us to a history littered with impediments. The borders are but one of the numerous obstacle courses standing in the way of our economic and social well-being.

Indeed, the ephemeral nature of borders inspires me with guarded cynicism; their impermanence animates a caginess of the kind that produces optimism within me. Those of us who have known the two sides of Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall, for instance, will remember two of the most absurd borders between the two German entities - the one, a line of yellow buoys the height of a human above the water to mark the border in the sea between the then GDR and West Germany.

The other was a road bridge at Domitz, built halfway across the River Elbe and, because uncompleted, left suspended in midair. With the fall of The Wall and the reunification of the two Germanys, the borders no longer existing point to their status of impermanence.

Sadly, this is not so in Africa. Because in 1963, our continent's Heads of State endorsed the borders bequeathed to us by the colonial powers at the inaugural meeting of the Organisation of African Unity, one felt profound sorrow at the decision, wrongfully catapulting us into everlasting political and economical disaffection, something the recent formations of regional groupings, dividing the continent into four main trading blocs, will not be able to eradicate as long we continue to endorse the border regime established in 1884 at the Berlin summit.

Borders are an anathema, which we must discard if we wish our continent to develop culturally, scientifically and economically as a single unit – and organically at that."

This article was published in the *Nairobi Daily Nation.* (Article paru dans le Daily Nation du 04 September 2009)

http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/insights/You_will_get_your_visa_after_six_months_sir_90823.shtml

- *Additional reporting by Francis Kokutse in Accra*
- *Africa Insight is an initiative of the Nation Media Group's Africa Media Network Project*

Diversionary Tactics on Darfur

Anne Bartlett

Diversionary tactics seem to be the order of the day where Darfur is concerned. The real tragedy of Darfur – the suffering of its people – has been forgotten under a sea of pointless initiatives, all of which seem to have only one goal in mind: to create enough confusion and chaos that the status quo will prevail. On the ground - and contrary to prevailing diplomatic speak - people continue to be killed and targeted in the Jebel Marra area by government forces that now have *carte blanche* to do what they like. Meanwhile, day after day we are treated to a circus-like environment in which more and more competing initiatives are announced. Of course none of them have a hope of working, but that isn't the point. For most of those involved, self-interest and geo-political gamesmanship have been put before human suffering – a point that is not lost on those living through this nightmare every day on the ground.

For the most part, Darfur has become a giant chess game in which everyone except the local people have a stake. For the National Islamic Front (NIF), chaos in Darfur creates a useful game of smoke and mirrors through which they are able to turn attention away from the possibility that they might be held accountable for their actions. To augment this strategy, the security and intelligence arms of the government are also working overtime, using oil money to bribe anyone to testify on their behalf. This situation has become markedly worse as a result of the relative impunity the Sudanese government now enjoys. Take for example the recent press conference by the oddly named "National Group for Correcting the Track of the Darfur Crisis" (NGCTDC). Their claim that external actors are manipulating and overstating the crisis is telling, as is the copious Sudanese Media Centre (SMC) coverage of their press conference which suggests clear government involvement.

Then of course, there is the US game of "soft diplomacy" with Scott Gration at the helm. For Gration the stated aim behind this softly-softly approach is to provide "leverage" so as to extract more concessions from the Sudanese government: a kind of carrot and carrot

approach. Yet for all the talk, his plan is strangely reminiscent of a dictator appeasement policy carried out with the clear aim of currying favor with China and smoothing the way with the enormous portions of American debt they hold. More problematic still, it seems to be ahistorical in scope, conveniently stepping over the NIF's track record and paying no strategic mind to the course of events that will be set in train over coming decades if extremists continue to control the largest country in Africa. This model of friendly condescension to locals and deals done under the table with dictators is fooling no one. As locals in Zam Zam and Abu Shouk camp recently pointed out, the US approach has done nothing to enhance their security or indeed their chances of survival.

As if the cynicism and manifest self-interest of western governments isn't bad enough, there are then the interventions by regional players in the crisis. The first of these is the Doha initiative. Aside from the obvious issue of Qatar's relationship with Sudan and of course, the disingenuous behavior on the part of the African Union, there is also the idiotic behavior by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) which seems to be desperately jockeying to maintain its position and promote the interests of its followers. Add to this heady mix, a bunch of cellphone commanders and their sidekicks who have no credibility in Darfur, and Doha becomes nothing more than a talking shop created and maintained by NIF and Turabi supporters. Whatever one might think about Doha, seriousness or the ability to effect change on the ground should not figure into the calculation.

Not to be outdone, there are parallel initiatives from Egypt. Take for example the agreement between JEM and the Umma Party in Cairo in July. To understand this, one has to understand the desperation of all parties involved. JEM, as previously stated, has a lot of weapons, but no influence on the ground. Their backer, Al-Turabi, desperately wants to get his foot back in the political door. His relative, Al-Mahdi, is no better. The Umma Party and Al-Mahdi have neatly sidestepped their responsibility for the mess in Darfur, despite their central role in creating and perpetrating ethnic divisions in Darfur going back as far as elections in 1968. The Umma party therefore has a history of using and abusing ethnic and religious politics in Darfur and that propensity has not changed. Finally Egypt has an interest in perpetuating instability in the region, because a chaotic and underdeveloped Sudan augments their power and influence. It also prevents anyone from looking too carefully at the looming water crisis in the region.

Then of course there is the Libyan involvement. Libya's role as a power player in the crisis is equally self-interested. From the early days and the deals done with Sadiq al-Mahdi to use Darfur as a weapons dump in his fight with the Chadians, to the attempts made to fracture and buy off factions of the Sudan Liberation Movement or Army (SLA) at the time of the Abuja talks, Gadaafi's role in this crisis is constant and unrelenting. Recent weeks have witnessed a new initiative around the establishment of Sudan's Liberation Revolutionary Forces (SLRF), with Libya attempting to create one structure before the resumption of peace talks in Doha. However, their lack of seriousness can be seen in the choice of candidate to lead such a group. Tigani Seisi Ateem, former Governor of Darfur, former sidekick of Al-Mahdi and staunch supporter of the politics of the center, cannot be considered a serious candidate to lead Darfurians anywhere. Besides his disastrous tenure as Governor of the region in which he sold the rights of the people of Darfur to the government and did next to

nothing to advocate for their interests, he has no respect or constituency on the ground and certainly no ability to effect change.

As I write this at the time of Eid, the ramifications of these interests become even more devastating. Before in Darfur, Eid was a time of unity. People moved from village to village greeting each other and wishing the best for the following year. Kids dressed in new clothes, ate halawa and looked forward to this day all year as a time of joy and a celebration of their culture. Today however, kids live in camps, many of them not knowing or experiencing what Eid was like before. Many of them have no hope for the future, no understanding of peaceful coexistence and no connection to the culture or society that created them.

For Darfurians the message should be clear: your strength lies in unity and understanding, not in division and hatred. The more Darfur is fractured, the more you allow the people of the region to be used by external parties for their own interests. The only way to stop this situation is to look internally and for the leaders of the region to stand up and be counted, not for their own benefit but for the benefit of their people. It is now 7 years since local people have experienced any normality whatsoever. Without a serious effort to redress the chaos that has been created by damaging agendas of the NIF, regional interests and western governments, there will be no future to look forward to. Herein lies the challenge and, in turn, your task for the year ahead.

This article can be found at: http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article32530

Our Racism is a Perfect Crime

Interview of Kabengele Munanga

By

Camila Souza Ramos and Glauco Faria

Kabengele Munanga exposes 'racial democracy' as farce, advocates affirmative action and discusses the space of blacks in society.[1]

Fórum : You came from former Zaire. In spite of the fact that Congo's culture and Brazilian culture have some points in common the Democratic Republic of Congo is a very different country. Did you feel keenly the race issue when you came over? How did you feel the change?

Kabengele : Those things are not as explicit as we think. I arrived here in 1975. I went straight to do my doctorate at Universidade de São Paulo. You do not come across prejudice at first sight as soon as you get out of the airport. Things start happening gradually. As when you go into some places and notice that you are the only one. You notice that they look at you and know right away that you are not from here - that you are not like 'our blacks,' you are different. You could say that such unfamiliarity is due to my being a foreigner, but in fact you are strange in comparison to local blacks. They do not go into certain places or if they do they are not self-assertive.

Later I did some courses in anthropology and some of my lecturers were specialists in the race issue. It was through academia and literature that I began to discover that there were problems in the country. One of my first classes was in 1975 or 1976 in a course on the race issue taught by my supervisor, João Batista Borges Pereira. Later, as time goes by you will go in somewhere and

[1] *Revista Fórum*, Issue 77, August 2009. Translated here by Fernando Rosa Ribeiro.

find out that you are alone. Then you ask yourself: where are the others? People would really stare. In fact, they stared even harder when I would go in with my wife and children. That is because mine is an inter-racial family: a white woman, a black man, a black son and another *mestiço* son.[2] Everywhere we went we became an object of curiosity. People would try to be discreet, but did not always succeed. We would go into places where in general blacks would not go.

Then you begin to look for an explanation in order to know why. You approach literature and the university's classes that discuss race discrimination in Brazil - the works of Florestan Fernandes, Otavio Ianni,[3] of my own supervisor and so many others who have worked on that issue. However, the problem is that when you are an adult you can defend yourself, but children cannot. I have two children born in Belgium, one in the Congo and my youngest is Brazilian. How many times have they had to face the police when they were alone and defenceless on the street?

My children went to a private school, Colégio Equipe. Some of the children of my lecturer colleagues studied there. I would not go to fetch them after school. When they left the school to take the bus to go home with some white classmates, they would be the only ones to be searched. Nonetheless, they shared the same social background and studied at the same school. Why only they would be suspect and searched by the police? I saw that happening countless times. I remember that my eldest son, who is nowadays an actor, used to be stopped by the police countless times when he bought his first car. They would always aim a gun at him while they asked for his papers. He was taught not to argue and to say that his papers were in the glove compartment, for otherwise they might think that he was going to take out a gun. In fact, he was suspected to have stolen his own car, which he had bought through his labour. Even today my children will not leave the house just to go across the street without their papers. They are adults and have developed this habit because until you can prove that you are not a thief...Your body's geography does not help you.

You may then think that the difference is merely social. Of course the social is also part of it, but what about the body's geography? This also goes together with the social. You cannot set them apart. In time I began to respond to the race

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2 *Mestiço* (feminine *mestiça*) is cognate with Spanish *mestizo*. It usually indicates a so-called 'mixed race' person, though the term can have different nuances in comparison to those in use in the rest of Latin America. As no exact translation is possible, the word as well as related terms – *mestiçagem, mestiçamento* - will be kept in the original throughout the text, some times after the appropriate translation or gloss. The same approach will also be applied to other terms (translator's note).

3 Both Fernandes and Ianni are well-known pioneering sociologists who worked on the race issue in São Paulo between the 1950s and the 1970s (translator's note).

issue through my life experience, my daily life and things that I learned at the university, as well as through the testimony of people from the black population. Then I understood that racial democracy is a myth.[4] There really is racism in Brazil. It is different from that practised in South Africa under apartheid, and also from the racism practised in the United States, in particular that of the South. That is because our racism is, to employ a common term for it, subtle. Namely, it is veiled. However, it does not mean that, because it is both subtle and veiled, it makes fewer victims than open racism. It makes just as many.

Fórum : When you have an apartheid system like the South African one or a system that restricts rights such as the one that used to exist in the US, the enemy becomes clear. In the Brazilian case it is more difficult to fight against the system...

Kabengele : Of course, it is more difficult because you do not know the identity of your oppressor. In the US it was easier because it began by the laws. The first demand was an end to the racist laws. Afterwards, there was the struggle to set up public policies geared towards advancing racial equality. Here it is more difficult. There was no law that discriminated, nor one that protected. The laws that protect are part of the new constitution that says that racism is a crime that does not allow for bail.[5] Before that there was the Afonso Arinos Act in 1951. According to that act, the practice of racism was a misdemeanour rather than a crime. During a long time both the black and the indigenous population lived without any laws that would either discriminate against them or protect them.

Fórum : Does affirmative action based on quotas for blacks face a harder time in Brazil on account of the myth of racial democracy?

Kabengele : There are sectors of the population that are against and for it. I would begin by those who are against it. They refer to the constitution itself, stating that we are all equal before the law. Therefore, we should not mete out different treatment to some Brazilian citizens. The quotas would in this way be unconstitutional. Another argument against them is the notion that, on account of *mestiçagem*, it would be difficult to tell who is black in Brazil and could therefore benefit from quotas. This argument has already been refuted. Brazil is a country of *mestiçagem*. Many Brazilians have European, indigenous and African blood. In this way, it would be difficult to know who descends from Africans and would be able to benefit from quotas.[6] This argument did not hold water. Why not? In a country where there is discrimination against blacks, discrimination itself is

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4 'Racial democracy' is a term that harks back to a description of Brazilian society by famous sociologist and historian Gilberto Freyre in the 1920s and 1930s (translator's note).

5 The latest constitution was promulgated in 1988 (translator's note).

6 The interviewee uses the term *afro-descendente*, a term employed by the black movement, part of academia and some times in official parlance as well (translator's note).

evidence that it is possible to identify who is black. Otherwise, there would be no discrimination.

In comparison to other countries in the world, Brazil is a country with an exceedingly high rate of mixing (*mestiçamento*). However, this should not prevent the development of an affirmative action policy because self-declaration is enough. Namely, it is enough for a candidate to a post or vacancy to declare his or her descent from Africans (*afro-descendência*). If there is any doubt, there should be an investigation. In borderline cases, someone can declare himself to descend from Africans (*afro-descendente*). Some times there are human mistakes as the one that happened at Universidade de Brasília. There were two young *mestiços* from the same parents. One was admitted through a quota because they thought he was a *mestiço*, whereas the other brother was barred from admission through quotas because they thought that he was white. This is a human mistake. It would have been different if they were absolutely certain that both descended from Africans. But the other brother appealed and was admitted all the same. Such borderline cases exist but will not stop a public policy that can benefit a good deal of the Brazilian population.

Besides, the quota criterion in Brazil is different from that in the United States. There, they began from a fixed criterion based on birth. It is enough that you be born black. Not in Brazil. If we look into the matter, with the exception of Universidade de Brasília (which has its own criterion), all Brazilian universities that use a quota system have employed an ethnic-racial criterion combined with an economic one. Its starting point is the public school.[7] It was not so in the US. However, the press does not want to see it that way. Everyone wants to say that the quota is merely racial. It is not. That is a lie. You have to look at how it works in all the universities. It is necessary to exercise a certain amount of control otherwise employing quotas will be useless. However, the quota is good if we follow quantitative research such as that of IBGE, IPEA, as well as the PNUD indicators[8]. All that research indicates that the gap in the domain of education between blacks and whites is very wide. If we take that into account, then there should be a policy for change. It is in that sense that a quota policy is put forward.

Racism is a daily fact in Brazilian society. People who are against quotas think as if racism did not exist in our society and as if it did not create victims. If someone can prove that there is no more racism in Brazil, then we shall not talk

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7 *Escola pública*, i.e., state-funded schools. Students from public schools are often considered underprivileged as a matter of course, regardless of 'race' (translator's note).

8 IBGE is the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, an official body which carries out the census and puts forth census-related and other official statistics; IPEA is the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, an official research body who has carried out invaluable work related to inequality in Brazil (racial inequality included); PNUD is the United Nations Development Programme (translator's note).

about quotas for blacks any more. We shall then only speak of social classes. However, as racism still exists, then there is no way you can treat on an equal footing people who are victims of both racism and the economic issue in comparison to those that do not suffer from that kind of prejudice. IPEA's research itself shows that if that situation is not changed, blacks will take a very long time to catch up with whites in terms of education. Those who are against quotas put forward yet another argument to the effect that any policy of differentiation on the part of Brazil's government would be a policy that acknowledges races. That would be a step backwards and we would have conflicts just as the US used to have.

Fórum : That is Demétrio Magnoli's argument.[9]

Kabengele : It is a totally false one because we already have experience of quotas. Some people mention seventy to eighty public universities involved.[10] Have you ever heard of racial conflict anywhere or of racial lynching? They do not exist. Of course, there were demonstrations in a couple of universities and some graffiti saying 'black man, go back to the slave quarters.' But that does not amount to racial conflict. That is only a manner of terrorising the population and projecting conflicts that in fact will not exist.

Fórum : Now DEM has filed a suit with the Supremo Tribunal Federal[11] asking for quotas to be called off. What is the motivation behind a political party like DEM and what is the connection between the ideology of a party or an intellectual such as Magnoli and the opposition to the quota system? What is the root of such resistance?[12]

Kabengele : I am under the impression that ideological positions are implicit rather than explicit. The issue of quotas is a political issue. There are people in Brazil who still believe that there is no racism in Brazil. The argument of that Member of Parliament from DEM is that there is no racism in Brazil and that the issue is therefore simply a socioeconomic one. It is a debatable point of view because we do have evidence that there is racism in Brazil in daily life. What do those people want? They want the status quo. The notion that Brazil is very well and there are no problems. Furthermore, the only problem would be the poor people. Therefore, we cannot introduce quotas because it would be introducing discrimination against whites and the poor. However, they ignore that whites and the poor are also benefited by the quotas. They however automatically deny and disregard that.

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9 A Brazilian geographer. See below (translator's note).

10 *Universidade pública*, i.e., a state-funded university. Quotas have become compulsory for all federal universities, but not necessarily for those funded by the different states (translator's note).

11 Highest appeal court in the country (translator's note).

12 DEM is the acronym for *Democratas*, a right-wing party (translator's note).

Fórum : But are those politicians not cynical as they are against the quota system as well as against *Bolsa-Família*[13] or any kind of compensatory policy in the socioeconomic field?

Kabengele : That is interesting, because a country that is as large as Brazil and has social problems should look for ways to change and transform society. Every time you touch on concrete policies for change, there comes up a discussion. But you don't solve social problems through rhetoric alone. How long have people been discussing the quality of the public school? I have been in Brazil for 34 years. Has the public school changed in any way since I got here? No, but the discussion goes on. 'O, all you have to do is change the public school.' The very same people who say that send their children to private school because they know that the public school is bad. As they are the authorities, they could provide a better role model and put their children in public schools and fight for laws, for a good salary for educators, laboratories, and safety. However, everything remains at the level of rhetoric.

There is also the legalistic argument to the effect that 'quotas are unconstitutional and there is no racism in Brazil.' Some legal experts say that the equality mentioned in the constitution is formal equality. However, there is also material equality. It is this material equality that is aimed by policies of affirmative action. It is not enough to say that we are all equal. That is important, but you must also provide the means to attain equality and you do that through public policies. Many have said that quotas for the universities will undermine academic excellence. It has been proved that quota students have performed as well as or even better than other students. Therefore excellence has not been undermined. By the way, it is curious to bring up merit as if our *vestibular* was a model of democracy and merit.[14] Merit simply means that at the starting point you place people on the same level. When people are not equal, they cannot be placed at the starting point in order to compete on an equal basis. It is as if you placed on the same starting line someone with a Beetle and someone with a Mercedes in order to see which car is faster. There is the student who comes from the public school in the periphery (*periferia*) which is a school of very bad quality.[15] There is the student who comes from a private school of good quality. Even if they start together, the student coming from a good school will achieve higher marks. A student from a school such as Pueri Domus or

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13 A federal government programme to assist poor families with children of school-going age (translator's note).

14 *Vestibular* is the general entrance examination for all public universities carried out once or twice a year all over the country. Millions of candidates take part in it (translator's note).

15 *Periferia* is a term indicating the poorer outskirts of large cities. It has social and cultural connotations that are reminiscent of those related to the former 'townships' in South African cities (translator's note).

Liceu Pasteur gets an 8, whereas a student from the periphery will get a 5.[16] The student from the periphery in fact came a much longer way. His 5 may in this way be more meaningful than 7 or 8. If you give that student a chance, he will not disappoint you.

That is what has happened. Such students have been given a chance as quotas have been employed since 2003. In those seven years, how many young people benefited by the quotas have graduated from a university? How many years would have it taken Brazil to get them to graduate without quotas? Maybe twenty or more years. These are concrete facts to which people close their eyes. In Professor Demétrio Magnoli's article, he criticizes me.[17] However, he has read nothing, not a single line from my books. He simply quotes me from my introduction to Eneida de Almeida dos Santos's book whose title is 'Mulatto, a non-black black man and a non-white white.'[18] She had asked me to write an introduction. From that three-page introduction he has taken out a few sentences. Based on those sentences he accuses me of being an academic charlatan and of professing a scientific racism abandoned over a century ago, and also of being part of a project for the official racialization of Brazil. He has never read anything that I have written.

The author of the book is a *mestiça* and a psychiatrist. She studies the difficulties faced by *mestiços* who are in-between blacks and whites in the construction of their identity. I wrote the introduction in which I state that they face such difficulties exactly because they are non-black blacks and non-white whites. This makes the process of identity building harder. However, on the political and economic level, they cannot remain ambivalent. They have to choose an identity and have to accept their blackness (*negritude*), instead of rejecting it. By this Professor Magnoli thinks that I am advocating the suppression of *mestiços* in Brazil and that this is part of a project of racialization of Brazilians. He had nothing to accuse me of, then learned that I have been advocating quotas, quoted some three sentences and then made his accusation in the newspaper.

Fórum : You mention the issue of the mindset of racial democracy, but people are educated in order to accept that myth...

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16 Most schools use a system of marks ranging from 0 to 10. Both Pueri Domus and Liceu Pasteur are expensive private schools in São Paulo (translator's note).

17 The article, under the title of 'Monstros Tristonhos' ('Sad-looking Monsters'), came out in *Estado de São Paulo*, a major newspaper, on May 14, 2009. It mentions two federal universities who have turned down *mestiços* as candidates as having made themselves into 'racial tribunals.' The article reportedly lays the blame squarely on Professor Munanga as an important source of the thinking behind the quota system (translator's note).

18 In fact, Eneida de Almeida dos *Reis*, author of *Mulato, negro-não-negro e/ou branco-não-branco* (Altara: São Paulo, 2002) (translator's note).

Kabengele : Racism is an ideology. Ideology can only be reproduced if the victims themselves accept, internalize and naturalize it. Besides the victims themselves, it is also accepted and internalized by those citizens that discriminate and think that they are superior to other citizens, and that they have the right to the best positions in society. If you don't bring together those two conditions,[19] racism cannot be reproduced as an ideology. However, all the education we receive is meant to reproduce it.

There are blacks who have internalized it and have in this way become alienated from their own humanity. They think that they are really inferior and the white man has all the right to take up the leadership positions. Moreover, there are also whites who have internalized it and think that they are really superior by nature. However, in order to fight against that notion laws are not enough. These are repressive and only punish. You must also educate. Education is a very important tool in changing mentalities. Brazilians have been educated not to avow their prejudices. Florestan Fernandes used to say that one of the problems of Brazilians is the 'prejudice against having prejudice against having prejudice.'[20] Brazilians will never accept that they are prejudiced. They have been educated not to accept it. As they say, never mention rope in the house of a man who has been hanged.

When you are face to face with a black man, you are told that you must say that he is *moreno*[21]. For if you say that he is black, he will be offended. That does not mean however that he should not be called black. He has a name and an identity, but when you talk about him, you can say that he is black. You do not need to whiten him nor turn him into a *moreno*. Brazilians have been brought up to behave in that way: never to mention rope in the house of a hanged man. When you catch a Brazilian red-handed, practising a racist act, he does not acknowledge it for he has not been educated to acknowledge it. If he was an American, he would say: 'I am not renting my home to a black man.' In Brazil, he will say: 'See, friend, you have come too late, I have just rented it out.' Americans have been brought up to own up to their racist practices so that these become explicit.

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19 Namely, internalization by both victims and perpetrators (translator's note).

20 Florestan Fernandes in one of the first sociologists who studied the race issue (translator's note).

21 *Moreno* can have various meanings, ranging from 'dark' to 'brown' to 'swarthy.' On occasion the term may also be applied to whites (meaning a white who is not blonde). '(Sun-) tanned' is also another possible, if less common, meaning. More often than not, however, it is a term used to indicate blacks in a less direct or euphemistic manner. Quite a few people in some parts of Brazil may however also use it as self-description (translator's note).

When *Folha de São Paulo*[22] did that opinion poll back in 1995, they asked many Brazilians if there was racism in Brazil. Over 80% answered yes. They asked the same people whether they had ever discriminated against anyone. Most said they had not. This means that there is racism but without racists. Racism hangs in the air....How can you fight against that? Quite often Brazilians go as far as saying to the black man who responds: 'It is you who have an inferiority complex for the problem is in your mind.' They shun away guilt and project it onto the victim himself. Have you ever heard of a perfect crime? Our racism is a perfect crime, because the victim himself is responsible for racism, whereas whoever made a racist comment faces no problems.

Fórum : Humorist Danilo Gentili wrote on Twitter a joke about King Kong, comparing him to a football player who used to go out with blonde women. There was a huge response, and the range of his arguments to explain himself is along the lines that you have been suggesting. He said that those who accused him were racist, and mentioned the issue of black pride as something coming from someone who is racist.

Kabengele : That is part of that mindset. The idea behind comparing the player who is going to marry a blonde to King Kong in an illustration is that someone who is upwardly mobile will look for his blonde. But what is the problem with the football player? Is he not one of those people who were victims of racism and now think that, as they have gone up in life, they have to show it by getting a blonde? A blonde who was forbidden to them when they were poor? This is one possible explanation. But isn't that blonde a human being who can choose for herself and therefore went with King Kong just because of the money? That is quite possible, for how many times will people not marry for money in our society? The old bourgeoisie only marries within the old bourgeoisie. But there have always been people who have disregarded the rules of society.

Those young white blonde women also go beyond their fenced-off identities in order to marry a black player. Why does the chain only break at the weakest link, namely, the football player? At the bottom, people don't want blacks to marry their daughters. It is a form of racism. They show their prejudice when they do not respect the will of those women nor of those people who have gone up in life in a society where love knows no boundaries. Otherwise, there would not be so many *mestiços* in this society. That humorist makes a humorous sketch out of it after all that happened in the football field when that player from Argentina called Grafite[23] a monkey, and after all that happened in Europe. He is trying to provoke people or else reassert prejudices in our society.

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22 *Folha de São Paulo* is a major newspaper in São Paulo that carried out a landmark survey on racism later published as a book (translator's note).

23 A black football player. See also discussion below (translator's note).

Fórum : In that instance Danilo Gentili further explained away his joke with a very simplistic argument: 'because I can call a fat man a whale and a black man a monkey.' As if it was the same thing.

Kabengele : That is interesting because my impression is that that guy does not know history, and black pride has a history. Blacks are human beings that through the very process of colonization and slavery were denied their humanity. In order to recover, they have to own up to their bodies as black people. They have to look at themselves in the mirror and find themselves either ugly or beautiful. That is black pride. And it is part of acknowledging yourself as black to own up to your rejected body. If that humorist knew that, he would understand the history of black pride. Whites do not have a reason to have white pride because they are the victors, for they are up there. It is the others who are down there who must have pride and must build up that pride in order to rise up again.

Fórum : You mentioned the incident between Grafite and Desábato.[24] Recently, during a match between Cruzeiro and Grêmio for the Libertadores Cup, a player supposedly called another player a monkey. In general, people – for instance, the journalists who commented on that incident and the managing board of Grêmio – argued that on the field you can say anything. Besides, if people were bothered by it football matches would not be possible. How do you see this kind of situation?

Kabengele : This is evidence of what I mentioned above, namely, Brazilians have been educated not to own up to their bad habits, namely, their racism. In other countries people would not say that on the field everything is acceptable. There people really get punished. But here when it involves a black person...have you ever heard of the opposite case, namely, a black who has called a white a monkey? When the police commissioner arrested the Argentinean player in the incident involving Grafite, everybody condemned the commissioner. Coaches, journalists, and sportsmen - they all said that in football it is like that. In that case, how can we educate the football player if everything is allowed? When there is physical violence players get punished. This is also violence, symbolic violence. Why is symbolic violence accepted whereas physical violence is punished?

Fórum : How do you see the implementation of the law that makes compulsory the teaching of African culture in schools?[25] Are teachers in general prepared to tackle the race issue?

Kabengele : That law has already been criticized by people who think it would also mean a racialization of Brazil. Those people think that, as the Brazilian population is a

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[24] Leandro Desábato is an Argentinean player. The incident took place during a match in the 2005 Libertadores Cup. Grafite is a player for São Paulo, an important club (translator's note).

[25] Federal law passed in 2003 making compulsory the teaching of black culture in Brazil and African history in schools (translator's note).

mestiço population, it is not necessary to teach black culture nor black history or the history of Africa. We have a single history and a single *mestiço* culture. There are people who think along those lines and therefore believe that the law means the racialization of education in Brazil.

However, the issue of teaching diversity at school is not an issue specific to Brazil. All countries in the world deal with the issue of the teaching of diversity at school, even those countries that were not colonial countries such as the Scandinavian ones. As they now receive immigrants, they therefore tackle the issue of diversity in their schools.

Brazil should deal with that issue in a more forceful way, as it is a country born out of the meeting between cultures and civilizations. The Europeans came, there were the indigenous people[26] – who owned the land – and then came the Africans. The last wave of immigrants is that of Asians.[27] In this way, all those are part of the roots making up Brazil. Those roots should be part of the formation of citizens. Now, if we look at our education system, we notice that the history of blacks and of Africa as well as that of the indigenous populations is not part of the education of Brazilians.

Our education model is Eurocentric. From the point of view of official historiography, the Portuguese arrived in Africa, came across Africans selling their own children, bought these children and brought them to Brazil. That is not what happened. The history of slavery is a history of violence. When you talk about what each people contributed to Brazil, you never talk about Africa. It will help if you introduce the history of the other in a positive manner.

That is why education and the introduction of black history in Brazil is part of that process of constructing black pride. Blacks have to know that they were brought over and contributed with their labour – slave labour – in order to build the foundations of the Brazilian colonial economy. Besides, there was resistance and the black man was no fool that simply accepted his lot. Otherwise we would not have had uprisings in the slave quarters or Quilombo dos Palmares. This last went on for almost a century.[28] They are evidence of resistance and the defence of human dignity. Those are the things that should be taught. This is part of the historical heritage of all Brazilians. Both blacks and whites have to know that history for it is through it that they will come to respect each other.

Fórum : Another issue under discussion are blacks in spaces of power. We do not see blacks either as mayors or governors. How do you fight for that?

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[26] The indigenous population is not included in the official census but is believed to be between 3 and 4% of the total population (translator's note).

[27] Asian-Brazilians (mostly Japanese-Brazilians) make up about 2% of the population (translator's note).

[28] Quilombo dos Palmares is Brazil's largest and most famous historical maroon community. It existed in the seventeenth century and is now both a symbol of black pride and part of official national heritage (translator's note).

Kabengele : What is a democratic country? In my view, a democratic country is one where its diversity is reflected in its structure of power. In such a country you see women holding positions of responsibility in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches as well as in the private sector. You also see indigenous people there. These were people who were the most discriminated against in society. That would be a democratic country. The fact that you look at the structure of power and see few or almost no blacks, no women, nor indigenous people means that something remains to be done in this country. Though a part of the construction of democracy the representation of diversity does not exist in the structure of power. Why not?

If you survey the judicial branch, how many black judges and chief judges do you have in Brazilian society? If you go to the public universities, how many black lecturers are there, to begin with in my own university? My university has about five thousand lecturers. How many black lecturers are there in USP? The Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas (FFLCH) is one of the largest faculties in Universidade de São Paulo (USP), besides the Politécnica.[29] I am certain that I was the first black lecturer appointed in my faculty. Since I joined the anthropology department there, no other black has been hired. In three years' time I will retire. Professor Milton Santos was a great lecturer. He excelled in geography. He joined his department from abroad.[30] I was already here. In the whole of USP I cannot mention more than ten people known to me. Maybe there are more, but even if you go for a higher figure there are not even fifty people. If you go to the large American universities, such as Harvard, Princeton, and Stanford, you will come across more black lecturers than in Brazil. They are or used to be more racist there. How to explain that difference? Emancipation was 120 years ago.[31] How come there has not been a certain amount of social mobility so that blacks can ascend? There are two explanations: either you say that blacks are genetically less intelligent, what would be a racist explanation, or else you find an explanation in society. That implies that their upward mobility has been blocked. It is therefore an issue of prejudice and race discrimination. There is no explanation for that. If you see the Japanese immigrants who came - recently it was the hundredth anniversary of their arrival - they have experienced a certain upward mobility.[32] Koreans

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29 USP is one of the two oldest universities in Brazil (founded in 1935), and is also one of the largest and most prestigious (translator's note).

30 Milton Santos (now deceased) was black and an internationally famous geographer (translator's note).

31 Emancipation (*abolição*) happened in 1888. Brazil was the last country in the Western Hemisphere to abolish slavery (translator's note).

32 That was in 2008. Japanese-Brazilians, though descended in part from indentured labourers and historically discriminated against, belong largely to the upwardly-mobile sector of the middle-classes (translator's note).

also have a place in society.[33] But blacks are already 120 years away from emancipation. There is an explanation and hence the need to change that predicament. Or we keep that predicament as is. For, if we change we are racializing Brazil. We can therefore also keep the situation as is to show that we are not racist. For the reasoning goes that if we try to change, we will be racist and be racializing. In that way, let's keep things as they are. That is the dilemma of this society.

Fórum : What do you think about the way the media tackles the race issue?

Kabengele : The press is part of society. I believe that the discourse on the myth of racial democracy is also a discourse that is taken over by some members of the press. The press shows a certain bias as it is against affirmative action policies. It is also not particularly favourable to the compulsory teaching of black history in schools.

Last month there was the *II Conferência Nacional de Promoção da Igualdade Racial* ('Second National Conference for the Promotion of Racial Equality')[34]. There was complete silence on the part of the Brazilian press. Not a single news item about it. The large newspapers did not mention it. Silence is part of the mechanism of Brazilian racism. As Elie Wiesel put it, the executioner always kills twice. The second time he kills through silence. Silence is a way of killing the consciousness of a people. For if we talk about the issue openly people will try to know more and become politically aware. However, if you remain silent, then the thing dies. Therefore, in my view, the silence of the press is part of that strategy of the unsaid.

I have just had an interesting experience. I left the National Conference and went to Barcelona. I was invited by a group of Brazilians that are *capoeira* practitioners.[35] Of course, they received money from the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations. The Ministry paid for my ticket and my stay. It was a small meeting of *capoeiristas* and I talked about black culture in Brazil. *El País* reported on it even though it was a small affair. That is Spain's most important newspaper. A major national conference goes unreported here. It is absurd. The silence of the press is not neutral. It is a silence that points to a certain conviction about the race issue. You must refrain from saying much and keep quiet. Tomorrow the issue will not be spoken of, and then it will be over.

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33 (South) Koreans are historically very recent arrivals. They tend to be upwardly mobile (translator's note).

34 An event sponsored by the government (translator's note).

35 *Capoeira* is a creolized African-Brazilian martial art-cum-dance (translator's note).

BOOK REVIEW

The Soul of Mbira: Music and Traditions of the Shona People

(Paul Berliner. 1978. California. University of California Press)

Gadziro Gwekwerere

Introduction

Several researchers including missionaries, historians, anthropologists and ethno-musicologists have studied several elements of Zimbabwean culture including religion, language and music. Findings about these elements of culture have been documented. This paper seeks to analyse the accuracy and validity of the findings by Berliner (1978) since it is apparent that some of the conclusions had misconceptions. Berliner is an American who was introduced to Zimbabwean music by Dumisani Mararire who taught African music in Seattle, Washington for several years, (Berliner 1978). Works by the scholar form a very useful base for evaluating published literature on Zimbabwean music. There is no doubt that although there might be apparent inaccuracies here and there, the literature remains valuable to the history and nature of African music.

What is with an old man is not to be asked for; he gives what he likes

The heading is a Shona proverb, *Chine musharuka hachikumbirwi, anopa sekuda kwake.* It literally means that elders are the custodians of indigenous knowledge and it is up to them to give or deny anyone the knowledge. Furusa in Mutsvairo et al (1996: 83) says, "Shona proverbs are a specific artistic activity in which the history of Shona culture is inscribed." These proverbs generalize people's experiences and way of life. They are statements of truths formulated after careful observations and experiences. The above Shona proverb implies that elderly people are the source of indigenous knowledge and they have to guard the knowledge jealously lest it is stolen or distorted by other people including scholars who may have

interest in the particular phenomena. It is up to the elders to divulge or hide certain knowledge to strangers even if they ask for the knowledge.

Oral tradition is not only an important source of information for Africans but even for Western countries. In the West there are stories that involve music or songs that were passed down centuries ago verbally or orally and still exist among the Western communities as cited by http://www.si.umich.edu/chico/UMS/Drummers/senstats.html

Oral tradition is when information is passed from one generation to the other by word of mouth. No written evidence would be referred to in this case. It is usually the very old people or longest surviving members of a community or family who would be privileged to recount past events relating to their way of life, customs and culture. A lot would therefore depend on the memory of the narrator and also individual choice to include or exclude aspects of the information asked for by researchers of a particular phenomena. Kileff (1997) points out that since the coming of whites to Zimbabwe, indigenous ways of life have gone through change and change has been greatest in cases where contact with foreigners has been extensive. The people of the Zambezi valley and other areas like Binga that are remote have not been as much colonized as the people in accessible areas like Harare. People in remote areas still have indigenous practices from the past such as language, dress, music and food.

Bourdillon (1998) in his book, *The Shona Peoples* acknowledges that oral tradition has been used for the past decades as a valuable source of information on the history of the people of Zimbabwe. He further states that oral tradition cannot be relied upon as a valid source of information because oral traditions are normally recounted only for a specific purpose and survive only as long as people continue to maintain an interest in the subject or phenomena. Informants apparently tend to recite and narrate aspects of their oral tradition which serve their purpose or they deliberately exclude information that they think and feel an outsider should not hear. There is no way of checking whether given information is twisted or distorted.

Nzewi (2007: 17) also observes that field researchers at times use Africans to poach indigenous knowledge and later have all the credit to themselves. Informants would only appear in one statement under acknowledgements yet, they would have been the main or chief source on untapped indigenous knowledge. Nzewi asks:

> Would a mentally secure indigenous knowledge expert easily divulge the theory and logic of her sensitive knowledge practice to any arrogantly posing- to- poach researcher?

What Nzewi says about Africa also applies to Zimbabwe as in the case of Berliner (1978). Authorship and analysis of a phenomenon in African indigenous culture is cumulative and yet it is personalized in the metropolitan knowledge jingles, Nzewi (2007). By this, it is implied that normally scholars do fieldwork with the help of indigenous people who give them knowledge and yet there is no partnership in authorship. If there had been fair partnership, there would have been accurate information, perhaps. African socialization does not allow people to divulge information to strangers. They say, *Nhumbu mukadzi mukuru*

hairevi chayakadya, meaning, pregnancy is secretive and does tell how it came into being.

In the introductory chapter of his book, *Soul of Mbira*, Berliner (1978: 3), acknowledges that the old men, who are custodians of oral tradition select which information to give or withhold to foreigners and strangers when he points out:

> As the days drew to an end, I casually asked *Bandambira* whether the keys of the *mbira* had any particular names. He thought for a while and then said simply, "No, I have never heard of such a thing."

Three years down the line, the same author returned to *Bandambira* (not a real name) and asked the same question only to be told that only four *mbira* keys had names. A serious scholar has to cite authorities by name so in this case *Bandambira* is not a real name but a nickname name for great *mbira* players. In the Western perspective would a serious scholar cite 'pianist' or a real name for the informant? One wonders if the later answer to the question was because the old man then wanted to tell the truth or invented the names to please the researcher who insisted on naming the *mbira* keys, a system that is common in Western music. Another factor could be that of incentives that were offered to the old man on the second visit in form of recorded music from the previous visit and a royalty cheque, Berliner (ibid). After being offered such gifts, one could be tempted to alter information and release information that pleases the rewarder (researcher) in this case. This could be taken as bribery and maybe *Bandambira* gave false information knowing that this misconception would eventually be unearthed by other scholars. If Berliner had taken time to build rapport with the informant, maybe he would have got correct information. Instead he came to collect data in short visits, Berliner (ibid).

The same author on the next two visits again received contradicting information on the names of *mbira* keys and admits that he had to destroy his notes to restart on more than two occasions. The information given to Berliner by the old man involved several mbira keys being allocated the same name or a mbira key being given a different name each time the researcher asked. The old man is said to have stopped to think for a while before reciting the *mbira* key aloud. This could have been because the old man had forgotten and was trying to recall or the worst could be that he would take time to 'cook' and fabricate a name since the researcher insisted on knowing the names.

When Berliner (1978: 7) replayed the recorded interviews with the old man about naming *mbira* he claims that there were voices in the background whispering to the old man not to divulge information to the stranger. It has never been in the Shona culture to name *mbira* keys, but just to play the keys knowing which keys produce high or deep notes. It is apparent that only *Bandambira* claimed to know this naming system and no other Zimbabwean musician claims that the *mbira* keys have specific names. Berliner (ibid) acknowledges that other experienced *mbira* players like Simon Mashoko denied that *mbira* keys have specific names. To therefore rely on information given and authenticated by one old man would be questionable. The researcher should have consulted more *mbira* players to verify this fact before publishing the findings. Other documented evidence has shown that it

is the different *mbira* types that have different names, different physical characteristics and different number of keys from one place to the other within Zimbabwe but not that *mbira* keys have always had particular names for example, *matepe, njari, nhare* and so on and so forth. Berliner doubted the information concerning the *mbira* keys but went on to publish it, which discredits his scholarly aptitude.

Western and African perspectives of studying or analyzing any phenomena differ

Although there is marked difference between Western and African musical cultures, the Western scholars seem to think that their way of thinking or analyzing music is valid for all peoples. Africans usually deal with theory and practice simultaneously; the Westerners prefer learning theory first and later the practical. Koetting (1970: 121) says, "African musicians generally do not think analytically about the music they make. They do not describe it in precise terms." One wonders whose precise terms when Africans understand themselves and their music without the use of Western principles. Berliner (1978) apparently had the same ideas in mind when he set out to travel from America to Zimbabwe to study music as evidenced in his research report Nzewi (2007: vi) points out that:

> In the African musical arts, scholarship that relies solely on Northern Hemispheric prescriptions and procedures will obscure rather than elucidate the unique humanly directed, theoretical and philosophical groundings of indigenous African musical arts intellect.

Thus, African and Western musical cultures differ such that different procedures should be used for analyzing each individual musical culture. That failure to accord an appropriate procedure in analysis, unique to African musical cultures, results in fundamental inadequacies on research findings conceptualized on preconceived alien propositions. It is from such inherently deficient backdrop of analytical background that it would be unfair to misrepresent Africans by converting their indigenous knowledge systems into foreign versions of knowledge systems.

Just because the piano and guitar have specific names allocated to keys or strings respectively does not necessarily mean that all African musical instruments have keys that have specific names. There arises a problem if a scholar insists on having specific names for *mbira* keys as observed in Berliner (1978). There are several pitches on the *mbira* and on the piano, but how that knowledge is perceived by the two cultures differs.

Berliner (1978: 55) writes *mbira* music in linear form splitting the piece of music into the bass (low sounding keys) and the treble (high sounding keys) clef. This alone is un-African for African music is perceived from a holist view where the cosmological thought system starts by envisioning, perceiving and construing the whole, the unity. Nzewi (2007: v) says, "African creative theory is marked by the performance principle and theory of cyclic development of the structural inside of a known framework or viewpoint." Thus, viewing African musical arts from a linear perspective is on its own wrong and a misrepresentation of the reality. Not only are the African musical arts cyclic but other arts like dwelling huts,

kraals and children's games take the cyclic structure and shape.

The nature of *mbira* music differs from that of any Western instrumental music. There cannot be a realistic comparative analysis of *mbira* and any given Western musical instrument. Berliner (ibid: 53) admits that notating *mbira* music using the Western scale is not accurate when he states that:

> Because of the elusive nature of *mbira* music, the visual representations provided in this chapter cannot portray the musical event in full, but only illustrate points about certain aspects of the music.

Thus, the illustrations of *mbira* music by Berliner are not definitely accurate as the Western stave cannot fully represent African sounds. Notation, whether on the stave or tablature does not accurately stand in for African musical sounds. Even the scale of *mbira* keys should never be compared to the Western octave as the two are different.

African indigenous music's scale system is standard such that it gives the idiomatic stamp to the corpus of melodic music from the culture and any creative person could compose a tune with any number or range of notes from the cultural scale, Nzewi (ibid: 15) Thus, there is no modulation or singing out of tune as claimed by Berliner (ibid: 196) when he says that ensembles would compete or that the audience would judge performers and opt for better performers. One other point about African music is that it has the humanistic principle of inclusiveness such that everybody is free to take part in music making, especially singing. Clefs do not matter but the starting pitch should be such that it allows all interested people to sing too.

The use of space and silence differs as far as African and Western music is concerned. While there are periods of silence in Western music called rests, according to Nzewi (2007: 34) absence of audible sound in African music does not imply rests. It is said that it is an interactive space intended to include a listener or co-performer in a creative or production process.

The notion of pleasant music is also not the same between the Africans and Westerners. Nzewi (ibid) believes that to an African, what is beautiful, pleasing or sweet to the senses is, more often than not, unhealthy for the mind and body. African musical arts' beauty is concerned with the inside or rather the effectiveness of the music than the superficial beauty in a given piece of music like in the Western perspective.

Misconceptions on Zimbabwean musical arts by Berliner

It is worth noting that both researchers, Berliner conducted fieldwork in and around Zimbabwe's capital city, Harare but their research findings seem to have been generalized across Zimbabwe. It should be noted that there are several music cultures in Zimbabwe which are shaped on ethnic and tribal lines therefore, what happens in Harare does not necessarily happen the same way in Bulawayo or any other part of Zimbabwe. Berliner (1978: xii) says:

> The Shona people of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) are among those people in Africa who place a special significance and value on the *mbira*.

This is true to a limited extent because the Shona people are divided into about five ethnic groups and dialects. These are the *Zezuru, Manyika, Karanga, Ndau* and *Korekore*. Of these, it is mainly the *Zezuru* who place special importance on *mbira* and use it for religious purposes. The other four mainly value the drum (ngoma) because of its use in religious purposes. All in all, it is not all Shona people who value *mbira* but some do, depending on its use for ritual, religious and ceremonial functions.

Throughout his discussion in *Soul of Mbira,* Berliner refers to the large *mbira dzavadzimu* (*mbira* for ancestral spirits). The *mbira* that he refers to is actually called *nhare*. This *mbira* has keys that vary from twenty- two up to twenty- five keys, depending on the manufacturer. Each tribe would have their own *mbira* for appeasing ancestral spirits which could be *nhare, nyunganyunga, matepe, njari* etc, depending on which type of *mbira* the ancestor used to enjoy as a living being.

Berliner (1978: 35) says:

> While the *mbira dzavadzimu* can be played for entertainment outside of religious ceremonies, its players report that, unlike other mbira, the *mbira dzavadzimu* is not "for playing in the beer halls. The *njari* and *matepe*, however can be played in the beer halls or for spirit possession.

The truth is that any *mbira* type can be played anywhere as long as that particular instrument (*mbira*) is not used for ancestral worship. Instruments for ancestral rituals are supposed to be revered and playing them elsewhere could offend the spirits such that they refuse to manifest during ancestral rituals.

Resonators for the *mbira* are usually made out of large pumpkin gourds and these are found within selected communities where this special type of pumpkin grows. It is a misconception to state that:

> Unless a musician is very wealthy he usually keeps the same gourd until it has been stitched in so many places that it no longer resonates the *mbira* well, Berliner (ibid: 38).

Thus, being wealthy or not has nothing to do with having a new gourd as a resonator since these are naturally readily available resources. Besides, members from the local community donate such resources to great players since these players in most cases are involved in religious ceremonies for the whole village or even tribe. Watching a *mbira* player with a worn out resonator does not imply poverty and this should never be associated with

one's economic status. Nzewi (2007: vi) also supports the idea of African communal support when he says, "In the original Africa, a person was not allowed to be poor and isolated when the family, the compound group or the community, in that telescoped order of responsibility, had the shared wherewithal for sustenance."

On page 40, Berliner (1978) points out that some *mbira* players play with great force during ceremonies such that they have broken *mbira* keys. One wonders how human fingers can break metal keys. This is an exaggeration of facts and the implication is that *mbira* players end up without fingers too, having broken them during rituals. The manner of playing actually reflects commitment and passion since the music has to do with ancestral rituals.

Mauch as cited by Berliner (1978: 43) writes that *mbira* music was popularly used to accompany the chores of farming, such as when "girls and boys thresh corn together", and mentions the performance of *mbira* by a blind beggar. There is music specifically for threshing and this music is in the form of work songs and everybody performs the music as they thresh. It would be ridiculous to have a few people playing the *mbira* whilst others are threshing and labouring. *Mbira* has never been used as part of work songs. The threshing sticks are used as musical instruments and produce rhythmic sounds as they hit the corn on the ground. This type of music provides a constant rhythm for people working as a group and the music breaks monotony when people are faced with a labourious task.

On page 128, Berliner (1978) claims that a *mbira* player called Simon Mashoko claims that if he spent time without playing the *mbira* instrument, the instrument that is usually kept under the bed would make sounds on its own, calling upon the owner to play it. This is no myth but just false information. Mashoko used to be a Catholic priest and did not actually have anything to do with ancestral veneration, though he was a great *mbira* player. The informant ends up giving researchers funny or unrealistic stories if too much pressure is exerted on them. Perhaps Berliner misinterpreted a joke or hyperbole since jokes differ across societies and cultures.

Mashave spirits are alien spirits which may belong to a different race or tribe or any person one is not related to. When possessed by such a spirit the medium speaks a language that they would not comprehend under normal circumstances. The possessed at times have talent in performing certain activities when under the influence of the *mashave* spirits and this ability can either be positive or negative. This has nothing to do with spirits of persons who did not receive proper burial rites at death as claimed by Berliner (ibid: 187).
One other misconception by Berliner (1978: 196) says:

> On such occasions the villagers give each musician or ensemble a chance to demonstrate their skills, and then they select the best players to perform for the remainder of the evening.

Only selected musicians perform at ceremonies for appeasing ancestral spirits. One would conclude that the researcher attended a *mbira* gala where performers would compete. Ritual or sacred musical ceremonies are attended by selected musicians and participants. Performers for religious rituals are selected according to specific religious beliefs, the

community elders also assist in selecting performers from among fellow villagers and the spirit mediums also have a hand in appointing performers. Spirits may not be invoked if unsuitable performers are selected.

> When the second group of musicians first arrived outside of the *banya*, the villagers prevailed upon them to perform, expressing their dissatisfaction with the first group. The *churning* of their *mbira* was not pleasing to them, the musicians did not play with enough power to make people dance well, and they took breaks for beer too frequently between tunes, Berliner (1978: 196).

Thus, the above impression is that *mbira* music should be pleasing to the audience and yet the correct fact is that the music should be appealing to the spirit. Whether the rest of the people are pleased by the music to the extent of dancing is not important. The Spirit mediums are the ones that need to dance or respond to the music so as to get possessed. The rest of the people are just there to support the spirit mediums. It is also not the energy exerted on performing that matters but that the music should be appealing to the spirit mediums.

On page 199 Berliner claims that *Bandambira* was hired to play *mbira* at a *bira* and played for more than two days because the spirit was stubborn and refused to manifest. *Bandambira* was said to have admitted failure and defeat but it is not only the music that may result in the spirit refusing to manifest. There are a lot of taboos or dos and don'ts that come with indigenous rituals. Some of the participants may be 'unclean' due to sleeping with their spouses during the ceremony or ritual. Even if people are married they should abstain till the period of the ritual is over. This even affects people who would have brewed the special beer for ancestral rituals.

Berliner (1978: 203) further misrepresents facts about Zimbabwean music by claiming that:

> One villager said that "the music [at a particular ceremony] was so well done that the spirits were hovering about waiting to appear". A singer remarked that the music was so nice it made her want to become possessed, and one man said that on a certain occasion the music was so good that the spirits were even possessing children.

Even from a euro centric perspective, it is ridiculous to say that spirits are visible. How can spirits wait as if they are tangible objects. The spirits, even in the African perspective bare invisible and the only sign that someone is possessed is getting into a trance and behaving differently as in talking or walking. A female who is possessed by a male spirit can start talking in a deep male voice and vice versa. The atmosphere must have been ecstatic. Another researcher, Bourdillon (1998: 222) says:

> The Shona are vague as to the nature of the spirit's presence in any of these objects: when questioned, they say that the spirit might be in the object concerned, but that they do not really know since one cannot see the spirit and their fathers never explained it to them.

It is true that the spirit cannot be visualized by the Shona. To say that people are vague just because they think differently is not fair. One wonders if Westerners such as Bourdillon are not also vague in this area since they believe that spirits are invisible but exist and affect people.

Conclusion

African scholars and researchers of musical arts seriously need to take time to study their own indigenous knowledge systems and correct some of the misconceptions. As long as they remain passive in areas of researching and creating new knowledge systems, other scholars will continue to misrepresent their cultural music. Not all information by scholars is wrong but if a researcher is not sure about other people's cultures, they should not misrepresent facts. Researchers are at times more interested in financial and personal benefits of publishing at the expense of the validity and accuracy of their findings.

The study of Africology needs to be pursued by genuine researchers so that African children are not poisoned by inaccurate publications. Africans have the following saying, "Until lions have their own historians, stories about hunting will always glorify the hunter and downplay the hunted." So, unless and until Africans do research about themselves, foreigners will continue to glorify themselves and also continue to be glorified by Africans. Publications on African musical arts without prejudice and distortions are what the world should be looking forward to having.

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BOOK REVIEW

Butterflies and Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries and Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa

(Patrick Harries (2007). Oxford: James Currey; Harare: Weaver Press; Johannesburg: Wits University Press; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007. xvii + 286 pp. Photographs. Maps. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. ISBN: 978-0-8214-1777-5 [pbk.])

Felix Banda

The book is rich and dense in detail covering differing fields ranging from history, anthropology, role of Christianity in the creation of ethnicity and tribes in Africa, to the linguistic aspects colonialism as well the onset of unequal power relations among Africans based on formal (written) and oral versions of African languages. The book has old maps of South Eastern Africa as well as illustrative figures and photographs of butterflies, fauna and some of the most influential Swiss missionaries to venture south of the Sahara in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. Of particular interest is how the Missionaries tried and to some extent succeeded in changing the knowledge systems of the indigenous Africans in South-East Africa through their writings, actions and practices. The book is also about how Africans undermined and adapted the European knowledge systems to suit their conditions. This did not always go well with the missionaries who saw their mission as to bring 'light' to the 'darkest' of Africa.

The book mostly chronicles the role of Henri-Alexandre Junod a Swiss missionary cum-entomologist-cum-botanist-cum naturalist. Junod with the help of other white missionaries and African collectors identified plants, collected and classified butterflies, constructed languages, tribes and ethnicities through their work on African dictionaries, orthographies and anthropology. He also sought to explain his theory of (African) natural science using Christian philosophy. Using the linguistic and skills in natural sciences of his African assistants and collectors (whose contributions he fails to adequately recognise), Junod came up with *The Life of a South African Tribe* between 1898 and 1927, which is recognised as well as vilified as a classic in South African anthropology. It is vilified for sowing the first seeds of racial segregation and tribalism in the Southern parts of Africa. Incredibly, Junod drew conclusions on African and human culture in general from his study of how butterflies are able to adapt and thrive to particular habits. It is seen as a classic for its detail and the fact that it was one of the first books of its nature to be written at the time.

Patrick Harries, the author, was initially interested in Swiss missionaries and started browsing the archives of the Swiss Mission in Lausanne on how they brought changes to Southern Mozambique. As his interest on the subject grew and so did the scope of his enquiry to include how missionaries generally perceived Africa and the impact their African experiences had on their lives and others in Switzerland. Particular focus was also on how the activities of the missionaries created tribes out of people who did not see themselves as belonging to 'tribes', manufactured vernacular languages which they then linked to the constructed tribes and particular borders, and especially, they imposed a European worldview and knowledge system on Africans. Harries suggests this was the beginning of hegemony and dominance of certain groups of people based on the 'standard' written language, which was not always the language spoken by ordinary people. This was also the beginning of dominance of Western knowledge systems over indigenous ones.

The book is written in 9 chapters of more or less equal length. Chapter 1 looks at Christian renaissance that swept through western Switzerland in the early 19th century. This saw the emergence of numerous Free churches and mission societies all vying to save the dark souls in Africa. The Christian revivals also brought a strong desire by missionaries to be free of government control. This in turn led to the birth of intellectual institutions in church circles whose boundaries went above the duties of evangelism, to African history, anthropology, etc.

In chapter 2 Harries discusses how the images emanating from Africa found their way into Swiss homes and to influence their way of life. The Swiss mission work in Africa made them realise that they were a people wracked with factionalisms based on religion, language, region and class. Through sustained campaigns, the missionaries introduced African story telling techniques, skills in the Arts, etc to the Swiss. However, the image of Africa as an evil dark continent in need of salvation persisted in the homes and public spaces of Switzerland. The chapter also touches on the cultural influences that laid the foundation to imperialism.

Chapter 3 traces the early mission work in what is now called Lesotho and Transvaal in the 1850s and 1870s. Here Harries focuses on the Paris Evangelical Mission Society, which was later joined by the Free Church of the Canton of Vaud. The society made its base at the foot of Zoutpansberg from where converted Africans fanned out to spread the word of God to

the far areas coastal plains of Mozambique. These areas were inhabited by multilingual and multicultural communities quite unlike the kinds of monoglot communities the missionaries were used to in Europe. The missionaries were not aware that the area was populated by polyglot communities and set about transcribing and translating the bible into what they thought was the language spoken by all people in the areas. Harries highlights the important role played by Africans in the spread of Christianity as well as in the transcribing and designs of orthographic conventions of African languages. The proliferation of missions and evangelists led to friction and competition for converts and territories of influence. The metropole lost control of the Christianity movement and also the content of the message, and where African evangelists were concerned this led to a dynamic and indigenised Christianity.

Chapter 4 looks at the manner in which the Swiss landscape influenced the way missionaries perceived Africa. Looking at Africa through Swiss lenses led to misrepresentation of African landscapes and misconceptions about Africans' way of life. Harries argues that African culture, tradition, socio-economic and political make up were distorted out of context as they became constructions of European imagination. The misrepresented information was then used to justify colonisation at a large scale. Through novels, maps, Sunday school texts, medical manuals, history books, etc an image of evil 'dark' Africa emerged requiring colonisation and evangelisation to bring to order. Maps were drawn and borders erected to bring large spans of land and people under control. The 'order' so created availed the missionaries to control of the demarcated societies.

Harries turns to Junod's interests in natural sciences in chapter 5. Junod saw biology and theology as related. He saw the vegetation as God's handiwork and saw it as his duty to glorify God through an examination of His creation. According to Harries, Junod understands and integration of the world of animals and plants in Africa was tempered by 'a hierarchy of knowledge ... that created and encouraged imperialism.' (p. 123). Harries argues that even though Africans contributed tremendously through observations and data collection, and in terms of ideas on classification, Junod still thought Africans 'were unaware of the true system underlying the organisation and understanding of nature.' (p. 123). This, according to Harries led to the division of scientific knowledge into racial categories, which in turn justified the seizure of other people's land and what was on it. In essence, it was deemed legitimate and a noble duty to grab land and possessions from Africans since they did not understand the true nature of them. African ways of naming, classifying, organising and understanding nature were thus replaced by Western knowledge systems, and hence the racialisation of the notion of 'science.' This in turn paved the way for the logic of imperialism.

Chapter 6 focuses on language, or specifically the invention of African languages, tribes and ethnicities by Europeans. The chapter also captures some of the problems the missionaries came up in the process of creating tribes and ethnicities out of people who had a different view of community. Of particular interest was the fact that people who lived in a particular community or home did not necessary speak one and the same language. It was also not uncommon for a homestead to have two or more languages spoken, with the wife speaking one language and the husband another. That these people lived in the same area and communicated among each other effectively means that they were highly multilingual. Migrations had also made the linguistic situation complex in that some of the languages

spoken were not understood by all in the areas. But to the missionaries the languages sounded the same. The Mission of the Free Church of the Canton of Vaud believed seSotho as transcribed by Paris Evangelical Mission Societies (PEMS) was spoken from 'Lesotho to the sources of the Nile' in the North (p. 155). When the mission set camp in Northern Transvaal, they set about teaching and preaching in South Sotho a language they had been trained in, but the local people did not understand. It was only after a year that one of the missionaries Paul Berthoud realised that he had been preaching for more than a year in a language local people did not understand! To make things worse for Berthoud, he also discovered that the linguistic situation was not as clear cut as his Western mind told him, as the people spoke different languages even though they lived in the same area. Also, they did not see themselves in the European sense of 'community' which shares language and belonging together. It also transpired that the term 'Makoapa' was not in reference to a particular language as the Europeans believed, but was a descriptive term for anybody who had migrated to the area. The people themselves did not share cultural attributes or language. In fact they spoke different languages. Berthoud translated the Lords Prayer and some hymns into 'Sekoapa' anyway! He did this with the help of his domestic 'Makoapa' and his trusted Sotho assistant Eliakim Matlanyane.

Harries notes that the local people who had learnt to read and write the invented languages such as South Sotho and Sekoapa found themselves in very enviable positions in terms of social standing. Thus, Harries notes that the Gwamba, Lemba and 'Pedi' who became literate in South Sotho became the elite and claimed the written form of language their own.

This is a classic example of how missionaries created vernaculars where they did not exist, manufactured ethnicity and tribes linked to specific linguistic forms and created borders and linguistic boundaries where they had been none. However, Berthoud did not like the fact that the written form of the language was only understood by a handful of people. He thus set about transcribing and translating the bible into Gwamba, the name he had given to the local dialect. After he began to understand Gwamba, he discovered that his South Sotho assistant Matlanyane, on whom he depended for translation of Gwamba, was in fact 'massacring the language [Gwamba] in an unmanageable way.' (p. 158).

The missionaries work to identify and locate different African sounds and dialects was hampered by the fact that they did not coordinate their work. As a result there was a 'proliferation of phonetic systems and orthographies' (p. 157) which made it impossible to record new languages or indeed to know whether a particular language had not already been transcribed by another group. The orthographies were also done by people who did not understand the linguistic landscape or the nature of Bantu languages.

In short, the chapter is packed with valuable information for the linguist, historian, anthropologist, etc. It is about how the different missionaries set about defining people in terms of what they thought their language was. In particular, Harries shows how missionaries confused words Africans used to different themselves from other groups to mean 'tribe' or ethnic group, which they later in European fashion linked to language. They created linguistic boundaries were there were none. They 'standardised', 'systematised' and 'purified' certain dialects so that the mission dialect became the Language, thus elevating the mission dialect to

the 'national' or 'tribal' language of prestige. (p. 165). This also marked the beginning of the link between language and structures of power.

Chapter 7 is about the social engineering that resulted from missionary control of the 'standard' written language. Harries argues that missionaries believed that through written materials and books, the mind, soul and African society generally, would be under the control of missions. The problem, however, was that the power of the spoken word tended to be stronger than the written one at that time, so that mission control was not guaranteed in all situations. Moreover, there were very few writers and people able to read the written word at the time. However, literacy in the created languages elevated the few literate Africans, who took advantage of the situation and adopted missionaries' notion of literacy. These elites in turn adopted the mission created identities and ethnicities as their own.

Chapter 8 looks at the impact of Junod's anthropological work on the political and socio-cultural economy of people of Southern Africa. Harries suggests that Junod's writings, particularly *The Life of a South African Tribe* provided the intellectual foundation of racial segregation. Of interest is how Junod would, through a process of selection, leave out certain details in his descriptions and illustrations to portray Africans as barbarians and primitive.

The last chapter focuses on missionary work in the 1930s and before. Chapter 9 depicts Africans as having taken over the mission societies and schools. The African 'tribal' landscape was no longer as first described by Junod. The rapid industrialisation and transformation of Africa had not been envisaged in Junod's writings, but its nature appeared built on the ideas of 'tribal' and 'racial' segregation and inequality as depicted in Junod's writings. The chapter also discusses how South African anthropologists, under the guise of valuing African cultural practices supported segregation as a way to 'stop the educated Native from aspiring to be an imitation European and lead him to take his rightful place as the natural leader of his own people.' (pp. 248-249). Indirect rule was seen as the way to protect Africans and their cultures. Harries reports that in the 1910s, the International Institute of African Languages endorsed this idea. The idea was to view Africans as 'tribal natives' who should not live outside their 'tribal structure' but 'on their own lines.' (p. 255).

No doubt the apartheid government in South Africa fed on such ideas to justify arguments for separate living and education for Africans suited to their own needs. Africans were then categorised into homogenous 'tribal' groupings living in Native lands under the Native Authority of the Chiefs who ruled by the grace of the colonial government.

The chapter ends with a look at NJ van Warmelo's influential *Preliminary Survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa* which categorised Africans in South Africa along distinct linguistic lines he called 'tribes.' The tribe then became the unit of study, which also fuelled the misconception that South Africa was constituted by discrete cultures, and which should treated as 'distinct political communities.' (p. 257). In South Africa this gave birth to what were to become 'tribal' Bantustans, each with its own language and culture.

In conclusion, this is well written book and should be a must read for all those interested in African languages and philology, history and anthropology. The book will also be of interest to scholars in the formation of African socio-political economy.

BOOK REVIEW

Marothodi: The Historical Archaeology of an African Capital

(Mark Anderson. (2009). Atikkam Media Publishers. Hardcover [ISBN: 978-0-9561427-1-9,]; Paperback [ISBN: 978-0-9561427-2-6,]; EBook [ISBN: 978-0-9561427-0-2,])

Andy Chebanne

Marothodi: The Historical Archaeology of an African Capital is essentially archaeological research that is based on the excavations of the Tlokwa capital that flourished in the 18th century. "Marothodi", as Dr. Mark Anderson correctly translates the SeTswana word, means "drops", directly implying, "rain drops." As a toponym, it refers to the historical capital of the BaTlokwa, one of the modern BaTswana peoples who inhabited the area, between Pilanesberg and the Great Madikwe (Groot Marico) River. That was before the 18th to 19th Century *Difaqane* or *Nfecane*, which were occasioned by a series of social and political upheavals in Southern Africa, and which were rooted in inter-ethnic disputes. Initially these instabilities were started further south, mainly from within the Zulu Kingdom, and later spread further north. The BaTlokwa were concerned by these socio-political instabilities at an earlier stage, when they came to live among the Batswana; and at a later stage when they were moved from the Marothodi. As the author correctly states, the Tlokwa are not originally Tswana but are from some Nguni groups who came to live among the BaTswana in recent centuries, possibly in the 18th century. Some of the Tlokwa remained among the Northern

Sotho and are called the Dogwa. Their constant migrations resulted in some of them settling in what has become Botswana, next to the present day capital city of Botswana, Gaborone. The city of Gaborone is actually named after a Tlokwa chief who led the Tlokwa people to Tlokweng, their ethnic settlement by the Ngotwane River. Mark Anderson has objectively reflected this history in his historical and archaeological account of an African Capital.

The book, *Marothodi – The Historical Archaeology of an African Capital*, is an extensive and thoroughly researched account on the ruins of a stone walled capital town of the BaTlokwa. The book comprises numerous illustrations (figures, tables, pictures) which illustrate and support an archaeological and historical account regarding the way of life of the BaTlokwa in the 19th century. The introduction of the book details "Tswana Towns in Context", and this context provides the historical background for this archaeological site and of other ethnic Tswana sites, and thus links the BaTlokwa to their regional ethno-linguistic history. Importantly, the site of the town is located in an area that facilitated its defence, enhanced by the building of the stone walls. The agro-pastoral life of its inhabitants is also pertinently accounted for.

The first three chapters are historical. Chapter one provides an account on early contact with the BaTlokwa, documenting journeys into the interior of Southern Africa by European travellers, and also provides elaborate historical information on the 19th century Tswana ruins. Chapter two provides the research background of the book. Therein, one gets to appreciate the descriptive beginnings of the inhabitants of Marothodi. A discussion on the early use of Tlokwa ethnography is presented. Regional distribution of site types and their identities are presented, discussed and profiled according to cognitive models, details, and variability within a historical context. This historical context takes focus in chapter three which links BaTlokwa regionally, evaluating their oral history, traditions and social activities from the 18th century. A Tlokwa territory is also defined in this chapter.

Purely archaeological subject matter is discussed in chapter four, and onward. This chapter makes an interesting biophysical discussion which looks into topography, climate, geology, soils, vegetation, and metallurgy technology of the BaTlokwa, and also compares other Tswana capitals within a premium biophysical landscape. Chapter five provides an archaeological context for examining the macro and micro settlement structures, and the metallurgical evidence found around Marothodi. Chapter six focuses on the presentation of the royal residences – the *kgosing* - their spatial organisation, as well as comparisons with that of the Molokwane. Detailed discussion is also provided for the excavations at the 'primary' *kgosing* (chief's residence). The spatial organisation of the 'secondary' *kgosing* is also discussed, and comparisons are made with the Kaditshwene. The discussions demonstrate the importance in the location of the *kgosing* spatial organisation, and how this forms the nucleus of the settlement. Chapter seven looks at the copper specialists. The spatial organisation of the settlement unit, and the excavations done thereon lead to a very interesting discussion on the nature of this category of trade, and the techniques employed by these artisans who worked on copper smelting. Chapter eight deals the hearth and home – the spatial organisation of this settlement unit and the discussions of what the excavations reveal. Chapter nine deals with masters of iron. This chapter opens a very important discussion regarding an Age of iron among the Tswana Sotho-Tswana Communities in particular and

Southern African in general. The identification of iron ore working sites and the excavation of the settlement unit lead to the identification of iron smelting precincts, and indeed the demonstration of metallurgical technology and a thriving metallurgical industry. The discussion reveals that these artisans were employed in the working of the iron ore.

The last two chapters, being ten and eleven, deal with the organisation of metal production and the origins, prosperity and prospects of Marothodi respectively. Under the organisation of metal production, the author discusses the technology of metal production and the spatiality of metal production at Marothodi. Under the origins, prosperity and prospects, the author present what he terms the archaeology of identity. This is followed by a discussion on production and trade, carried forward from this historical settlement of the BaTlokwa. In the conclusion of chapter eleven, the author proposes an inter-disciplinary approach to the study of the site and he further suggests directions for future research.

The historical and archaeological account of Marothodi makes it an interesting site for African archaeological work, and a pioneering research study on African history. The book is skilfully written and systematically presented, and allows for a better understanding of the subject matter under investigation. The findings of the excavations show that the Marothodi community evinced industriousness, and possessed impressive skills and techniques to work metal ore, and sustain the inhabitants with an agro-pastoral production. The author adeptly details these activities in a circumspect, historical narrative style that makes the book a pleasant read for all. Furthermore, the technical analysis that the author makes regarding every item or structure of the relics is profound, and produces precious historical information in every chapter. I am persuaded to state that henceforth, all accounts of African history should, as much and where possible, be accompanied by supportive evidence, in manner similar to how Mark Anderson presented his research. Archaeology alone gives a physical dimension of relics; and history (oral and documented) gives a social dimensions. However when crafted together, they present a more objective account of a human life. This is the greatest achievement of this book by Dr. Mark Anderson. It is factual as it is objective. It is artistically interesting as a result of its multi-disciplinary approach to all the archaeological, geological, geographical, oral, and documented evidence gleaned from the study of the Marothodi site, as it was inhabited by BaTlokwa in the 18th and 19th centuries. The articulation of these two synergic disciplines, archaeology and history, brings the BaTlokwa to life, from two centuries ago, invoking a vivid experience associated with anthropological accounts. This is what distinguishes the presentation of this book from its precursors. By creating different contexts and backgrounds, and detailing the activities and technologies of the BaTlokwa, Dr. Mark Anderson brings yet another dimension to the benefits employing multi-disciplinary approaches to the study of Ancient African, ethnic communities.

This book, *Marothodi: The Historical Archaeology of an African Capital* is a valuable contribution to Southern African history through archaeological evidence. It is archaeological research that has been associated with historical sites such as Mapungubwe and the Great Zimbabwe Ruins, and which ultimately highlights the extensive history of African societies. It is also archaeological evidence that encourages African historical research to go beyond the boundaries of oral tradition and superficial, travellers' documentation. Reliance on hard archaeological facts has therefore enriched African history and has granted it the benefit of

being based on sound historical methodology, and interpretation of facts. The study on Marothodi, a BaTlokwa ancient capital, is thus a consequential contribution toward the linkages and interpretations of Southern African history and the archaeological findings in this book. What is also evident is the book's extensive bibliography and illustrations, and indeed the application of advanced techniques in geology and archaeology. These factors make this book a well-researched publication. It is informative and resourceful. It will provide techniques and theoretical approaches regarding archaeology and history for many researchers in the field.

The BaTlokwa, a peaceful, industrious, and metallurgical community, just like most societies of Southern African during that Age, made great contributions, and this archaeological and historical account pertinently bears testimony to the ingenuity of Africans before European colonialism. The remnants of the BaTlokwa people may be currently much smaller in number compared to their other ethnic Sotho-Tswana neighbours, but this publication puts them in a historical pedestal which makes their account as important regarding the understanding of the Sotho-Tswana people of Southern Africa, before and after the onset of colonialism. In this regard, it is not just the BaTlokwa, but all their neighbours in Southern Africa that are brought into prominence. Henceforth, African people's history should not be subordinated to other continents', people history. Africa has its own monuments to remind historians that its people are as ancient, and their past life being as productive and inventive as any society in the world.

The book, *Marothodi: The Historical Archaeology of an African Capital,* is methodically written, without any jagonry of the profession. It is suitable for both archaeology students and field archaeologists. It is also a must read for historians and social-anthropologists. By linking the past of the BaTlokwa to their present, it pertinently breathes life and factuality to African history and the people this history deals with. The book also compels archaeologists to undertake similar excavations for other ethnic groups.

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