PART 3

Times of Ideas

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Culture and Intellectuals: Challenging Globalisation

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

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

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

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

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

First: The Interaction Phase

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Second: The Cold War and the National Liberation State

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Third: In the Context of Globalisation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Unchanged Agenda

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

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

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

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

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

(i)   From Colonialism to Imperialism; Violence and Liberation

(ii) Alienation and Presence

(iii) Which Social Analysis?

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

(v)   Fanon's Presence in the Arab World

From Colonialism to Imperialism; Violence and Liberation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Alienation and Presence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Which Social Analysis?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Fanon in the Arab World

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This chapter deals with the following issues:

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

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

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

Cabral's Stance on Culture and Identity

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Challenges of Globalization and the State of National Liberation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusion

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

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

> Built on the development of popular culture and authentic, positive, cultural values… A national culture, built on history and the gains of the struggle itself… A scientific, technical culture compatible with the demands of progress… Development will come about through a critical understanding of human knowledge: the arts, sciences and literature… etc.

> A world culture, from the perspective of a healthy integration with the world around us, and a forward-looking vision for its development…. The life of the African peoples confronts the challenge of imperialism…. The challenge here is to fertilise history with an expression of our culture and African-ness, then to convert that into a leap forward, expressive of the culture of a liberated people….

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

A Special Relationship with Archie Mafeje

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

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

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

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

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

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

The End of Anthropology

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

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

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

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

(i)   The main criticisms addressed to the objectives and methods of anthropology;

(ii) The attempts to reconstruct anthropology as a support for development in the post-independence state;

(iii) The efforts to transform the theoretical concepts and methodology after the declaration of the end of the old anthropology, then trying to indigenize it in the context of African realities.

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

The Critical Standpoint

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Attempt to Reconstruct Anthropology

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What End for Anthropology?

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

Here, stress was laid on the necessity to indigenise the social sciences in the African anthropology congresses (Hountondji 1993; Mafeje 1996). They refused to accept the holistic European advance while refusing such totality for African society or that European post-modernism could lead to the old colonialist fragmented empirical outlook, to be applied to Africa and the Third World alone while western society would benefit alone from globalisation (Mafeje 1996). Samir Amin also reiterates this theme when he writes: 'The capitalist society of the centre, based on rationality, is now exporting irrationality only to our world in the south'.

Reconstructing the Old Concepts

Such refusal came first as a rejection of the old concepts of traditional anthropology. This was the work of young African anthropologists who rejected the concepts of 'tribalism' and 'the characteristics of human races', and other such concepts that they attributed to colonialism and its lackeys. We shall review in brief some such contributions.

P. Rigby denounces such attempts in his *African Images* under the title 'The Racist Ideology Creates the Legend of the Hamites' (1996), where he denounces the extravagance in extolling their social ascendancy over their neighbours due to their Caucasian ancestry, etc. He points out the discourse about the peoples of East and Central Africa, where some colonial anthropologists proposed the utilisation of some such groups to dominate other groups for the benefit of the colonial power. The anthropological studies asserted that this group (the

Massai) was superior as Hamites over their neighbours of the Nilotes. The same theory of racial superiority of the Hamites was also extended to Rwanda and Burundi where the Tutsi were utilised to dominate the Hutu in accordance with the recommendation of another anthropologist. Such claims called for a special assessment of the physical, psychological and mental characteristics of the Tutsi to explain the continued discrimination to their benefit, and their domination of the Hutu, and even explain the post-independence struggles and colonialist interventions. Here, we find Rigby tracing the Hamite myth:

In the 19th century, J. H. Speke applied it in 1865, for the first time, on the studies about East Africa. The anthropologists adopted this legend once more in the 20th century until 1950, in the form Hamite Nilotes. This last form was applied in 1953, in the ethnographic survey of Africa under the direction of Galvier and his wife. This survey tried to establish the 'inferiority of the Negro Race' by claiming that the history of East Africa cannot be explained except by an invasion by Caucasian whites! (Rigby 1996).

Mafeje, Southall and others – according to Rigby – refuted the Hamite myth, but it continued as some popular mythology in the historiography of East Africa. Cheikh Anta Diop also refuted the mythology of the Hamites, by stating that the claim that the Dinka, the Shiluk, the Noweir or the Massai have a Caucasian origin is tantamount to claiming that the Greeks are not white! Such claims amount to saying that any civilised group in Africa has a non-African origin, meaning that the Dinka or the Massai are different from the 'primitive' masses around them. Indeed, such groups have a very long history in Africa.

This was also a denial by the Seligman's school, which claims that the pastoral Hamites came in waves of migration from the Caucases passing through North Africa and the Nile valley. This school reached such conclusions after the study of the animistic tribes in Nilotic Sudan, and the claim that the intermingling between these superior immigrants and the local Negroes produced the Massai and the Baganda, and later, the Bahima, etc. Such claims – according to Rigby – were passed on to the followers and colleagues of Seligman, such as Malinowsky and Pritchard.

The contribution of Mafeje in challenging the colonial anthropological concepts appeared first in his study on the ideology of tribalism (1971, followed by the study of the ethnography of the region of the Great Lakes (1991). He considers that it is not easy to separate social sciences from ideology; that had the Africans written their history, the results would have been different, and thus we should look for the motivation behind such writings.

In this connection, he makes the following analysis, in which he notes that the western system of concepts leads to the cropping of the term 'tribalism' in any study, using the colonial European terminology about Africa. Even a century later, European ideology still sticks to the term tribalism to describe the African society. The British insist on the use of the term and their students in East Africa and the South use it after them, despite the fact that the southerners never use this term, but refer to the 'nation', the 'people' and the 'clan', or sometimes to the 'land' (of the person). Anglo-Saxon anthropology always looks for pure tribalism that fits the policy of indirect rule advocated by Lord Lugard and Sir Donald Cameroon. Some anthropologists thought such policies helped conserve social consistence and stability. Later, when these anthropologists started studying urban societies, they attributed some folkloric phenomena penetrating urban society such as dancing of rural origin, as an indication of persistence of tribalism in an urban context (Mitchell's study on the dance of the Kalela in the copper belt), to evade any reference to social or class distinction in the towns.

When anthropologists started the study of social change, they again referred to tribal resistance to change, rather than its disintegration or loss of stability. Watson even refers to tribal stability in conditions of monetary economy. Here, we find a divergence between politicians and anthropologists, the former attributing the failure of attempts at modernisation to tribalism, while the latter think that tribalism lies behind the success or failure of modernisation, as the case may be.

It remains to answer the query whether tribalism may exist without tribes. If we accept the classic definition that 'tribes are self-sustained groups with little or no external trade', then anthropologists will have to explain whether all African political entities are tribes. What about the large kingdoms such as the Lwabola or the Zulu? Or shall we accept calling them 'super tribes' as some anthropologists do? Schapira tried to evade the discrepancy by calling the tribes 'separate political groups' that administer their affairs without foreign intervention. Thus, the tribe is considered as being above all known forms of human organisation. Culture as a criterion of assessing the tribe was only introduced with the advent of modernism, and the contributions of political and social studies (J. C. Mitchell, M. G. Smith).

According to Mafeje, the anthropologists' concept of the tribe, large or small, may be acceptable for pre-colonial societies, where the tribe lived in relative isolation as an entity defined in time and locality, and conducted a subsistence living economy. Such a definition cannot, however, be applied

after the intrusion of European colonialism, and their inclusion within the capitalist monetary system and the world market. The new division of labour, and the new modes of production and distribution, gave African societies a new, radically different basis. Thus, it is no more a question of scope, but rather qualitative changes of the social and economic order. One cannot totally deny the role of the tribe in Africa, but we must differentiate between resorting to one's tribe as a token of integrity and self-esteem, and using it as a means to remain in power, in the capital of the modern state, or exploiting one's tribesmen in the context of a modern society.

To simplify Mafeje: tribalism becomes an ideology with no objective existence as claimed. It becomes some sort of false consciousness of the so-called members of the tribe, and an aberration that the elite resorts to while exploiting their tribesmen. It is ideology in the Marxist sense, but also ideology for the Africans who share the western ideology with their colleagues in the West.

With social change, people often belong to the region rather than the tribe, such as the Transkei in South Africa, or the immigrants in Cape Town. Thus, the concept of region comes before that of the tribe, as has the criterion of culture that the British anthropologists ignored because they were isolated from structuralism. In South Africa, the Xhosa speakers share a common culture over a very wide region, even though they belong to different political entities. Culture is utilised in South Africa to attain a higher social status, so can we call this tribalism too? Indeed, some still call it tribalism!

Why stick to the concept of tribalism so much in an urban context and a market economy? Mainly because it helps embroil the nature of the economy, and the power relations between the Africans, and between them and the capitalist world, as the concept of feudalism was used in Latin America to cover up imperialist capitalist relations.

Mafeje introduces the concept of 'regional characteristics' in order to facilitate situating the cultural elements in a wider society, as well as understanding the class transformations in that society. He maintains that anthropologists need to use a concept that may be generalised to cover human societies, and that tribalism cannot be such a concept. In his book *The Theory and Ethnography of African Social Formations* (1991), Mafeje believes that the first generation of European ethnographers in Africa contributed a considerable body of material that became classics in their fields. He also believes they adopted certain fixed concepts, such as the tribe, the clan and the lineage. They also resorted to opposing categories for classification such as acephalous states in contrast to centralised ones, and patriarchal societies

in contrast to matriarchal ones, also pastoral versus agricultural societies, etc. All such classifications were looked down upon with disdain by the British anthropologist E. Leach who named such methods 'butterfly collecting' (Mafeje 1996. Apart from the clearly organic outlook of the functional structural anthropology, all such classifications are of an empirical and even static nature, trying to crowd various objects in a tight bag. They also create working modes of thinking that lead directly to an ahistoric stand. We note here that in biology, such methods of classification were abandoned for the more dynamic reactions of biochemistry that we meet in all forms of life. In human societies, some social phenomena may seem as various types, but in the final analysis they are found to be different manifestations, or permutations of the same phenomenon, such as types of existence or social classifications. All this makes us wary of falling into the snare of evolutionism or historicism.

Such studies may add to our acquired knowledge, but they have little effect on the classic ideological systems, as they use the same classified categories to reach almost the same results. Moreover, ethnographic description or theorising is far from their centre of attention.

However, such criticism does not by necessity include all historians of African societies, as we find in *Modes of Production in Africa* (1981) by Grummey and Stewart (ed.), a great effort by the authors to theorise African history. They tried to apply the concepts of historical materialism to the pre-colonial African history, using accepted epistemological concepts, and arrays of Marxist concepts such as 'modes of production', 'classes', 'surplus value' and 'capitalist production relations', to explain that history. They show a serious effort to lure English-speaking historians away from their empiricism, without showing a similar will to learn from African ethnography except to extract the greatest amount of historical 'facts' and explaining them by pre-accepted standards and classifications.

Mafeje says in the present study that he intentionally tried to evade all such generalisations. He takes African ethnography as a standard, with which he tries to assess all previous concepts that he does not take for granted. Using such a method, some epistemological hypotheses *per se*, including Marxism, become subject to doubt, and must be subjected to cultural discussion, as Y. Tandon remarks. Instead of being swamped by theoretical theses, Mafeje takes one fundamental thesis and subjects it to his method of doubt and examination. He applied this system to Samir Amin's thesis on the tributary modes of production (Amin 1973), whose history is different from that of the perspective of European history, and as such must be judged by its own terms.

I agree with Mafeje that the main aim of his study is to establish a conceptual formulation of some of the phenomena and social relations in black Africa, which had been examined in a biased manner by non-Africans for a long time. The aim is to show that most of these concepts were misrepresented to prove the lack of correlation between the universal language of social sciences based on the European historical experience and the local language as understood by the imperialists.

The problem, as we see it, is the authenticity of the social sciences, as some of their texts have no historical context; and in order to grasp them fully, we must comprehend their historic context. The point here is not that social formations are governed by the related ethnography, but that the latter explains social classification, codes of social conduct, and the ideological reproduction. A given social stratum need not behave in a certain manner anywhere in the world. African capitalists may set aside the possibility of doubling the surplus value, for reasons of kinship. In Buganda, the proprietor chiefs will gain more value from making political dependents than from squeezing out their labour force. To evaluate these development aspirations, all such ideas are relevant, credible and even objective. We must bear in mind that all local dialects, as well as all languages, can mislead, and what may guide the analyst is the context. When we read local tongues, we do not face an object that is clear *per se*, and this is exactly the error of both the empiricists and the globalists. The deciphering of the symbol usually means an expert translation of an ambiguous language, to make it more lucid. Thus, when we insist on comprehension of local dialects, we have no intention of discarding the current scientific social language, rather we insist on a clear understanding of local experience, and hence better credibility and objectivity. From the point of view of social theories, this implies a thorough process of examination, classification and re-arrangement.

Speaking on the liberation of the discipline, Mafeje recalled that among those who showed interest in developing a radical social theory in Africa and anywhere else, Samir Amin occupies a distinguished place. Because he cannot be considered among those who decline details and go forward to present issues of forgone conclusions, he will always be consulted for his critical thinking and looking for new ideas. Although such ideas may not always be fundamental, they generally present logical conclusions.

Hence, Archie Mafeje does not uphold the idea of the end of anthropology in order to liquidate an epistemological order, but rather to put in its place a more appropriate alternative to the concept, that in his opinion leads to anthropological theorising of another kind.

15

Samir Amin: Coming Late to the Arab World*

Arab culture adopted a striking stance by disregarding certain prominent worldwide thinkers. It was not due to ignorance but to reasons related to the prevailing intellectual, social and political structures. This can be applied to Gramsci and Franz Fanon as well as Samir Amin for a certain time. Despite numerous causes that involved all the three respectively, the nature of the prevailing intellectual structure in the region remains a common element. We will present this briefly and focus on the presence of Samir Amin in the Arab world.

The connection of the middle class that established the Arab communist movement with the concepts of modernisation and 'catching up 'with the West, as well as its need for strong support against British and French colonialism, facilitated its linkage with Soviet-Leninist Stalinist ideas. Consequently, it was subjected to the Komintern schemes and its exclusive positions towards the 'others' even from the Marxist-Leninist circle. Hence, Gramsci, Fanon and later Samir Amin were excluded and confined by regional communist organisations and were restricted from interaction with intellectuals in these organisations or those in general in the region, unless within narrow limits.

Gramsci strongly rejected Stalinism and presented a flexible formulation of ideological hegemony. Fanon gave precedence to peasants and the national issue and not to middle and petit bourgeoisie in cities, which produced most of the Arab communists. Thus, they were put within limits. It is logical that there was more than one reason, bearing in mind the nature of the social bourgeois

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revolution in the region as well as the concepts of the July Revolution and the weakness of the leftist movement itself. As for Samir Amin, many of these elements applied to him and incited his exclusion by the Arab world from the time of his departure from Egypt in 1960, during Abdel Nasser's crisis with the communists, until his return in the 1980s.

This situation changed dramatically due to the wide-ranging dissemination of his translated works, followed by his strong presence at the outset of the 1990s and his election as President of the Arab and African Research Centre in Cairo.

Circumstances of Absence and Presence

In a long dialogue between Samir Amin and myself (Sharawy 1994), my questions were posed on his departure from and return to the Arab world, and especially his differences with the Soviet viewpoint prevailing in the region as well as his conflict with Nasserism. Samir Amin clarified these points and shed light on certain developments that involved him. I quote:

> Perhaps the answer to this question is composed of two parts, one is personal, regarding my character, with its scientific and cultural components, and the other is political.

> On the personal part: I was born in Egypt and always considered myself as an Egyptian and an Arab. I never imagined that I would not return to my homeland although my education was western. I was educated in the Lycee School in Egypt and later left to France where I completed my higher studies. I intended to return and live in Egypt. I returned after receiving my doctorate in 1957 and joined Al-Moassassa Al-Iktissadia (Economic Institution) in 1957 until 1960.

We now come to the political aspect, that is, post-1959 and the system's orientation towards the right.

> I had to emigrate for obvious reasons. I thought that I would only be leaving for a short period. I never chose to merge into western society during my absence from Egypt but believed that it was better to do so with societies closer to ours – Arab and African – and closer to myself. I proceeded in this course for many years but never intending to sever relations with the Arab world and Egypt.

> As for my position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and socialism and my differences with the communist movement, I was a member of the Egyptian communist movement earlier – not since the outset. I personally started with the Communist Party (El Raya) since its inception in 1951. I was twenty years old and believed that I had communist tendencies even before that, not since childhood of course but since secondary school, I was always a leftist.

However, the basic problem we confronted in Egypt and the Arab world after World War II was whether there was a possibility for a national bourgeois change. Was there scope for such a change in Africa and Asia or was revolution possible by means of action in rural areas? That is socialist revolution in several stages, meaning that the bourgeoisie in our countries was basically similar to a compradoric bourgeoisie. Therefore, the national bourgeois project was an illusion and would only lead to failure and, consequently, to a return to compradorism.

Mao Tse Tung's book has become familiar to us since 1952 after it was translated into Arabic on 'new democracy' as a strategy or a main strategic line to realise this integration between the national movement and socialist revolution in stages. The book stated that there was a national democratic phase in the first stage, led by the toiling masses under the leadership of the Communist Party.

The Egyptian communist movement during this period, especially 1945-1946 to 1952, had adopted a different theory from that of the international communist movement at the time. It deemed there was still a margin for national bourgeois liberation with a democratic content that is the presence of other popular social forces in this movement.

I believe that history proved that this concept was wrong. Yet, within a short period of time, circumstances changed, at least outwardly, that is there were several socialist revolutions on the one hand and national liberation movements on the other (Amin 1994).

Even during the first part of the conflict with Marxists, Samir Amin did not totally disappear; for he published his first book *Monetary and Financial Trends in Egypt in 1957* in Cairo in 1959 when the July Revolution in Egypt nationalised foreign companies as a step before wider actions in 1961-62. This took place during arguments within the Egyptian communist movement on the nature of the Free Officers' State. Was it a national capitalist state or bureaucratic bourgeoisie? Even, this dispute was stopped by the detention of Egyptian communists for five years, from 1959-1964.

However, it was not a coincidence that Samir Amin left Egypt in 1960 and published his book on Egypt under Nasserism (Amin 1964), under the pseudonym of Hassan Riyad, as a critique of state capitalism and the bureaucratic class. This was followed by a critique of 'Soviet Socialism' in Paris for two decades. He returned to Egypt at the end of the 1980s and published his book (in Arabic) *From a Critique of the Soviet State to a Critique of the National State*. I believe this book summarises the nature of his journey from and to the Arab world. Many developments occurred in the region itself between these two journeys on the one hand, and in the thoughts of Samir Amin himself on the other.

In Egypt and certain national states in the region, 'Arab or Islamic socialism' were discussed at length in the context of political culture when the charter on national action in Egypt was based on the alliance of working forces that also includes soldiers and local capitalist advocates. This culminated in Egypt, Syria and Algeria, with the domination by military and local capitalism at the expense of democratic evolution.

Soviet thinking influenced this formulation, based on 'democratic revolutionaries' and the theory of 'non-capitalist path', and on supporting these national regimes militarily and economically. All this did not help in the total liberation of the relationship with the international capitalist camp as much as matters did that evolved within the context of political balances in accordance with the principles of non-alignment.

This tight framework did not permit the infiltration of Samir Amin's ideas into Egypt and Arab Mashreq (the eastern Arab region) for a long period that stretched until the late 1970s. Such change became possible due to the Communist Party dissolving itself in Egypt in 1965 to ally itself with Nasserism, as well as those restricted by the Syrian and Iraqi military, the Algerian liberation army and, to a lesser extent, sectarian strife in the Sudanese society.

Samir Amin was aware of the concept of the national state and its progressive measures and he presented models of the national state through his studies on Guinea, Ghana and Mali as opposed to the neo-colonialist capitalist model of the Ivory Coast. Nonetheless, his criticism of Soviet influence and its objectives, and placing his model among the trends of the capitalist state, were not welcomed by the traditional Arab Left who had been satisfied with their presence in cultural and media organs in the Arab region, to the extent that Samir Amin was deprived of knowledge of Arab leftist culture, with its influential outlets such as *Al Talia* magazine, *Al Kateb* in Egypt and *Al Tareek* in Beirut, etc.

Although he was absent in the Arab arena, Samir Amin was radically changing in Europe following his theory of 'accumulation at the global level' and his book on inequitable evolution (Amin 1974). Hence he was linked with many Marxist debates internationally at the end of the 1960s as well as dialogue with the Dependency School. However, his analyses on both levels did not penetrate into the Arab region easily for certain regional considerations. It is necessary to note these considerations to explain the absence and presence of Samir Amin:

(i)   The domination of the national issue and involvement in the Arab-Zionist conflict and repercussions in terms of giving priority to the 'national' over the 'social' in general and viewing the socialist camp within a national and not a social context. This is in addition to

modernisation trends in the national project, historically, that deemed the West as more beneficial in this course, according to the theory of 'catching up' which was not far from Soviet orientation itself.

(ii)   Pressure brought to bear by conservative social forces and strong cultural heritage against dissemination of dialectical materialism and forbidding the teaching of it to their sons in socialist countries during the Nasserist era and replacing it sometimes by local and fundamentalist ideas. Therefore the Marxists' task, even within the Soviet framework, was constantly faced with problems.

(iii)   Importance of the non-aligned discourse to justify limiting relations with the socialist East, its laws and transactions (66% of Egypt's trade in the 1960s was with the West).

(iv)   Effects of the Arab armies' defeat by Israel in 1967 paralysed confrontation with the United States and growing international capitalist movement before the Soviet camp. This motivated national states to think of reviewing the moderate strides taken towards socialism.

(v)   The Sino-Soviet conflict – ideology and influence – seemed to be more of a difference between two countries than a philosophical debate. This mixed up the ideological position with the political stance of both Marxist forces and national governments and affected Samir Amin for a long time.

The five points mentioned above need not be linked to the nature of the problems met by Samir Amin's thinking under these specific circumstances, as he was considered by the traditional Left as part of the hostility against the Soviets in the West. That is why he only approached Arab thought during the mid-1970s and later. It was then that social and cultural causes that brought about the failure of national experiments (especially after the 1967 defeat) were reviewed. Moreover, literature written under the name of Mahmoud Hussein was propagated among many leftist elements, especially youth, on class conflict in Egypt. His analysis of bureaucratic bourgeoisie in national states which led to this defeat, in addition to animosity expressed by writers against relations with the Soviet Union, as well as Anwar Abdel Malek's articles on the united democratic front and political Islam, were well read. However, many people were surprised by the 1973 war that reactivated the conflict between Arabs and Israel, and the relative Arab superiority in this conflict. This reactivated the 'modernisation' school within the framework of total Western confinement. At the same time, oil and petro dollars as well as the Islamic awakeness led by Gulf models of life launched a campaign against

the cultural and political national and social progressive ideas. The role of the Soviet Union was undermined and restricted under this atmosphere. The role of Marxists was also weakened by Sadat's sweeping aggressive policy and its close links with the United States, as well as its 'openness to the West' instead of Nasserism's 'relative closure'. Thus, it was natural for Samir Amin to appear in the new leftist circles with his theory of capital accumulation, his analysis of the centre and periphery and also the relationship between old and neo-colonialism and dependency discourse. Simultaneously, wings of the leftist and communist movements held conferences on the Asian mode of production and called upon Samir Amin's formulations.

Hence, Samir Amin's presence in the political arena differs from Gramsci and was considered by Taher Labib as a 'cultural' presence, following the 1967 events in the Arab East (Labib 1994).

Amin's Presence in the Maghreb (North Africa)

Samir Amin's early presence in Maghreb countries was different from that in the East, because in North Africa (Maghreb), his arrival was not linked politically with the traditional Marxist movement as much as with academic thought and the students' movement. I believe that his presence was facilitated because these countries' citizens read French easily, and hence had access to his early writings on the Maghreb economy and later to his books on the modern Arab nation.

Maghreb Countries: University students focused on their studies in the early 1970s with a new spirit because it answered both Marxist interpretations and the traditional communist movement of social and political development, according to the views of the youth. In fact, its answer to the interpretations of other eminent thinkers who were committed to the prevailing political and cultural authority on a social structure was consistent with 'statism' (Al Arawi 1977). Therefore, it is not surprising that Samir Amin's book on modern Maghreb was republished more than three times in the 1970s (Amin 1966). In this book, he links the nature of French colonialism, the composition of the elite and authority in North African states after independence and their impact on Arab-African policy of North African countries, with the context of modern colonialism policies that were imposed for changes or development in social trends on the elite who accepted or rejected these ideas. This analysis boosted Samir Amin as one of the most prominent thinkers accepted by young researchers and the Magreb students' movement for a long time, especially during the 1980s. Yet, although I reviewed more than one work on general or

political sociology in Maghreb (Al Arawi), Algeria (Al Kenz – Djaghloul) and Tunisia (Al Hermassi), I did not find Samir Amin as a reference in their works, although I knew that they recommended their students to read his books. Therefore, I was not surprised by the results of a survey on the instruction of sociology in Tunisia Tahir Labib (unpublished paper) that Samir Amin was at the top of the list of favourites of the students among 13 Arab and international scholars, preceding Marx, Ibn Khaldoun, Max Weber, etc.

In fact, Labib's study on Tunisian students indicated that the three most popular references among Samir Amin's books were the Arab nation, the contemporary Arab economy, and class and the nation, before the book on modern Maghreb. I believe that Labib's study undertaken in the 1980s is but an indication of a period when the Tunisian intellectuals focused on the Arab nation, reacting to the Francophones, and sought refuge in the presence of the League of Arab States in Tunisia during this period.

Amin's Presence in the Mashrek

The presence of Samir Amin in the eastern Arab world or what can be called the Cairo-Beirut axis has increased since the outset of the 1970s, following his absence during the Nasserist period as well as the absence of the Marxist Left itself that experienced the same fate.

Regarding the Cairo-Beirut axis, Samir Amin's presence progressed at first in the academic field and then in the general political culture; his books, which were scarcely published during the 1970s, increased in the 1980s and intensified in the 1990s because he wrote and published them directly in the Arabic language. He also participated in debates and discussions in cultural seminars in more than one Arab country.

(i)   The academic community in Egypt expressed certain interest in Samir Amin's ideas since the beginning of the 1970s. Their interest in the Dependency School was prominent in social thinking. Although Sadat's open-door economic policy raised the issue of dependency in Egyptian thinking and because the new generation of Egyptian academicians in sociology or economics are not French speaking, most of the scientific works in Egypt that quoted Samir Amin were referring to his English translations. Hence, reading Samir Amin was associated with reading Gunder Frank, Walerstein and other thinkers of this school who were directly exposed to some Egyptian scholars (Sayed Al Husseini and Ahmed Zayed). Debates in national academic works in general revolved around the answer to modernisation and its relationship

with development, following the campaign launched against Nasserist options. Although there was a desire to confront emerging dependency forces by theoretical attack (Sayed Al Husseini) and defence of planned development before the hegemony of international capitalism (centre) over countries such as (periphery), several studies were directed towards criticising the role of the Nasserist state and its despotism. This was particularly in the rural areas in terms of the tributary system which Samir Amin explained within the role of the state in the East (M. Auda and Zayed). Simultaneously, political and sociological theoretical studies did not stop examining the status of the state in the Third World within the concept of the Dependency School (M.K. El Sayed and Salah Abu Naar). The issue of the 'state' within the framework of dependency theories remained a matter of concern to certain academicians. This was due to the onslaught of structural adjustment programs and privatization of the public sector accompanied by the withdrawal of the state from its former significant role in the economy and social services. It was reflected in the studies by academicians until the outset of the 1990s by developing the theory of dependency to the study of the world order criticising Abdel Khalek Abdalla 1974, Ahmed Thabit and Farag Abdel Fattah Farag, etc).

(ii)   Samir Amin was also absent during the 1960s and part of the 1970s in the field of thought that approached his ideas on capitalist production and delinking with the world capitalist system. A prominent Egyptian scholar (Adel Hussein) addressed the dependency of the Egyptian economy in a significant work without referring in his theoretical part on dependency to Samir Amin, whereas he based his research on Brebish and Mirdal, etc. The same occurred with an eminent Lebanese scholar who dealt indepth with the mode of production and innovated a new term, 'colonial mode of production', without indicating any knowledge of, or referring to, Samir Amin (Mahdi Amel 1978), although he discussed the production mode which was analysed by Samir Amin. Ahmed Sadek Saad, the well-known Marxist thinker, also wrote profoundly in the 1970s on Egyptian and Arab social history in the light of the Asian mode of production and dealt with the tributary system which he considered had contained Egyptian history in a bid to precede with his theory on moving towards socialism. However, he argued in this respect with French Marxists without mentioning any knowledge of Samir Amin's theories (Saad 1976).

(iii)   Nonetheless, the phenomenon of Samir Amin's absence from Arab
         political and social thought did not last for long. In fact, he reappeared
         and progressed with the changes that occurred in civil and cultural
         organisations outside the scope of traditional leftist parties since the
         1980s and throughout the 1990s. In particular, this followed the
         negative impact of impoverishment policies, also on an international
         economic level, on political decision-makers apart from the spreading
         influence of fundamentalist currents at the same time. Thus, ideological
         and popular resistance against neo-imperialism and fundamentalist
         leaderships will mount. Samir Amin's translated works into Arabic
         played a role in crystallising many of the ideas from intellectual works
         by famous scholars or by means of periodicals and leftist cultural
         institutions.

         It is possible to enumerate a number of examples in various countries
         in the region related to Samir Amin's intensive presence in the late
         1980s and throughout the 1990s. In Lebanon, the *Al Tareek* magazine
         that expressed Arab communists and leftists in general focused on
         discussing Samir Amin's translated works. Special files on his thoughts
         were prepared and published directly, giving full prominence to his
         ideas on the transitional phase to socialism as well as on his theories
         on the nation, autocentric development, the popular and national
         democratic alternative or the theory on the possibility of 'delinking'
         with world capitalism. Numerous books on these issues were written in
         many parts of the Arab world between those who disagreed and agreed
         with Samir Amin's theories.

         Also in Lebanon, the well-established Center for Arab Unity Studies
         gave prominence to Samir Amin's theories on the Arab nation and ideas
         on national popular alliance, as well as inviting him to some periodic
         seminars. Yet, the Lebanese study that discussed his ideas by analysis
         and criticism came in the context of 'Arab culture and ideology' by
         Fahima Sharaf Eddeen, especially after Amin's book *in Arabic: A Theory
         on Culture* was published, and within the Arab cultural movement's
         concern on addressing the fundamentalist issue and its cultural
         framework.

(iv)   In Egypt, Samir Amin's presence strongly returned to the cultural
         arena after being kept away by academic studies, following the wave of
         research on dependency in the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s.
         The Arab and African Research Centre was an active forum for Amin`s

activities since it published and discussed his article 'The National Popular Democratic Alternative' 1992 Many discussions revolved around it under the difficult conditions confronted by the popular political movement in Egypt, namely the emergency laws and exchange of violence with the state, particularly by Islamists. The centre published the above-mentioned article by Samir Amin with his other writings on criticism of the Soviet experience and the nation state. Then the centre focussed again on this issue as a basis to discuss political alliances in Egypt (Shukr 1994) which was continued in his several studies on civil society and popular action. Then other theories of Samir Amin came up by being presented directly or through discussions on his analysis of colonialism, imperialism and social movements. His ideas and modern theories on globalisation were also addressed in a large seminar held in his honour by the Arab Research Centre on the theme 'Globalisation and Its Social Dimensions in the Arab World' in 1998. During the 1990s, Samir Amin wrote directly and also supervised a series of important books on civil society and the state in Egypt, Lebanon, Mashrek and Maghreb, as well the following journals: *Quadhaya Fikriya*, *Azmina Muasra*, *Sutour*, *Adab wa Naqd* and *Alyassar*. He entered into debates with Egyptian intellectuals, which indicated that he was maturely understood. In fact, Samir Amin enjoyed the level of participation and the fora which enriched his presence in Arabic, and made him easily understood in Egypt, especially as books in foreign languages, including his own, were inaccessible.

(v)   Perhaps Samir Amin's works or what was written about him in Arab capital cities cannot be adequately recorded as regards to the extent of his presence in Arab countries. Yet, it must be underlined how much he was appreciated publicly in a gathering at a Syrian university and Damascus Book Fair, as referred to in *Al Nahg*, a famous cultural magazine there.

Even in the Gulf region, he was well presented by some intellectuals, especially Abdel Khalek Abdallah in his book *Political Dependency*.

(vi)   It can be stated that Samir Amin returned to the Maghreb region after a long period of absence from the first wave in the 1970s. Although his articles were published in many magazines (*Al Wehda* in Raabat, and *Arguments* (Otroha) in Tunisia), he was reviewed by a prominent scholar who was studying private production trends in Tunisia before capitalism, its impact on the Al Khammasa community and its system

in agricultural production (*Al Hadi Al Taymoumy*). The scholar also wrote a comprehensive book in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, entitled *Controversy on Imperialism*, in collaboration with Samir Amin.

Institutional Presence

It must be noted that Samir Amin's presence in the Arab region was not confined to his presence as a thinker in academic or cultural fields. His institutional presence was also significant because he is very charismatic; his discourse gained more prominence with his physical presence in addition to his intellectual participation. It is difficult here to record all his articles and studies demanded by many journals and newspapers as formerly mentioned, but he also actively participates in seminars and symposia in Cairo, Beirut, Damascus and Tunisia. He has been a member of the Board of the Arab African Research Centre since 1993 and its president since 1997, thus strengthening the field of African studies between the main activity of the centre and promoting relations between it and the Third World Forum in Dakar. Moreover, Samir Amin's presence was also significant in the Executive Committee of the Arab Association for Sociology (Tunisia), as well as in the Arab Council for Social Sciences. All these are active in the Arab cultural movement and Samir Amin's presence consolidated their progressive orientation at a time when numerous non-governmental Arab cultural institutions rushed towards globalisation and its activity circles.

Samir Amin's Arabic Literature

The books in the Arabic language by Samir Amin numbered about twenty-five between 1957 and 2002 (see bibliography), seventeen of which were translated from French or English while about eight were published in Arabic even if their origin was in another language. It is possible to classify the list of his works in Arabic as follows: one in the 1950s, one in the 1960s, one in the 1970s, four in the 1980s, ten in the 1990s and up to 10 by 2002. This classification initially indicates that the academic school was aware of him in the 1970s through his non-Arabic books and he was better known among the Arab populace in the 1980s, reaching a peak in the 1990s because his books were directly written in Arabic.

The second comment in this respect is not very different from the first, in that it commenced with translations, in the 1970s, of his theoretical academic studies on 'accumulation and inequitable exchange' and 'inequitable evolution'

as well as books published on the Arab nation, like *Class and the Nation in the History and in the Imperial Period* (1980). This was in answer to the needs of the Arab reader on the two subjects that were widely discussed in the 1970s: the new policies of Sadat on catching up with American orientation, and mitigating Egypt's national identity. Here, Samir Amin found himself inside and outside the traditional academic scope and within the political movement debates, especially during the generation of the 1970s debate on modes of production and the capitalist world order.

The third comment is related to Samir Amin's reaction to what had prevailed in the region in terms of dialogue on the role of culture or fundamentalist currents and their escalating influence. He realised that the economic or political interpretation was insufficient in terms of events occurring in this complex region and therefore translated his writing on Eurocentricity and counter fundamentalism entitled *Towards a Theory on Culture* (Amin 1989), as well on dialogue of the state and religion, and even wrote articles on religious innovation and creativity.

He has continued writing on Islamic history as well as popular alternative and national popular alliances. He participates in discussions on the concept of the nation state and has written on globalisation and hegemony up to the militarisation of globalization that crowned his cultural presence in the Cairo conference on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in October 2001, and his popular lectures in the Cairo Library, following this conference.

16

Not an Autobiography of the Author[*]

I

One morning in the winter of 1947, the village of Abu Kolos, Denshway (Mid Delta) was surprised to see Haj Mohammad Sharawy moving to join his other children in Cairo. His obvious purpose was to continue the education of his young boy in government schools. The boy had memorised the greater part of the Quran, and finished part of his elementary schooling. The father intended to send the boy to Al Azhar for his further studies, but the mother stood firm: she will not have her boy become another Faqih as she wanted him to continue as an Effendi like his older brother and brother-in-law.

The family settled in the popular quarter of Sayeda Zeinab, and subsisted on the meagre income of letting part of their modest house and on the modest rent from a small piece of land in the village. The boy joined the primary school at an age somewhat older than his school mates, and this resulted in some isolation and, hence, spending more time on reading.

The old Haj, who was notable in the village as a venerable man of religion and a wafdist, became just another citizen in the big city, but he soon died in 1949 when the boy was only 14 years old. During the late 1940s and the early 1950s, the boy attended the prayers in the Zawya of Al Sonna Al Mohammadia and the premises of the Misr Al Fatah Party, or the Green House in Moneera where he listened to the fiery speeches of the leader, Ahmed Hussein, every week and bought the party paper *Al Ishtiraki* every Thursday. He was agitated by the words: 'Your subjects, your Majesty'. Later, he was also roused by the epistles of the martyr Hassan El Banna; and armed with such sources, he edited a bulletin published by his friends in the neighbourhood under the name *Al*

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[*]   This text was read to some friends who were generous enough to attend an Iftar in my honour arranged by Salon El Nadim in Ramadan of 2007.

Shola (The Beacon). On the cover page, he put the photos of the nationalist leader, Mostafa Kamel, followed by the then foreign minister, Mohammad Salah Ed Dine after he rejected the pact with Britain and the USA, and then that of Mohammad Naguib after the July Revolution.

Between 1953 and 1955, he joined the Moslem Brotherhood where he read all the literature by El Banna, Al Ghazali, Sayed Kotb, Mohammad Kotb, Al Bahi Al Kholy and Sayed Sabeq. This was a normal thing in those days, and is still the root of fundamentalism in today's youth. In those early years of the July Revolution, he joined the Wafdist/Brotherhood demonstrations, calling for a return to party politics, and a return of the army officers to their barracks. By the time the young man was entering the university, matters had settled down and the officers had consolidated their rule. He chose to study Sociology after it was separated from Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts.

When, in 1955, his home was invaded by the police in search of a Moslem militant, the officer was surprised to find a manuscript entitled: 'The Bloody Conflicts and their Effect on the Islamic Mission'. When he was sure that it was my own thoughts, he left me alone, but the same was not true in my conflict with Islamic culture and politics as I joined university.

This experience in defying the constants of religious tradition helped me go further on the road of freedom of thought, and the cafeteria of the Faculty of Arts was the ideal place for such free debate. After the war of 1956, it was the venue for meetings of the leaders of nationalist youth and the new poets to discuss the articles of Al Adab of Beirut about the cultural situation in Egypt, and the dedicated intellectual according to Sartre. The book that had the greatest influence on our youth was by Mahmoud El Aalem on the *Egyptian Culture* (1954), and Abdel Azim Anis, and the comments on that book by Taha Hussein, the "Future of Culture in Egypt".

It was a very rich experience for me in the Philosophy Department, moving between Aristotle and Logical Positivism. In the Sociology Department, I sailed between anthropology and primitive cultures. However, the social hypocrisy in this department and its meddling in social fieldwork made me hate the department, while I clung to the realm of philosophy and literature, together with progressive colleagues of Arabist leanings.

In the Faculty, the communists could not attract me as easily as the Moslem Brotherhood had in my teenage years. They seemed to believe that the July Revolution could be led to real socialist paths once it had moved firmly on the path of national liberation. So, they urged their base in the direction of general political action, while I looked for deeper cultural education from

them. Marxism remained, for me, one of the philosophies I studied just as other modern ones after I had read *A History of Atheism in Islam* by Abdel Rahman Badawi (1945). This thirst for further study was the reason why I remained in the leftist sphere, even after my comrades were arrested after my graduation, and after being taken up by my duties with Mohammad Fayek in African affairs.

The July Revolution had liquidated the university staff, leaving it prone to the pragmatists and careerists who took over, but this had not occurred to the same extent with general cultural life. The positive stand of the Marxists towards the revolution after Bandung and the Suez War meant that some leftist intellectuals still remained in office; for example Rushdi Saleh, the real founder of folkloric studies, who had edited *Al Fagr Al Jadid* back in the 1940s that had opened its pages to all progressive thinkers to expose their modernist thought. The man welcomed me as a diligent student of anthropology and sociology even before I had graduated. I would also mention some ideological support from a different directions that I got from Dr Abdel Aziz Al Ahwani in studying folklore. I spent two years after my graduation in 1958 under the leadership of Rushdi Saleh in the Folklore Centre, where I studied our heritage and anthropology that I aspired to follow as my career. This study made me connect the experiences of peoples with their folkloric heritage more than with politics. This vision was later rectified after reading the book by Yuri Sokolov (1970) on the subject that I translated with Abdel Hamid Hawas. This book gave a much deeper look into folklore as a comprehensive expression and arena for class struggle.

II

As soon as I set foot on this realm, I found myself attracted to another sphere by forces that I could not resist. One evening, I went to meet a true liberal Mohammad Abdel Aziz Ishaq, who attracted me to a group of youths, mostly from British and French colonies and Southern Sudan, who met in the premises of the African League. Thus, I worked in the morning with the oppressed of the popular culture, and in the evening with the representatives of the oppressed peoples in Africa! The frustration of Rushdi Saleh with the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Culture was relatively compensated for by the energetic efforts of Abdel Aziz Ishaq and the activity of African politics. The publication of the periodical 'African Renaissance' by the African League, and the active efforts of Mohammad Fayek who was attached to the bureau of President Nasser, attracted me to a new line that held much promise, although it was far removed from my original cultural aspirations.

My evening activities with my youthful African friends did not disrupt my official connection with the Folkloric Centre whose inauguration I attended with Rushdi Saleh in 1960, hoping it would become an academic institution that I would be proud to help create. Saleh had to struggle with the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Culture and the Minister himself who looked disdainfully on popular culture. He sent me with an old fashioned recorder and a borrowed technician from the broadcasting authority to collect all sorts of popular folklore from all corners of the country, after exhausting the popular quarters of Cairo and other cities. I was soon joined by other energetic youth, among them my friend Abdel Hamid Hawas, and we collected much of the folkloric heritage, encountering such names as Abdel Hamid Younis, Zakarial Hegawi and Mahmoud Reda and his popular dance troupe.

At the time the rising bourgeoisie was eager to find new avenues to explore, such as folklore, some were looking for new sights, others wanted to revolutionise the popular heritage, and some were merely looking for tourist attractions, but they never contemplated the creation of an academic institution. After two years of such efforts, I asked Saleh if he really thought I could look forward to an academic future, but his reply was not to expect much along this line.

I must admit, however, that my study of popular culture with the methodology of Saleh and my close contacts with leftist African liberation movements taught me how Marxist methods could be effective, in contrast to my brief contact with the conflicting Marxist organisations in the prisons that I was spared from being interned in because of my short-lived relations with them.

III

The work with the African League attracted me to continue in this line, where Mohammad Fayek took me from Abdel Aziz Ishaq to translate important articles and news about African colonies in newspapers coming from either Europe or the colonies themselves. To be able to do so, I had to join the evening classes of the Faculty of Languages (the Alsun School) for two years where I studied English literature and I translated, in conjunction with my colleague Hawas, a book on anthropology by Sokolov. Thus, I got involved in translation work with Fayek, but we also met the African youth agitating for the independence of their countries. These young leaders came to the African League where their best contact was Fayek, and I had to translate, as best I could. However, my knowledge of their liberation struggles and political aspirations was of tremendous value to me and meant a wealth of human relations as well as

information about African problems that was lacking then, and unfortunately still is. We cannot forget that Nasser's Egypt had just come from Bandung in 1955 and hosted the first Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Conference in Cairo in 1958.

From translating, I moved to an official post in 1960 in the Bureau of African Affairs that was in direct contact with the President. This meant a serious responsibility at this early stage of my life and a lot of effort and stress. My reward was the good results I was able to achieve as an overseer of the East African students in Cairo, then as a researcher in the African Affairs Institution, and then as the coordinator of all African liberation movements in Cairo. This work which was a very rich human experience for me continued until the 1970s.

This rich political and cultural experience needs a volume to be recorded, and such a record would be valuable for the whole country and not only to those who took part in it. One important feature is that this activity never suffered from the conflicts between the decision makers as was the case in Arab affairs. The position of Fayek at the political centre saved us from any conflicts although there were many bodies concerned such as those of foreign students, the workers general union, the Islamic affairs, etc. Some of these groups were openly reactionary while others were progressive through their political formation. We were also spared any possible adverse intervention from quarters that had the right to intervene, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Socialist Union. The former only took care of administrative matters, while the latter intervened only at ceremonial occasions! Such freedom of movement reduced not only the numbers of cadres required to do the work, but also any popular awareness of our achievements.

At the time, we were taken up by the 'fast-changing' events that Egypt was at the 'centre' of: trying to save the Congolese Revolution and Lmumba in 1960-61; convening the first African Unity Conference in 1962-63; trying to save South Africa from apartheid; trying to join Africa to the non-aligned movement in 1964-65; and supporting the armed liberation struggle around Africa, and in particular in the Portuguese colonies.

In Cairo, there appeared in succession some 25 representative bureaus of African liberation movements, some of which were presided over by deputy leaders or general secretaries. I had, in my capacity as member of the African Affairs Authority, to follow personally the problems of all these bodies with Egyptian bureaucracy. I also followed angrily the Soviet-Chinese conflict over supporting the various African liberation movements. Some had Soviet support,

and therefore had more support from Egypt, hence better chances to be heard worldwide. The others got more Chinese support through Tanzania, but both claimed our support in general spheres where we were anxious not to have any dissidence that would mar the overall conflict with imperialism. My greatest problem was to prevent any such disagreements from surfacing up and spoiling the whole glorious picture. I am sorry to state that this stage of our history, full of patriotic struggle and in which Egypt played an important if not a leading role, got so little attention from our cultural circles, and only some newspaper applause that covered a degree of ignorance of African vitality and turned the matter into forms of phony propaganda, some of which I really regret.

At the time many of the representatives of the African liberation movements and students would converge on my home, such that it became difficult to differentiate between the roles of the militant, the researcher, the official and the friend. My family had to put up with all this confusion, but I believe my other colleagues also faced similar situations. This continued until Sadat came and put Mohammad Fayek in prison for no valid reason and ousted me from my position, in the midst of his onslaught on all our African relations. He threatened to fight Ethiopia, and even fought against some liberation movements, such as in Angola and Congo. Yet, I continued with some friends, some of whom are still with us today, to keep our cultural relations in the African society alive. Thus, I retained the role of the militant and researcher, after being ousted as an official and expert!

All the African leaders went back to their countries where they became presidents, ministers or political prisoners, while I was detailed to the Sudanese Affairs Ministry where I started new relations with Sudanese intellectuals since I was reluctant to cooperate with the Numeiri regime in the integration programme. I admit that this period too was rich in the formation of new cultural relations with circles hitherto unfamiliar to me. Thus, I made friendships with Mohammad Omar Bashir, the genius of African studies, the poet Mohammad Abdel Hay and the researcher Abdel Ghaffar Mohammad Ahmed. In Juba University, in the early 1980s, I made friendships with Abdel Rahman Abu Zeid and Farouk Kduda, such that I seem to be a partisan of the cause of South Sudan. This period of retirement also gave me the opportunity to renew my relations with many Africans in the Group of African Political Studies where I tried in vain to entice them to study the miserable Arab-African relations.

Frustration is not the only memory of those glorious years of national liberation struggle in Africa since much was indeed achieved during those years

even if it was not fully recognised by the media or the cultural circles in Egypt. Thus, I believe that my contribution in some ten volumes about Africa and Arab-African relations, and some translated works, plus some modest academic contributions was not enough to compensate for the generalised poverty of knowledge about this southern dimension of our people's history.

I may now sum up the conclusions of my modest experience in the spheres of folklore and relations with Africa, by stating that Egypt does not possess any real discourse, whether official or popular, towards folklore, nor does it possess a strategic penchant towards African cultures or relations. The limited elite that worked in these spheres did not believe our society has put to use any of its efforts in this connection. Proof of such a contention is the absence in Egypt of any institution for the true study of folklore, or any institutions for African research and action. The responsibility for such poverty lies with the lamentable degradation of our middle class and its deformed modernism, and the obsession of our intellectuals with the media instead of creating cultural institutions. Our scientific endeavour, if any, is limited to educational institutions. The greatest calamity stems from Egyptian capitalism that has lost all national aspirations or rationality, as we see all the time. The only nonsense we hear in this respect is some pretensions about the supposed proliferation of Islam or Arabism in Africa.

In the 1970s, some other intellectuals and myself felt that we could not let all the efforts of the two decades of African action be wasted and go into oblivion, so we resuscitated the role of the African League by reconstituting the African Society to resume what could have been ignored by the previous stage in cultural efforts that could be the basis for the national action. When I told some of the former responsible persons of such efforts, they were surprised and gratified that we were trying to fill the gap left by our previous efforts. I met with a richer experience than expected in contact with the cultural arena and in taking African relations to the academic circles. I met many African intellectuals in political and social sciences such that I enjoyed this new experience despite many personal difficulties in my life. My personal experience was enriched by my close contacts with Archie Mafeje in social analysis, and Mamdani, Issa Shivji and Nabudere in political science. We read Cheikh Anta Diop, Agabi and Ki-Zerbo on history and Senghor in poetry. The comradeship with Archie Mafeje in Cairo was no less interesting than that with Samir Amin and Fawzy Mansour in Dakar, and with Ibrahim Sakr and Abdel Malek Oda and scores of other brilliant intellectuals in Cairo. All these gave liveliness to the African presence in Cairo despite the lack of an appropriate discourse.

IV

It seems that we have to evaluate the 1970s from more aspects than that of Sadat, since there were more turn-arounds than the Sadat virtual coup d'état, and these were mostly positive. Such was the political and ideological diversity that was inaugurated and resulted in demarcation of left and right. The Palestinian question was put on the agenda of general debate at the cultural and popular levels.

My fate was to join the realm of national culture, and I was surprised to find that the schools of leftist thought that have to be brought to the attention of our popular masses are much wider than the limited struggles in which some of our comrades were completely involved. There was little knowledge of the rich experience of the Left in countries like India, South Africa, Brazil, etc. that is still going warmly on despite what is sometimes said about the collapse of socialism.

In a previous stage, national activity seemed nearer the work of technocrats while, in contrast with the Sadat period, it took on the form of a progressive struggle. Thus, there was the support of the student movement in the early 1970s; the re-establishment of the communist movement; then the mobilisation of the intellectuals around the nationalist objectives with the creation of the Writers Union; and support for the Palestinian Question and opposition to normalisation of relations with Israel after the Camp David Agreement. All these were nationalist struggles to keep the nationalist ideology alive and activate the nationalist role of the intellectuals. I shall not go into the details of all these conflicts, but surely I was deeply involved in the nationalist traditions, and felt that we had to resist the calls to depoliticise cultural work. Such calls were a corollary of the previous domination of the media on nationalist activities, and the exclusion of many leftist intellectuals from public action.

I never felt, like many friends, that the 1970s with all the new phenomena that started in them was much different from the nationalist traditions I had experienced in the 1960s. Indeed, Egypt had seen – especially from 1967 onwards – diversity in literature, theatre, cinema and intellectual circles, a diversity that is incompatible with a totalitarian regime. However, the mechanisms of this period still need deeper analysis.

From the early 1970s, the reactivated presence of the Islamist movement brought to the fore new questions about the role of the nationalist intellectuals, and their choice between tradition and modernity. The Left was taken up

by the problems of re-establishing its ranks and of the coalition within the Tagamu Party. Inside this turmoil, there were the problems of the reactivation of the Egyptian Communist Party around some of the old militants, while the Communist Workers Party was the place for the younger generation, together with variations such as the adherents of Hadeto, the Workers Vanguard, or the debate about the position with regard to the bourgeoisie and its historic role. As a bureaucrat, I felt nearer to those who grew up within public action as myself, as I never felt happy with underground work. I thought the masses needed a general political culture that was as scientific, enlightened and revolutionary as each intellectual could contribute in that direction.

Such feelings may explain my approval of the dissolution of the Egyptian Communist Party in 1965 against all leftist sentiment that condemned that action. I thought it was better for the militants to be immersed in the midst of the popular masses even though they could not stand firm against the overwhelming popularity of Nasserism. Their noticeable cultural presence in the late 1960s no doubt helped the re-establishment of their parties in the 1970s. Despite the heroic sacrifices endured by the underground militants, their work isolates them from public work and responsibilities.

The more open atmosphere that followed corroborated my viewpoint and removed any remorse I might have felt for not joining their ranks. By contrast, the Islamists who had better contacts with the popular masses and who possessed a culture open to political organisation and reappraisal, confined themselves to secrecy and manoeuvring with ambiguous alliances, and there was a lack of a distinctive political, social or economic programme acceptable to the people.

This atmosphere had its negative effects on the Committee for the Defense of National Culture that was created after the Camp David Agreement in 1979, and on the strong urge to counteract the efforts to normalise relations with Israel and to domesticate Arab culture to accept Zionism. The committee was the venue for conflicts between secrecy and legality, between Arabism and Egyptian nationalism, between Arabism and Islamism and between tradition and modernity. My experience with the Tagamu Party that sponsored the committee was very bad, just like the experience of alliances within the left movement in general, yet the leadership of Latifa Al Zayat was an inspiring example of straightforwardness and honesty in honouring alliances. The founders and promoters of the committee had to face a lot of conflicting trends, such as giving priority to the political over the properly cultural. There was also much mutual distrust between the Nasserists and the Marxists, apart

from the abhorrence of the Islamists from any leftist trends in culture. This was especially annoying because confronting Israel and Zionism on religious grounds was ineffective and embroiled their role as agents of imperialism in the region. Such ideologies proved their failure in the case of Pakistan and Iran which claimed to be founded on such grounds, but finally had to emerge as national secular states. Nevertheless, the committee got enthusiastic support from the mass of intellectuals, and was a bright progressive feature of the Tagamu Party itself.

The group working with Latifa was like a fighting contingent, and I had to play the role of mediator or compromise finder, a role not always commendable, but sometimes necessary. Thus, the committee had to fight the well-known struggle against normalisation, and re-establish predetermined facts such as that the Palestinian question is also an Egyptian issue. When the committee decided to take concrete action by opposing the participation of Israel in the Book Fair in 1981, we were all dispatched to Qalaa prison. I was dismayed when some did not appreciate our stand although they would boast about it later.

As a result, I was ousted from my post in Sudanese affairs (for the second time) and also from the secretariat of the African Society. My social position was saved, however, by the Sudanese brothers giving me a staff job at Juba University where I saw the beginnings of the unrest in Southern Sudan. I remained there until the Sadat administration put my name on the list of conspirators in the so-called Apple 19 plot, together with all the active members of the committee. I had to quit Sudan for fear that the Numeiri Government would hand me over to the Egyptian authorities.

Again, the late Mohye Ed Dine Saber, the Director of the Arab League Education Culture and Science Organisation, generously welcomed me as an expert on Arab-African cultural relations in Tunis. I worked there from 1982 to 1986, but kept in close contact with the cultural scene in Egypt, and wrote about those who acted to relieve their sense of guilt in mixing up political matters with party politics that I thought was not right. The period in Tunis was lively, with political and legal public action, and I was satisfied with my stay there.

This period was also rich in proving the depth of Arab-African cultural relations, despite many conservative concepts on the Arab side that led to lack of seriousness towards strengthening such relations. The reason for such laxity was the deterioration of many Arab regimes during the 1970s that led to a deterioration of political positions such that the only remedy had to be undergone in the cultural arena. Thus, my role became more personal rather

than a reflection of official policies, despite the numerous official institutions inaugurated at the time. No wonder then that Israel was back on the scene so forcefully in the 1990s.

V

After my return from Tunisia, I had the invigorating experience of founding the Arab Research Centre, which was its first name. This was closely related to that of the National Cultural Committee as regards Egypt's relation with the imperialist powers as well as with Arab and African countries, but we tried to avoid the previous problems, by accommodation rather than compromise. The first contacts took place at Latifa's home as well as Dar Assakafa Al Jadida, the Tagamu and even the Committee itself. To get £50,000 (from 30 contributors) to start the project seemed like a miracle, but that miracle was repeated two years later by becoming £100,000. In 2005, a third miracle was buying our own premises and the number of sponsors rose to 75, including communists, Marxists, liberals, nationalists and progressive capitalists. I was not alone of course, and my deepest thanks go to all who contributed to the endeavour. I would specially mention those of them who have passed away: the late Dr Fouad Morsi, Latifa Al Zayat, Nabil Al Hilaly, Abdulla Al Zoghbi, Mahmoud Al Aalem and Dr Abdel Azim Anis.

AARC is a leftist institution that commands enough respect and stability to keep it going. It tries to respond faithfully to the research requirements of the Left, it is open to all trends, and it encourages free dialogue in Egypt and elsewhere. Thus, I shall only mention its success in making wide contacts with the scientific and cultural circles in the Arab and African countries, while the official relations suffer many setbacks, in particular at the cultural level. The brilliant group of intellectuals who sponsored the activity of the Centre at various stages gave weight to the values it promoted in society, and the sharing between Egyptians and Africans was very remarkable, although somewhat late. No doubt, the contribution of Samir Amin and Fawzi Mansour greatly corroborated my own African relations in the African and Third World circles and induced many others to add their efforts to these cooperative endeavours that gave results that surpassed my wildest dreams.

VI

In conclusion, why is it that political and cultural life in Egypt seems stagnant, while society appears to be boiling up with social unrest? When will this stagnant pond join the live waves of the ocean? I ask myself such questions

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when I feel the effects of my Arab-African culture boiling inside me and trying to spill out.

When the rhythm of popular national conferences in Africa was rising in the 1990s, two texts were issued simultaneously (without any prior coordination), one in Nzongola Ntalaga in Congo and the other from Fawzy Mansour in Cairo. They both called for a 'second wave' of national liberation. As imperialism globalises its domination of the world, political and social liberation from this domination must become global too. Thus, many people are rising in protest, calling for real sovereignty over their destinies and not just nominal independence this time. As we too suffer from the same problems, we must rouse the popular masses to fight for their rights. Gathering large masses in national sovereignty conferences is not an easy task, a task that needs a culture of change, of insurrection, but practice will surely make it more fruitful.

Again, the question of the national state is a thorny one – the independent, democratic, social state – yet it is an urgent requirement in confrontation with the attempts at fragmentation and constructive chaos. I wonder sometimes why the Left shuns the question of the state. I believe the Soviet Union, and even China, was a national state, and no more. Many leftists deplore the insufficiency of the state in fulfilling many of its social responsibilities. Others keep chanting the bleak rhetoric of liberal democracy, such that I cannot fathom what they are after. They seem not to imagine a national independent state caring for the needs of the popular masses unless it were an authoritarian one, hence this contradiction with democracy.

The state, as it stands in Egypt, will not evolve easily towards the call for democracy. The heritage of the Islamic 'nation' is replete with non-democratic practices, and some studies even tell us of a complete lack of democracy at certain stages of its history, such that some claim that democracy is not a popular claim or aspiration.

In contrast, in my African experience, I find Archie Mafeje's claim that the distorted capitalist state can only produce distortion. Another African scholar, the Nigerian Peter Eke, lamented the distorting colonialist capitalism in his country. He found there were two worlds in the country and not one world, even if we consider class or tribal cleavages. This thinking may go against the usual class distinction for some time, as indeed there are two worlds that will not easily meet.

I suggested lately that we stop studying poverty as we already know enough about it. What needs more study is this distorting capitalism: how can some

spend £22 billion to build a phantom city whose owners have other property in similar walled cities where they isolate themselves from the rest of the people? Some answered: it was a sort of apartheid in Egypt, and when we look at the other side of the coin – the miserable conditions of the inhabitants of Doweiqa – we see a real apartheid. If Samir Amin is concerned about apartheid at the world level, we find that it starts here in our city, in Madinaty.

Where then is the state? Sometime ago, some Somali traders wanted a state of their own making. They grouped some of their subordinates in Kenya and created a state in exile, and announced for themselves a parliament of that state, and the head of that 'state' announced he would soon visit his 'capital' Mogadishu! In a conference in Addis Ababa, some laughed at this fictitious state. I told them I knew other countries whose rulers live in beach resorts and walled cities, and deign to come to visit us from time to time. These are the new apartheid cities, and this is the self-isolating state. We need a big popular alliance to gather the conference of national sovereignty, and create our own state, and call it what we wish.

VII

My final conclusion is to thank some who witnessed my journey from the beginning until near its end. I wish that the lady who carried her few belongings to bring me to the capital to meet modern times was still alive to see the result of her efforts from which she personally gained nothing. She remains a symbol of the persecuted Eve.

My small family was extended to reach the limits of Africa, North and South, and East and West. We welcomed revolutionaries and freedom fighters, and intellectuals and artists at our home, and shared with them the hard times and the good ones. All through this, Tawhida was a true mate and not only a good media and legal professional. Also, Ayman and May seem to bear hardships more than me. While I feel disheartened, they show more faith in a better future, and the grandchildren seem even more ambitious. The friends from the African liberation movements were always asking whether Ayman and May were going to become politicians. So, when they both chose medicine, I would answer that they would become writers!