

The Black Power Pan-Africanist Perspective

By Chinweizu

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The Black race will be exterminated
if it does not build a black superpower in Africa
by the end of this century.

African Unity: the problem and its dimensions

By Chinweizu

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One of the core objectives of Pan-Africanism, since 1958, has been African unity. The three key questions about unity are: unity for what? Unity of whom? And what type of unity? Let's consider them, one by one.

Unity for what?

All too often one gets the impression that Pan-Africanists are obsessed with unity for unity's sake. But as Chancellor Williams pointed out, "Not 'unity just for unity' but unity for great achievements."-[*The Destruction of Black Civilization*, p.343] We therefore need to spell out the paramount objective to be achieved by any unity we are talking of. I would say that we need just enough unity to achieve the Black Power we need to guarantee our security and survival. Anything less is inadequate; anything more is superfluous. Black power is the only desirable objective of African Unity.

Unity of Whom?

There is no agreement as yet on the constituency for the much desired unity. Some, like Nkrumah, Padmore and Diop, have advocated a unity of the entire continent of Africa, a unity that would include the Black Africans and the Arabs in the African continent. Some like Azikiwe and Museveni have advocated a unity of all who now reside on the African continent—Blacks and whites, including the Arab and European colonial settlers. Yet others want the unity to be between the Black Africans and their Diaspora in the Americas; and still others want the unity, whatever its form or forms, to be between the Black Africans in Africa and the Blacks world-wide, excluding the European and Asian settlers on the continent. These differences need to be thoroughly debated and a consensus reached on this vital question.

What type of unity?

On this there are divergent proposals, even though some claim that consensus has been reached, and that differences exist only over the means of implementing it. According to Prof. Opoku Agyeman,

“Africa’s predicament has not been in regard to determining the nature and character of the needed unity, but rather in respect to the implementation of it.”

--Opoku Agyeman, (2001)in *Africa’s Persistent Vulnerable Link to Global Politics*, San Jose: iUniversity Press, 2001, p.123

However, please consider the following statements:

“This is my plea to the new generation of African leaders and African peoples: work for unity with the firm conviction that, *without unity there is no future for Africa*. That is, of course, if we still want to have a place in the sun. I reject the glorification of the nation-state, which we have inherited from colonialism, and the artificial nations we are trying to forge from that inheritance. We are all Africans trying to be Ghanaians or Tanzanians. Fortunately for Africa we have not been completely successful . . . *Unity will not make us rich, but it can make it difficult for Africa and the African peoples to be disregarded and humiliated. And it will therefore increase the effectiveness of the decisions we make and try to implement for our development.*

--Julius Nyerere, speaking in Ghana in 1997. Quoted in Kwesi Kwaa Prah, *The African Nation*, Cape Town: CASAS, 2006, p.276

“One must say that our first preoccupation (in foreign policy) has been and remains the creation of working African solidarity, with a view toward African unity, the necessity of which—now unanimously accepted—no longer seems necessary to prove.”

--Amadou Ahidjo, 1962. Quoted in *The African Nation*, pp.276 –277

“I think that Pan-Africanism should be concretized either in the form of regional States or one continental State, whichever is feasible, . . . ”

--Azikiwe, 1962, “The Future of Pan-Africanism” in J. Ayo Langley, ed., *Ideologies of Liberation in Black Africa, 1856-1970*, London: Rex Collings, 1979, p.305

“the organization of African unity in 1963 stated its first purpose to be ‘to promote the unity and solidarity of the African States’ ”—Nyerere, (1968) in Langley ed, *Ideologies*, p.350

“The ideal of African unity is premised on the notion that the emancipation, development and prosperity of people of African descent can be achieved only through the unity of the people.”

-- Kwesi Kwaa Prah, *The African Nation*, p.269

There cannot be “one Africa that fights against colonialism and another that attempts to make arrangements with colonialism.”

--Frantz Fanon, quoted in *The African Nation*, p.276

“Our objectives must be the creation of an economic and politically federated continent. . . . If despite goodwill on our part, North African Arabs were to refuse a continental federation, then nothing should stand in the way of the formation of an exclusively sub-Saharan continental federation. . . . In such an eventuality, no one could accuse sub-Saharan Africans of being guilty of exclusivism, since their appeals to the North would have been refused.”

--Chiekh Anta Diop, (1977); *Afriscopes* Interview with Carlos Moore, in *Great African Thinkers*, ed by Ivan Van Sertima, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1986, pp. 260, 261

A little reflection will show that the nature and character of the African unity mentioned in the above quotes is not the same. Nyerere, like Nkrumah, Azikiwe, the OAU and Diop, is talking of unity as state integration, the integration into a federation of the colonial states inherited at “independence”; Ahidjo is talking of solidarity of the states; Prof Prah is talking of “the unity of the people” and not the integration of states; Fanon was talking of unity of purpose and action by the states. These few examples make clear that Prof Agyeman cannot be correct in claiming that the nature and character of the African unity desired has been agreed upon or settled.

Given these disparate notions of African Unity, the question of “what type of African unity” is still to be resolved. To help us move towards a resolution, I shall now attempt to elucidate the aspects and dimensions of the issue.

Here is a list of some different possible types of unity.

1] Unity as state integration or political federation. Examples of this include the USA, the EU, the former USSR, the proposed United States of Africa. African unity of this kind, being a union of states, would exclude those Africans of the Diaspora who have no states of their own. However, Cheikh Anta Diop has said:

“Black communities must find a way to articulate their historical unity. The ties between black Africans and the blacks of Asia, Oceania, the Caribbean, South America and the United States must be strengthened on a rational basis.”—Diop, *GAT*, p.246

Now, if this type of unity is pushed to its global limit, as hinted by Diop in the above passage, it would require a global Federation spanning the Black African states of the Homeland and those of the Diaspora ranging from Fiji and Papua New Guinea all the way west to the Black Caribbean states like Jamaica and Belize. An impossibly unwieldy union of states.

2] Unity as solidarity of people based on distinctive racial, cultural, linguistic and historical identity. Examples of this type include the solidarity between the Chinese in China and their global Diaspora; a solidarity based on their Yellow race, Han ancestry and Chinese culture, and effected on the basis of what they call “the mirror test”—if you want to know whether you are Chinese, look in the mirror and see.

Another example is the racial solidarity of whites, a solidarity about which Chancellor Williams said:

“Caucasians will wage frightful wars against other Caucasians, but will quickly unite, as though by instinct, against non-whites, not only in wars but in international politics. They have developed a kind of built-in solidarity in their relations with non-Caucasian peoples. This fact, as much as anything else, helps to explain their position as masters of the world.” –Chancellor Williams, *Destruction . . .*, p.298

Pan Africanism has paid hardly any attention to this type of unity. In fact, it is resisted by our racial integrationists who denounce a racial criterion, a black “mirror test”, as “racist”.

3] Unity through a shared ideology or religion. Examples of this are the unity of the population of the USA through a Constitution that articulates a body of beliefs, i.e. the ideology of the USA; the organized State Shinto in Meiji Japan; Christendom; Dar-al-Islam; The Free World—unified by the doctrines of capitalism, free enterprise and anti-communism.

Unity of this sort, unity by norms and customs, rites and ritualized behavior, is explained by Konrad Lorenz as follows:

The triple function of suppressing fighting within the group, of holding the group together, and of setting it off, as an independent entity, against other, similar units, is performed by culturally developed ritual . . . Any human group which exceeds in size that which can be held together by personal love and friendship, depends for its existence on these three functions of culturally ritualized behavior patterns. . . . From the little peculiarities of speech and manner which cause the smallest possible subcultural groups to stick together, an uninterrupted gradation leads up to the most elaborated, consciously performed, and consciously symbolical social norms and rites which unite the largest social units of humanity in one nation, one culture, one religion, or one political ideology. . . . It is perfectly right and legitimate that we should consider as "good" the manners which our parents have taught us, that we should hold sacred social norms and rites handed down to us by the tradition of our culture. What we must guard against, with all the power of rational responsibility, is our natural inclination to regard the social rites and norms of other cultures as inferior. . . . The moral of the natural history of pseudo-

speciation is that we must learn to tolerate other cultures, to shed entirely our own cultural and national arrogance, and to realize that the social norms and rites of other cultures, to which their members keep faith as we do to our own, have the same right to be respected and to be regarded as sacred.

-- Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression*, New York: Bantam, 1967, pp. 74-75, 78, 79, 80

Our fidelity to the symbol implies fidelity to everything it signifies, and this depends on the warmth of our affection for the old custom. It is this feeling of affection that reveals to us the value of our cultural heritage. The independent existence of any culture, the creation of a superindividual society which outlives the single being, . . . is based on this autonomy of the rite making it an independent motive of human action. (*ibid.*, pp. 71-72)

For large groups, this is the most important source of the feeling of belonging together; but it has never even been recognized by Pan Africanism. This type of unity is especially important in view of the fact that Black Africans are deeply divided by their strong adherence to the various religions and ideologies of their white enemies.

The need is therefore most pressing for a Pan-African ideology or religion that will bond the entire black race together. Kwanzaa is a beginning, and should be propagated throughout the black world.

4] Unity through a hierarchy of organizations-- economic, social, cultural etc.

This is the kind of unity which a conglomerate imposes on its units; an economic franchise imposes on its outlets; the unity of the Rotarians, Kiwanis, Boy Scouts Movement; it is also exemplified by how Wall Street unifies the economy of the USA, and the City of London unifies the global economy of the British empire.

Lack of attention to this type of unity has meant that there have been no efforts to create Pan-African apex organizations to unify efforts and give leadership in the economic, social and cultural areas of life. No great consortium of banks with Pan-African reach and clout; no Pan-African equivalents of the Rotary Club or the Kiwanis; No pan-African hierarchy of religious outfits, etc. Yet it is hierarchic networks of these sorts that embody and operationalize unity.

Chancellor Williams correctly laments that "The picture of several thousand black organizations, each independent and vying for leadership, is substantially the same picture of fragmentation and disunity in Africa that led to the downfall of the whole race." [*Destruction . . .*, p. 321] But the remedy for that situation is not one massive membership organization, but the creating of hierarchized groups of these organizations to give them coherence and the potent force for united action under the control of the top echelon organizations.

5] Unity through joint activity. This is exemplified by the unity of the members of a football team or league, of a sporting association. Of this kind of unity Chancellor Williams said:

“the total membership is mutually and individually involved in activities which each feels is important and will be directly beneficial to him all in his own lifetime. . . . [This unity is achieved] almost unconsciously as people work together for mutual benefits to each other and the advancement of the [group] as a whole. Meaningful, practical activities [are] the cement which we call unity.”—[*Destruction . . .*, pp. 343-344]

Since 1958, Pan-Africanism has had a one-track mind, and has been obsessed with state integration. It has failed to promote joint and periodic activities like a Youth Movement with four-yearly Youth Festivals. Its Pan-African Congresses have not been regularized to hold, say, every 5th year. Even its cultural festival, FESTAC, has been allowed to lapse. FESTAC should have been organized to hold every decade, and so give Pan-Africanists in the cultural field a festival to work towards every decade. These are the kinds of periodic activities that help to build solidarity and win and hold adherents to a movement.

6] Unity as a functional bloc or League. This is the kind of unity exhibited by blocs and alliances of states like NATO, the Arab League, the defunct Warsaw Pact, and the British Commonwealth. About the British Commonwealth, Azikiwe said:

“The Commonwealth is bound by a complex system of consultation and co-operation in political, economic, educational, scientific and cultural fields, working through many Commonwealth organizations and through personal contacts, like the Prime Ministers’ Conferences.”
--Azikiwe, 1962. In Langley ed., *Ideologies*, p.310

The unity Diop proposed for all the blacks when he said “The ties between black Africans and the blacks of Asia, Oceania, the Caribbean, South America and the United States must be strengthened on a rational basis.” is probably better embodied in such a League than in a geographically unwieldy Federation of states scattered across the globe.

The lack of attention to this type of unity has been disastrous for Pan-African collective security. With everything concentrated on states integration through the continental, Black African and Arab OAU/AU, no attention has been paid to our need for our own organized bloc of states, a Black African League or Black World League where matters peculiar to ourselves, matters of exclusive interest to ourselves, could be addressed without interference by our Arab enemies.

7] Unity through one mass organization with one voice. This is the type of unity manifested in Garvey’s movement, the UNIA; it is also proposed by Chancellor Williams when he suggests a “kind of massive organization”, “a nationwide organization of Blacks only [with] an active membership so vast that it would go far beyond the accepted scientific criteria for determining the wishes of a whole people; [an] organization that would, beyond all doubt, be the voice of Black America.”—[*Destruction . . .*, pp. 332, 342]

A mass organization of this sort is probably best done through an organized religion or ideology, the type described in #3, above.

Pan-Africanists seem, thus far, to be fixated on types #1 and #7; they have not even explored the others. The failure of Pan-Africanism since 1958 to attend to and develop other types of unity besides state integration, has not just been misguided. It has helped to weaken the effectiveness of Pan-Africanism. It has left it without a basis of appeal to the ordinary Africans whose interests are monumentally different from those of states and presidents.

In its obsession with states integration, it has expected a Federation of states to do the job of a globe-spanning league of states for collective security as well as the job of popular solidarity; it has not explored the ways and means for organizing people's solidarity.

Lack of solidarity organs

Of the missing types of unity, one whose absence is the most deadly is probably the lack of organs of popular solidarity. Lack of people's solidarity helps account for the absence of expressions of popular support by Black Africans for the South Sudanese, Darfurians and other victims of genocide, ethnic cleansing and colonialism perpetrated by the racist Arab settler minority government in Khartoum. There has been no wave of popular indignation or demonstrations against the Black African presidents in the AU who have been campaigning to prevent Bashir from being arrested and tried in Die Hague for his crimes against humanity.

Also conspicuously absent have been demonstrations of popular Pan-African solidarity with Zimbabwe in its long struggle against the neo-colonial sanctions and regime change campaign by the white imperialist powers.

Lack of popular solidarity organs manifests also in the American Diaspora's failure to support the Afro-Sudanese against Khartoum. When not totally indifferent to the plight of our endangered racial kith and kin, many in the American Diaspora have sided with the Arabs out of Islamic or anti-imperialist solidarity. And they have failed to mobilize the US government to stop the ethnic cleansing and genocide in Darfur. They have failed to use their power as American citizens to do what Chancellor Williams suggested, namely

“Influence American foreign policy and actions in regard to crucial matters affecting African nations just as effectively as American Jews can influence this country's relations with Israel. . . . This would be real Pan Africanism.”

[*Destruction* p.345]

I would suggest that pan-Africanism needs to distinguish and build these various types of organs of unity (these 7 do not exhaust the types). Only when we have built a dense network of these 7 types of institutions can we be said to have organized ourselves and achieved Black African unity.

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Collective Security

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It is absolutely amazing, quite tragic and a great sin of omission, that collective security has not explicitly been the paramount objective of Pan-Africanism since 1958. For a people all of whose woes for the past 2500 years (since the fall of the Black Egypt of the Pharaohs to White Persians in 525 BC) have resulted from their inability to secure their borders and protect their lands, populations, societies, cultures, values etc., achieving collective security should have been, and still should be, the paramount concern. Other than Nkrumah's repeated demand for an African High Command; and Azikiwe's mention, in 1962, of the need for some arrangements for collective security; and Haile Selassie's mention of that need in his 1963 address at the inauguration of the OUA, I have found in the records no other treatment that has a bearing on the issue. Nkrumah, Azikiwe and Selassie did indeed raise the issue of collective security; however, they did so in an a-historical form, the wrong form.

The "Never Again" question

Consider a man who has just escaped, half mauled, from the den of a pack of hungry lions. If he is wise, his first order of business is to vow "Never again!" and ask how he strayed there in the first place, and then to take steps never again to make that mistake. If he does not do this, if he fails to learn from his harrowing experience, he is stupid and deserves to become the dinner for the next lion that comes his way. By failing to ask and answer that "never again" question, Black Africa's "independence" generation let Black Africa down and led us astray.

Unfortunately, since the "independence" generation did not have the ancestral sankofa orientation, the question of collective security was not posed in the

correct historical form that would have allowed our past experience to point to an answer for the future.

The African High Command that Nkrumah urged did not go far enough in addressing the fundamental problem. It was limited to “an African High Command which could resist . . . acts which threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of African States.” [*Revolutionary Path*, p.345]; it would “plan revolutionary war, and initiate action” so that Africa will be liberated soon. [*Revolutionary Path*, p.482] It was not a doctrine that posed or answered the comprehensive historical question of how we fell into a history of enslavement, conquest and colonialism in the first place, and how we could ensure that we never again did so.

Unity for security and survival

Since 1958, Pan-Africanism has made African Unity its prime project. Now, the usual motive for the voluntary unification of states is security and survival. However Pan Africanism has strangely been obtuse on the matter of security and survival for its constituency. I do not find Nkrumah, Padmore, Diop, Azikiwe and the other advocates of continental unification anywhere articulating [and I stand to be corrected] the argument that the paramount objective of continental unification is the survival and security of Africans. If they did, and thought the matter through, and had bothered to educate themselves on the nature of Afro-Arab historical relations of the last two millennia, they would be simply suicidal or insane to have proposed a unification of Arabs and Africans under one continental state. Not even Nkrumah, for whom unification seems like a panacea, [note his long catalogue of benefits that he said it would yield], saw fit to include security and survival, whether explicitly or implicitly, among his reasons for advocating continental unification. In light of the articulated and demonstrated Arab ambitions in Africa for the last 1,500 years, any unification of Black Africans with the Arab settler colonialists in Africa would be as suicidal for Black Africans as a unification between mice and cats would be for mice.

Our endangered situation

Consider this true story from Sudan:

"The dispute over oil," Victoria Ajang begins, "first became an issue of life and death for me in 1983. That year the government began its program to pipe oil from our land in the south up to the north. Students in my town were quite upset about our resources being diverted by the government, and so they held a protest march outside the local school. But the government would not tolerate this.

"On a summer night, the government militia forces suddenly swooped in on our village. We were at home relaxing, in the evening, when men on horses with machine guns stormed through, shooting everyone. I saw friends fall dead in front of me. While my husband carried out our little daughter Eva, I ran with the few possessions I could grab. "All around us, we saw children being [hit] in the stomach, in the leg, between the eyes. Against the dark sky, we saw flames from

the houses the soldiers had set on fire. The cries of the people forced inside filled our ears as they burned to death. Our people were being turned to ash."

Victoria Ajang's story of what happened to her village, illustrates what dangers they expose themselves to who do not take measures to ensure their security. They will be relaxing and entertaining themselves when their enemies make a surprise attack and destroy them. That is the situation Black Africans have allowed themselves to be in for 2500 years and have foolishly refused to take measures to prevent.

An unasked question

Two vital questions should have been asked and answered in 1958 by the All-African People's Conference, namely: (a) "How do we set the rest of Black Africa free from colonialism?". (This, thankfully, was indeed asked and answered) and (b) "How do we ensure that we shall never again be enslaved, conquered and colonized by anybody?" (This, alas, went unasked and remains unasked and unanswered till this day). Rather than take up the second task, we were diverted into other things. In Nkrumah's own words:

"Long before 1957, I made it clear that the two major tasks to be undertaken after the ending of colonial rule in Ghana would be the vigorous prosecution of a Pan-African policy to advance the African Revolution, and at the same time the adoption of measures to construct socialism in Ghana." –[*Path*, p.125]

In their desire to establish a new social order—apparently without bothering about how it would protect itself from our enemies-- Nkrumah set about building "scientific socialism" in Ghana; Nyerere set about building African socialism (Ujamaa) in Tanzania; Kaunda set about building African Humanism in Zambia; Houphouet Boigny set about building capitalism in Cote d'Ivoire; and others set about building other systems in the other countries, but nobody saw fit to ask the paramount question of African collective security, namely "How do we ensure that we shall never again be enslaved, conquered and colonized by anybody?" This question should have informed whatever new social order they set out to build, but did not. What is the result today?

Consequences of lack of historical focus on Collective Security

Several very costly errors have flowed from this our lack of proper [sankofa] attention to our collective security.

A] Our quest for African unity has been misguided in three respects:

A1] We have sought to unite a territory –the entire African continent--that is far too large for our security needs.

A2] By not finding out who our historic enemies are, we have included our Arab enemies among those we seek to unite with;

A3] By not understanding our security requirements, we failed to seriously undertake industrialization.

B] Even if we still recognize that they were our historic enemies during the centuries of the slave trade and colonialism, we have failed to realize that ***Europeans did not stop being our enemies with the ending of political colonialism [1957-1994]***. In our amnesia

and foolishness, we have treated our historic White European enemies as our best friends, as our mentors in development and now as our so-called 'development partners'; and we have treated our historic Arab enemies as our African brothers and allies, and thereby left ourselves totally unprepared for their enemy attacks, for example:

B1] The AIDSbombing of Black Africa by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the USA took us totally unawares;

B2] For 50 years we have allowed the European imperialist institutions—the UN, and especially its IMF-WB-GATT/WTO troika, and our European “ex-colonizers” to tutor and guide us into maldevelopment and chronic poverty.

B3] For 50 years we have failed to recognize and collectively resist Arab colonialist expansionism and racism against Black Africans, as well as the persisting enslavement of Black Africans by Arabs.

For 50 years, for lack of an explicit and appropriate interest in our collective security, we failed to heed the fundamental strategic principle:

Know your enemy and know yourself, and in a hundred battles you will never be defeated. -- Sun Tzu

Had we sought to know our white enemies, what would we have learnt from our own sages who had already studied them? We would have learnt the following:

“The attitude of the white race is to subjugate, to exploit, and if necessary exterminate the weaker peoples with whom they come in contact.”

--- Marcus Garvey

“In their relationship with the Black race, Europeans are psychopaths.” --- Bobby Wright

“Black men and women, when will you cease to drift along the way which leads to the extermination of the Black race?”

--- Azikiwe

For fifty years, due to our lack of focus on our collective security, we have paid a heavy price from AIDS, not just the millions that have died from it, but also the multi-generational consequences from the social dislocations caused by the death of parents and the abandonment of millions of babies as AIDS orphans

For fifty years, due to our lack of focus on our collective security, we have also paid a heavy price from the economic war waged on us by the European powers that got us into their debt trap and impoverished us.

For fifty years, due to our lack of focus on our collective security, we have also paid a heavy price in the millions killed or enslaved by the Arabs, and in the land they have seized from Black Africans.

‘Pacifist morality’ and our lack of security consciousness?

We must observe that it was not only the leaders who failed to ask the vital question about our collective security; the entire “independence” generation seems to have failed to do so. They were not suspicious of the colonial masters that had enslaved and conquered and exploited Black Africa for centuries; and even till now we are not suspicious of the Europeans and Arabs, which is why we give their NGOs unchecked access to our villages, without strictly monitoring them to make sure they are not subverting our society or culture. When a behavior is rampant in a society, it is useful to look for an explanation in the culture. I think this suicidal lack of security consciousness is ingrained in our culture.

Cheikh Anta Diop, in his Two Cradles Theory, lists ‘pacifist morality’ as one of the traits of the Southern Cradle cultures of which Black Africa is a part.

Nkrumah, in lauding the African Personality, said: “We have the gifts of laughter and joy, a love of music, a lack of malice, an absence of the desire for vengeance for our wrongs, all things of intrinsic worth in a world sick of injustice, revenge, fear and want.”—[*Revolutionary Path*, p.114]

These traits of the African personality are not a virtue in the world as it is. The world requires a ‘warrior morality’ not a ‘pacifist morality’.

It was Steve Biko who observed, and correctly I think, that “we are not a suspicious race.” Some might think that that trait is a virtue, but it is not. It might be a virtue in ‘pacifist morality’ but it is a vice in ‘warrior morality’. And the world we live in demands ‘warrior morality’. To illustrate the warrior mentality that we lack, here is a story from Meiji Japan:

In a Japanese Hospital

The last patient of the evening, a boy less than four years old, is received by nurses and surgeons with smiles and gentle flatteries, to which he does not at all respond ... He is both afraid and angry — especially angry — at finding himself in an hospital tonight: some indiscreet person assured him that he was being taken to the theatre; and he sang for joy on the way, forgetting the pain of his arm; and this is not the theatre! There are doctors here — doctors that hurt people. . . . He lets himself be stripped, and bears the examination without wincing; but when told that he must lie down upon a certain low table, under an electric lamp, he utters a very emphatic “*No!*” . . . The experience inherited from his ancestors has assured him that to lie down in the presence of a possible enemy is not good; and by the same ghostly wisdom he has divined that the smile of the surgeon was intended to deceive ... ‘But it will be so nice upon the table!’ coaxingly observes a young nurse; ‘see the pretty red cloth!’ “*No!*” repeats the little man — made only more wary by this appeal to aesthetic sentiment ... So they lay hands upon him — two surgeons and two nurses — lift him deftly, bear him to the table with the red cloth. Then he shouts his small cry of war — for he comes of good fighting stock — and, to the general alarm, battles most valiantly, in spite of that broken arm. But lo! a white wet cloth descends upon his eyes and mouth, and he cannot cry, and there is a strange sweet smell in his nostrils, and the voices and the lights have floated very, very far away, and he is sinking, sinking, sinking into wavy darkness ... The slight limbs relax; for a moment

the breast heaves quickly, in the last fight of the lungs against the paralyzing anaesthetic: then all motion stops. . . .

-- From Lafcadio Hearn, *Writings from Japan*, ed by Francis King, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984, p. 164

The people of the “independence” generation did not have the healthy suspiciousness that was displayed by that little Japanese boy! Nor have we acquired it till today.

Our tragedy

Why do I say it is tragic that we have not made collective security our paramount concern? Had we made collective security our paramount concern, it would have forced us to correctly answer the question: unity for whom? We would have investigated to determine those enemies from whom we need security; and that would have obliged us to examine the history of our relations with the Arabs and with the Europeans. And having ascertained that Arabs are our mortal enemies, we would not have sought continental union with them. This is one way in which our lack of clarity on the question of who our historic enemies are has cost us dearly.

Just consider the long war in Sudan between the Black Arabs who are entrenched in power in Khartoum and the Black Africans of South Sudan. Black Africa would have mobilized and won that war long ago if we had a doctrine and an organ of collective security. In which case the genocide in Darfur would not have arisen at all. By the same token, the enslavement of Black Africans in Mauritania by the White Arabs there would have been ended by the collective intervention of Black Africa. Furthermore, the current Arab campaign to seize a belt of Sahelian borderlands stretching from Senegal to the Red Sea would have been checked. Same with the Arab ambition to seize the entire Nile Basin, all the way south to Kampala.

This lack of definition of who our collective enemies are has also prevented us from being on our guard against the Europeans. Many of us do not even recognize that the Europeans are our enemies, despite their having enslaved and colonized and exploited us for many centuries. Because we are not on guard against them, we allow them to come and go unsupervised into our countries, which is how they came in and inflicted AIDS on us by using AIDS-infected vaccines to vaccinate 97 million Black Africans in an alleged campaign to eradicate smallpox.

So, what do we do now?

Breeding out pacifist morality traits

As Cabral taught us, we need to struggle against our own weaknesses. As I have indicated, one of our weaknesses is our pacifist morality. It manifests as our unsuspectingness, as our lack of malice, as an absence of the desire for vengeance for our wrongs, especially wrongs received at the hands of whites.

Diop pointed out that the most essential function which a culture must serve is survival [*Great African Thinkers*, p. 244]. As we have seen, the pacifist morality of our culture has been maladaptive and has exposed us to many lethal dangers. We need to repair our culture. We need to evolve a new African culture that breeds out the pacifist mentality and inculcates a warrior mentality in ever four-year old. But can this change be effected? Yes, it can. Just consider what Shaka did, in just ten years, with his reforms. In fact, on just one fearsome day, he wiped out cowardice from the Zulu nation. So, if we set about things correctly, we can change from a pacifist morality to a warrior morality even in one generation. That is a task for our education system.

We need to change our child-rearing methods and adopt some functional equivalent of the Samurai upbringing that produced that 4-year-old Japanese boy. Then we should supplement that by emphasizing martial arts and the game of chess in schools. We should then top it off by instituting compulsory military service for all 18 year olds. The products of such a system are unlikely to have a pacifist mentality, or to be obtuse about collective security. It might be useful to indicate the basics of a Samurai education as a model of what we should functionally reproduce.

A Samurai upbringing

“But sons of samurai were severely disciplined in those days: and the one of whom I write had little time for dreaming. The period of caresses was made painfully brief for him. Even before he was invested with his first *hakama*, or trousers — a great ceremony in that epoch — he was weaned as far as possible from tender influence, and taught to check the natural impulses of childish affection. Little comrades would ask him mockingly, 'Do you still need milk?' if they saw him walking out with his mother, although he might love her in the house as demonstratively as he pleased, during the hours he could pass by her side. These were not many. All inactive pleasures were severely restricted by his discipline; and even comforts, except during illness, were not allowed him. Almost from the time he could speak he was enjoined to consider duty the guiding motive of life, *self-control* the first requisite of conduct, pain and death matters of no consequence in the selfish sense.

There was a grimmer side to this Spartan discipline, designed to cultivate a cold sternness never to be relaxed during youth, except in the screened intimacy of the home. The boys were inured to sights of blood. They were taken to witness executions; they were expected to display no emotions and they were obliged, on their return home, to quell any secret feeling of horror by eating plentifully of rice tinted blood-color by an admixture of salted plum juice. Even more difficult things might be demanded of a very young boy — to go alone at midnight to the

execution-ground, for example, and bring back a head in proof of courage. For the fear of the dead was held not less contemptible in a samurai than the fear of man. The samurai child was pledged to fear nothing. In all such tests, the demeanor exacted was perfect **impassiveness**; any swaggering would have been judged quite as harshly as any sign of cowardice.

As a boy grew up, he was obliged to find his pleasures chiefly in those bodily exercises which were the samurai's early and constant preparations for war — archery and riding, wrestling and fencing. Playmates were found for him; but these were older youths, sons of retainers, chosen for ability to assist him in the practice of martial exercises. It was their duty also to teach him how to swim, to handle a boat, to develop his young muscles. Between such physical training and the study of the Chinese classics the greater part of each day was divided for him. His diet, though ample, was never dainty; his clothing, except in time of great ceremony, was light and coarse; and he was not allowed the use of fire merely to warm himself. While studying of winter mornings, if his hands became too cold to use the writing brush, he would be ordered to plunge them into icy water to restore the circulation; and if his feet were numbed by frost, he would be told to run about in the snow to make them warm. Still more rigid was his training in the special etiquette of the military class; and he was early made to know that the little sword in his girdle was neither an ornament nor a plaything. He was shown how to use it, how to take his own life at a moment's notice, without shrinking, whenever the code of his class might so order.¹

1. *Is that really the head of your father?'* a prince once asked of a samurai **boy** only seven years old. The child at once realized the situation. The freshly severed head set before him was **not** his father's: the **daimyo** had been deceived, but further deception was necessary. So the lad, after having saluted the head with every sign of reverential grief, suddenly cut out his own bowels. All the prince's doubts vanished before that bloody proof of filial piety; the outlawed father was able to make good his escape; and the memory of the child is still honored in Japanese drama and poetry.

Also in the matter of religion, the training of a samurai boy was peculiar. He was educated to revere the ancient gods and the spirits of his ancestors; he was well schooled in the Chinese ethics; and he was taught something of Buddhist philosophy and faith. But he was likewise taught that hope of heaven and fear of hell were for the ignorant only;

and that the superior man should be influenced in his conduct by nothing more selfish than the love of right for its own sake, and the recognition of duty as a universal law. Gradually, as the period of boyhood ripened into youth, his conduct was less subjected to supervision. He was left more and more free to act upon his own judgment, but with full knowledge that a mistake would not be forgotten; that a serious **offense** would never be fully condoned; and that a well-merited reprimand was more to be dreaded than death. On the other hand, there were few moral dangers against which to guard him. Professional vice was then strictly banished from many of the provincial castle-towns; and even so much of the non-moral side of life as might have been reflected in popular romance and drama, a young samurai could know little about. He was taught to despise that common literature appealing either to the softer emotions or the passions, as essentially unmanly reading; and the public theater was forbidden to his class.² Thus, in that innocent provincial life of Old Japan, a young samurai might grow up exceptionally pure-minded and simple-hearted.

So grew up the young samurai concerning whom these things are written — fearless, courteous, self-denying, despising pleasure, and ready at an instant's notice to give his life for love, loyalty, or honor.”

2. Samurai women, in some provinces at least, could go to the public theater. The men could not, without committing a breach of good manners. But in samurai homes, or within the grounds of the **yashiki**, some private performances of a particular character were given. Strolling players were the performers. I know several charming old **shizoku** who have never been to a public theater in their lives, and refuse all invitations to witness a performance. They still obey the rules of their samurai education.

Extract from “A Conservative” in Lafcadio Hearn, *Writings from Japan*, pp.291-293

If we learn from the Samurai upbringing, we cannot allow our children to be brought up on Channel O, and the like.

A change in our concept of security

Besides inculcating a warrior mentality in all Black Africans, we need to change our still-colonial concept of security.

The colonial notion of security was the security of the colonial state and enterprise from the people it came to exploit and oppress. This was the doctrine of security which conceived the colonial army as a back-up for the police i.e. as an army to be used for riot control and punitive expeditions. This doctrine has been inherited by the

neo-colonial states and has not been changed. [In Nigeria it was applied by the British to suppress the Aba women's uprising, and recently by Obasanjo to wipe out the restive peoples of Odi and Zaki Biam].

In neo-colonial Africa, it has been noted that a small army, incapable of serving as an effective instrument of foreign policy, tends to 'look inward'—to intervene in domestic politics; and that by and large, African forces are deployed only against their own people in their own countries. Furthermore, as Nyerere noted in 1961, "If an African state is armed, then realistically it can only be armed against another African state"[See Opoku Agyeman, *Africa's Persistent Vulnerable Link to Global politics*, pp. 18, 19, 20, 23]

Can such internal security armies defend Black Africa against the Arab League, or Belgium or France or the UK, let alone against NATO?

Here is Azikiwe's suggestion for an African Convention on Collective Security.

"This should make provisions for the following: a multilateral pact of mutual defence . . . ; an African High Command . . . ; a doctrine of non-intervention in Africa, on the same lines as the Monroe Doctrine in the Western Hemisphere. This doctrine should make it clear that the establishment or the continued existence of any colonial territory in the continent of Africa, by any European or American or Asian or Australian power shall be regarded not only as an unfriendly act, but as an act of aggression against the concert of African States; a Pan-African Declaration of Neutralism [i.e. non-alignment] . . ."—[Azikiwe, (1962) "Future of Pan-Africanism" in Langley ed., *Ideologies*, pp.321-322]

We need to adopt and develop this line of thinking. Security has to be against our external enemies: Arabs, Europeans and whoever else; and against enemy capabilities, existing and potential. Hence we will need to monitor enemy capacity as it changes, lest we find ourselves equipping ourselves to defend against obsolete weapons, and preparing for the last war, as it were.

Furthermore, our concept of security must be broadened well beyond military security to include economic, food, health and ideological security, since we have been under attack by the Arabs or the Europeans in all these areas. In fact, we need collective security of a total sort-- security against all possible means of attack, presently known and potential, and from all possible enemies.

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The Black Power Pan-Africanist Perspective

By Chinweizu

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The Black race will be exterminated
if it does not build a black superpower in Africa

by the end of this century.

Socialism or communalism?

By Chinweizu

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Several African leaders of the “independence” generation advocated or implemented what they called socialism. Prof. Prah reports that,

By the mid-1960s, practically all African heads of state, with the exception of Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, Leon Mba of Gabon and V.S. Tubman of Liberia had at one time or the other espoused African socialism. Consistently, such ideologues have put a distance between what they variously defined as African socialism, and 20th century Marxian socialist formulae, with the emphasis on class struggle. Tom Mboya anchored his definition of African socialism on the pre-industrial communitarian ethos of Africa. . . . In Tanzania under Julius Nyerere, populist socialism was described as Ujamaa socialism.

-- [African Nation, pp. 80, 81]

The “African socialism” of many of these leaders was a prestigious misnomer for African communalism. Here is Tom Mboya’s exposition of it; his is quite representative of expositions by Nyerere, Kaunda, Senghor, Mamadou Dia etc.

“In Africa the belief that 'we are all sons and daughters of the soil' has always exercised tremendous influence on our social, economic and political relationships. From this belief springs the logic and the practice of equality, and the acceptance of communal ownership of the vital means of life—the land. The hoe is to us the symbol of work. Every able-bodied man and woman, girl and boy, has always worked. Laziness has not been tolerated, and appropriate social sanctions have developed against it. There has been equality of opportunity, for everyone had land—or rather, the use of land—and a hoe at the start of life. The acquisitive instinct, which is largely responsible for the vicious excesses and exploitation under the capitalist system, was tempered by a sense of togetherness and a rejection of graft and meanness. There was loyalty to the society, and the society gave its members much in return: a sense of security and universal hospitality.

These are the values for which, in my view, African Socialism stands. The ideals and attitudes which nourish it are indigenous, and are easily learnt, for they have been expressed for generations in the language of the soil which our people understand, and not in foreign slogans.

All African leaders who have written on this subject are agreed on these points. President **Nyerere** has said: 'My fellow countrymen can understand Socialism only as co-operation.' And President **Senghor** of

Senegal, speaking at the Dakar conference in December 1962, on the 'African roads to Socialism', said: 'Socialism is the merciless fight against social dishonesties and injustices; fraudulent conversion of public funds, rackets and bribes...'

I have, I hope, given some idea already of the reason why Africans call these attitudes 'African Socialism', and not just 'Socialism'. . . . There is a positive desire, arising out of what may start as a negative reaction, that whatever is of value in Africa's own culture and her own social institutions should be brought out to contribute to the creation of the new African nation.

I wrote earlier about the task of reconstructing the economy in the days after Independence. In the effort to do this, new values have to be established in place of colonial values and we have to decide what part the traditional African social and cultural structure can play in the country's economic development. Its main difference from the European structure, which was of course the one officially favoured during the colonial era, is that it is communal by nature. Most African tribes have a communal approach to life. A person is an individual only to the extent that he is a member of a clan, a community or a family. Land was never owned by an individual, but by the people, and could not be disposed of by anybody. Where there were traditional heads, they held land in trust for the community generally. Food grown on the land was regarded as food to feed the hungry among the tribe. Although each family might have its own piece of land on which to cultivate, when there was famine or when someone simply wanted to eat, he merely looked for food and ate it. . . .

When money was introduced, the African came to work for wages; but he still maintained contact with his native land as the only source of security to which he could look in old age or in sickness. He was secure in his mind that he could go back to his home and be taken care of by his people. It was a social security scheme, with no written rules, but with a strict pattern to which everyone adhered. If someone did not adhere to the pattern, and **did-not** take on the obligations inherent in the system, he found that, when he next got into trouble, he received little or no attention.

He was expected to live harmoniously with others in his community, and to make his contribution to work done in the village. . . .

The practice of African Socialism involves trying to use what is relevant and good in these African customs to create new values in the changing world of the money economy, to build an economy which reflects the thinking of the great majority of the people. . . . The challenge of African Socialism is to use these traditions to find a way to build a society in which there is a place for everybody, where everybody shares both in poverty and in prosperity, and where emphasis is placed upon production by everyone, with security for all. . . . In his booklet *UJAMAA—the basis of African Socialism*, Julius Nyerere brings out clearly the essential difference of African from European Socialism. He writes:

The foundation, and the objective, of African Socialism is the Extended Family. The true African Socialist does not look on one class of men as his brethren and another as his natural enemies. He does not form an alliance with the "brethren" for the extermination of the "non-brethren". He rather regards all men as his brethren—as members of his ever-extending family'. 'UJAMAA, then, or "Familyhood", describes our Socialism. It is opposed to Capitalism, which seeks to build a happy society on the basis of the Exploitation of Man by Man. And it is equally opposed to doctrinaire Socialism, which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of Inevitable Conflict between Man and Man.

--Tom Mboya, "African Socialism" in J. Ayo Langley ed. *Ideologies*, pp. 508-513

Nkrumah differed from all the others. Nkrumah, a self-declared Marxist, espoused Marxism, which is also known as "scientific socialism". He declared "Pan-Africanism and socialism are organically complementary. One cannot be achieved without the other." [*Revolutionary Path*, p. 127] Is that claim true? Nkrumah merely asserted but did not bother to demonstrate this dogma of his. Unfortunately, it is false, as false as his many fallacious claims about what "only a continental union government" could achieve for Africans. It is like his opportunistic and Canute-like nonsense that "if in the past the Sahara divided us, now it unites us." [p.129]. Marxism (Scientific socialism) has as much organic or historical or cultural connection with Africa as Hinduism, Taoism or Shinto. Marxism in Africa, just like Christianity, is an alien, imperialist import. For either of them to be organically connected to Pan-Africanism, European cultural imperialism would have to be organically connected to Africa, which is not the case. As Prah pointedly asked: "What is the relevance of 'scientific socialism' to the notion of African unity? [*African Nation*, p. 63] If it has no relevance to the objectives of Pan-Africanism or to African history and culture, how can it be correctly said to be organically complementary to Pan-Africanism? That Nkrumah was both a Pan-Africanist and a Marxist, is only a fortuitous coincidence in his intellectual life. It does not make Pan-Africanism and Marxism organically related in any way.

Furthermore, Ayi Kwei Armah has argued, correctly in my view, that

Marxism, in its approach to non-Western societies and values, is decidedly colonialist, Western, Eurocentric and hegemonist. . . . Marxism, in its approach to the non-Western majority of the world's peoples, is demonstrably racist — racist in a prejudiced, determined, dishonest and unintelligent fashion. Western racists hold that Western art is art, but African art is primitive art. . . . what makes Western art civilized and modern is that it originates in the West ; what makes African art primitive is that it originates in Africa. Racism is luxuriously illogical. That is partly why, for Marx and Engels, communism is modern, civilized and serious when it appears in Europe (even if it has only a spectral form). The same communist phenomenon, when it manifests itself in the non-Western

world, is dismissed as primitive communism, even though it appears there not as a fuzzy liberal specter but in human form — vigorous, pushing toward birth in societies familiar for ages with communism as a lost tradition and a real hope, often aborted, sometimes fleetingly realized.
--“Masks and Marx”, pp. 41-42

Since Pan-Africanism is anti-racist, anti-colonialist and anti-Eurocentric, Nkrumah cannot be correct in claiming that Pan-Africanism and a racist, colonialist and Eurocentric Marxism, a.k.a. “scientific socialism”, are organically complementary and that one cannot be achieved without the other. That is tantamount to claiming that anti-racism and racism, anti-colonialism and colonialism, anti-Eurocentrism and Eurocentrism, must be achieved together in Africa.

In contrast to Nkrumah’s “scientific socialism”, the African socialism of the other leaders is derived from African communalism and therefore has a historical and organic link to African culture. As Nyerere explained:

“By the use of the word ‘ujamaa’, therefore, we state that for us socialism involves building on the foundation of our past, and building also to our own design. We are not importing a foreign ideology into Tanzania and trying to smother our distinct social patterns with it. We have deliberately decided to grow, as a society, out of our own roots, but in a particular direction and towards a particular kind of objective. We are doing this by emphasizing certain characteristics of our traditional organization, and extending them so that they can embrace the possibilities of modern technology and enable us to meet the challenge of life in the twentieth century world.”

--Nyerere, “Ujamaa is Tanzanian socialism” in J. Ayo Langley ed, *Ideologies*, p. 546

Nkrumah would have done well to follow Nyerere and to heed Azikiwe’s wise counsel on ideologies:

“it is obligatory for us to adopt a tolerant skepticism in respect of alien ideologies and then examine impartially our aboriginal lore of good living. If we reacted otherwise, then we would be desecrating the legacy which our forebears had bequeathed to us from past generations.”—Azikiwe, “Tribalism . . .”, in J. Ayo Langley ed, *Ideologies*, p. 474

We need to note that both Capitalism and Socialism are ideologies made-in-Europe to solve the peculiar problems of a modern European society in which two antagonistic classes confront each other, one having seized all the society’s means of production leaving the other with only its labor to sell to live. Unless and until that situation is replicated in Africa—and that would be a disaster-- these rival ideologies will remain inappropriate for Africa. After all, theories about the camel’s way of life should not be applied to the whale’s.

It should be pointed out that the ancestral African political economy combined private ownership with communal ownership. As Kaunda described it:

“ our ancestors worked collectively and co-operatively from start to finish. One might say this was a communist way of doing things and yet these gardens remained strongly the property of individuals. One might say here that this was capitalism. Collectively and co-operatively they harvested but when it came to storing and selling their produce they became strongly individualistic. They did not finish at that. When it came to sharing the fruits of their labour like meals, for instance, they shared them communally. Indeed, one is compelled to say a strange mixture of nineteenth-century capitalism with communism. Yet, as is said above, this was original and the pattern essentially African.”

--Kaunda, “Humanism in Zambia”, in J. Ayo Langley ed, *Ideologies*, p. 567

African Socialism or African Communalism?

Why did these African leaders choose the tag “African Socialism” for what was actually African Communalism? I suspect that in the global climate of the 1960s which was dominated by the intra-European Cold War, they found it prestigious to attach a European label to their African-derived political ideology, hence the “Socialism”; but they also needed to distinguish their ideology from European socialism, hence the “African” in the name. But I think the time is past when we should seek to enhance the value of something African by making it seem a variant of something European. Our intellectual independence requires that we name things correctly and on our own terms. I will therefore use the term African Communalism henceforth to describe what has been called African socialism.

Towards an Industrial Communalism

Nyerere, Senghor, Kaunda, Tom Mboya, Mamadou Dia and the rest of them began the process of formulating an ideology for building a political economy that would put in modern form the pre-colonial African political economy of agrarian communalism. The project remains uncompleted and should be continued from where these pioneers left off. The challenge to work out an industrial upgrade of pre-colonial African communalism is before our intellectuals and should be taken up. As Nyerere put it:

“Who is to keep us active in the struggle to convert nationalism to Pan-Africanism if it is not the staffs and students of our universities? Who is it who will have the time and ability to think out the practical problems of achieving this goal of unification if it is not those who have an opportunity to think and learn without direct responsibility for day-to-day affairs”—“Dilemma . . .”, in Langley ed., *Ideologies* p.352

We should then invite our students and academics to take up the challenge and provide us with the much needed Industrial Communalist Ideology and thereby give us a framework of ideas with which to solve our problems, with which to define and pursue our interest in the world.

I would caution them not to be put off by Nkrumah's silly dictum that "Practice without thought is blind; thought without practice is empty."—[*Consciencism*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1964, p. 78] We should realize that Nkrumah's dictum is blind to the virtues of division of labor; it suggests that thinkers who are not also agitators should be regarded as having nothing to contribute. And that even a muddle-headed thinker who is an agitator is preferable to a clear thinker who is not also an agitator. Let those talented to think for us unabashedly do so. Let those who are talented agitators and political organizers do that unabashedly. And if we spawn any of those rare persons who combine first rate thinking with first rate organizational skills, we should be thankful and get them to contribute in the way Cabral contributed to Africa and Mao contributed to China, and Lenin to Russia.

For the benefit of those who take up the challenge, let me stress that they should conceptualize our situation in a comprehensive way, so that the ideology they come up with can help solve our problems comprehensively. Unlike Nyerere, Kaunda and co, who were trying to work out a communalist system, but who did not explicitly impose on their system the conditions for defending it in the world as it is today, those who set out to fashion a neo-communalist system would do well to consciously design it so it can achieve the Black Power necessary to protect it in this century. The mix of principles of ownership of the land and other means of production must be consciously such as to allow the setting up of giant industries. In principle, there should be no reason why a giant industry should not be communally owned by an entire village or town. Modes of ownership by communities should be invented to supplement and complement individual ownership. In addition there is much to be learnt from the Industrialized systems of Sweden and Japan and from pre-colonial Asante. According to Prof. Opoku Agyeman:

Collectivism is the predominant impulse in Sweden, in the sense that the system emphasizes the sovereignty of collective well-being over individual private interests. In Japan, where society is similarly conceived in corporate terms, individuals 'are seen to benefit only through the elevation of the group as a whole.' In Asante, the welfare of the national society was placed well above calculations of individual self-interest and self-indulgence.

Prof Agyeman further elaborates:

"The logic of the Japanese "capitalist" system places a heavy reliance on the private market. And yet Japan's market economy is not based on Adam Smith's notion "that a society benefits from the liberation of individual greed—each person seeking his own self-interest." In "socialist" Sweden the government's role has been to foster social uses of ownership, which is overwhelmingly private, to ensure the sovereignty of society's interests over private interests. . . . In "mercantilist" Asante, even though the public sector loomed larger than the private, no rigid antipathy to private enterprise existed. On the contrary, the private sector was nurtured by the state to generate wealth through the fostering of a breed of private entrepreneurs.

Socially responsible uses of the ownership of the means of production, private or public, is a demonstrable value in all three cases. In Sweden, while it is

acceptable for a private owner of industry to create a fortune, this is conditional on the wealth being used in socially useful ways. In Japan, the private sector exudes social responsibility through a “corporate socialism” that confers such benefits as lifetime employment and egalitarian job practices. In Asante, private acquisition of wealth was encouraged but on condition that the riches were obtained by honest means and hard work and could be relied upon by the system for pecuniary assistance.

--Opoku Agyeman, *Africa's persistent Vulnerable link to Global Politics*, pp. 92, 90, 91

The great challenge facing African thinkers, whether or not they are also political leaders, is to fashion an industrial communalist ideology to guide the political economy of an industrialized Black superpower. In this task, they have much to learn from case studies of pre-colonial African countries like Asante and Zulu; and also from non-African countries like modern Japan, Sweden, Cuba and China.

The Black Power Pan-Africanist Perspective

By Chinweizu

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The Black race will be exterminated
if it does not build a black superpower in Africa
by the end of this century.

The African Nation?

By Chinweizu

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Is there an African nation? Where is it? Are there African nations? If so, where are they? I submit that the African nation does not exist and has never existed. There is the African race, but it is not a nation. There are many African nations, but these are what we have learned to defame by calling them tribes. These so-called tribes were the true nations in pre-colonial Africa. What nowadays are called African nations, are not nations at all; each is just a country under the jurisdiction of a state. It is fashionable to call them nation-states, but that is at best a courtesy.

Why is it important to determine whether or not Black Africa is a nation? Pretending that Black Africa is a nation when it is not would be as delusional as leaning on a walking stick without noticing that it is made of ice. When things get warm the ice will melt and you'll be leaning on air. Alternatively, if a builder lacks cement blocks and, in desperation decides to call heaps of beach sand by the name cement blocks, he will soon find that he can't lay the heaps course on course like he could actual blocks. For lack of the factors that make a population cohere into a nation, the African nation, being a

pseudo nation, would disintegrate under pressure, just like an ice stick in warm weather. For example, suppose you had an army of the so-called African nation. And half your army were Black Muslims each of whom said in his heart: "I am a Muslim and I worship Allah and I follow the way of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). I have no relationship with you, except that your skin is black. The lightest Arab is closer to me than you. If there were to be war between Muslims of any shade of color and the darkest of black people, I will be on the side of Muslims." If a Black African army is filled with such people, what chance has it of defending Black Africa from the Arabs? Such is the danger of fashionably pretending that there is an African nation when, in fact, it doesn't yet exist. We should all take to heart Nyerere's warning: "It is no part of transforming dream into reality to pretend that things are not what they are." –[Nyerere, "Dilemma of the Pan-Africanist" in Langley ed., *Ideologies*, .p. 347]

Now back to the question: Is Africa a nation? In attempting to answer this question scientifically, rather than sentimentally, we would be helped by starting from the following statements from three different disciplines: Cultural anthropology, Historiography and Biology.

Lets hear first from cultural anthropology through Cheikh Anta Diop:

"The cultural identity of a people [is] centered on three components—linguistic, historical, and psychic."

--Diop, in *Great African Thinkers*, p. 268

Also according to Diop, the psychic factor is the domain of poets, singers, storytellers. Note the example of the brothers Grimm who, by collecting German folk tales in their *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, laid the psychic foundation of German national identity; also note the role of the epic *Kalevala* in fostering national identity in Finland; also the role of the *Mahabharata* epic in fostering Indian national consciousness, and the role of the William Tell legend in the national identity of Switzerland. Similarly, the Old Testament has been an indispensable anchor for Jewish identity; for the Japanese, the *Nihon gi* or *Chronicles of Japan*, which was compiled in 720 AD and the *Kojiki* or *Records of Ancient Matters*, which was compiled in 712 AD, with their collections of myths, legends, historical accounts, songs, customs, divination and magical practices of ancient Japan, have provided the psychic bedrock of Japanese national identity.

Let's next hear from historiography through Jaques Barzun:

"What makes a nation? A large part of the answer to that question is: common historical memories; . . . a common language, a core of historical memories with heroes and villains; . . . a nation is forged into unity by successive wars and the passage of time. . . . It takes a national war to weld the parts together by giving individuals and groups memories of a struggle in common. Needless to add, nationalism can arise only when a nation in this full sense has come into being."

–[Jacques Barzun, *Dawn to Decadence*, pp. 775, 776, 695, 435

Finally, let's hear from ethology, the biological science of animal behavior, through Robert Ardrey:

“A biological nation is a social group ... which holds as an exclusive possession a continuous area of space, which isolates itself from others of its kind through outward antagonism, and which through joint defense of its social territory achieves leadership, co-operation and a capacity for concerted action. It does not matter too much whether such a nation be composed of twenty-five individuals or of two hundred and fifty million. It does not matter too much whether we are considering the true lemur, the howling monkey, the smooth-billed ani, the Bushman band, the Greek city-state, or the United States of America. The social principle remains the same.

--Robert Ardrey, *The Territorial Imperative*, pp. 210-211

What Diop, Robert Ardrey, and Jacques Barzun together tell us is that a nation is made by shared language, historical memory of struggles carried out together, and a shared body of myths, legends, epics, songs etc., and demonstrates its nationhood by outward antagonism and the defense of its common territory.

It doesn't take much reflection to grasp the fact that by these criteria, there is no African nation as yet, and there never has been. The African nation, though talked about in some Pan-Africanist circles, remains only an aspiration. The languages are diverse; there is no shared body of myths, legends, epics, songs etc; and the historical consciousness has never been fostered.

Unsurprisingly, we do not behave like a nation. We do not defend our joint territory. If there was an African nation already in existence today, it would have manifested its nationhood by collectively defending the portions of the common Black African territory that have been under attack by Arabs for the past half century, as in Mauritania and Sudan. In particular, an all-Black-African army would have gone to defend the people of Darfur from Arab attack since the ethnic cleansing began there. But the rest of Black Africa has left the Mauritians and Afro Sudanese to their fate, as if they were aliens, and their fate did not concern the rest of us.

The behavioral test of territorial defense aside, the contrast between India, China, Arabia on the one hand and black Africa on the other, should highlight the fact that Africa is not and has never been one nation. India was politically unified in the 4th century BC and had shared a common culture for centuries even before that; China was politically unified in the 3rd century BC and has shared a common history and culture ever since. The Arabs became a nation through Mohammed when they finally, and for the first time, shared the same religion and political leadership, and then dispersed, in a burst of imperial aggression, from the Arabian peninsula and spread to occupy the lands from the Persian Gulf westward to the Atlantic coast of Morocco. Thus, the Arabs became a nation 14 centuries ago and have shared a common historical consciousness ever since then. In contrast, it was only in the 20th century, with the European conquest and colonization of all of Africa, that Black Africans first began to think of themselves as one. And they have yet to be unified politically or culturally, let alone in religion.

Every one of these Black African countries of today is not a nation but a noyau, i.e. “a collection of individuals held together by mutual animosity, who could not survive had they no friends to hate”. Every one of the Black African countries today is populated by people of many pre-colonial nations and is like a refugee camp into which the populations of many genuine nations have been herded by force.

What would it take to make nations out of these colonial concentration camps that the Europeans carved out in the late 19th century during their scramble to conquer Africa? And what would it take to make the African race into a nation? Lessons could be learnt from Ashanti, Zulu, India, China. A shared struggle against our Arab enemies would be a good start for a common historical consciousness.

But is it much use trying to turn Black Africa into a nation this late in time? I don't think so. The tasks before us in this 21st century can be accomplished without Black Africa becoming a nation. Fostering Black African unity through various methods is more feasible and desirable. It would be much easier to turn SADC and ECOWAS into nations, into modern superpowers, than to start doing what India and China did three millennia ago by conquest.

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