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African American Literature spuns four centuries. It covers and epitomizes the brutalizing experience of slavery on slave ships from the African continent to the New World. It eulogizes African to heroes of slavery at Gome Island and the triumphs of Toussaint L'Overture against Napoleon Bornaparte's army in Haiti. It is Four Hundred years of African experience against racism, an indictment of western civilization and unfinished masterpieces of African liberation in the diaspora. It is a history of a nation outside the African continent. It is a history of people disposed, voices of suffering, voices of hope, poems of unity, joy, success and failures all in one. It is expressed in song, art, theatre, oral literature, a new civilization and silence.

It is therefore near impossible to sum up these myriad of expressions into one term or summarize all the suffering and triumphs in both survival and death in a period. However, for this occasion - "The African American Week" I have the humble task of viewing with you, the Impact of African American Literature on Liberation Movement in Africa. This task can be made lighter because those who went before us (our ancestors in African liberation, i.e. W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Booker T. Washington, Nat Turner, Phyllis Wheatney, Malcom X, Martin Luther King, Stockly Carmical, Syllevester Williams and Rodney. They all had one thing in common. They had the dream of the African people in diaspora as the Paramount purpose of their struggle. The paradigm in the black experience in Americas was so intertwined with the suffering of the African people on the continent that the banner for liberation of African Americans became inseperable with the liberation of the African continent.
Thus, Africa became the central theme for the liberation movement. It became the paradigm and focus of liberalization struggle on the African Continent. A number of people became the vanguard in the Africanization process. They included Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Ahammed Ben Bella, Gamel Abdul Nasser, Sekou Toure, Foureiz Fauon.

This great men for the first time in the African experience, joined hands by universalizing the black struggle and joining the black experience from the Carribean to California and from New York to London, Paris. To them, the African struggle became a continent struggle encompassing, South, East, West and North Africa. Above all, they made the problem of the blackman a universal human rights struggle spreading from the Manchester and Paris Conferences against European colonialization to a struggle between justice and injustice. They used all the available force (the United Nations) Bundung Conference and universalized the struggle against colonialism.

LOOMINGS IN AFRICAN LIBERATION

When W.E.B. Du Bois proclaimed that "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line", at the turn of the century, many people doubted his rationale. However, it took many years for some authors to agree with Du Bois. Kilson and Rotberg in their book The African Diaspora were quick to realize that although African Americans lived in the New World for over four centuries, the African World was distinct and separate. They site the religion in the Carribean including one on voodoo and the politics in Haiti seemed to follow along black ethnicity which could be found in many other parts of the new world.

Gunnar Mayrdal in his classic: The American Dileming: The Negro
problem in Modern Democracy, saw the African Americans society as separate and distinct. Although the 1944 volume became a catalyst to strides made in race relations into the United States, many of the changes that African Americans hoped would alter the plight of their lot remain untouched. This was further confirmed by Franklin Frazier's famous publication, The Black Bourgeoisie more than 20 years later which observed that despite the advances made by African Americans (black bourgeoisie) who were mainly professionals in salaried progressive institutions, businessmen, teachers and doctors - they all depended upon segregated community patronage. (Franklin E. Frazier 1957). In another book "Racial Inequality" in America, the author looks at the plight of African Americans as a "Dream Deferred". In a searing critique of the fathers of American independence, he noted that from the observation, blacks were not included in the Thomas Jefferson creed that "All men are created equal".

As conditions for African Americans were put to test especially in the 1960s low aspiration, poor education, family instability, unemployment, crime and drug addiction compelled Kenneth Clark to look at the pathology of the Ghetto as an institutionalized pathology with chronic, self-perpetuating problems. Kenneth Clark reminds many Africans on the continent of the mentioned vicious circle of poverty where suffering is recurrent with health problems, hunger and starvation as the order of the day. Accompanying increase in African American population was an intensifying of discrimination and racial hatred. The making of a Ghetto by (Gilbert Osofsky 1945) is a case in point. These problems made the suffering of the African Americans and African on the continent share a mutual distrust for American whites.
similar to that of the Africans to the colonial powers. African Americans therefore saw one major solace to their oppression in the New World. This was later championed by Marcus Garvey a Jamaican born African who founded Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Marcus Aurelius Garvey was a proud man who worked toward the building of an African Empire away from the United States. He believed in the purity of the African people just as some white people believe in the purity of the white race. To achieve his scheme Garvey who was sometimes looked upon as a rabble-rouser preached a back to Africa movement and used UNIA as a vehicle to that end. In 1920 Garvey founded an African Empire in New York and called a large international convention which he referred to as the first African Parliament and proclaimed himself its first President. This "Racial African Empire" had a flag of the popular colours we see (red, green and black) in most of the African flags with a black star in the middle. He founded an African shipping line known as the Black Star Line and raise money toward the building of that African Nation. The conservative whites who did not like blacks in the U.S. including the Ku Klux Klan supported Garvey but the industrialists who exploited the African labour knew that Garvey's scheme would ruin the U.S. economy. Because the Black Star Line was organized to ship African Americans back to Africa, Garvey was taken seriously. Ironically, it was Du Bois who worked with white liberals to found a rival movement to that of Marcus Garvey: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He was charged by the U.S. on tramped up charges and sentenced to prison. After a long prison sentence Garvey fled to England where he died in 1940. Garvey's "Back to Africa" movement was by no means the first
of its kind. In 1788 African Americans organized to go back to Africa. In 1815 a black captain Paul Cuffee took a group of African Americans to Sierra Leon through American Colonization Society. In 1877 the Liberian Exodus Joint Stock Company was formed in South Carolina which bought a ship and transported African Americans to Liberia. Infact it is Kwame Nkrumah who once said that the person who influenced his thinking most was Marcus Garvey. This is seen in the Ghanaian flag, Black Star Line as a national shipping company and Kwame's obsession with African unity and Pan Africanism.

This excussion in Garvey's life by no means minimizes the importance of the "Grand old Man" of Pan-Africanism - Dr. William E. Burghardt du Bois. Longivity blessed du Bois to witness his dream of an African independence movement come to fruition. In his autobiography Du Bois writes:

As I face Africa I ask myself:
What is between us that constitutes a tie
That I can feel better than I can explain?
Africa is of course my father land
Yet neither my father nor my father's father
Ever saw Africa or knew its meaning or
cared ever so much for it ..........

THE GREEENING OF AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT

After a bitter struggle between Africans in the diaspora that is to say, Africans from West Indies, and those from United States, a cross fertilization of ideas emerged. At the confluence of these ideas African students who were studying in the United States, United Kingdom and France came into the Picture. From South Africa P. K. Isaka Seone a founding member of the first
African National Congress (ANC) in 1912, Prof. J. L. Dube, Prof. Jabavu and Dr. A. B. Xuma who were associated with liberation movement in South Africa joined the struggle. From West Africa: Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, and Dr. Kwame Nkrumah while from East Africa there Peter Koinange and Dr. Hastings Banda. To complete the Atlantic triangle the West Indies contingency included George Padmore, Sylvester Williams and Otto Makonnen.

The United States had provided a rich source of Pan-African movement and the first episode of an uprising took place in Nyasaland in 1915 where John Chilembwe organized rebellion against colonialism. Mr. Chilembwe was in the United States as a student between 1897-1900. The Commission of Inquiry which investigated the Chilembwe uprising linked it to the African American civil strife in the United States. The role of the independent Negro churches in the U.S. especially African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Baptist and Messianic groups were implicated. More so, the writings of W.E.B. Du Bois and the general resentment of blacks over discrimination in white churches, provided a fertile ground for African revolt. The African American Church in the US became a rich platform upon which the awakening of Africans in Africa was based. In 1900 Rev. Charles Morris who organised an African Baptist of South Africa indicated that he believed God will help the African students to carry the message of hope to Africa from United States.

Subsequent to the First Pan African Conference, a series of other conferences followed. Du Bois championed the 1919 Pan African Congress to coincide with the Treaty of Versailles in Paris after the First World War. There were 57 representatives at the Conference with eminent men like Blaise Diagne and Clemenceau in attendance. Diagne was representative of the French government
on colonial affairs although he himself was an African from Senegal. Black members of the House of Deputies in France attended - merely as French stooges. The third and fourth Pan-African took place in 1921 in London and Brussels and 1923 in London and Lisbon respectively. In summarizing the contents of these congresses one finds a common cry that "Africans must have a voice in their own affairs", that "black folk be treated as men".

THE MANCHESTER CONGRESS OF 1945

The Manchester Conference of 1945 was the culmination of all the conferences held by African since 1900. The convenor was du Bois - the Grand Old Man of Pan Africanism. Those present included my former Prof. at Howard University C. R. L. James from West Indies, George Padmore and Dr. Peter Milliard. The African group included Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, J. Annan, Joe Appiah, Dr. J. C. de Graft Johnson from Gold Coast and Chief H. O. Davies O. C. Dr. Azikiwe, Chief S. L. Akintola, from Nigeria. There was also Jomo Kenyatta our first President, Wallace Johnson from Sierra Leone and Otto Makonnen.

The major resolutions drawn from the Manchester Congress included a call to all African leaders to go back to their respective countries and fight for human rights, the freedom of their respective regions and the freedom of the African continent. From the meeting Nkrumah went back to Ghana saying - "Seek yee first the political kingdom and the rest shall be added unto you". Jomo Kenyatta came back to Kenya and agitated for freedom against the white settlers' wishes. This cry for freedom was followed by the Mau Mau uprising. Nkrumah agitated for independence in Gold Coast and in 1958, Ghana became the centre stage of independence movement.
THE GREAT BETRAYAL

The Pan African political movement at home with Ghana as its base brought about the greening of African independence movement throughout the continent. It realized the transportation of Pan-Africanism from the diaspora to the continent. Thus, the resolutions from the Accra Conference of 1958, at Accra, Nkrumah's declaration was that Ghana's independence was meaningless as long as the masses of Africa are still under the colonial yoke.

"We cannot under any condition, even if we wanted to, stand aloof from the terrible and terrifying battle now raging in the heart of the continent between five million whites and two hundred million Africans...."

There was that feeling of "Africa for Africans", need for democracy "one man one vote", need for "positive action" against colonialism, ownership of Africa's resources, a United States of Africa and solidarity among brothers which will transform tribalism into nationalism. The call by Gamel Abdel Nasser, unity of Africa in three concentric circles was quickly espoused by Nkrumah. The Arab cycle, with the continental African cycle and then our brethren Islam circle. Nasser's philosophy helped to create a new bloc the "Afro-Arab-Asian Front. This happened to be a critical period of the cold war. A period when alliances were so clear and pronounced that the conflict between the Soviet bloc vis a vis the Western camp did not call for fence sitting. As a result, while in the African circle Nkrumah, Ahamed Ben Bella, Gamal Abdel Nassar, Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Madibo Keita Tabman, Haile Salessia, Julius Nyerere and Tom Mboya had a series of meetings geared toward African Unity along side the Afro-Asian
Solidarity Movement which was basically non-aligned.

"We in Egypt believe in neutralism and non-alignment. This principal has been adopted by many of our friends in Asia and Africa. We believe that by adopting this attitude we ward off the shadow of war".

The above statement by President Nasser made Egypt and the Afro-Asian bloc the focus of East-West struggle for influence during the cold war era. While many African and Asian countries benefited militarily and sometimes economically by playing up East against the West (as the case of the Aswan Dam in Egypt) the Third World countries became the battlefield for competing ideologies. The United states and the Soviet Union were mutually suspicious of Nasser, Nehru, Surkano, Nkrumah and President Tito of Yugoslavia. They were the main players in the cold war chase game.

THE CASABLANCA AND THE MONROVIA STATES

Throughout Modern African history leaders have not understood the theory and practise of European warfare. The European warfare the aim of the victor is to compel the victim to do the victors will. Total annihilation and wars of attrition are rare in modern European Warfare. Thus they rank their reasons/benefits for waging war and rank their enemies from the greatest to the lesser. These concepts are both alien and unknown to most African warriors. It was therefore not unusual to find Savimbi and his South African Mercenaries cooperating to fight the Angola government. The concept of the lesser of the two evils remained an X-factor. Wasn't Athena the goddess of wisdom, arts industries and prudent warfare?

Immediately after Ghana's independence and the formation of the Afro-Arab-Asian bloc, African leaders were seen to belong to
two major camps, the moderates were viewed to be pro-west (Monrovia States) and they include Liberia, Nigeria, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Togo, Ethiopia and the 12 French speaking countries belonging to the Brazzaville States. Because of the cold war and the sphere of influence European economic interests they could not discern who was their greater enemy. Most of them fought bitterly with the Cassablanca states pertaining to Africa not France, Britain or the United States who became their closest allies.

On the other hand, the Casablanca States were in the eyes of the West, the most "radical states with leftist leanings". They had adopted a clear-cut Lumumbist line during the Congo crisis and were diehard Pan-Africanist. They included; Ghana, Morocco, Guinea, Mali, UAR, Libya and the Algerian provisional government (Which was represented at the conference by Frantz Fanon and Ahamed Ben Bella). The great debate that emerged after the formation of these two rival camps is what brought about the great betrayal of Africa at the formation of the Organization of African Unity in 1963.

Many people even in Nigeria saw the merits of an African Union of states but vehemently rejected the formation of such a union in fear of Ghana's Nkrumah. Yusuf Maritima Sule of Nigeria had this to say.

"Pan Africanism is the only solution to our problems in Africa .... No one African doubts the need to promote Pan-Africanism ...But we must not be sentimental; We must be realistic. It is for this reason that we would like to point out that at this moment the idea of forming a Union of African States is premature ......

In his books "I Speak of Freedom", "Africa must Unite" and Neo-
Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism", Kwame Nkrumah had become a crusader for African freedom, African economic independence and a formation of a Union of African States. These publications did not endear him friends into the West who had economic interest in Zaire Union Minere and the Openheimer business investments in South Africa and multinations like Lonrho. Multinationals feared him, anti communist forces made him a target. Portugal with its vast colonial territories in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bisau and Cape Verde as seen in a more illustrative book by Malyn Newitt; Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years (1981). Apartheid South Africa saw him as enemy number one. Kwame Nkrumah became the focus of a strong OAU. Authors like Colin Legum, Prof. Ali Mazrui, Dr. Rubin at Howard University portrayed Nkrumah as Czarist emperor whose main aim was to devour smaller African countries in his endeavour to build a strong African Empire. The rivalry saw President Julius Nyerere become a mouth piece of the West during the Cairo Conference opposing Dr Kwame Nkrumah's desire for an African government. Even President Jomo Kenyatta is quoted as saying.

"I want to see first East African United and federated and then the whole of Africa as one" (Colin Legum p.65)

The greatest of criticism against Kwame Nkrumah came from Nigeria. "Dr Nkrumah must be told that his reckless pursuit of his ambition for expansion will lead him no where. His real aim is to swallow little Togo and chew up parts of Ivory Cost. (Colin p.55)"

Prof. Ali Mazrui on the other hand seemed to have devoted a whole book on Heroes and Uhuru—Worship on Kwame Nkrumah. In a chapter on the "Problems of Unity" Ali Mazrui sees Nkrumah as the Leninist Czar an accolate which enemies of African unity used effectively not only to destroy the any scheme towards African unity but
also to blackmail Nkrumah.

"...While Nkrumah strives to be Africa's Lenin, he also sought to become Ghana's Czar. Nor is Nkrumah's Czarism necessarily "the worst side" of his personality and behaviour. On the contrary, his Czarism could win moderation have mitigated some of the harshness of his Leninism."

Writing at the height of the cold war when the West's fears about communism in Africa was at the highest, Prof. Mazrui's book did more to destroy everything that was African in Nkrumah and anything stood for on Africa. The "Washington Monarch" scenario of Nkrumah's weakness in ostentation" were so demeaning and incriminating that at the birth of OAU in 1963, Nkrumah had neither friends in Africa or Europe. Thus, all ideas he espoused regarding African unity and an OAU that would be powerful and dominant were watered down in a word, the OAU had a still birth by the triumph of the Monrovia States and anti-Nkurumah forces. This seemed to mark an end to the influence the African American literature to the African liberation movement. It was the great betrayal championed by Africans statesmen and scholars.

THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

The decline of African American influence on Africa as a whole came at the time of independence. Ironically, it is the same Ali Mazrui who noted in the "idiom of Self-determination" (Towards Pax-African p.3) that, "What loosened the ties between Africans and Afro-Americans was the emergency of independence as a paramount slogan of the African Sector". The charter of the Organization of African Unity embodies safeguards that encouraged "consolidation of the hard-won independence as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our states".
These safeguards were etatic and included the following ....

"The member states, in pursuit of the purposes stated in Article II, solemnly affirm and declare their adherence to Article III of the charter.

1. the soveignty equality of all members.
2. non-interference in internal affairs of states
3. respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state for its inalienable right to independent existence.
4. Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration.
5. Unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assasination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighbouring or any other state.
6. Absolute dedication to total emanicipation of the South African territories which are still dependent.
7. Affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocs.

The creation of etatism by Article III of the OAU made it easy for France, Belgium or Britain to intervene in an African troubled situation that a neighbouring state. It's the fear of Nkrumah's interference in Togo or Nasser in Sudan or Ethiopia that created an OAU that has for thirty years become the whitest of the white elephants in Africa.

All the suffering in Angola, Mozambique, Liberia, Nigeria during the Biafra War, and of late Rwanda has gone down in history as the worst human rights crimes against the peoples of Africa but OAU never lifted a finger. The conflict between the Hutu poeople and Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi are not new phenomenon. There
are many desperate cases of hunger and suffering all over the continent where OAU should have played a significant role but it was rendered powerless by Article III of its charter. It has taken the same Ali Mazrui, many reactinary statements same which shamefully call for recolonization of the African continent, (Nation, February 5, 1995). Whatever the merits of his arguments, Prof. Mazrui is advocating for re-enslavement of the blackman a concept on Bois, Marcus Garvey, Nkrumah, Walter Rodney and all the dead heroes of our liberation movement would consider the height of insanity in Africa. What we need to do is to go back to the drawing board. To seek African-American participation in the 21st Century liberation in Africa. The African scholar (Nasibi, Nation 1993) the African Politician has gone back to ethnicity, to the tribal enclaves and have failed to rise the heights of nationalism which diaspora liberation literature espoused. A few months ago Ali Mazrui was in Kenya and the statement he issues on Majimboism makes it impossible to differentiate him for Mr. Nazir.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The African nightmare which Prof. Mazrui observes in Rwanda, Angola, Somalia and elsewhere do not call for "Recolonization of the continent" as the greatest hope but rather, it calls for our re-examination of our values, our leaders and our political will. It is not the constitution that is important after all, the first Kenyan constitution was drawn up by the best African brains of our time. This included a former U.S. Supreme court Judge Thargood Marshall the executive and judiciary all independent with guaranteed civil liberties and due process of the law embodied in it. Since then, the African constitutions have been flouted so many times. What is in question here is
the morality of the African leadership. In conclusion therefore, this paper calls for complete overhaul of the African mind, the African ontological view of the self and a complete review of the OAU charter to incorporate what W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, Sylvester Williams, Kwame Nkrumah and other founding fathers of Pan-Africanism had envisaged of the African continent. More than ever, we need in Africa, a rebirth of African American new literature on governance and egalitarianism. The bottom line is a rebirth of a new African intelligentsia; the Locke, the Betham, the Roussau, the Mill, and the Jeffersons of Africa far removed from the intellectual hero worshippers of today.
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