

PAN-AFRICANISM,  
CARIBBEAN EXILE, AND POST-COLONIAL AFRICA

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and racism abroad. In the process, West Indian paternalism gave way to genuine collaboration and solidarity among West Indians and Africans. In London in the 1930s, West Indians George Padmore and C.L.R. James of Trinidad, Amy Ashwood Garvey of Jamaica, and Ras Makonnen (formerly George T.N. Griffith) of British Guyana agitated for African liberation alongside several future African leaders, including Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, I.T.A. Wallace Johnson of Sierra Leone, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, and later Kwame Nkrumah of the Gold Coast (later Ghana). Their work in exile culminated in the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester in 1945, laying the foundation for the independence of Ghana and other colonial territories on the continent. During this same period in Paris, Aimé Césaire of Martinique, Léon Damas of French Guyana, and Leopold Senghor of Senegal established the literary-philosophical Negritude movement which, along with the emergence of the journal *Présence Africaine* and a publishing house of the same name founded by Alioune Diop, helped inspire both a cultural renaissance in Africa and the

In the 1960s, the focus of the Caribbean exiles shifted from Africa to the Caribbean as a new generation of West Indians, in part inspired by independence and liberation movements in Africa, set about transforming the Caribbean. Building on the foundation of their predecessors, they embraced

described as maroon intellectuals because they drew upon the history of maroons in the Americas and slave resistance and struggle in general<sup>5</sup> appeared during periods intense agitation or anti-colonial activity in Africa and the Caribbean, or when global warfare was imminent. With this in mind, one of the goals of the paper is to examine how Caribbean political-

diaspora; that the liberation and redemption of Africa was prerequisite to and inseparable from the liberation of people of African descent altogether. The high point of the Pan-African Congress in that it marked the transition from a by-and-large African diaspora-led movement to one that was not only focused on African concerns, but had Africans from Africa at the helm. At this monumental meeting, the theoretical foundation for the African independence movement was set. Two years later, Kwame Nkrumah, one of the organizers, left England for the Gold Coast to lead the independence movement in present-day Ghana, paving the way for the independence of the entire continent.

Since 1945 there have been at least two major Pan-African Congresses (1974 and 1994) that were consciously initiated in the tradition of their predecessors. The Sixth Pan-

-blooded Negro of Koromantee  
stock<sup>9</sup> founded the UNIA along with his first wife, Amy Ashwood Garvey, in Jamaica in  
throughout the Caribbean, Latin America and in Europe prior to founding the  
organization

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plight of people of African descent, the work of Garvey and the UNIA influenced a wide  
cross-  
musicians Duke Ellington and Oscar Peterson to leaders within the Irish nationalist  
-Slavism and Pan-Germanism movements which rose to  
prominence du



*against colonialism and oppression, which characterized the 'New Negro' spirit of the age*<sup>13</sup>.

The movement had some 859 branches to its credit by August 1921. By 1926 the UNIA could boast of chapters throughout the African continent; all over the English, French, Dutch and Spanish-speaking Caribbean and Latin America; England; Wales; and Australia. Though the estimated number of

message of Black pride and African redemption was an inspiration to Black people around the world. In South Africa, early members of the African National Congress (ANC), decades before Nelson Mandela became known a leader in the struggle against *Negro World*.

Kwame Nkrumah acknowledged his debt to the work of Garvey and the UNIA which inspired him long before he became known as a Pan-African figure. As C.L.R. James writes

forces and the pervading social conceptions which automatically sought to destroy him, his achievement remains one of the propagandist <sup>14</sup> Referring

-African world, James adds:

*Garvey's voice reverberated inside Africa itself. The King of Swaziland told Mrs. Garvey that she knew the name of only two black men in the Western world: Jack Johnson, the boxer who defeated the white man Jim Jeffries, and Marcus Garvey. Jomo Kenyatta has related to this writer how in 1921 Kenya nationalists, unable to read, would gather round a reader of Garvey's newspaper, the Negro World, and listen to an article two or three times. Then they would run various way through the forest, carefully to repeat the whole, which they had memorised, to Africans hungry for some doctrine which lifted them from the servile consciousness in which Africans lived. Dr. Nkrumah, a graduate student of history and philosophy at two American universities, has placed it on record that of all the writers who educated and influenced him, Marcus Garvey stands first. Garvey found the cause of Africans and of people of African descent not so much neglected as unworthy of consideration. In little more than half of ten years he had made it a part of the political consciousness of the world.*<sup>15</sup>

history and to instill the idea that Black people were destined to throw off the yoke of colonialism and the legacy of slavery and assume their rightful place at the table of

reach and appeal. At his peak, tens of thousands would turn out to hear him speak and as the movement expanded, it was increasingly seen as a major political threat by U.S. authorities. Pressure was brought to bear on the UNIA while internal infighting and

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<sup>13</sup> Tony Martin, *Race First* (Dover, M.A.: The Majority Press, 1976). At 13.

<sup>14</sup> James, *supra* note 1. At 397.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* at 396-397.

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into the 1940s with the work of Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah, who was introduced to Padmore by James. As Ron Ramdin suggests, in addition to James' writings, a number of other important works emerged out of the efforts of individuals

*The Negro in the Caribbean* and Jomo

*Kenya: Land of Conflict*.<sup>21</sup> As I have already stated, the movement outside the African continent culminated in 1945 with the convening of the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester. Many of the individuals who go on to lead or play pivotal roles in the independence movements throughout Africa participated in this conference at which, in many respects, the theoretical basis for the African independence movement was laid.

Across the Atlantic in the Caribbean, a corresponding development within the radical Pan-African tradition also emerged in Trinidad under the leadership of Vincentian native Elma Francois. Francois was a founder of, and leading figure in, the Marxist-oriented Negro Welfare Cultural and Social Association (NWCSA), an organization based in Trinidad and grounded in the labour struggles of the 1930s that swept the Caribbean. According to

*1) To struggle for the development and better welfare of the Negro people, 2) To develop solidarity with the oppressed Negro people of the West Indies and the entire world, 3) To make known the conditions of the oppressed Negro people and their struggle against oppression and, 4) To win the masses of oppressed people the world over in a struggle for the better welfare of the Negro people.*<sup>22</sup>

Before migrating to

Vincent. In Trinidad, while washing clothes to make ends meet, she continued to be an

activist in anti-imperialist work and mobilization against the Italian invasion of Ethiopia mirrored that of the International African Friends of Ethiopia and the International African Service Bureau. The NWCSA was exemplary in its policy of equal and full participation of women within the organization while being grounded, not only in Trinidadian and Caribbean struggles, but in those of the people of the Soviet Union, China, India, and, to an extent, Western Europe. In 1938 Francois became the first woman to be tried for sedition in Trinidad, charges for which she was later acquitted. Sadly, she died suddenly in 1940.

The radical Pan-African tradition took on various forms and later included the work of Claudia Jones, another under-recognized figure within the tradition, and individuals like Jan Carew, as well as poets and writers Andrew Salkey and John LaRose, and poet Linton

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<sup>21</sup> Ron Ramdin, *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain* (London: Gower, 1987). At 146.

<sup>22</sup> Rhoda Reddock, *Elma Francois: The NWCSA: and the workers struggle for change in the Caribbean in the 1930s* (London: New Beacon Books, 1988). At 35-36.

Kwesi Johnson. LaRose has been a stalwart figure in Black British history and is one of the founders of the George Padmore Institute in England. In the mid 1960s and 1970s in Canada, the Montreal-based Caribbean Conference Committee (CCC) which included,

Gloria Simmons, Gene Depradine, Rosie Douglas, Ann Cools, Alfie Roberts and Tim Hector and its successor, the Caribbean International Service Bureau (CISB), also worked in close association with C.L.R. James and in the spirit of the International African Service Bureau. Members of the CCC and CISB continued their political work in the Caribbean long after the two organizations dissolved, playing significant roles in developments in Grenada, Dominica, Trinidad, St. Vincent, Jamaica, Antigua, and other parts of the Caribbean.

Work within the radical Pan-African tradition continued into the 1970s and early 1980s in England with the work of the Race Today Collective. Its adherents helped shape the thoughts and actions of successive generations of Blacks in Europe, the Caribbean and Africa. But this tradition is not confined to the individuals from Anglophone Caribbean and Africa. Parallel to the post World War II Pan African developments England, a similar tradition also emerged in France, in part, centered around the journal *Présence Africaine* along with the early writings of Aimé Césaire, Leopold Sédar Senghor, René Depestre and Frantz Fanon. In the United States, in addition to the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, a number of intellectual/activists emerged with the radical Pan-African tradition, including poet Claude McKay, Richard B. Moore, co-founder of the African Black Brotherhood and an early member of the U.S. Communist Party, and writer Richard Wright. As Santiago-W.F. Vallés has pointed out, in addition to the United States, small Caribbean and Latin American groupings also emerged in Cuba, Haiti, Suriname and other parts in the

drew upon Maroon struggles and slave resistance in the Caribbean and Latin America in much the same way that James turned to the Haitian Revolution.<sup>23</sup>

methodology and style of thinking that emerged from these efforts was characterised by its capacity to analyse and verify and apply what had been learned within a perspective

<sup>24</sup> These independent groups were not only able to break with conventional intellectual and political traditions that buttressed the colonial order, but in so doing, they developed and sustained communication across r

Exile has been central to Pan-Africanism. Referring to the experience of C.L.R. James, the usual career, in  
<sup>26</sup> Exile

intellectual has to be made up because you cannot follow a prescribed path. If you can  
bewailed, but



jokes and

<sup>31</sup> The novel

32

ected schoolmaster who, though not an avid reader himself, would also provide James with books to read and did his best to instill in him the importance of education. When C.L.R. James was eight, his father began preparing him for the secondary school exhibition (i.e. scholarship) which earned him a modeled on the British school system. Yet, despite his efforts, and to the consternation of rs who had earmarked him to become either a lawyer or a doctor, the two most touted and respectable occupations for colonials of the time, James was at best a modest student who demonstrated little interest in conventional education. He obtained a classic British education, reading Latin and Greek as well as mathematics and English literature, including the plays of Shakespeare in which he found much solace. He also mastered French well enough to later translate Boris *Stalin* from French to English while in England in the 1930s. James also

<sup>34</sup> This code permeated James life and it was only later when he arrived in England that he realized that the code was anachronism that few adhered to in British public life, and even fewer in private. Even after being unceremoniously rejected in his effort to enlist in the British army during World War





*a cork to choke down the natural expansion of the people. Always the West Indian of any ambition or sensibility has to see positions of honour and power in his own country filled by itinerant demi-gods who sit at their desks, ears cocked for the happy news of a retirement in Nigeria or a death in Hong Kong.*



here are deliberate as, as history demonstrates, Césaire was less concerned with absolute  
ma *Notebook* was the precursor to *Discourse on Colonialism*. However,  
when he wrote *Discourse on Colonialism*, he was at a different stage in his life. He was a

*Discourse on Colonialism* was one of the most compelling anti-colonial statements of the  
twentieth century. Published in 1950, the word barbarism runs like a thread throughout  
tion,

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Césaire declares Europe to be morally and spiritually indefensible and decries the falsity  
and hypocrisy of its *mission civilatrice*.<sup>48</sup>  
by that of the United States.<sup>49</sup> Baseness, corruption, and the systematic practice of  
to the barbarism inflicted on Europe by Hitler, a barbarism that was first tried and tested  
on the non-European people of the world.<sup>50</sup>  
external barbarism turned inward, or what Césaire *progressive*  
*dehumanization*  
within and without Europe.<sup>52</sup>

But while *Discourse* asserts that the notion of a European civilization and the idea that  
people of the Third World must look to themselves, not only for their own redemption,  
but to save the world from imminent catastrophe, Césaire concludes by placing the fate  
of the world in the hands of the proletariat which, if the meaning of the word is to be

<sup>53</sup> Not only does he believe that the European model is dead, however, but he breaks with Marxist orthodoxy by implying that even the notion of international working class solidarity has proven to be flawed if not altogether faulty. While some, like Jean-Paul Sartre, attempted with varying degrees of success to break with the political chauvinism that has characterized the European and North American to these calls; for the workers believe, too, that they are part of the prodigious adventure of the

<sup>54</sup> Consequently, Fanon arrived at the conclusion that the Third World  
ething from us other

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In the mid 1930s, C.L.R. James founded the International African Friends of Ethiopia (IAFE) in order to mobilize against the fascist Italian invasion of Ethiopia.<sup>56</sup> Other members of this group included Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, T. Ras Makonnen (formerly

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<sup>53</sup> Fanon, *supra* note 47.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* at 315.

<sup>56</sup> As Horace Campbell points out in *Rasta and Resistance* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1987) in much the same way they would later do during the struggle against South Afr

George T.N. Griffith) of Guyana, Arthur Lewis of St. Lucia, and Jamaican Amy Ashwood Garvey of Jamaica.<sup>57</sup> Despite its small size, the IAFE played a pivotal role in disseminating information on the fascist invasion of Ethiopia. Their work resulted in public outcry against the invasion and the boycotting of Italian products.<sup>58</sup>







inequality,<sup>73</sup> and then, in what is perhaps the most vivid reference to Africa in the book, -term plan to sail to Africa and put an end to the slave trade before lamenting:

*But for the revolution, this extraordinary man and his band of gifted associates would have lived their lives as slaves, serving the commonplace creatures who owned them, standing barefoot and in rags to watch inflated little governors and mediocre officials from Europe pass by, as many a talented African stands in Africa to-day.*<sup>74</sup>

And on the last page of the book, James writes:

*Imperialism vaunts its exploitation of the wealth of Africa for the benefit of civilisation. In reality, from the ve*



In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon raised the issue of the concentration of human and financial resources in the national capital:

*In an underdeveloped country, the leading members of the party ought to avoid the capital as if it had the plague. They ought, with some few exceptions, to live in the country districts. The centralization of all activity in the city ought to be avoided. No excuse of administrative discipline should be taken as legitimizing that excrescence of a capital which is already overpopulated and overdeveloped with regard to nine-tenths of the country. The party should be decentralized in the extreme. It is the only way to bring life to regions which are dead...*<sup>80</sup>

-country, ought to be the most privileged part of the country. Moreover, the last resort, there is nothing inconvenient in the government<sup>81</sup>

provides the reader with insight into the inner-workings and dynamics West African societies of the period in question as well as issues that were raised by Amilcar Cabral about 20<sup>th</sup> century Guinea-  
of Guinea-Bissau makes explicit in a the twentieth century context what Rodney projects in his analysis of sixteenth to eighteenth century West African history.

work on the Haitian Revolution as a university student in Jamaica, he participated in a study group with C.L.R. and Selma James as he pursued a PhD. in history in London. These

whom would go on to play active political roles in the post-independent Caribbean. Among those involved were Richard Small, Norman Girvan, Orlando Patterson, Robert Hill, Joan French, Adolph Edwards, and John Maxell, all of Jamaica; Adolph Edwards, Margaret Carter Hope, from Barbados; Stanley French, St. Lucia; and Walton Look Lai, Trinidad. According to Rodney, the study group had a tremendous impact on him.

<sup>85</sup> Rodney found the study group indispensable to his political developme

acquire a knowledge of Marxism, a more precise understanding of the Russian Revolution, and of historic <sup>86</sup>

by Europeans. Rodney applies a Marxian analysis to distinguish between the aims and aspirations of the African ruling class, on the one hand, and those of the common people on the other. Somewhat empirical in its approach, the book details the way in which the African elite were both used and manipulated by Europeans during the slave trade, and the way in which African elites also consciously manipulated their European counterparts in order to profit from the enslavement of other Africans. Rodney never loses sight of the fact that it was Europeans who orchestrated and were the primary beneficiaries of the slave trade. Yet, referring to the existence of social classes in the Upper Guinea Coast and

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simple coincidence that the Djolas and the Balantas, who produced the least slaves either by raiding or by preying upon each other, were the very tribes with an amorphous state structure from which a well-

<sup>92</sup> Rodney also suggests that

demarcation is clearly drawn between the agents and the victims of slaving as it was carried on among the littoral peoples, that line coincides with the distinction between the privileged an

<sup>93</sup>

the common people. This is of course the widespread pattern of modern neo-

<sup>94</sup>

unique traits as an historian and Pan-African figure. First, Rodney had h2 Tf1 65fJpirical i@\_P0\_F2&&#E2uN



conditions for active participation of both citizens in the city and what he describes as subjects under customary rule in the country while reconciling the differences in these different forms of social organization.<sup>100</sup>

and someone who, perhaps more than any single individual, lent clarity to the complex interplay of forces that defines the African continent. Cabral was one of the major different means, they would come to similar conclusions about the nature of class struggle in Africa. In writing about the Atlantic slave trade at this early stage in his political life, Rodney was conscious of the prevailing socio-economic climate in Africa and the Caribbean and used history as a means of contextualizing and assessing contemporary events.

Walter Rodney embodied the best of the Pan-African tradition. He never shied away from controversial or difficult questions and much like Malcolm X, who was also assassinated before his prime, he was honest and principled consistently sought to expand his understanding of the world around him. Unlike many West Indian Pan-Africanist, Rodney spent a substantial amount of time in Africa. He taught at the University of Dar es Salaam in two stints, between 1966 and 1967 and again between

he was better equipped than his Caribbean predecessors to raise critical questions about the economic and political development of Tanzania and the rest of the African continent.

In 1967, six years after Tanzania became independent, the government of Tanzania under the leadership of Julius Nyerere delivered his Arusha Declaration which ushered in a series of social and economic reforms designed to encourage economic and social self-sufficiency and thwart corruption and profiteering by government officials. Among the reforms included the nationalization of certain key industries and the implementation of a policy to prevent government officials from earning a salary beyond their government pay, controlling shares in a company(t)-4eliverinarems his Arusi22(rms(o)7(me)-se-5(BT1 iv

The political environment in Tanzania attracted a number of African thinkers, many of whom were Marxists and socialists as there was a sense that Tanzania was on the verge of something of profound significance for Africa. Tanzania also raised the ire of the United States and a number of Western countries for its socialistic orientation and raised eyebrows in the Soviet Union when it received economic and military assistance developments and the university became a hub of activity for both students and

further invol

<sup>103</sup> as



inside the metro <sup>106</sup> Yet despite the confluence of forces that contributed to the African independence movement – World War II, the emergence of the Soviet Union as a

liberation struggle in Indo-China, etc. –

of independence was *initiated* by the African people; and, to whatever extent that <sup>107</sup> And in the face of those who would describe African independence as an utter sham, Rodney

does not lie in their methods of producing wealth, but in the way that wealth is

<sup>111</sup>

detractors as the idea that it is not the production process – the method of producing wealth – that separates socialism from capitalism appears to justify the exploitation of labour under the banner of socialism in the belief that the end always justifies means. And yet Nyerere supports his assertion by arguing that in traditional African societies which he describes as socialistic – no one was starved of food or suffered injury to their dignity.<sup>112</sup> Of course, this remark overlooks the fact that many traditional African





characteristic of his commitment to the underclass and honest and democratic leadership.

Upon reading Rodney for the Six Pan-African Congress, but did not attend when it became evident that the event would exclude representatives of the Caribbean and Pan-African left, gave Rodney some strategic -African Congress and be the leading ones in putting forward these ideas. That would be a political blunder of <sup>134</sup> In essence, James was suggesting that Rodney adhere to his own advice. Rodney himself had reached the conclusion that, as a West Indian, there were limits to which he could directly intervene in African affairs.<sup>135</sup> It is also possible that James, who at this stage had visited Africa several times but had never lived there, p

Africa in a chapter of his *A History of Pan-African Revolt* (1969) and the same essay appeared in his *Nkrumah and the African Revolution* (1970).<sup>136</sup>

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And although James and Rodney acknowledged that Nkrumah inherited an infrastructure designed to meet the needs of the former colonial power

which was constructed for British imperialist purposes and not for purposes of governing

<sup>140</sup>

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playing a major role in the Fifth Pan-African Conference in Manchester, an event that helped to spark the continent-

petty bourgeois leadership subverted the popular movement after 1957 and as Nkrumah

resorted to repressive means such as jailing opposition figures and clamping down on the labour movement. And it is here that James found Frantz Fanon particularly useful.

Paraphrasing

must dig deep among the mass of the population to find the elements of a truly national

<sup>142</sup>

reached to date by Blacks in revolt, Rodney argued Tanzania had earned this praise because it nationalized foreign investments, restructured the educational system, and planned a future based on rural development and socialist principles by drawing on local heritage all of which James believed to be highly significant.<sup>143</sup> For Rodney Ghana was a

-directed and

of the population and was encouraging further ties of dependence with the outside world rather than self-

<sup>144</sup> Rodney remarks about Tanzania raises

-African

speech delivered at a conference on James in 1972, two years before he wrote the 1974 essay for the Congress and ample time for him to develop a more critical appraisal of developments in Tanzania. Which brings us back to James letter to Rodney after reading his statement to the Sixth Pan-African Congress.

As has been stated, it was not that James did not agree with the sentiments outlined in evident in his critique of Nkrumah for what he deemed his political

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<sup>140</sup> James, cited in *ibid.* at 42.

<sup>141</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> *ibid.* at 44.

<sup>143</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> *ibid.* at 45.



Houphouet-  
147

Houphouet-Boigny emerged a prominent labour leader in the 1940s. His opposition forced labour and colonialism made him a popular leader and he eventually drew tens of  
<sup>148</sup> As a minister in the French parliament he gave voice to the deplorable social, economic, and health conditions of African labourers whose existence was tantamount to being a slave. The irony, as he pointed out to his French colleagues, was that France had recently experienced forced labour during the Nazi occupation. To allow these conditions to continue in its colonial territories would be hypocrisy in the extreme.<sup>149</sup> His success against forced labour and his disassociation from local and French communists who advocated a radical break with France consolidated his relationship with the metropole and despite opposition from labour and student groups to his policies on independence, he advocated emancipation within the framework of the French union, and later the French community.<sup>150</sup>

He unilaterally modified the French constitution to permit independent states within the

colonies, and on August 7, 1960 Ivory Coast became independent. Houphouet-wager with Nkrumah was based on two different systems of government in West Africa. On the one had, a strong association with France as a non-independent territory, and on the other, an independent and socialist path. But with the collapse of the French Community, the ini government was overthrown before the wager ended. Nonetheless, a brief comparison between the two countries up until 1966 sheds light on the challenges that confronted newly-independent African countries, and particularly those that attempted to build socialism in the post-colonial period.

market economy grew wealthier during the period in question. Emphasis was placed on



countries, state intervention in Ghana was pushed to the limit, in effect stifling local industry. This problem was exacerbated by the shortage of skilled personnel and under-achieved limited success.<sup>153</sup> If we add to this the fact that the military budget rose from 2.7% to

generally been that the men will lead and the women follow. Only recently has the work of women such as Amy Ashwood Garvey, Elma Francois, and Claudia Jones been given the attention it deserves. And in the case of the anonymous women who have played

<sup>159</sup> opening political and social choices to women without having to  
succession [that] prescribed that males allocate and own land, women controlled the  
<sup>160</sup> while men sought authority through ritual specialization and  
<sup>161</sup> Land inheritances were often manipulated in a practice known as  
*nhayikwa* or *nhanye* in which daughters became sons in order to inherit from their  
fathers.<sup>162</sup> porous nature of gender  
relations in that society, and the way in which women were able to negotiate and  
maneuver their way into positions of authority when it was not directly conferred on  
them. With colonialism, *Ekwe*, an important title bestowed upon women for their  
economic success and industriousness, was outlawed and, with the imposition of male-

that came from local grassroots women. These women were frustrated and had more terms of corruption, the exploitation of women, especially the incessant demands for huge levies from women, etc.<sup>166</sup> They also called for unity among Nigerian women, despite their awareness of social and class distinctions between themselves and women general opinion of women was that men have failed in ruling the country; it is now time t

<sup>167</sup> For

social jus

<sup>168</sup> It cannot, therefore,

with w

<sup>169</sup>

Making a distinction between grassroots women and their elite counterparts Amadiume women have used the services and support of the majority of women, especially at the organizations or have organized women to serve their own self-interest rather than that

<sup>170</sup> As a

<sup>171</sup> After suggesting ways in which Nigerian women can be better represented within the official political apparatus and proposing methods for legislative and judiciary improvement in the country,

would best be tackled through campaign work and massive adult education programmes in health care, childcare, workshops on such economic activi

reveal to women the positive and powerful roles that women have played in Islam, Christianity etc., in order to arm them against conservatism,

<sup>172</sup>

improvement, the momentum and specifications must be left to individual local areas. Women outside such areas should give information and support only when invited to do

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<sup>166</sup> Amadiume, *supra* note 157 at 197.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* at 199.

so.<sup>173</sup> For Amadiume, in the final analysis, the impetus for change among African women rests in local communities and in the hands of those who have the most to gain from

understanding of social change sits well within the Pan-African tradition we have explored throughout this paper, and represents a major contribution to our understanding of the exigencies of social transformation in Africa.

In a little-known book, *Black Africa: the Economic and Cultural Basis for a Federated State*, Cheik Anta Diop, the renowned Senegalese physicist and African culture-historian, outlines his vision for African development.

understanding of the cultural, agricultural, material and environmental resources of the development that stresses leaner governments, the erosion of civil society, and reductions in social spending while consigning the Global South to the role of exporters of cheap primary products and suppliers of cheap labour to foreign corporations.

Diop provides historical, linguistic, and cultural evidence as well as compelling economic and geo-political arguments in favour of African unity in the form of a federated continent. Like many who have reflected on the prevailing socio-political conditions in

federated state can offer a s

Indeed, though one be armed with such fecund a scientific method of analysis as Marxist dialectics (assuming it has been sufficiently assimilated) it would be hopeless to try to apply it to a reality of which one is totally ignorant.

of our compatriots have thought that they could get by without any deep knowledge of African society and Africa in all aspects: history, languages, ethnicities, energy potential, raw materials and the like. The conclusions reached have been abysmally banal, when not

ideas, breadth, and revolutionary perspectives by the use of offensive, excessive, and murky vocabulary; they forgot that the truly revolutionary quality of language is its demonstrative clarity based on the objective use of facts and their dialectical relationships, which results i

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For Diop, a new vision, creatively exploring alternatives to the conventional economic approaches, is imperative. The raising of capital through joint ventures between the state and foreign capital while adopting policies similar to those adopted under NEP (New Economic Policies) during early stages of the Russian Revolution; the exchange of precious African metals (gold, silver, platinum) for hard currencies and heavy machinery; selling excess raw materials that local industries cannot absorb – Diop sees all of these approaches as necessary to economic reform in Africa. Yet, he adds that,

*In the last analysis, the most important investment is of a human character; it is the collective will of the peoples to serve their countries. The establishment of a collective public manpower pool is possible only if none feels frustrated. Before that can be achieved, it would be necessary that, through judicious paring, salaries paid for political positions be brought down to the range of workers' wages.*<sup>178</sup>

Fundamentally, despite his emphasis on alternative methods of economic development development is essentially a social one in which the collective will of the population is

countries might for a long time be used all too easily as blackmail."<sup>179</sup>

180

its own domestic market, one of the greatest in the world. A whole book should be

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<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.* at i.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* at 83.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

devoted to the study of this market with a view to organising the economics of the

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Like so many of the theorists we have examined in this paper, Diop raises question as to

Fanon, a descendant of African slaves who were transported to the Caribbean was among the first to raise serious questions about the viability of post-colonial African governments within the framework of the prevailing global economic and political order.

Drawing on his experience as a member of the *Front de libération nationale* (FLN)

*The Wretched of the Earth* presaged the

dilemma that would confront African and Third World states.<sup>182</sup> Fanon believed that a

new world needed to be reconstructed upon the ashes of the old order which, despite its persistence, he believed had come to an end. Fanon also believed in human solidarity, but in the spirit of Bandung and the idea of a Third World – an alternative to the capitalism and communism – and firm in the idea that the people of the Global South would have to lead the way towards bringing a new world into being. He rejected the

proclaiming that they were anxious for the welfare of Man: today we know with what this

Europe was coming to an end and he called upon the people of the Third World to create

<sup>183</sup> In many ways, Africa and its descendents have answered the call of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the U.S., which in turn, breathed life into the range of social movements that gripped the world in the 1960s, from militant students protests to the rise of African liberation movements. The movements of African descent have posited new possibilities that continue to challenge the world to positively recreate itself.

As we recall the humble beginnings of Pan-Africanism and how a few focused African and Caribbean women and men plotted and schemed in exile as they dared to imagine that imperialism could end in Africa; and if we read this history with the understanding that change is a continual process and that independence and the present post-colonial

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<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.* at 84.

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the northern part of the

<sup>183</sup> Fanon, *supra* note 47. At 313.

period represent important stages, but not an end then it is not difficult to imagine the possibilities that exist on the continent. There is much that can be gleaned from past struggles and the impact that such struggles have had, not only in Africa, but on the world stage. In Guinea-Bissau, the African Party of Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) under the leadership of Amilcar Cabral carried out an

struggle for independence, the PAIGC remained focused on the goal of improving the lives of the people and, to this end, they set up schools, hospitals, and a more equitable system of justice in the zones that they had already liberated from the Portuguese. Through ideological and moral persuasion, they also won over many of their military and political opponents to their side during the struggle causing desertion and widespread disaffection among Portuguese soldiers<sup>184</sup> on Portuguese soldiers and members of the Portuguese left in no small way contributed to the military overthrow of fascism in Portugal with the fall of the Caetano regime in 1974.<sup>185</sup>



about the fulfillment of the aspirations of Africans and people of African descent everywhere. It will at the same time advance triumph of the international socialist

<sup>186</sup> Nkrumah expended time and resources to promote Pan-Africanism and  
ng the  
pantheon of Pan-African figures whose vision of Africa and Africans transcended national boundaries.

This essay has many shortcomings. Literature should have found a place within it as African and the Caribbean writers have made a tremendous contribution to our understanding of human condition. Within the Pan-African tradition, the poetry and plays of Aimé Césaire, the poetry of Edward Kamau Brathwaite, and the writing of Buchi Emecheta, Chinua Achebe, Ayi Kwei Armah, and Maryse Condé, among many others, show an appreciation for the political, historical, and cultural challenges that have confronted and continue to confront the African continent and people of African descent.

This paper has been read primarily through the lens of Caribbean intellectual-Pan-African figures. Although it has not ignored the work of their African equivalents, this approach represents an attempt to show how West Indians have engaged the African continent while at the same time examining some of the principle threads in African post-colonial theory. This approach runs the risk of giving too much weight to Caribbean thinkers at the expense of their African counterparts, thus giving the false impression that this representation reflects reality in its entirety. No doubt, West Indians have played a significant role in African affairs, particularly within the Pan-African movement. But this reality reflects an interest in the African continent that is tantamount to a lost child desperately trying to find its way home, a simplistic analogy that reflects the reality of

forced to recreate themselves in order to adapt to a new environment. West Indians are still struggling to become masters in their own home, afflicted by many of the internal and external challenges that confront the Africa. To its descendents abroad, s to

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