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U.N. ~ 1978

"Anti~

Apartheid

Year"



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1978 -- ANTI-APARTHEID YEAR

THE UNITED NATIONS has deemed 1978 "Anti-Apartheid Year." Since Steve Biko's death and the jailing of leaders and the banning of most remaining publications, the tension has grown within South Africa. Meanwhile, guerrilla warfare continues in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Namibia (Southwest Africa) as the white regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia desperately stall for time while practicing ever more cruel repression, both within and outside their borders. The bombings of "guerrilla camps" kill hundreds of women and children.

The United Nations has called upon governments and private individuals and institutions to observe "Anti-Apartheid Year."

THE GAR will observe this mandate by publishing poems and texts smuggled out of South Africa, as well as the writings of South Africans in exile struggling to liberate their own country. We also publish the story of various activities taking place within the United States, uniting citizens of Africa and the U.S. in the struggle to reveal to the world the horrors of apartheid, the mass relocations of hundreds of thousands of people to sterile wastelands where one-half of the children born die before reaching the age of five, the enforced separation of husbands and wives, mothers and children, mass jailings and bannings. South Africa is guilty of genocide. Documentation for these charges is readily available from the U.N.

In addition to the South African texts, we are happy to present poems and essays dealing with Tanzanian socialism, the Swahili language and literature of East Africa, poems from Ghana and a few poems by Americans concerned about the oppression of Africans and American blacks.

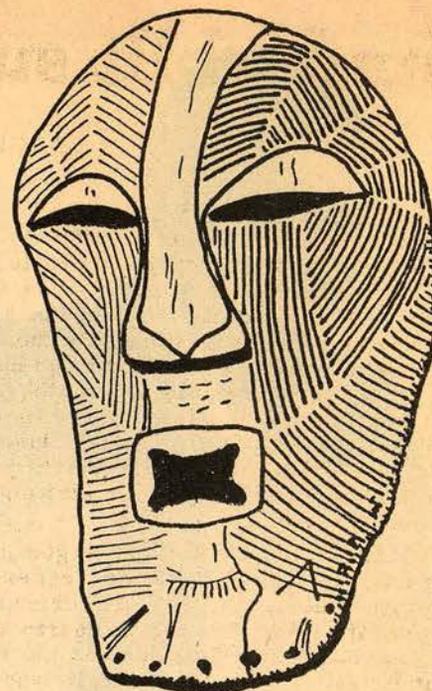
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NGUGI DISAPPEARS

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Kenyan novelist, essayist, playwright and chairman of the Department of Literature at the University of Nairobi, was arrested for questioning in the early morning hours of Dec. 31 by Kenyan police. He (along with 100 of his books) was taken from his home in Nairobi and has not been heard of since. According to an anonymous article in THE WEEKLY REVIEW, a Kenyan publication, Ngugi in his recent writings and actions has "moved farther and farther to the left of the country's political ideological spectrum" and has "acted the part of ideologue rather than writer and has done so with increasing inability to relate to the limits of the sphere of an author's operation which is possible in a developing country in areas where ideas, however noble, can be translated into actions which then have far reaching implications to the general pattern of law and order." (Jan. 9, 1978, pp. 5 - 6).

Ngugi published a widely-acclaimed novel about class conflict in 1977, PETALS OF BLOOD, and in late 1977 co-authored a Kikuyu-language play with Ngugi wa Mirii (no relation) entitled NGAHIKA NDENDA. The play deals with the involvement of different sectors of the Kenyan community in the Mau-Mau rebellion. It was banned by the district commissioner of Kiambu after a few performances.

The African Literature Association has responded by writing letters to the President of Kenya, the ministries of education and of sports and culture, the Kenyan mission to the U.N., two Kenyan newspapers and one Tanzanian paper. These letters express concern about Ngugi's arrest as well as the hope that his release of trial will soon ensue.

Dennis Brutus has written us to urge readers to write letters to the Kenyan government and the Kenyan ambassador to the U.N., to insist that charges be made public and that Ngugi be given a trial, and to organize events in their areas to inform people of Ngugi's arrest.

More information on Ngugi's latest works is available in an interview and a review of the play published in the Jan. 9 THE WEEKLY REVIEW.

Vanderbilt supports Apartheid Sports

LARGEST APARTHEID SPORTS DEMONSTRATION
IN U.S. TO DATE

There were more people outside the gym than inside and one cop for every six people. The games were running tens of thousands of dollars in the red. Vitas Gerulaitis, one of the American players, was quoted as saying "By the time we got to the locker room I was ready to go home." The March 17 - 19, 1978 Davis Cup matches at Vanderbilt University will be remembered more for political significance than for sports. Instead of gaining prestige and money for its sports program, Vanderbilt will be remembered for inviting a racist South African team.

The NAACP and the Urban League joined with sports associations such as the Tennessee Coalition Against Apartheid, ACCESS (American Co-ordinating Committee for Equality in Sports and Society) ICARIS, and other groups such as the Revolutionary Student Brigade, The American Friends Service Committee, PAC, in the protest. Prof. Richard Lapchick of ACCESS will be remembered for the attack upon him at Virginia Wesleyan University by masked assailants after he had returned home from an organizing meeting in Nashville. He had been knocked unconscious and had "NIGER" cut in to his stomach.

Friday afternoon, in the midst of a late winter storm, 3500 people marched from three Nashville area colleges, Meharry, Fisk and Tennessee State University, to Vanderbilt University, flowing together to form the biggest civil-rights demonstration since the 60s. After chanting:

FREEDOM YES, APARTHEID NO
DAVIS CUP HAS GOT TO GO!

A NATIONAL ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE

A working group for a National Anti-Apartheid Conference was formed March 19 during the demonstrations against the David Cup matches in Nashville. The group set as its main goal to convene a national conference before the end of the U.N. - declared "Anti-Apartheid Year" (March 21, 1978 - March 21, 1979). Secondary goals are to further the attacks on U.S. corporations holding major investments in South Africa and on sports exchanges between the U.S. and South Africa. The group hopes to work as a clearing house for anti-apartheid activities as well as to germinate action in new cities.

Many of those chosen as leaders were active in the Tennessee Coalition Against Apartheid which had coordinated the protest against the Davis Cup at Vanderbilt. Chosen as working coordinators were Dennis Brutus (Evanston) and David Huet-Vaughn (Nashville), with Angela Jackson (Nashville) and Ellen Mark (Chicago) for publicity and Terry Nichols, Yolanda Huet-Vaughn and Jane Cagan (all of Nashville) for fund raising.

Those interested in helping further the effort should contact Dennis Brutus (English dept., Northwestern Univ., Evanston IL 60201) or David Huet-Vaughn (1503 Ashwood, Nashville TN 37212).

and picketing, the group heard various speakers including Jimmy Masapola from the South African Students' Organization as snow darkened the sky and blanketed umbrellas. A constant chanting picket of three or four hundred people circled in front of the entrances to the gym making the spectators run a gauntlet between them and the line of sixty or so policemen standing shoulder to shoulder. Attendance was about 1000 each day, far from the 8500 hoped for, far below what was needed for Vanderbilt to break even. It was one of the smallest crowds ever to see a Davis Cup match.

Will Grimsley, AP special correspondent, wrote: "There was a grim starkness about the 8500 empty seats in the modern Vanderbilt University gymnasium... The combatants... were brought to the arena like gladiators out of another age. Plainclothes police wearing bullet-proof vests and guns escorted the players from their hotel some 10 miles away... The sponsors dispensed with the usual playing of national anthems -- a ritual that has been commonplace in Davis Cup matches for generations. 'It was decided that this might be too inflammatory,' said Slew Hester, president of the U.S. Tennis Association.

Saturday even more people turned out to join the NAACP and Urban League sponsored march from Tennessee's capitol building through downtown Nashville, past Vanderbilt University to Centennial Park (home of America's parthenon) to hear a number of black leaders explain why Americans should fight to end apartheid in South Africa. Bright sun had replaced the snow clouds. Dick Gregory was the most moving speaker, leaving many in tears when he said "I would love to be a father of ten children in South Africa knowing what is happening here today... Thank God for the groups that came together to make this possible... We're going to send a message to South Africa saying it's just a matter of time." The crowd was mostly black, largely middle-aged, middle-class, well-dressed.

Across the street the circle of pickets continued to make those who chose to attend aware of the political aspect of the games. Four or five hundred demonstrators kept up chants and speeches. One person was arrested for "throwing rocks at the gym" and one spectator went home with a bloodied nose.

By Sunday the NAACP and Revolutionary Student Brigade had gone home and the demonstration melted out as the "Drums of Peace" and cow-bells set the beat for the circling picket line. A trio bearing the Black Flag and black dolls crucified on giant crosses marched back and forth past the entrances to the gym.

Jerry Hornsby, a demonstration marshal with the Tennessee Coalition, reporter for the socialist paper THE GUARDIAN and former member of the socialist party managed to get on the court with a sign showing photos of South African atrocities. He had time to say: "Anybody who paid to see these matches is a racist. You have blood on your hands." before the police wrestled him out.

"YOU OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED --
YOU KNOW YOU'RE DOING WRONG!"

The attacks on apartheid sports had come a long way since British spectators drove South African teams out of England by throwing sacks of flour on courts. Awareness of South Africa was increasing, especially in the American press, as chants were picked up in news reports.

DON'T WANT NO RACKETS
NO RACKETS
DON'T WANT NO BALLS
NO BALLS
JUST WANT FREEDOM
FREEDOM FOR ALL

---Hal Wylie

Conference on International Sport, Politics, Racism and Apartheid

by Wayne Kamin

The international anti-apartheid sport movement held its Conference on International Sport, Politics, Racism, and Apartheid at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, on March 10-12. The conference was the first of its kind ever convened and the largest gathering of anti-apartheid groups ever assembled outside a United Nations forum.

Meharry Medical College president Dr. Lloyd Elam set the tone in his opening address. He described apartheid as "a disease that seeks to destroy (Black South Africans') health and image of self."

"The intimidation of the disease alike makes the oppressed peoples of South Africa internalize their feelings of inferiority," Elam said. The Davis Cup match between the U.S. and South Africa should be canceled, he added during his eloquent and moving remarks, as part of the cure of the disease of apartheid.

Conference participants represented virtually every one of the world's major anti-apartheid sport organizations, including groups from New Zealand, Canada, England, Ireland, and a special delegation from the United Nations. The conference was convened by Dennis Brutus, chairperson of ICARIS, the International Campaign Against Racism In Sport, the movement's global umbrella.

American anti-apartheid organizations present included ACCESS (American Coordinating Committee for Equality in Sport and Society), the American umbrella organization; the American Friends Service Committee; the Coalition for Human Rights in South

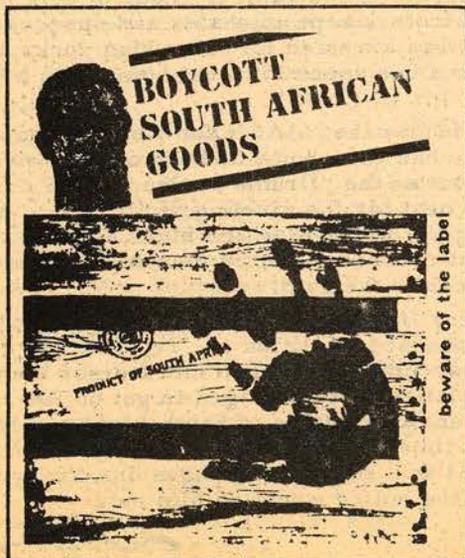
Africa, led by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, whose Nashville chapter worked with the Tennessee Coalition Against Apartheid to coordinate the Davis Cup protest marches and rallies; the National Student Coalition Against Racism; the Steve Biko Memorial Committee; and the South African Consciousness Project.

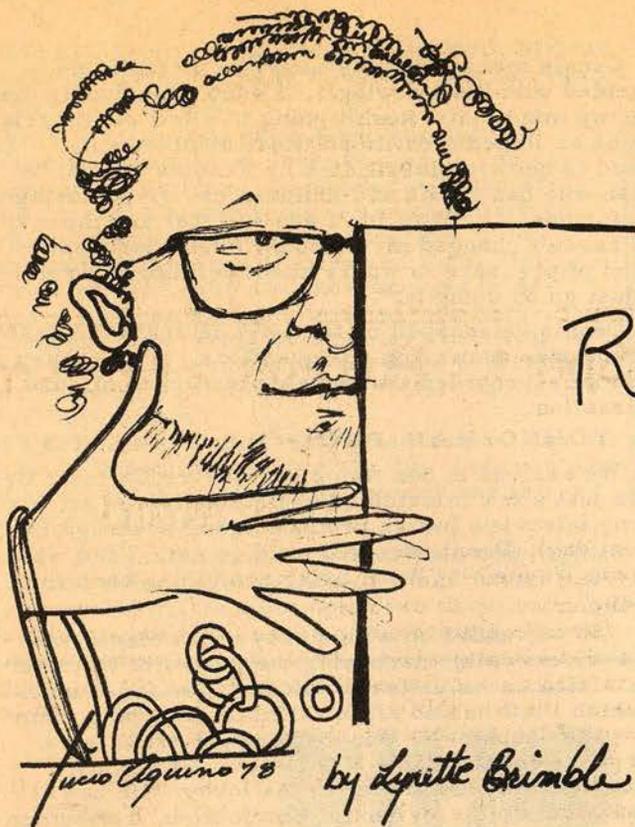
The United Nations was represented by an observing team from the U.N. Special Committee Against Apartheid. The U.N. team took back with it the conference's official statement and resolution, for use in the Special Committee's drafting of an International Convention Against Apartheid in Sport. The Special Committee will issue the International Convention later this year, in conjunction with the U.N. General Assembly's designation of 1978 as International Anti-Apartheid Year.

One of the major concerns of the international campaign against apartheid in sport has been to expel South Africa from membership in all international sports federations. Although South Africa has been barred from many of the federations, the regime still retains membership in over three dozen, including golf, rugby, and Davis and Federation Cup tennis. South Africa thereby retains a large world stage on which to parade apartheid in sport.

The conference paper presentations and open discussions therefore aimed at two bastions of support for South Africa's continuing participation in international sport. Conference participants presented detailed information about South Africa's segregated sports policies. Statistics showed, for example, that White sportsmen and sportswomen enjoy over 100 times the economic advantage of Black and Coloured South Africans in sport facilities. Further similar documentation swept away the web of confusing and misleading information circulated by the South African regime about its sports policies in order to retain its memberships.

By examining the constitutions of several international sporting federations, the conference showed that a small number of White-ruled nations sympathetic to South Africa have greater voting power than the rest of the member states. In other constitutional cases, a vote of two-thirds or even three-quarters majority is needed to expel a member nation. Again, sympathetic nations have come to White-supremacist South Africa's aid when the question was raised. Great attention also focused on the role of multinational corporations in undergirding apartheid in general, and particularly in sponsoring international sporting events. The conference's official statement and detailed resolutions strongly urged South Africa's exclusion from world sport until apartheid is dismantled in favor of racial equality.





Remember
Steve
Biko!

NERVOUSLY I GLANCED around the UT lecture hall in search of the unknown Dennis Brutus. Several imposing black men fit Hal's description of "austerity and unrelenting perseverance." As they suspiciously returned my questioning stares, I half-froze, anticipating the next three days of trailing behind SPORTS ILLUSTRATED'S "Dark Genius of Dissent" during his Steve Biko Memorial trip to Texas.

No matter. Professor Ben Lindfors had ascended the speaker's stand to announce the distinguished South African poet/politico/exile. Scribbling "FEB. 8" on my page of notes, I clicked on the cassette recorder. At the same time a thin man strode up to the podium. Unhesitatingly, he surveyed the audience, apparently estimating its potential commitment to South Africa. Then, in a tone sincere yet forceful, Professor Dennis Brutus launched ahead:

|| I find my best classes are those where people argue with me and present their own ideas... when they disagree with me as violently as they please... so I hope you'll feel free to do that. ||

Brutus next recited poetry -- some of it from his new collection, A STUBBORN HOPE -- and explained the why and wherefore of his anti-apartheid politics. As would remain constant in his next three lectures that day, Brutus set aside a large portion of the 45-minute class period for a question-and-answer session. Mainly African students, all very earnest and polite, rose to describe similar problems in their own countries. Probably because Brutus listened supportively and only added upon their remarks if clarification seemed necessary, the students spoke positively and concisely, proposing solutions based on their own experience. This pattern recurred, whether Brutus spoke from a podium, from the hotbox of a press conference or across an avocado sandwich at Yaring's.

Thus the lecture, "Current Poetry and Politics in South Africa," ended with more than perfunctory

applause, and Hal introduced me to the Northwestern professor:

"Dennis. This is Lynette."

"Hello, Lynette. So you're going to San Antonio with us tomorrow?"

But before I could answer, Brutus and his band of faculty, journalists and African compatriots were already hustling out the door toward lunch at Luigi's.

The conversation focused on the next day's press leak of the March 17 boycott of the Davis Cup Tennis competition in Nashville between white South Africans and Americans. Wayne Kamin of the American Friends Service Committee telephoned the San Antonio papers, the DAILY TEXAN and other Austin media to alert them and make appointments for the rest of the day and tomorrow. Essentials completed, everyone headed back to campus for the next lecture, sponsored by UT's Afro-American Culture Committee as part of its Black History Week.

From there, Dennis, Wayne, Hal, Hal's wife Carolyn and I dashed downtown for Dennis' TV spot on NEWS SCENE. Afterward, Dennis asked: "Did I do okay? I completely forgot to say that my earlier books were published by Troubadour Press right here in Austin." Meditatively he examined each of his responses, noting the few relevant points he had failed to cram into the seven-minute interview with Nancy Rice. Then, on to enchiladas and Margaritas at El Rancho. The (black) DAILY TEXAN reporter took notes:

|| South Africa's control is worked out with the CIA. Biko's funeral was a safety valve. No one was beaten up (there)... They just take pictures of everyone, so they can knock them off anytime they want... ||

We headed back to UT for the panel discussion, "The Sixties as a Social and Political Movement." Speaking alongside of Dennis were Harold Cruse of the University of Michigan and Dr. John Warfield, UT's Director of Black Studies. The 12-hour day ended as Dennis yawned: "I'm tired; I want to go to bed."

PEOPLE SLEEPING ON THEIR HEADS

Friday opened with a ten o'clock press conference in John Warfield's office. As the last of the reporters, television cameras, faculty members and students left, Dennis, Hal, Wayne and I climbed into Carolyn's 1965 Comet. I told Dennis: "If I were you, I think I would get tired of so many people asking me questions all the time." Without sarcasm or impatience he replied, "What would you

do? Get mad at them?" He reflected. "If I can get people interested and maybe a little involved, it's worth doing."

As we rode to Wayne's apartment -- our last stop before San Antonio -- Dennis talked about one of his many experiences with South African Indians and yoga:

I once slept in an incredible Ashram where everyone slept on their heads. It was like a Dante's Purgatorio. In the dawn light, the grey light, seeing people sleeping on their heads, their feet in the air... when I woke up I thought I'd died (well, I'd been drunk the previous night and I only made it there because I had danced virtually until dawn...)

A constant draft froze Dennis and me as we sat in the back seat of the Comet. Knowing that the car's various holes and dents would make a trip to San Antonio unbearable in February, Hal gave us blankets. But Dennis and I sat on most of them, trying to block the air stream flowing between the cushions from the trunk; they engulfed the confused mass of satchels, books and newspapers which surrounded us. Discovering a place in the back window for my tape recorder, I switched it on as Dennis explained the roots of his activism:

From the late 40s onward, I was already challenging apartheid in sports. In 1950 I not only become a member of a teacher organization, but in a matter of months I'm elected to the Executive and take a decision to attack the government's attempt to create new ghettos... But a public meeting is called in the city hall by a bunch of Uncle Toms, blacks who are advancing various compromise deals with the new ghetto system mainly, because they hope to buy property in these ghettos or, if they can't own the property, they are going to be the new supervisors of the ghettos... I attack them from the floor... and the audience shouts 'Can't hear you! Can't hear you!' so I vault onto the stage and take the mike from the speaker and literally take over the meeting which ends with a resolution attacking the whole concept of ghettos and racism and labeling it Nazi and all that... Prior to that, I had a different kind of track record. I was a teacher, scholar and a dreamer! I had been dismissed as somebody who couldn't be a serious politician, because of the assumption -- 'Well, if a guy's a poet, he can't also be a politician.'

Switching to his travels across South Africa, Dennis continued:

The president of the national weight-lifting association was a trucker, and I was the secretary. He had a lot of confidence in me, so when he had a contract he would arrange to do it on a Friday and return on a Monday, so I could ride with him. I'd ride right through the night. I must have criss-crossed South Africa dozens of times. It gave me the opportunity to analyze these problems. Each time we'd hit a town I would make a contact. While he was loading and unloading, I would be meeting with sports officials of that town, in football, in tennis, in table tennis, in softball, in boxing. I had a network all over the country, being on the road just about every weekend. And when he was not there, I thought nothing of getting on the road and thumbing a lift. The area where Biko grew up, I walked that area....

Dennis mused that his activism virtually coincided with his marriage, "I very consciously made up my mind that I wasn't going to allow my marriage to be an impediment to political involvement... I used to quote a classic line by Francis Bacon: 'A man who has a wife and children has given hostages to fortune.'" "Why don't you say that any more?" "I haven't changed my attitude; I don't feel that kind of pressure to worry about defining my role. I just go on doing it."

Dennis cat-napped on the way; he spent the rest of the ride answering our questions. I took notes and tape-recorded the quotable stretches of conversation.

A YOUNG MAN FROM MY HOME TOWN

We arrived in San Antonio's Carver Cultural Center just a few minutes before a reporter. After a long interview (which produced good coverage the next day), Dennis decided we'd go eat. "But what about Wayne?" "We'll bring something back for him."

So we ended up with a very quick dinner-on-the-river-walk, discussing the guerrilla warfare in Africa as we buttered soft tortillas for Wayne (which I left behind after carefully wrapping them in paper napkins). One long freight-train later, arriving for the BIKO MEMORIAL EVENING, we found Wayne agitated in the lobby. He had already set up the Friends' contribution, a documentary film on South Africa and was waiting to hustle the poet backstage.

The film THERE IS NO CRISIS showed life in the "townships" (ghettos) where the fulfillment of basic human needs is a faraway dream. It ended by listing the arrests and narrow escapes of every South African anti-apartheid leader who had been interviewed in the documentary. As the lights came on, Wayne appeared and delivered a short summation of his projects with the Friends. Then he introduced a very serious poet/activist:

Since that film was made, over 600 leaders of the people have been arrested. The twenty organizations which were the voice of the people have been banned. The struggle continues underground, with one important difference; the people of South Africa have decided that they are no longer going to meet machine guns and tear gas with bricks and stones and broomsticks... they have been pushed to an armed confrontation.

The seriousness of the black Africans' struggle hit the audience emotionally and intellectually. The lady behind me murmured "Amen."

Form in your mind the image of one young man, a student in my home town, Port Elizabeth. A young man kept naked in a prison cell, chained like an animal to the floor, beaten by the police, his body covered with burns from electric shocks when they interrogated him. That man, sixteen days on the floor of that cell, and then thrown naked and unconscious in a jeep and driven 700 miles from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria, and dying with his skull beaten in, with his brain smashed... I ask you to remember Steve Biko.

I remembered yesterday afternoon when I had asked Brutus if he worried about going to prison. "Well, if it happens, I'm sure I'll endure whatever I have to." How could he calmly assure me that he would endure after he had not only lost his right to teach, publish and live in South Africa,

but had also been shot in the back by South African security police and sent to Robben Island for 18 months without trial?

There is a law that says if you recruit people in this country to be mercenaries you are committing a crime. If you serve in the army of a foreign country and you are an American citizen, you are committing a crime. But hundreds of Americans, many of them Viet Nam veterans, are now mercenaries in Africa. Why has not one single person been prosecuted for being a mercenary in Africa? Why has not one single person been prosecuted for recruiting mercenaries? Where is the Justice Department?

I accuse the United States Government and the Justice Department of complicity. I accuse them of being accomplices in the murder and torture of people in Africa.

Later I found out some all-American type walked out at this point. And perhaps I would have been less sympathetic had I not spent two days trailing this relentless truth-pursuing South African poet.

This country made a commitment, made by President Carter when he stood at the rostrum of the United Nations and pledged that the United States would demonstrate an active concern for majority rule... self determination... human rights all over the world...

I say, and I believe Steve Biko would say, President Carter is guilty of hypocrisy. The American corporations, all 495 of them in South Africa, are profiting from the blood, the sweat, the corpses of the people of South Africa. On their behalf... I say this must stop!

Passing the Alamo for the dozenth and last time, Brutus sighed: "And now a moment of sentimental indulgence. But only a moment."

"Is it a public moment?"

But Brutus was already motioning to the wind and composing fresh lines of verse for an absent loved one. He lingered with her only a moment, then turned again to the world, and I turned on the tape recorder, letting it run until all the tape was gone.

BIKO MEMORIAL EVENING

by Mario Salas

Between three and four hundred people gathered in San Antonio's George Washington Carver Cultural Community Center auditorium on February 10, during Black Heritage Month, to celebrate the life and cause of slain Black South African political leader Steven Biko.

Dennis Brutus, exiled South African poet, activist, and special United Nations advisor on apartheid was the highlight speaker on the program. Brutus blasted the U.S. government and Justice Department for their complicity in the murder of Blacks fighting for political freedom in South Africa. Brutus stated that hundreds of U.S. citizens are fighting as mercenaries for White minority governments in Rhodesia and South Africa, even though it is against American law to do so.

"Why has not one single person been prosecuted in this country for being a mercenary?" Brutus asked.

Brutus further condemned the American government by accusing President Carter of hypocrisy in his stance on human rights. As the crowd applauded, Brutus asked what has happened to the human rights campaign in this country. He pointed out that some of the mercenaries presently fighting in Southern Africa are from San Antonio.

In fact, the San Antonio Light recently reported that Major Mike Williams of San Antonio had commanded a terrorist Rhodesian border patrol.

In reference to Steven Biko, founder and leader of South Africa's Black Consciousness Movement, Brutus told the audience, "Remember him (Biko) as a symbol of the courage and determination of the people of my country."

San Antonio State Representative Lou Nelle Sutton also spoke at the event. She urged protest against the support which U.S. corporations give to the racist regimes of Rhodesia's Ian Smith and South Africa's John Vorster. Rep. Sutton asked Afro-Americans to continue their fight for equality in order "to remain a beacon of hope to Black Africans."

Of great importance to the Biko Memorial Evening were the remarks made by Reverend Claude Black, pastor of Mt. Zion First Baptist Church. Rev. Black stated that for the first time in San Antonio, Black Heritage Month was directly involved in a fight against international racism.

"Black Americans have a mission," said Rev. Black, "to pressure the U.S. government to abolish international racism." Rev. Black was a member



THOMAS MELONCON

(article cont'd on page 10-->)

Poems of Prison and Release

James Matthews

South African writer James Matthews is the founder of the banned Black Literature and Arts Congress of South Africa and editor of the poetry anthology Black Voices Shout! He wrote the following poems while he was a political prisoner in solitary confinement in Cape Town for several months following the June 16, 1976 Soweto massacre of schoolchildren by South African riot police.

The complete book of Matthews' prison poems, Pass me a meatball, Jones, will be published by Troubadour Press of Austin on Soweto Day, 1978.

thoughts flock to my mind
uninvited mourners keening
at my death
dagging condemnations at a body
not yet settled in his plot
sweeping away my exhortations
their sharp words screw the coffin
to prevent further protestations
emanating from my heart
shuffled with impious haste
from the parlour to the grave
thoughts hurry into the mist
to spread the news that
i never was from the start

their wailing was
a wind seeking
escape from subterranean
torture chambers removed
from searching eyes
'at first loud
then faint echoes
of its loud
sound trapped in
bottlenecks; wails of
souls suffering punishment
writhing, squirming, screaming
pleading release from
mist entering chambers
wresting from them
tears as tribute
pain unendingly inflicted
by harsh overlords
controllers of their
confinement in hellholes
along subterranean chambers



clipped wings, i stand
and watch their flight
dark patterns traced on blue

limbs shackled, my spirit
soars and joins them
cavorting in the sky

making mock of earthbound things
they touch heaven's edge
and i share their delight

spell broken by clanging
door and grating key
i gaze as birds disappear

but heaven's flight fills me
with hope making me buoyant
knowing clipped wings will grow

imprisonment is dying in stages
each tear a drop of blood
dredged from within; pain deeply felt
too heavy for words to tell

castration of self by time inflicted
chipping minute particles from one's heart
the empty cavern entombing dead dreams
and an accumulation of cherished hopes

the strain to remember faces
blurred images of the past
and the score of conversation
imprisonment is too much to bear

fear, a snake
wrapped around my throat
makes my eyes cockroach
at the blockage of breath

blood tripping veins
rush a rapid pace
rivers running in flood
panic me with the flow

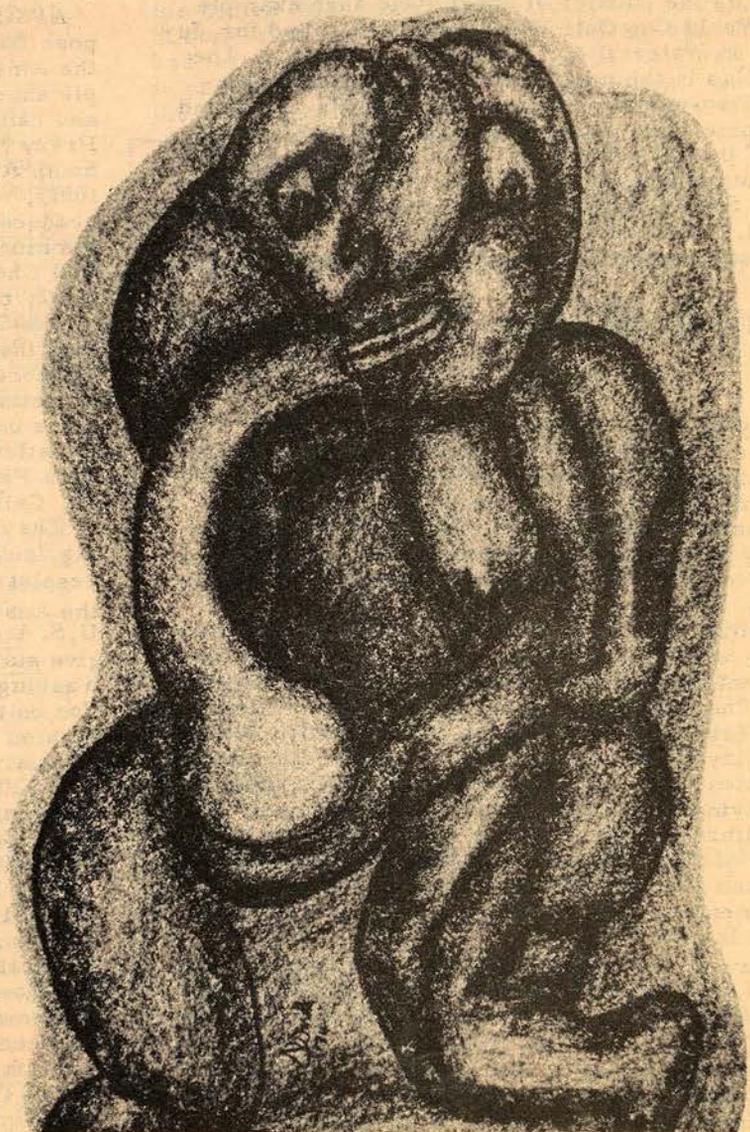
drumbeats echoing in my heart
pound a savage sound
activating limbs in frenzied dance
devised by fear

i found my wash-bowl
decorated with petals
coloured a caesar's cloak
and wondered who the listener
privy to my silent longing
for a sign of beauty
had left a compassionate token
that he shared my fears
of opening his eyes
to find the sombreness
of the cell had taken
possession of our mind
burying beauty with our thoughts
and that a thing that is enchanting
will not last

making wordly sport
of woman's body
a prisoner's litany
rapacious morning joy
recalling lust-filled fantasies
and damp shanks
creamed in exertion
squirming under blankets
searching for relief
to needs unfilled
and desires damned
mouthing animalistic pain

it lays there so invitingly
that verdant slope of
hill
sweetly curved like a woman's
body
the wind brings the perfume it
wears
my eyes travel its stretch of
thigh
my hands tingle to touch its rocks
nipples
its brow decorated with garlands of
heather
my spirit yearns for its
embrace
but i could only regretfully
sigh
beyond reach it lays so
enticingly

Editor's note: James Matthews wrote the three
poems on page 12 after release from prison in
early 1977.



Resources

FOR ORGANIZING AGAINST APARTHEID

BY WAYNE KAMIN

The March 17-19 United States-South Africa Davis Cup tennis match is one of innumerable specific events which have and will directly involve Americans in the international politics of race relations and human rights. America, as a part of the world community, can no longer avoid coming to terms with the brutal inhumanity of apartheid in South Africa.

The American Friends Service Committee, as a member of the American Coordinating Committee for Equality in Sport and Society (ACCESS), resolves that South Africa will be increasingly isolated from sport and all other international forums until apartheid is dismantled.

We need only look at the sponsorship of many international sporting events which allow South African participation to see that American transnational corporations involve America in the economics as well as the politics of sport. One such example is the World Cup Golf Tournament scheduled for July 1978 in Waterville, County Kerry, Ireland. The World Cup is the major international team golf award. Two-man teams from fifty nations are slated to compete, including a team from South Africa. Four of the six permanent World Cup sponsors are American transnational corporations which do business in South Africa. They are Pan-American Airlines, I. T. T., Colgate-Palmolive, and American

Steve Biko Memorial

(cont'd)

of last year's San Antonio City Council, which passed a resolution asking citizens not to purchase South African Krugerrand gold coins.

During the evening, a petition was circulated condemning the Republic of South Africa and calling on Congress to use its power of taxation to take the profits out of U.S. corporate investments in South Africa.

The Biko Memorial Evening was coordinated by the San Antonio Committee Against Mercenary Recruitment and U.S. Intervention in Foreign Countries. The program also included a play entitled "The Death of O.D. Walker," by nationally known Black playwright and folksinger Thomas Meloncon of Houston. Meloncon also sang freedom songs, accompanying himself on guitar and backed up by Donald Bedford on piano. Wayne Kamin, Regional Coordinator of Southern Africa Peace Education for the American Friends Service Committee, presented a documentary film about South African apartheid, "There Is No Crisis."

The event was sponsored by the AFL-CIO Trades Council, the Association of Black Social Workers, the NAACP, the Young Workers Liberation League (Austin), Tu Casa, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Rho Chapter, and the Black Student Unions of several San Antonio colleges. Other sponsors included City Councilman Joe Webb, lawyer Maury Maverick, Jr., the Nation of Islam, and the Afro-American Club of Wheatley High School.

Express. People interested in supporting the protest of the matches should write to those corporations. Write also to Kader Asmal, Chairman of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, 20 Beechpark Road, Foxrock, Dublin 18, Ireland.

Because American transnational corporations sponsor most international sporting events which allow South African participation, they must be addressed for the part they play in the maintenance of apartheid sport. The Texas office of the American Friends Service Committee (600 West 28th Street #102, Austin, Texas 78705; 512-474-2399) is compiling a list of transnationals who sponsor those sporting events. That information is available to everyone. We also hope you will help us in the project by sending names of sponsors, events, locations, and the dates of the events to the Texas office.

The address for ACCESS is Dr. Richard Lapchick, Chair, ACCESS, Virginia Wesleyan College, Wesleyan Drive, Norfolk, Virginia 23502; phones 804-461-3232 and 804-428-1250.

AFSC is also at work with the Committee to Oppose Bank Loans to South Africa, an affiliate of the American Committee on Africa. Interested people should write to the committee for affiliation and campaign activity suggestions. The address is Prexy Nesbitt, Committee to Oppose Bank Loans to South Africa, 305 East 46th Street, New York, NY 10017, or call 212-838-5030. The national AFSC headquarters is another resource. Write to Michael Simmons, Southern Africa Peace Education, AFSC, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102, or call 215-241-7000.

The San Francisco AFSC office, in conjunction with that city's branch of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, has produced a pamphlet targeting the Bank of America that is also useful for other banks and lending institutions. The pamphlet is called "Stop Banking on Apartheid." Write to Niva Padihla, AFSC, 2160 Lake Street, San Francisco, California 94121, or call 415-752-7766.

The Texas AFSC office has information on pending South Africa-related Congressional bills and resolutions and their individual sponsors. Write to the Austin address given above to find out which U.S. legislators are involved. They can serve to give state anti-apartheid activities added voice. The Washington Office on Africa has available information on the voting records of all U.S. Congress members on South and Southern Africa issues. Write to them at 110 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, or call 202-546-7961. They also have information on the activities of the Congressional Black Caucus, which has been active recently in South Africa-related legislation.

Very little regulation actually exists for transnational corporate activity. Most of it is a maze with so many loopholes as to be largely ineffective. Little also exists for state input to regulatory activity. However, in February of this year, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected corporate challenges to a nineteen-state commission created to coordinate taxation of big businesses that operate across state lines. Taxation is one lever on corporate activity that involves the American public. Much work obviously still needs to be done and requires vigilance.

One helpful educational outline on transnational

corporations comes from the Portland AFSC office. The Texas office can make copies for your use in developing community and state-based action on the transnationals. The outline is called "Study/Action on the Global Impact of Multinational Corporations." By way of outline and bibliography, it contains information on transnational history, power base interlocutors, the limited existing national and international controls, and alternatives for responsible corporate activity in light of the arising new international economic order.

Two organizations have produced informative lists of transnationals and their operations in South Africa. Together they provide us with the U.S. home bases of those corporations in various states and the names, business activities, and numbers of employees at affiliate plants in South Africa. One list is called "American Firms, Subsidiaries, and Affiliates Operating in the Republic of South Africa," and comes from The Africa Fund, another affiliate of the American Committee on Africa. Write to The Africa Fund at 305 E. 46th Street, New York, NY 10017, or phone 212-838-5030. The other list is called "Investors in Apartheid: U.S. Firms with Subsidiaries in South Africa." It was compiled by NARMIC (National Action/Research on the Military-Industrial Complex), an AFSC project. You can write for a copy of that list to the Texas AFSC office, to NARMIC at the national AFSC headquarters in Philadelphia, or to the AFSC office in your area.

The South African Catalyst Project (SACP) was founded to help provide basic information to coalitions intent on influencing universities to divest their portfolios of stocks in U.S. transnational corporations which have business operations in South Africa. Organize is SACP's technical and political handbook for campus mobilization that can also serve the general community. It quite simply, level-headedly, and with feeling lays out the brass tacks of beginning, organizing, and building a movement. SACP also offers a radical analysis of the role of U.S. transnationals in the apartheid system called United States Investment in South Africa. Moreover, SACP has begun to dispense updated accounts of college and university divestiture campaigns around the country. Write SACP c/o Chris Gray, 570 Oxford Street, Apt. E, Palo Alto, California 94306, and help out by supplying divestiture information you have on hand.

Other literature as well as films on apartheid and the roles of American transnationals and lending and investment institutions is available through several sources. AFSC offers its selection in a small brochure called Resources for Education and Action. One offering in the brochure is the Action Guide on Southern Africa, which includes an extensive catalog of film sources, campaign activities, and Southern Africa contact groups in and outside the U.S. Tri-continental Film Center's 1977-1978 catalog is available by writing 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, NY 10014, or phoning 212-989-3330. California Newsreal has established a Southern Africa Media Center. Write for the brochure to 630 Natoma, San Francisco, California 94101.

The United Nations is an indispensable source of information on apartheid. The U.N. Centre Against Apartheid over the years has compiled and printed numerous important monographs on apartheid and its opposition. One of the most current documents is OPI/576-36544-March 1977, the U.N. General Assembly's Programme of Action Against Apartheid. The document commends the Programme to all governments, organizations, and individuals, "in order to assist the people of South Africa in their struggle

for the total eradication of apartheid and the exercise of the right of self-determination by all the people of South Africa irrespective of race, colour and creed."

Another recent Centre Against Apartheid publication is called A Landmark in the Struggle Against Apartheid. This pamphlet is the result of the August 1977 Lagos, Nigeria, World Conference Against Apartheid, which was convened by the U.N. in cooperation with the Organisation of African Unity. Write to the Centre for copies of each of those two important international documents, as well as for a complete list of other Centre resource publications. The address is Centre Against Apartheid, United Nations, New York, NY 10017.

There are too many anti-apartheid organizations for mention here. However, one new coalition which has proven successful in mobilizing broad-based support for the anti-apartheid movement is the Steve Biko Memorial Committee. The Committee is based in Chicago. Its coordinator is Anthony Stephens, and the address is 39 S. LaSalle, Suite 825, Chicago, Illinois 60603 (phone 312-263-5095). One of the aims of the Steve Biko Memorial Committee is to inform and mobilize the public around the issues of apartheid inhumanity, such as Black Consciousness Party founder and leader Steve Biko's brutal murder by the South African police. Other aims include drawing parallels between racism in the United States and South Africa, the usefulness of nonviolent initiatives for dismantling apartheid, and the role of U.S. business and banking activity in undergirding apartheid. The group also rents out the latest anti-apartheid film, "The Rising Tide."

THICKET

a literary magazine for creative expression, publishes fine contemporary writers from this country and abroad, including Africa. Its format includes poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, translations and graphics.

DISSIDENT POETRY FROM LENINGRAD, a special feature section of THICKET's third issue, includes a substantial interview with Konstantin Kuzminsky and a selection of poems from underground Leningrad poets. This issue is now available in Austin bookstores.

All issues are available by mail (\$2.35).

THICKET

box 7912

Austin, TX

78712

i delighted
in the fear
cringing in their eyes
as they placed me behind
that iron door in the cell
they conceived will turn into my grave

my silence
silenced the shrill
accusations of their voices
demanding my voice remain mute
to the demands of the rights
rightful for an oppressed man to make

the firming
of my heart
was nurtured by their
fears as their hands trembled
ringing iron shackles around my wrist
to drain the power in my arms

is freedom
only theirs to
have? i softly asked
is it not for every man
to share and spread the need
of brotherhood's common creed in our land

my mocking
laughter was louder
than their footsteps as
they hurried from my cell
to bury the truth in their
hearts which their faces could not hide

The voices of
my brothers sustained
me in the dark
of my days
as we shared
confinement in the
solitariness of our cells
the songs sung
were freedom songs
from which was
forged mail vests
covering us from
their physical assault
our songs reached
other brothers confined
in other parts
of the prison
freedom songs became
a raging storm
and our voices
waves rushing forth
to drown those
who dared confine
men whose freedom
would not be denied

at the first offer
of judas-pay
his loyalty leaked
like yolk from an egg
leaving a scummy white
and our awareness alerted
by the cockroaching
of his eyes
as it met ours
his clandestine whisperings became
available to our ears
as another name was
added to the list
his masters compiled
he eluded our grasp
as he cowered in
the protective glare
of prison guards
waiting out his time
for early release
while we remain
behind iron bars



james matthews

PELCULEF.

PELANDABA CULTURAL EFFORT :

Pelculef is the newsletter of a new cultural association of South African refugees living in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana, just north of South Africa. The first issue of the newsletter contains an introductory editorial (excerpted below) about the association, the Pelandaba Cultural Effort (PCE). The rest of the newsletter includes poetry, news, and the background story of An Anthem of Liberation, PCE's program of literature, song, dance, drama, film, and movement which has evolved since Soweto Day, 1977.

Pelculef #1 also contains a review of Mongane Serote's new book of poetry, no baby must weep, and Serote's preface to Shaya, a fresh anthology of poetry by South Africans exiled in Botswana.

While in Gaborone last summer, I met with Serote and other members of PCE. We spoke about PCE, then still largely a conception in mind. It is good that the Gar can introduce the group now.

The fact that Serote left the West to be near South Africa in time of need is no surprise. For one thing, Gaborone and refugee camps I saw elsewhere in Botswana are still unequipped to handle the large numbers of South African men, women, and especially children who have temporarily or permanently fled the tragic brutality of South African apartheid.

South Africans struggling for their freedom, whether in forced exile or inside South Africa, will have it one day. To that end we encourage your support of PCE's commendable effort to foster a sense of community and the creative arts which are brutally suppressed by the South African government at home.

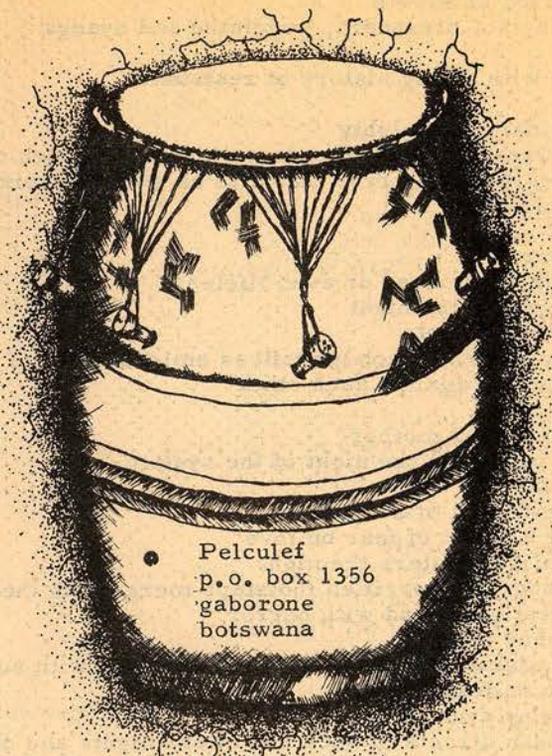
Mail an international money order for \$3.00, made out to Pelandaba Cultural Effort, to the Gaborone address on this page, along with a note requesting Pelculef #1 by name. I have no doubt that a larger contribution will be put to good use.

-- Wayne Kamin

CULTURAL BODIES like the Pelandaba Cultural Effort are not merely shaped by people who feel they need a cultural body by all means necessary, nor do they sprout out of the ground like mushrooms after a rainy day, no. One of the most important factors which contributes towards the establishment of such bodies, which causes them to exist, is the geopolitical situation people find themselves in.

Pelandaba was a house in which political exiles from South Africa lived, loved, fought and lost, the final loss being the house. From that house -- and seeing very few avenues open -- emerged a cultural group that had a few aims, recognizing that as an exile one can easily sit on one's backside for years. The group realized that there was a shocking lack of relevant theatre or cultural groups operating here in which exiles could take part, and that those that are here have got nothing to do with the black people and the black experience, and that those existing potentials must be developed and nurtured. By relevant we mean that which relates to wishes and aspirations, dreams and goals of black oppressed people. The Pelandaba Cultural Effort is one of the means by which black artists to reassert their pride as people, to foster dignity and solidarity.

13

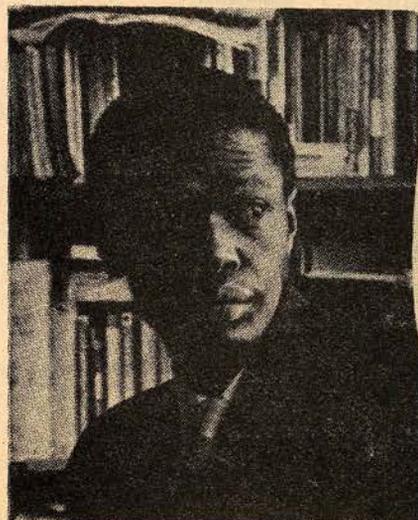


Pelculef
p.o. box 1356
gaborone
botswana

PCE aims at granting affiliation to black artists; to present plays and organize exhibitions for the arts; to encourage creativity and development in a widening spectrum of the arts; to foster an interchange of ideas by providing symposiums and lectures; and to work towards bolstering a new cultural impulse and generate a consciousness that will do away with ignorance and avarice whose resultant issues are anger, jealousy and hostility. In the distortion of a people's history and contribution -- and colonizers are past masters at that hideous art -- those invested with the power and prerogative to distort automatically distort their own history. And they are thus demented.

(From the editorial introduction to PELCULEF #1)

Trading Poet -14



This well known poet continues the GAR-series of trading poets. Cut out each one. Trade with your friends! Identify the poet. Collect the whole series. Each reader sending us 10 different poets (from the GAR) properly identified wins a free lifetime subscription. Hurry!

it were us, it is us
the children of Soweto
langa, kagiso, alexandra, gugulethu and nyanga
us
a people with a long history of resistance
us
who will dare the mighty
for it is freedom, only freedom which can quench our thirst—
we did learn from terror that it is us who will seize history
our freedom.

remember
as though motherless or even lifeless
how we walked the night
the loveless streets
owned by so cruel such merciless emissaries who speak foreign tongues
who turned us against each other
remember—
ask any child or mother
who are penned in the night of the system
ask any father
about the weight of despair
about the assault of fear on love
when gunfire shatters the night
and the running, terrified footsteps merge with the heartbeat
a heartbeat gone mad with horror
for so many nights
so many nights, so many of us have slipped with such swiftness
from life to death
for so many cruel deaths
on the mean streets of such merciless nights and days
remember
how you or i or anyone of us
with a voluptuous lust for death
how we got drunk
with whiskey, dagga and religions
remember the shattering despair to feel as worthless as debris
remember the shades of death we longed for
here we are now

we think of the nights behind us
when the children were shot, when their blood was spilled
when their little bodies rolled on the streets
rolled as if stones gone mad rolling from the mountains
remember how they charged, the children charged and fell
as if into a deep fathomless abyss
here we go again
a man or a woman
out of the insatiable stomachs of vampires called factories
walks the night soaked with the blood of the children
walks weary on a friday night
to where?
do not tell us of soweto, alexandra, langa, nyanga, athlone, bonteheuwel
or witbank
the ember of the blood of our children has turned these to ashes
it were us it is us
who were taught by history
that terror before the will of the people
is like a sheep in the mouth of a crocodile
here we go again
we have learnt from so many cruel nights
that oppressors are guilty forever
and we know that we will move.

it will be the trees, the mountains
it will be the silence of the karroo and its heat
it will be the song of our rivers
moving, us one with them
moving
the night giving us sanctuaries
the day witness but silent
it will be us
steel-taut to fetch freedom
and—
we will tell freedom
we are no more strangers now.



NO MORE STRANGERS

Mongane Serote

(from PELCULEF, vol. 1,
October 1977)

PART ONE

how could we have taken so many journeys yet never arrive
remember
the hoe we carried beneath the whipping sun
and the bible that we carried our eyes glued to the empty sky
how one time we learnt sections of sub-sections and proclamations
and now we wield the gun as if it were a whisk
the water of the womb spills now
the face of the day frowns with pain
do we have a speech for this child
or is it another urchin.

PART TWO

so one day hope begins to walk
it whispers
about the twisted corpses that we saw
sprawled across the streets on this knowledgeable earth
the tears
the blood
the memory
the knowledge, which was born by every heavy minute that we carried
across the wilderness, where there were no paths
where screams echoed, as if never to stop
it is when there is no hope, that hope begins to walk again
yet
like we said
hope never befriends fools

PART THREE

what is it that we want
to shout
to shoot
to betray fathers and render children fatherless
to betray mothers and thus wipe out nations
to die in shame
ah my brother
whisper to me, what do we want
to betray our brothers and render them an issue of furious fires
to wrench our hands out of our sisters' hands
so we can hear their screams tearing the night
ah
africa whisper to me, touch this hurt mind this weary heart
if i die in this painful pose
if your greed
your power
is going to be stained by my blood
why have i walked many foreign plains and streets
while my desires for you were tortuous
i have seen many terrible nights come and go
i have clutched your hand many times when i was lost in the streets
whose names i could not pronounce
africa
i have had no choice but to walk from between your thighs
clad in your blood.

(extracts from behold mama, flowers!)

Mongane Serote

(from PELCULEF, vol. 1, October 1977)



In the dark lanes of Soweto
amid the slush, the mud, the squalor
and among the rusting tin sheets of the shacks
the lust for freedom stubbornly survives
like a smouldering defiant flame—
and the spirit of Steve Biko moves easily.

IN REMEMBRANCE

A TRIBUTE FOR STEVE BIKO

The dusty roads
from Peddie to King

the yellow river
choking with silt
draining to i'Monti

the dust-filmed bluegums
poised and dreaming
in the arid air

the parching dust
harsh in the throat
and hurtful on the eyes

the crude teutonic towns—
Hamburg, Berlin, Hanover—
with their ominous echoes

— all these he knew
their roads he traversed:

they fired him with resolve
and smoldering anger

their racial hate seethed round him
like the surge of shimmering heatwaves
and laid a thousand lashes
on his taut flesh;

here he planned, dreamed,
waged his struggle
and hardened his will
to confront the butchers

to challenge their terror
— even if they robbed him of his life.



STEVE BIKO, a leader of the resistance to apartheid in South Africa, died in detention, September 1977. King is short for Kingwilliamstown; Biko was born and spent most of his life there; i'Monti (pr. E'Monte) is the Xosa name for East London, a city nearby.

LETTER TO THAMIMHLAMBISO, African National Congress Representative in New York:

It was with deep sadness that I learnt of the death of our dear brother and comrade Duma Nokwe. He rendered splendid and generous service, often at great sacrifice and with much personal hardship, to the noble cause of the liberation of our country South Africa.

I last had the opportunity to work with him in August of 1977 at the World Conference Against Apartheid in Lagos, Nigeria, when he rendered important and valuable services both when speaking from the podium in the closing session and in the drafting commission which prepared some of the initial conference documents. He will be sadly and deeply missed by many in the struggle.

Our association was a long and fruitful one, dating back to the time when we were fellow-students at Fort Hare, and living at the same hostel, Beta Hall, tho' I was not politically active then. Thereafter, in Johannesburg, where he was facing the Treason Trial, and subsequently in Dar es Salaam, Lusaka, London, New York, Chicago and finally, Lagos. We often worked together and I was impressed by his competence, his energy and his unfailing optimism and good spirits: he not only worked well, but inspired others to do so in the struggle.

While he will be sorely missed, I know the struggle will continue to a successful conclusion and Duma Nokwe's memory will be an inspiration to many of us.

A LUTA CONTINUA!

SEQUENCE

Bright water glistening
over smooth hard pebbles
sparkles coruscating
in the festive Presidio

such bright grace
such luminous charm
and the clear brave eyes
shining with tight-curbed sorrow

Now they say the brightness is quenched
the elegance crumpled.
Strange. And stranger yet
they say the bright courage failed.

Biko, you know
resisted the terrors:
confronted by them
he braced himself to die
even as their clubs
pulped his brain:
the will to die
may have been his last
fragmentary concept,
only a diffuse defiance
remaining as they killed him.

---for Beatriz Allende
who killed herself in Cuba
in 1977

poems by dennis brutus



Sorrow for the children of Soweto,
weep for the corpses of Soweto
and swear an oath for Soweto—
their deaths will not be forgotten,
their lives will purchase our freedom.

Thomas Mann's Death in Dar es Salaam

by Stephen H. Arnold
Department of Comparative Literature
University of Alberta

The bourgeoisie...compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i. e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

Marx & Engels, The Manifesto of the Communist Party

Dar es Salaam, 1974. Assignment: teach "Literature and Revolution" to twenty-five majors in Literature in the graduating class of the national university. First prescribed text, Thomas Mann's Death in Venice! Obviously a negative example, but why this one? Texts to follow easier to justify: Brecht's Days of the Commune, Mayakovsky's "V. I. Lenin," O'Casey's Purple Dust, Tressell's Ragged Trousered Philanthropists, Morris' News from Nowhere, and London's Iron Heel. Two additions, limited by the availability of books in Dar, Lu Hsun's Old Tales Retold (inserted after Morris), and "The Success of Kazimoto," a Tanzanian story for 12-14 year olds, put at the end of the list.

With the blessing of a library devoid of criticism, I set out to read works and plan lectures for two weeks prior to our first meeting. Stumped by Mann's DV, I leave it aside.

With Days of the Commune (1948), I thought I should first talk about "epic theatre," and then, if I could find it, discuss its relationship to a Scandinavian play of 1948, The Defeat, which Brecht considered to be full of lies and pessimism about the 1871 Paris Commune, and necessary to refute in another play. Next I would take up the topic of political slogans (so important to the play), as a form of literature. After that I would measure Brecht's portrayal of the Commune against its history, and end by drawing lessons from the 1871 Commune, relate the play to the strong but chaotic position of the Parisian proletariat in 1948, and finally lead discussion to its relevance to Tanzania in 1974.

For Mayakovsky I intended to lecture on the history of epic poetry, explain why it died out under capitalism, why socialist writers were reviving it, and so forth. The changes brought to epic by Mayakovsky would precede my description of the poet as a man and his distortions of Lenin and the Revolution, as determined by juxtaposition with selections from Lenin himself and certain historical materials.

I would introduce O'Casey's play as a pastoral, give a lecture on the history of the genre and the play's place in it, showing again how a progressive writer was reviving a form practically abandoned by previous bourgeois art. Then I would go into Irish history and the Gaelic Renaissance, drawing parallels between negritude writings and Purple Dust. The class basis of racism in the play and British colonial history would complete these lectures.

William Morris' novel would necessitate an outline history of utopian literature, to be followed by talk about Marxist struggles against the utopian school, and Morris' place in this great nineteenth-century battle. Specifically I would demonstrate the content of his war against Bellamy, whose odious, idealist utopia—Looking Backward—had been written a year or so previously and had been promoted by ruling classes to become a best-seller.

With the first class meeting almost upon me I had to abandon my evasion of Thomas Mann and find a revolutionary handle on his work. Consistent with my other planning, I unconsciously decided to begin with superstructural history. Knowing nothing about the students I would teach, and nothing about their previous experience in literary and historical studies, I assumed all the wrong things. I assumed that because they were in the graduating class they would all know a considerable amount of European cultural history (for example that Plato and Platonic thought would be vaguely familiar to them) and would have mastered in literary theory courses basic structural concepts (irony, point of view, and so forth).

I was to be ambushed by my own naivete. When seven lectures yielded to disgruntled resentments approaching discussion, I learned they had never heard of Plato, and they militantly refused to permit a separation between Mann and his protagonist Aschenbach—the irony of author criticizing character and the sustained symbol of homosexuality were denied by fierce adherence to the literal level of the narrative. I offer this anticipation as a Brechtian epic intrusion, so that the failure of my lectures, now to be outlined, will be more obvious. (A further violation of chronology is necessary here. I was later to discover in content something which was only an abstract article of faith at the time. The students in Dar knew no less about history and literature than my North American students. They merely knew different things, from different perspectives.)

Meanwhile, back in the lecture hall. Before roaring off on my too softly spoken, very foreign accented, gatling-gun ideas on DV, I held a get-acquainted session. Students asked me four questions which I took one hour to answer: (1) tell us about revolution in Canada; (2) tell us about your life; (3) do you have children? (4) can you suggest any reading to us?

The second lecture period was also a seminar of the whole, addressed to three questions meant to establish some common ground. Proceeding from the name of the course we pursued answers to (1) what is literature? (2) what is revolution? (3) what shall the aims of this course be? Many vague, abstract answers were given to "What is literature?" In sum, they had a difficult time—as North American students do—distinguishing literature from other forms of written activity. Finally, I stated that the question was a trap, an old, idealist question. Circling the word "is," I led to a historical and dialectical materialist definition, demonstrating how different social classes in different places and times have given various and sometimes mutually exclusive definitions to "literature." Illustrations of this and other material on the same theme elicited some enthusiasm.

My examples were drawn from literature foreign

to them. Feudalist literature, in its neoclassical stage in France in the seventeenth century, in fierce reaction against lively empirical and inductive tendencies in Renaissance literature inspired by the young bourgeoisie, had taken class struggle out of the recently reacquainted inheritance of art from antiquity. Feudalist art attempted to erase history in its coherent, evolving variety of phases, in order to eternalize feudal class relations and the worldview of the aristocracy.

Against this static, ahistorical worldview, expressed in drama and poetry observing strict generic rules and separation of styles applied to nobles and masses, bourgeois literature was rising with its faith in progress, change, upward mobility, lack of respect for generic barriers corresponding to class lines, etc. After it took power and transformed feudalism into capitalism, it began its own attempt to make people believe the world had always been the same as the present world. The givens of capitalism became the model for all history. The new cultural premises born of capitalism in its struggle to overthrow feudalism became a new set of philosophical a priori-isms designed to convince people that the basic features of capitalism had always existed and that this was firmly rooted in the inherent and immutable nature of humanity. People had, according to this view, always exhibited the traits of the capitalists; they had always been competitive, greedy, aggressive, destructive, driven by self-interest, etc. Women had always been inferior to men. Exploitation had always existed, etc.

The bourgeois economists, Ricardo and Smith, could not explicate and grasp the key working principle of capitalism. They could not grasp value and its social evolution. Bourgeois political economy assumes, for example, that money has always been a feature of social barter. Espousing this notion, the bourgeoisie collapses historical progress into some eternal, private property and money. It took the revolutionary genius of Marx to expose the fact that money is not synonymous with capital; that surplus value evolved and gave rise to capitalism—the predominance of surplus value is capitalism.

I developed these points in preparation for reading Mann's DV, as a literary work by a member of the bourgeoisie who wants to expose bourgeois deceit. Mann, I explained, was a liberal, a reformer, yet nevertheless a reactionary. Reform would allow his class to survive. It was not a position taken because of any moral concern for the masses. He feared them and they disgusted him no less than his own class.

Next lecture. I promised first to demonstrate how the work is approached in bourgeois intellectual circles, and then to come at it again from the proletarian or Marxist-Leninist point of view. According to the first scheme, I laid out the cultural premises of DV, beginning with Platonic and Neo-Platonic currents in the work and in its background. I backed up to Heine and romantic irony, and came forward again to talk of irony about irony. I moved in reverse once more to show how Goethe's Faust figured in Aschenbach's parentage. At this point a student made bold, interrupted me, and said, "If we are to discuss this novel in any useful way, first we must have the historical and cultural background." I missed the cue. I was so involved in subtleties I misread what was being said, and replied that I was giving that background, and that discussion, useful or otherwise, couldn't take place until it was given. (This must have sounded very arrogant to someone who was really telling me that if I expected them to follow what I was saying, it was nonsense, unless Thomas Mann as a person and

Germany of the prewar period were made the foundation for understanding.)

The following session was a seminar, the students' turn. A welcome hand broke through my fog. "I'd like to talk about cultural revolution." "Fine, go ahead," I said, not seeing the immediate connection, but glad to have a chance to hear someone else. The man in the beret rambled into a speech about the need for Tanznians to emulate the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. Thanking him,

I said we would soon be practicing just that by looking at DV in the context of the struggles that produced it and then in light of what relevance, if any, it had for the Tanzanian masses. I had missed another cue. To me the remark had seemed supportive to my notion that we were preparing in class to participate in revolution outside of class. What was meant, of course, was that I was perceived as a blow-hard expert who should be overthrown.

Next session: character and point-of-view analysis. I began with Aschenbach, described as representative of a section of the bourgeoisie, then as bourgeoisie itself, and finally as embodiment of the decline of bourgeois art from vigorous symbolism to decadence. Then came Tadzio. Why, I asked, did Mann show him only from the outside, an immature child into whom Aschenbach absurdly projected genius and subtlety? I talked of him as an idea, as the Platonic conception of beauty.

At the next seminar a student summarized the book with a quotation: "Obsession with beauty alone does not yield useful knowledge." I applauded. Precisely what Mann is saying about the Aschenbachs of his class, I said. I missed the intent of his remark. The student was not showing he seized and agreed with this point of Mann's. He was objecting to the book itself, but stopping short of saying let's throw it out and get on to another. This was my sentiment as well, but I felt tied to the book and determined to teach from negative example.

The images of the tiger and the mysterious young-old man in the early passages next drew my interest. Aschenbach's hallucinations lead back to Freud, to Dionysius and Apollo, to Romanticism versus Classicism, to Primitivism versus Civilization, to Death Wishes and Reality Principles, to the Liebestod, to Charon, to Aschenbach's regret at never having had a son, to his dreams...

Wanting to demystify all of this, to turn to the promised proletarian reading, I began to convert existential (growing old) and psychological (insanity) themes into social class analysis. I did not know until months later that most of the men had stopped reading the story when they discovered the homosexuality, and that several of the women did not even believe that the author could actually be dealing with a phenomenon so unusual in the African world. I was teaching from a European perspective and momentarily guilty of universalizing the world I came from, imposing it onto the African scene, where Aschenbach's infatuation with Tadzio must have impressed the readers with shock value equivalent to the impact rape of young children would have on us.

I introduced Mann, his bourgeois family, and Germany in the prewar period. I read from letters of Mann, and essays, in order to establish his political views. I was now in the matter that I should have begun with. I isolated for consideration the images of proletarians in the novel, contrasting their vitality, though prejudicially presented, with the upper classes. Signs of interest were rekindling.

Unfortunately, the Ali Mazrui medicine show rode into town before our next class. For three

hours Mazrui shadow-boxed with mighty metaphors. Marxism, he argued, is inapplicable to Africa. Its proponents show an "aggressive dependency" on Europe. Those who follow these misguided importers of alien ideology, he said, show submissive "passive dependency" on Europe. Two extended metaphors illustrated these types, and then were used over and over again in a three-hour, wear-your-audience-down-so-they-will-have-no-questions-to-ask strategy. The metaphors were substituted for the world, and, in a hazily described world external to the metaphors, action was counseled. "Creative eclecticism," using a spoon of Marx, a pinch of Gandhi, a dash of Confucius, and a dollop of tribal warrior traditions, would make a brew to cure Africa's ills.

Mazrui argued with syllogisms, not analysis. He might as well have said, "(1) Man rapes Nature; (2) Man is part of Nature; (3) therefore Nature has only Herself to blame," and then elaborated this idiom to conclude that it is not capitalism which pollutes, ravages, and ruins Nature, but generalized humanity. Anything to let monopoly capitalism off the hook. Bourgeois criticism always dispenses with the real world.

At our next class period students bubbled with anti-Mazrui-isms. "His 'solutions' are pollutions"; "He's an Afrosaxon" (using a slur the glib Ali coined for others in one of his "Sting like a butterfly, float like a bee" speeches).

Mazrui is like Mann, I began; they both substitute an image for the world and explicate the world in terms of the image. Dialectical materialist analysis moves from particulars of reality to general theory, back to reality, and so forth, always relating parts and whole back and forth in a context of developing contradictions and direct, active participation and struggle. Environmental models, whether concretely or metaphorically expressed, continually modify, with practice, i.e., conscious involvement in the real world of contradictions, being the test of the accuracy of models. The theoretical models never become detached from practical application. Mazrui and Mann, on the other hand, detach and substitute.

Briefly, during the next session, I went into the euphemistic language of the seventeenth-century precieuses in France as an anticipation of the evasive language I had been describing, and then contrasted this masking of reality with the proletarian delight of Cockney rhyming slang. Alas, instead of using this analysis of the class basis of language to finish my would-be progressive treatment of Mann's DV, I let it lead me back to Symbolist literature in the nineteenth century, back to superstructure, to the refined parody of Platonic discourse in Mann's narrative.

Once again I attempted to show how Mann hated his character, how he tried to lift up the pious mask of the bourgeois artist to show us the rapacious Tar-tuffe underneath. For the discerning, I said, hopelessly enmired in the muck of my own culture, and as far from that of my audience as Mann, Mann was showing us that bourgeois art is a lie, that the Western tradition of Platonic idealism is a lie, a deception.

Until months later I did not learn how much the students hated Mann and had hated me. They firmly believed that portrayal of homosexuality was condoning it and did not care to see it as a symbol for a stage of capitalism.

I pointed out that in imperialism, the highest and final stage of capitalism, monopoly capital is the main form of bourgeois wealth. It is industrial and finance capital that has become concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. These few hands control

virtually everything, and money is no longer made from putting new things into production. It is made through financial manipulations alone. Like homosexuality as portrayed in DV, it is a sterile enterprise involving no development.

I also related Aschenbach's cosmetic camouflage to another feature of monopoly capitalist economy—more goes into packaging and the fascist practice of mind control and seduction, advertising, than goes into the product. Quality declines inexorably in this stage of capitalism.

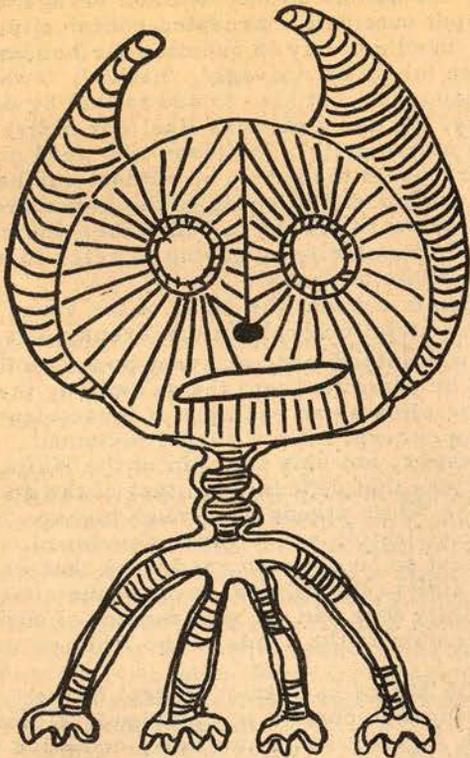
The plague symbol in DV is often interpreted as a premonition of World War I, of the first Great Imperialist War, and of Bolshevism; it has also been seen as the pollution of Europe by the arrival of dark races to mix with its light-skinned people, and a "yellow wind," blowing from the East. It is elsewhere that I found its meaning of monopoly capitalist decay.

And the symbol of Venice? After so much immersion in European culture I suddenly realized that Venice has associations to us that would not exist for Africans. To them it is a European city, at best one built around canals. I asked, "Why could Thomas Mann not have named his story Death in Dar es Salaam?" No answer. And then, as if having to explain a joke that isn't very funny, I said: Venice was the birthplace of capitalism, of European expansion abroad (Crusade ships, Marco Polo, banks, etc.); it is a city of dead art that is sinking into the sea. To Mann, it is a symbol of European civilization, sinking in the mire of its own pollution ("civilization" being an abstraction used to hide class content, something rising as well as declining). To us Aschenbach's dream of death and orgy is the collapse of capitalism; to us it is the end of the rule of the bourgeoisie, the festival of the masses who will bury it. Dar es Salaam has none of these connotations. The only link is the one we should have begun with. When Mann wrote this work, in 1911, Tanganyika was a German colony. It could very well have been that Mann, having ties with the bourgeoisie involved, knew of the fierce Maji Maji war of rebellion in Tanganyika against the Germans in 1905-1907. His nightmare of revolution was masked in symbols. (A spectre haunts Aschenbach; "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism"—the opening line of Marx and Engel's Manifesto of the Communist Party.)

It will be no surprise that I faced revolt. A number of class members complained and asked that I be fired. My supporters were confused. I confronted them, offering to resign any time if we could begin all over and if they were not satisfied. What saved me, I suppose, was their discovery that I was not responsible for the reading list. Mann's presence was introduced by a scholar from East Germany. I vowed to refuse to be fished in by such lame justifications in future. Instead I would refuse to impose literature on students which they regard as repugnant. I then embarked on repairing the damages before continuing the course. I did this by inverting the order of priorities: the author's biography and social, economic, and political history would come before literary history and textual analysis. I began to study African literature so I could relate, however feebly, to the culture of my students. In the course of the year, rapport came slowly. On one occasion a student came to say, "I now see why it was important after all to read DV. Like the Buddhas that have been preserved in China, Mann's work should be preserved and studied in the future so such nonsense will never seduce anyone

The Language of the Oppressor

by Amelia House



again." I did not fully agree and explained that the initial instinct of students to reject degenerate art was perfectly correct. "Western" bourgeois culture has no place, educative or otherwise, in the culture of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Reading the final exams I tasted some satisfaction. The students had gained confidence enough to be quite creative and straightforward in writing what are normally considered to be critically serious and tortuous exams. They had a wide range of choices, yet several chose to take up DV, and they were relaxed enough to make such asides as "monopoly cannibalism," "trading raw materials for manufactured gods," "contradictions coherent in capitalism," and so on. I learned from their exams that in spite of some vestigial intellectualism in my approach to Mann and in spite of themselves, they had learned a great deal.

There are some lessons which should be precipitated from between the above lines: (1) Negative examples are important; in fact they are almost all a progressive teacher in most literature courses has or is given to teach when taking a progressive stand and approach. But negative examples should follow or at least accompany positive examples, or you will only get deaf ears from students. (2) Begin with a description of the writer's life and of social contradictions contemporary with the text; then test the text for their presence. (3) If you cannot relate what you know to what your listeners know, none of your knowledge is useful knowledge. As Chairman Mao pointed out, you must be a student of the masses before you can be a teacher of the masses. (4) And, perhaps most important, be honest and democratic with your students. Allow them the credit of being intelligent by developing their best "instincts" rather than suppressing them. These points may appear obvious, but I only acquired such common sense through my struggle to keep from dying with Thomas Mann in Dar es Salaam.

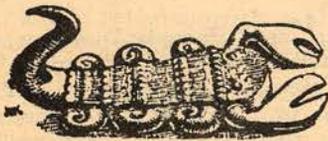
"When I use a word," said Humpty Dumpty in *THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS*, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

IN SOUTH AFRICA, language has been used as a means of social control. Its intent is for White racism to remain supreme and for "the kaffir to know his place." As St. Clair, a sociolinguist, points out, "there is the covert and insidious use of language as a means of institutional labeling and symbolic control" (*LEKTOS* 3, no. 2, 1977). The South African regime has been described by Bunting in *THE RISE OF THE THIRD REICH*. This parallel is appropriate in the examination of language usage. Hitler realized that the necessary first act was to re-define his enemy. He had to refer to them in less than human terms. In South Africa, Dr. Verwoerd, the then Minister of Native Affairs, pronounced that education for the natives should make them realize that equality with the Whites was not for them. He added that anybody who believed in equality would not be regarded as a suitable teacher for natives. The use of the word 'native' has come to mean "black". So it is not strange in South Africa to hear Africans from other countries referred to as 'foreign natives'. The word 'native' has attached to it the Tarzan movie stereotype. But the Whites in South Africa go further in their dehumanizing of the Blacks (or anybody of colour)—terms like 'kaffir', 'hotnot', 'koolie', form part of the normal vocabulary. Anyone who opposes the government is referred to as 'communist', 'terrorist', and 'traitor'. 'Agitator' is another common label. House arrest, detention without a charge, sentencing to hard labor on Robben Island become 'justifiable' acts to deal with terrible elements in the society.

The rulers in South Africa use labeling to convince themselves, the world at large, and the people they oppress of the Blacks' intrinsic inferiority. They first separated the total population into Whites and Non-Whites or Europeans and Non-Europeans. The 'non' effectively negates the existence of a majority of the people. (I have recently had it observed to me by a White South African that there are 4 1/2 million people and 18 million Blacks in South Africa). In South Africa the Non-Whites are further compartmented into strata of inferiority. The Africans labeled Natives, Bantu, or Kaffirs are placed at the bottom;

the next layer is the Asian and 'Other Coloured'; then the Coloured (mixed). The society becomes a shaded triangle with White at the apex. This arrangement implies that upward mobility means the moving to a lighter-skinned group. Terms like 'pass-for-White' and 'slightly coloured' indicate the people on the move.

Having separated the people by colour, the governing party legalized the division by ordering the possession of identity cards. For Whites, Coloureds, and Asians, this means a card with the category indicated. For Africans it means the carrying of a pass-book. With the order to carry 'the book of life', the Africans are reduced to total nonbeings. Their numbers become more important than their names. It is the information attached to the number that is stored in the computer, not the name.



Names have always had the power to define people. Hitler made use of this when he decreed in 1938 that Jews could only receive first names listed in the directives of the Ministry of the Interior. Africans are often made to take on additional names at their place of employment or given nicknames by the employer who finds the names too 'strange', 'different', or 'difficult to pronounce', or just not acceptable. The Jews had to be clearly labeled JEW, and the Africans have to carry the pass-book always on their person.

Separation in South Africa is to protect the purity of the ruling group. The Immorality Act forbids miscegenation. The Group Areas Act divides the society into compartments for living. Having labeled the groups as 'non', 'heathens', 'kaffirs', or any other negative, the Whites feel the need for protection, so these laws are acceptable. As Bosmajian, in *THE LANGUAGE OF OPPRESSION*, points out, "There is a close nexus between language and self-perception, self-awareness, self-identity and self-esteem. Just as our thoughts affect our language, so does our language affect our thoughts and eventually our actions and behavior" (p. 8).

Language in South Africa takes on yet another dimension when the role of Afrikaans is considered. Incorporated in the various Education Acts is the provision for 'mother-tongue' instruction. In some cases (e.g., the University of the Western Cape—for Coloureds) it has come to mean Afrikaans. In many cases arbitrary decisions about the specific language are made. Afrikaans is the language of the rulers, and systematic change from English to Afrikaans as the first language is observed as oppression through thought direction.

The oppressed people are separated because they have been defined as uncivilized and needing special care to turn from their heathen ways. Through Christian National Education, it is hoped that all 'natives' will be led to Christianity. This is seen as proof against foreign ideologies. The Afrikaners

through their Calvinist tenets believe in their God-given right to rule and so the 'heathen savage' is effectively put outside the accepted community. There is a need not only to question the humanity through such labels as 'savage', 'native', 'swartgevaar', 'baboons', but also to add to this by doubting maturity. By using phrases like 'our native boys', 'our native girls', 'children who need protection', 'where would the native be without our help?' the Whites condescend to speak to the immature. The Blacks are also always to remember their inferiority and immaturity by having to refer to and address the White as 'baas'.

Bunting points out that the ideas of the young are always under strict control. In the Transvaal a book guide was introduced, and only books on the guide could be permitted into the schools by the teachers. He cites as an example of indoctrination the following excerpt from a school textbook:

It is, however, not only the skin of the White South African that differs from that of the non-White. The White stands on a much higher plane of civilization and is more developed. Whites must so live, learn, and work that we shall not sink to the cultural level of the non-Whites. Only thus can the government of our country remain in the hands of the Whites. (p. 202)

Since South Africa has strict control of the press, all language control is conscious. A dictionary of South African usage now being compiled at Rhodes University had to be revised to delete examples cited from the now-banned *THE WORLD* newspaper. Newspaper reports effectively make use of labeling through marking. We can be certain that a White suspect would be reported without marking, i.e., just as a 'suspect', but the 'Bantu', 'Coloured', or 'Asian' suspect will be marked as such. Through the used of markedness the belief that crime is only committed by 'Non-Whites' is built up. This reinforced the need for maintenance of the grand design of 'Apartheid'.

St. Clair has devised a chart to demonstrate that there is a rationale and structure behind labeling and deviancy.

GOOD	BAD
Intelligence	Erotica, bodily functions
Human	Animal, savage, vermin, microbe
Religious	Heathen, pagan
Citizen	Alien, foreigner

We know what is valued by the rulers by how they label others. In South Africa, where the Presidential Guard was chosen on a blond-hair, blue-eyes basis, we are taken back to the pure race of Hitler. Colour of skin and texture of hair are further sections for division. Slaves with straight hair and lighter skins fetched higher prices on the market. In the 'Non-White' cinemas advertisements for products to lighten skin and straighten hair are very common. Always it is important to make your "skin lighter and brighter."

In South Africa language is used to define (set limits for) the majority of the population. Words are used to dehumanize human beings and to 'justify' oppression.

Stokely Carmichael commented on the need for self-definition. He saw the definers as rulers. Bosmajian strongly urges the need to rebel against linguistic suppression. He notes that the oppressor will resist efforts of redefinition. This we have seen when students in South Africa protested against the language medium enforcement.

In South Africa language forms a strong arm of the oppressor.

SWAHILI PROVERBS:

THE NATURE AND VALUE OF PAINFUL EXPERIENCE

by Carolyn A. Parker

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PROVERBS express in their texts a summary of human experience— observations on human nature, the causes and effects of human behavior, and a philosophy for living. In their application to social situations, proverbs transmit messages concerning appropriate behavior in a specific context: they may be used to warn someone not to do what he is about to do or encourage him in his action; they may criticize him for what he has done or praise him for it.

The folklore of the peoples of the Swahili Coast is rich in proverbs that express the experience of a long and proud cultural tradition. The Swahili use these proverbs delicately and subtly to advise and aid each other in the complex and problematic matter of human social interaction. A small number of the proverbs from this tradition concern experience, in the sense of practical knowledge gained from active involvement in human affairs, providing insight into the Swahili view of its nature and its value, particularly when such experience is painful. Several of these proverbs will be discussed here for the insight they give into this source of knowledge.

Ideally, the Swahili believe that one should learn how to behave properly in social situations, learn the difference between right and wrong, and even learn how to perform various practical tasks from a teacher who knows the subject well and has some experience in the matter.¹ One can learn from observation, from asking appropriate questions, from the advice and teaching of others, and from imitation and practice with the help and guidance of another. Failing to learn how or what to do in a particular situation can lead to unpleasant consequences.

ASIYEFUNZWA NA MAMAYE HUFUNZWA NA ULIMWENGU (He who is not taught by his mother is taught by the world) refers to a period of apprenticeship, whether for a trade or for life. The "mother" may be literally one's own mother or any other person of knowledge and experience, such as an older friend, an employer, a teacher. The "world" is meant more literally, but it implies circumstances that are less friendly or loving than would obtain in being taught by a "mother." The literal interpretation of the proverb is: if one does not learn how to behave from the loving teaching of one's mother, one will be forced to learn how to behave by an unloving world which lacks the gentleness and patience of a mother.

The proverb may be used to warn someone that he is disregarding sound advice, that doing so will lead to unpleasant consequences, that he

will nonetheless learn the very lesson he is disregarding through the predicted consequences. The proverb may also be used after the dire consequences have occurred to stop complaints about them and, sometimes, to express a smug I-told-you-so kind of satisfaction that the prediction of the proverb has been fulfilled. Even so, there is still the implied advice that "next time" one should listen to the advice of and learn from "mother" before the "world" takes a hand in the lesson.

A second aspect of the proverb's application is revealed when the one who has not learned has failed to do so through no fault of his own, e.g., his parents died when he was young. In such a case, the proverb may be used to express sympathy for the person who is forced to learn from experience, i.e., "it is sad that you have had no one to help you through this and now you must learn the hard way." This use of the proverb implies also the belief in the value of close personal ties, the importance of the mutual aid which human beings should give each other in avoiding or dealing with the problems of this life.

A more strongly negative comment on the consequences of failing to learn when learning is easy is offered by the proverb ASIYESIKIA LA MKUU HUVUNJIKA MGUU (He who fails to heed the advice of an elder suffers a broken leg).² The image of the proverb is more concrete in predicting the consequences of a failure to learn, implying by a broken leg unequivocally negative consequences. The teacher in this proverb is not a loving mother but a superior of any category in the social hierarchy of statuses. Regardless of what kind of superior it may be—a parent, an older person, an employer, a religious leader—it is someone who is personally respected and whose advice must therefore be respected.³

Again, this proverb may be used to warn someone against failing to heed the advice of an elder and to criticize this failure. There is no sympathy in the use of this proverb.

Going beyond the advice of elders and the lessons the world will teach, some proverbs refer directly to painful experience as an effective teacher, i.e., if one cannot avoid this harsh teacher one should at least recognize that the lessons taught will doubtless be well learned. UKUPIGAO NDIO UKUFUNZAO (That which hits you is that which teaches you) implies such a belief. The reference may be to the corporal punishment used to maintain discipline and force learning in Koranic schools, but the text refers literally to ulimwengu (the world) again. This proverb omits reference to an easier way to learn, focusing on the value of experience as a teacher and emphasizing that the blows of the world are the source of both pain and knowledge.

This proverb is used, as the previous two are used, to warn someone that he will have to learn

(cont'd on page 26--->)

Poems From Ghana

AFTER THE RAINS

(for Kofi)

Mud of rain season bakes
in harmattan sun.....
.....cracks produce mouths
thick-lipped wombs
to scream
in stratocratic agony
the rape of the breast
of the earth
after the rains come
will ooze out
new life.

Vincent Odamtten

University of Cape Coast

TRYST

We warmed to each other with shy looks
Kissed once and clicked teeth;
We walked a bit,
Drawn by some dubious faith towards a world without decay.
Our love was faceless, like a good lie
And we left no finger-prints where we caressed;
We held our gaze in the nest of our palms, gingerly,
Like the wings of prayer
That may one day soon touch the skies.
So we stayed together all night
Tightly on edge, no laughter no light
And dropped our thoughts into the airless room
Slowly, with the smooth flow of a dripping nose.
Silently we prayed each would go away.
Nothing was ever right that night.
Our libation came and went without meaning
Cloyed the air and gathered dust

Our love was born at dawn
In the middle of a yawn

Later, much later, after all the fumbling
And confessions,
We sat on our silence in the manner of rejected gods
And touched each other with sighs only—our
Wishes described a mild kind of insanity.
Then we said our goodbyes
To the hollow of the skies
With promises to meet again soon
And shook hands over a star that has decayed.

THE GAME

You will not know
Living in your dream-world.
The thing is sweet
Just take a draught of the brew
Smell the scent of the steaming soup
Or get a glimpse of magnificent metal
And I know you would like it
You are going to love it
Perhaps better, than they
They who know the art
It is the bold who thrive
They can snatch the cake
Even if wedged to crumble
Between the beak
The beak of the hawk
That hawk high up in the sky.
You only need to taste it
And you would wish a plateful
Perhaps, yet a second course
Then you lick your mouth to sore
And tell me how you are
Enmeshed
In the web of that game
The game all like and all are good in
That in which we find pleasure
The pleasure that engenders the decay
The slow disintegration of our land.

Eugene Opoku-Agyemang
December 1976

Assibi Bukari

THE INDEX NUMBER

11/2/B7. Dead, lifeless cold paper but for its life
giving blood of words

No name, no human touch, no matter male or female
The surgeons will cruelly dissect it, for
With pen instrument they cut, test tempt evaluate
and sometimes Kill

"Do not bring us to the test.
Lead us not into temptation."
Cry the desperate indexed patients.
But cried, collapsed, crushed,
The acme pound of flesh is imminent.
They hide behind their dons and gowns and
Yet the cruelty is generous pushings
Through trials that lead up the LADDER?

Mary Abena Griffin

PEN-Club

MERPEOPLE MANQUE

Tied by the neck
To the tail of the Fish
We made the forced plunge
After it into an unknown element
Years after the slaver first drew African blood

The salt of the Sea
Ate up the rope
With the teeth of time
After the swimming lessons

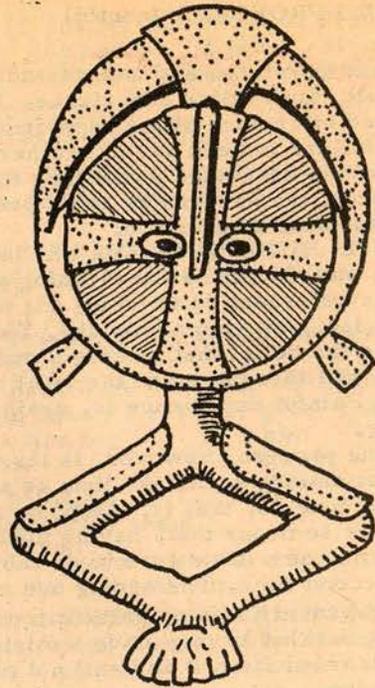
Yet we went on
Floating, breaststroking
Backstroking, kicking
Aping the dolphins

Striking a hollow note
On the skull of identity

But was it known that
Our salvation lay asleep
On the Shore?
Tired of waiting
For the Waylaid
Or wayward?

Yet when we got there
When we got to the Shore
And woke her up
With the cacophony
Intruding language
She simply gave us
Towels
Then bicycles
To ride home to our Huts....
Where the Drum beats.....

Baboucarr Sulay Sarr



A DREAMER COME HOME

Once I sat at your feet
Gathering a harvest of meaning,
Once in the centre of this room
The word held meaning for me, for you too, I suppose;
Your tongue spun whispers, whispers grew
Into revelations and glowed wisely on my questioning eye.
I twirled dizzingly to the earth-
I was the earth which received
You were the finger that lost nothing in giving.

You too knew a return to earth
You who once witnessed my birth.
Resting, you also heard the rustle of growing leaves.
Once, you were not afraid,
I smelt on you the odour of kinship.

Do not say I lie: I lie only to rest now
For I tire easily these days

Once in the middle of this gloom
You gently picked the harmattans peeling skin
And wove a sound off my pleading arms;
On discarded nights under unsmiling moons,
I sat at your feet plucking wisdom:
We stopped the calabash to lick pages off books
And emptied world for meaning, meaning
For beads that did not cackle.
Once you brought a dreamer home. The word
Whispered revelations a nod of resolution.
Once you were root and I, the fruit

Now in the fall, I take corners too fast
And theres no room here made for victory:
Such is my devotion to defeat.
Unseen now, unheard, I hug the walls and the interstices
Watching your feet go quickly quickly. And
Words depart when night dissolves in
The angry flame of approaching dawn. And
Meaning also slowly departs....

Tell me, after this going and going
That goes on, where has all the meaning gone?

Eugene Opoku-Agyemang
March 8, 1977

his lesson, gain knowledge and understanding, through difficult, even bitter experience. The proverb is not used after such bitter experience to criticize any failure to heed advice; rather it is used itself to serve as advice to swallow the bitter pill and accept the severity of one's present situation for its value as a lesson.

MPOTEA NJIA HUUJUA NJIA (One who loses the way knows the way) is similar in meaning and concreteness. The reference is to losing the way to do something, i.e., making a mistake. The proverb expresses the belief that making a mistake insures that one will thereby learn the right way to do something. Painful experience is, again, an effective teacher.

The use of the proverb, however, is less as a warning against making a mistake than as an excuse for having done so, that is, the proverb is used to reassure someone that, having made a mistake one time, he will be sure to do things properly the second time. The erring one may himself use the proverb to stop criticism of his error, pointing out that having made a mistake, he has indeed learned from it and will not make that mistake twice.

Expanding the notion of the value of painful experience as a teacher is MTOTO AKILILIA WEMBE, MPE; UKIMKATA ATAUCHA (If a child cries for a razor, give it to him; if it cuts him, he will leave it).⁴ The proverb's reference is concrete and clear, though it may be applied to anyone who seems intent upon doing things the hard way, getting himself into trouble, or otherwise bringing harm to himself.

The use of the proverb implies that someone is beyond advice and can only learn his lesson through painful experience, even though the proverb may be addressed to the "crying child" to warn him of impending disaster, implying perhaps that his persistence in such a course of action may be viewed as somewhat childish. More often, however, the proverb is used to justify leaving someone to his foolishness in order that he may learn for himself.

One need not himself be cut by the razor of experience to learn from its sharp edge. UKIMWONA MWENZAKO AKINYOLEWA NYWELE KAVU TIA ZAKO MAJI (If you see your companion's hair being shaved without water, put water on your own) is most appropriately a warning to be prepared, but its message is that a painful experience (a dry shave) for someone else should serve as a vicarious lesson for others.

The proverb is more specific than some of the preceding texts in the sense that it refers to the particular lesson to be learned from a particular painful experience--the experience is someone else's, but it could happen again to oneself; therefore one should take the proper precautions lest the same misfortune befall one. In this sense, the proverb is used between two misfortunes--after that of one, before that of another--but it may also be used to criticize someone for failing to learn from someone else's mistakes or misfortune. In addition the proverb may be used to justify one's (elaborate) precautions against painful experience, i.e., "it happened to him, it could happen to me, so I'm going to try to avert this misfortune."

Similarly, AUMWAYE NA NYOKA AKIONA UNG'ONGO HUSHTUKA (He who has been bitten by a snake is startled if he sees a strip of palm fiber) justifies precaution and wariness. Painful

experience is a snake bite; anything similar (even an innocuous strip of palm leaf) is to be treated with caution until it is certain that it is indeed not what it first appears to be.

The proverb is not used, however, to warn someone of any future dire consequences. Rather, as in the final application of UKIMWONA MWENZAKO AKINYOLEWA NYWELE KAVU TIA ZAKO MAJI, this proverb justifies the behavior which reflects the lesson learned from painful experience, although in this case it is one's own previous experience rather than that of another person. There is no criticism associated with the use of this proverb; it is only used to express approval for cautious and careful behavior derived from experience and to defend one from any criticism of such behavior.

A final aspect of the training provided by experience is implied rather than expressed in the proverb ASIYEJUA MAANA HAAMBIWI MAANA (He who does not know the meaning is not told the meaning). The proverb does not mean that one should not be taught, but rather that if one refuses to learn from being told, one should not be told again. The proverb reflects the notion that initial effort is all that is necessary, and if it is not rewarded with signs of learning, there is no further need for such effort, for the only way for such a person to learn "meaning" at this point is through his own bitter experience. The proverb criticizes someone for failing to learn the easy way and justifies "washing one's hands" of such a person and the problems of teaching him. This proverb is more caustic than MTOTO AKILILIA WEMBE, MPE, indicating greater resignation to and disgust with someone's refusal to listen to advice.

To summarize, these Swahili proverbs indicate that one learns from two kinds of sources. The easier way is to learn from the instruction and advice of older, more experienced persons. The harder way is painful, coming from one's own experience through trial and error, with emphasis on the error. The "world" teaches experience, often through painful blows. In spite of the pain that one might feel through such experience, one should nevertheless appreciate the knowledge that comes with the pain. To err is to learn; having made a mistake one should learn from the mistake rather than repeat it. Sometimes people have to make their own mistakes in order to learn. Sometimes one can learn from the mistakes of others. Having suffered, one should not be ashamed to act on the basis of painfully gained knowledge. If, however, someone refuses to learn in spite of all efforts to teach him, there is also no shame in abandoning him to his own folly and the harsh lessons which the world will teach him. After all, ULIMWENGU NI MWALIMU BORA (The world is the best teacher).

NOTES

The theoretical assumptions and methodology upon which this study of Swahili proverbs is based are set forth at length in Carolyn A. Parker, "Aspects of a Theory of Proverbs: Contexts and Messages of Proverbs in Swahili" (Ph.D. dissertation, Washington, 1974).

The research on which the article is based was conducted in Seattle (March-May 1970) and in Coast Province, Kenya (October 1971-December 1972); the latter was partially funded by an NDFL Swahili Fellowship. Informants were interviewed in Lamu, Mombasa, Mamburui, and Tchundwa, Kenya. Most interviews were conducted with Salma Mbaye, Amina Said, Mwalim Badi, Omar

Bwana, Mohamed Maulana, and Mariamu Said. These informants represent several subgroups of the Waswahili but all are native speakers of Swahili, born and raised in the Islamic society of the Swahili Coast.

Texts and literal translations of proverbs in the manner advocated by E. Ojo Arewa and Alan Dundes, "Proverbs and the Ethnography of Speaking Folklore," *American Anthropologist* 66(1964): 70-85, are presented in the Appendix.

1. This apparently contradicts Jan Knappert ("Social and Moral Concepts in Swahili Islamic Literature," *Africa* 40 April 1970 :125-136), but more likely it complements his statement that "Study is recommended for both sexes and all ages. *Kusoma si ukarani* 'studying is not the same as being a clerk.' Study is the most esteemed occupation. All knowledge in traditional Islamic society is *elimu*, i.e., knowledge of the road to Paradise. This knowledge is acquired by studying the Koran, the Hadithi, i.e., the Sacred Tradition of the Prophet, and all other learned works on law, history, astronomy, as in theory all knowledge may help us on the thorny path to Heaven." (p. 132). These proverbs are less concerned with the thorny path to Heaven than the rocky road of life.

2. This proverb is discussed at greater length in Carolyn A. Parker, "The Advice of Elders, a Broken Leg, and a Swahili Proverb Story," paper presented to the African Literature Association, Madison, Wisconsin, March 1977.

3. See Ahmad A. Nasr, "Traditional Swahili Ethics as Depicted in Swahili Literature," *Ba Shiru* 6/2(1975):47-56. Nasr argues that respect—in the sense of honor—is the epitome of the Swahili system of ethics. It could be argued that respect—in the sense of awareness of the potential for evil that resides in one's fellow man—is the epitome of Swahili social interaction, but this is not the place to do so. Oversimplification in any case does little justice to Swahili culture and its value system.

4. This proverb and AUMWAYE NA NYOKA AKIONA UNG'ONGO HUSHTUKA are also discussed in Carolyn Ann Parker Duck, "Some Swahili Proverbs and Their Messages," paper presented to the Northwest Anthropological Association, Corvallis, Oregon, March 1970.

APPENDIX

ASIYEFUNZWA NA MAMAYE HUFUNZWA NA
(s)he who is /by/his (her)/is always / by/
not taught mother taught

ULIMWENGU.
world (universe)

He who is not taught by his mother is taught by the world.

ASIYEJUA MAANA HAAMBIWI MAANA.
(s)he who /meaning/(s)he is / meaning
does not not told
know

He who does not know the meaning is not told the meaning.

ASIYESIKIA LA MKUU HUVUNJIKI MGUU.
(s)he who / (advice) / important / is always / leg
does not of person broken
hear

He who fails to heed the advice of an elder suffers a broken leg.

AUMWAYE NA NYOKA AKIONA UNG'ONGO
(s)he who /by/snake /if (s)he /strip of palm
is bitten sees fiber

HUSHTUKA.
is always startled

He who has been bitten by a snake is startled if he sees a strip of palm fiber.

MPOTEA NJIA HUUJUA NJIA.
one who /way/ always /way
is lost knows

One who loses the way knows the way.

MTOTO AKILILIA WEMBE, MPE; UKIMKATA
child / if (s)he / razor / give / if it cuts
cries for him him (her)
(her)

ATAUACHA.
(s)he will leave it

If a child cries for a razor, give it to him; if it cuts him, he will leave it.

UKIMWONA MWENZAKO AKINYOLEWA NYWELE
if you see / your com- / (s)he is being / hair (of/
him (her) panion shaved the head)

KAVU TIA ZAKO MAJI.
dry / put on/yours/water

If you see your companion's hair being shaved without water, put water on your own.

UKUPIGAO NDIO UKUFUNZAO.
it which / it is / it which
hits you indeed teaches you
That which hits you is that which teaches you.

ULIMWENGU NI MWALIMU BORA.
world (universe)/it is/teacher/best
The world is the best teacher.

REVIEW

BRITAIN, RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA, 1900-45
THE UNCONSUMMATED UNION

by Martin Channock
Visiting Associate Professor, University of Texas
at Austin

xii, 289 pp. \$22.50 0 7146 6001 9

The author sets out to detail how and why Britain created the white colony of Southern Rhodesia in 1922. He explains why Rhodesia never joined the white Union in the south, and explores the roots of the ill-fated Central African Federation. It is the first time these events have been placed securely in the context of the relationship between Britain and the Union of South Africa. The book contributes to the understanding of the processes of British decolonization in Africa by describing the first such case, that of South Africa, using British archival records. The division in white nationalist politics inside South Africa, its internal and external policies, and British attitudes to them are traced in detail. Particular attention is paid to defense, to British and South African versions of territorial and political segregation, and to African efforts to change and influence these. The study will be of great interest to students of twentieth-century African history and of British, Commonwealth, and international history, as well as to specialists in the history of south and central Africa.

Kufikirika and Kusadikika

by Don Bobb

IN Kufikirika and Kusadikika, the Tanzanian writer Shaaban Robert has taken us to two imaginary countries. The first is the land of reflection, which exists only in thought; the second is the land of credibility, halfway between heaven and earth in the sky. Kufikirika has an autocratic king, Kusadikika an autocratic prime minister. The antiquated and unjust political systems of both kingdoms are being challenged by courageous and eloquent citizens. A new day has come.

Kufikirika is a great empire comprising one-half of the world's population, ruled by the greatest king of the world. Governed by a dependable military force and efficient administration, it has been a wealthy and prosperous land. But now the golden age will come to an end unless a successor is found for

Swahili literature is not easily accessible to non-Swahili speakers, for very little work has been translated into other languages.

Oral literature is reviewed and summarized in Jan Knappert's Myths and Legends of the Swahili (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1970). W.H. Ingram has provided a collection of stories on Abunwas, Baghdad court poet and jester transformed into trickster in Swahili folklore: Abu Nuwas in Life and Legend (1933).

Classical poetry has been made available through the efforts of Lyndon Harries in his Swahili Islamic Poetry (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), J.W.T. Allen in Tendi (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1971), and Jan Knappert in Swahili Islamic Poetry (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), Traditional Swahili Poetry (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967), and A Choice of Flowers (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1972). Much of this is religious verse in the Arabic Islamic tradition. There is also much love poetry and panegyric verse, also following Arabic and Persian traditions, dating from as far back as the seventeenth century. This oral poetry later became a highly prized, though often esoteric, literature, understood well only in the Swahili coastal culture along the Indian Ocean.

Two examples of the best in Swahili literature are available in English: a play, Kinjeketile, by Ebrahim N. Hussein (1969, translated 1970), and a novelette, Kusadikika, by Shaaban Robert (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1951; translated by David C. Sperling, 1973).

Kufikirika, the other novelette by Robert discussed in this article, was written in 1946 but published only posthumously in 1967 (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1967; © Witwatersrand University Press, 1967).

Other works useful for understanding Swahili literature include: Lyndon Harries, "Swahili Literature in the National Context," Review of National Literatures 2, no. 2 (Fall 1971):38-62; Reuben Levy, An Introduction to the Sociology of Islam, vol. 2 (London: William and Norgate, 1933); Farouk M. Topan, Uchambuizi wa Maandishi ya Kiswahili (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1971); and J. Spencer Timingham, Islam in East Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964).

the childless king. Desperate attempts by medicine men, priests, exorcists, fetishers, and sorcerers to produce an heir have failed. The land has been impoverished for the purpose of making magical medicines to induce conception by the queen. Finally the prophet-interpreters succeed. A prince is born. The prophet-interpreter responsible is Utubusara Ujingahasara, who becomes the hero of the land and of the novel.

Kusadikika, by contrast, is a relatively poor land, in many ways quite backward. The prime minister, Majivuno, is a handsome egotist who has squelched all opposition. He has imprisoned six outstanding men who had been sent as delegates to surrounding countries to study their societies and who returned with recommendations that infuriated the prime minister. Now a seventh person, Karama, is on trial for teaching the study of law. The prime minister considers this a betrayal of the existing sacrosanct law. For six days Karama defends himself by describing the six countries visited by the delegates.

STRUCTURE OF THE NOVELS

Kufikirika revolves around Utubusara Ujingahasara. He gives a broader education than the king considers valuable to the scholarly prince, who becomes ill from overwork. Disguised as the "ignorant" farmer-prisoner in the subsequent episodes, he is nearly offered as one of two human sacrifices needed to cure the prince. He directs the king to the "hospital," where the prince is finally restored to good health. Versatile and articulate, this self-effacing protagonist is rewarded by being promoted to the position of prime minister.

Kusadikika's "prophet," by contrast, is an average citizen who has aroused the hostility of the government by starting a law class. To the Chief Justice the study of law is merely the "science of opposing laws," but to Karama law is the science of judgment. He is finally released from prison along with the six delegates and transforms a sleeping serfdom into a flourishing populace by the teaching of law.

THE SOCIOPOLITICAL NATURE OF THE NOVELS

It is obvious that these two novels show an interesting political analysis. The hospital in Kufikirika symbolizes the promise of modern medicine to heal physical and possibly social ills. Though the royal ancestry is preserved, it is pushed into the shadows by the brilliant prominence of the prophet turned prime minister. An old African political concept of chieftainship is proclaimed: The chief remains the head of his people only as long as he maintains his dignity and their respect. This novel may reflect a certain popular resentment of the Arab royalty of the Swahili coast and a new democratic awareness of human dignity and equality.

Kusadikika's political atmosphere is more modern in that the king's power for three long reigns has been shared with the prime minister, Majivuno. All Kusadikika women bear twins, making it something of a land of magic and taboos, ambiguity or duplicity. A commoner has challenged the traditional authority and released a current of ideas which make the country germinate, first into a hotbed of political controversy, then into a land of prosperity, progress, and peace. Rule has

passed to the common people. Shaaban Robert foresees the dawn of a new period, with no colonial empire or Arab royalty.

In each novel, a teacher shows the way to the new order. Utubusara Juingahasara provides knowledge of world history, medical science, and freedom from superstition and fear. Karama teaches Kusadikikans to study law. A new political consciousness is awakening in post-World War II Africa.

Three major sociopolitical areas concern Shaaban Robert. The first is law, which seems to govern life in Kusadikika, as in most Islamic societies. Indeed, according to J. Spencer Trimingham, in Islam in East Africa:

"The law in Islam may be equated with the church in Christianity, as the expression of God in the world. It rules wholly and indisputably in all cultic expression and within the realm of family life; it is still the force which gives an Islamic expression to life." (p. 76)

Thus "law" becomes the Absolute. Its application will be debated as autocratic "justice" yields to democracy. Its teaching will encourage truth and honesty and sow the seeds of peace and friendship. It is the mediating Power uniting a political autocracy and a voiceless population. It is destined to become the political religion of the Kusadikikans.

A second emphasis in Robert's political literature is the importance placed upon agriculture and community solidarity. The desert syndrome in both novels is a result of backward thinking, injustices on the part of the political oligarchy. When the people are considered and their views and interests expounded, progress and development come. The desert turns into rich, productive soil. Parts of these novels sound very much like President Nyerere's Arusha Declaration on Ujamaa and African Socialism.

A third emphasis concerns the ideal country to be attained through the awakening of the masses to their freedoms, through knowledge and achievement. The idea of a mythical Utopia to be reached through suffering and risk is a stimulus to social action and progress.

Many teachings are made explicit in the novels: Education should include knowledge not only of one's own culture, but of the cultures of the entire world. Witchcraft and magic are to be scorned, for in the hospital one finds better treatment for illness. One's ignorance or intelligence is not measured by the trade or profession one practices.

THE SIX countries visited by the delegates from Kusadikika are interesting from the sociopolitical point of view. They are called North, East, South, West, Heaven, and Earth.

People in the North live in big towns, possess paved roads, efficient medical treatment, and sophisticated agriculture, all achieved through the cooperative efforts of the people and the combining of all monies. This seems a reflection of Marxism.

The East is a land where peace reigns. The art of friendship is taught in school.

The South is a land of excessive greed and ignorance, of severe cold and storms. The dangerous people cause the delegate to undergo many narrow escapes. Is Robert alluding to White South Africa? Within the land there is a region called Kiasi, "Moderation." Here the delegate observes moderate authority, freedom, restrained power, respect, and temperance. Does

the region not exhibit tribal political and moral values, so strikingly in contrast with the values of White, colonial Africa?

The West is a land which utilizes every effort to relieve human suffering and improve the quality of life. It is also the land of darkness, where sun and moon set. Though it is the land of extravagance, there is a region called Iktisadi, "Thrift." It might seem that Western capitalism has its good and its bad aspects.

Heaven is the land where records of human actions are kept. There the people practice justice, engage in hard work, and enjoy goodness and deeds of kindness. It is the center of transcendental Power.

Earth represents the here and now. It is composed of people who have passed through severe trials and have overcome them with great deeds of kindness and courage. The inhabitants of Earth are beginning to travel through the air. They are preparing for their children's future through education. Cooperation among peoples is a way of life. Poverty, ignorance, and extravagance are beginning to disappear. War and capital punishment have long ago ceased to exist. One day the people will have one faith, one nation, one condition, one language, as all troubles vanish.

THE NOVELS AS ART

The works of Shaaban Robert resemble in many ways Arabic-Swahili poetic and oral literature. The author is a poet and storyteller who seems to be performing before an audience. We can almost hear his voice and see him smiling when the characters are behaving properly and frowning when they are not. He is writing in the tradition of the Swahili poets, promoting the conventions of Swahili Islamic society.

There are echoes of The Arabian Nights and traditional folklore in the Kufikirikan kingdom and its crisis resolved by Wisdom. The adventures of the Kusadikikan travelers resemble Arabian adventures:

"The king wanted to gobble up Kabuli without sharing him with the hunters who had caught him. His great greed annoyed the hunters, and a war broke out between the king's armies and the citizens. In that war every living thing was destroyed and Kabuli alone remained. This was an escape as narrow as a hair's breadth."

The images used in Kusadikika are earthy, sometimes comic, sometimes poignant, always terse:

"Kusadikikans have a bad habit of looking for a stick after they have been bitten by a snake."

"Time has wings like a bird. If patience is practiced, six days are the same as six hours."

"He had determination as great as that of a safari-ant which dares to cross a small stream over a bridge made from the dead bodies of other safari-ants floating in the river."

Both novels offer tragic qualities but end happily. The surprise ending in Kufikirika provides a touch of the comic, as do some of the metaphors using animals. The universalization of characters leads us into a legendary mode. Though the characters' everyday problems are portrayed realistically through use of everyday language and images, the mode tends to idealize

their emotions, struggles, and destiny.

Shaaban Robert seems committed to preserving what is good in traditional society and equally dedicated to leading that society into a better version of the modern world. He is caught between

two lifestyles and philosophies, and yet lives his life as an "artist of the people" in an unperturbed, confident manner. His world is his people. He shares their joys and agonies. His society is far from ideal, but he dares to believe that it can ultimately become utopian.

THERE IS NO SUN IN HERE

Boccaccio
wrote the classic work
that fixed the form
of Italian prose for centuries;

penned the lubriciousness
prurients condemned;
sought to justify it
as morally neutral;

remembered Laura
with buboes and black stains
dying in that fearsome umbra
and Petrarch, bereft, weeping;

wrote a hundred tales
celebrating love
in thanksgiving
for his own, onetime, wonderful love.

Dennis Brutus

There is no Sun in here,
Only the rain outside, incessant.
There is no shade in here,
A mist, grey, blue-black
Through mashed wire-windows...
There is no nothing in here
Except my breathing
Which I and the two unblinking
Policemen on the ceiling
Of cell 201 can hear.

Molefe Pheto
April 1975

poem for Dennis Brutus

You set off again
on your pilgrimage
to the sanctum of human hearts
where Truth resides
silent
eternal
waiting to be released
by its messenger.

Ellen Mark
Chicago

30

TROUBADOUR PRESS

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TROUBADOUR PRESS is pleased to offer two books of poetry by Dennis Brutus. Thoughts Abroad (1975) was first published in 1970 under the pseudonym John Bruin so that the book could be distributed in South Africa, where Brutus' work is banned. Strains (1975) is a collection of poems (1962-1975) previously unpublished in book form.

Black Voices Shout! (1976), an anthology of contemporary South African poetry edited by James Matthews, was first produced in South Africa in 1974. The book has since been banned by the South African government. The poets are Austin Cloete, Christine Douts, Mike Dues, Pascal Gwala, Ilva Mackay, James Matthews, Wally Mongane Serote, Steven Smith, and Benjamin Takavarasha.

Apartheid Is Not a Game (1975) is an inside history of New Zealand's contact with South African racism in sport. The writer is Tom Newnham, president of New Zealand's CARE (Citizens' Association for Racial Equality). In the wake of the 1976 pullout from the Olympics by nations protesting New Zealand's rugby tour of South Africa, and with protest against South Africa's policy of racial discrimination at its most intense, this book is increasingly important for the clarity and detail it gives to one of the most crucial issues of our time. Apartheid Is Not a Game was published in New Zealand and is distributed by Troubadour Press.

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If you can make two blades of grass grow
where one blade grew before
the world will beat a ploughshare to your door
and put you in a better mousetrap.

Dennis Brutus

TOO LONG

Too long
too long has it been
this moving without end
this thing of not knowing my true /NAME/ or the knowledge
that lies within
this killing myself and everything about me
without knowing why ?

Too long
too long has it been
this thing of /HATE/ that surrounds me
and blinds me so I can't see
who knows of nothing but itself
and all the madness it brings.

Too long
too long has it been
these powers of evil that demand of me
this doomed /WORLD/ that feels no pain
my hours without love or peace
and a kind word from another that I need so very
MUCH.....

Too long
too long has it been
this thought within me
and not being able to see or /feel/ the touch of life
that is real.....
this thing of not knowing freedom of space
MYSELF.....
this thing that you are doing to me
just because I'm here.

Too long
too long has it been
knowing that there is no end.....
too long
too long has it been
TOO LONG.

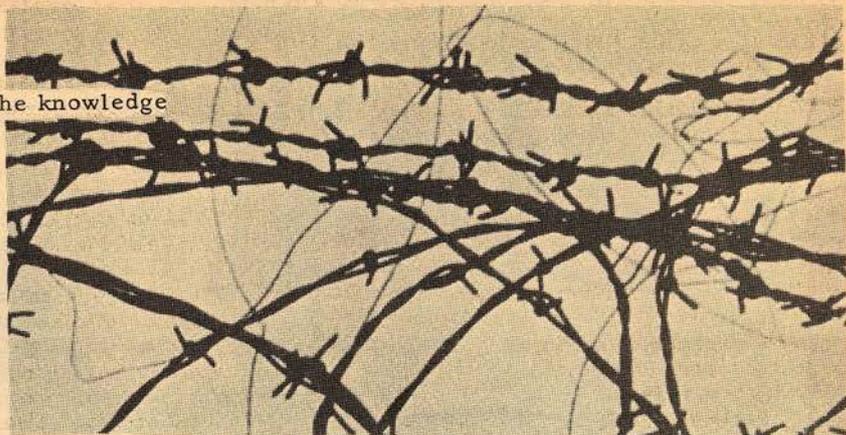
By Diallo
(Theodore Miles)
Stateville Prison, Illinois



FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Like a woman gone
beyond her time
My Country
you amble on
with a heavy burden
Pressing low
you amble on
We can no longer
wait for nature's course
We must deliver
You
with
force.

Amelia House



GRAHAMSTOWN LOCATION*

Before dawn the shadowy figures begin to stir.
One by one they emerge from tin shacks and shanties
and begin the long queue at the solitary tap.
A colorless sky frames their dark forms
as they wash. Hands, then faces,
spitting out their sleep.

Bare feet begin padding their ragged parade
along the roadway into town.
They approach the city.
The sun shivers for an instant on the horizon
and breaks over them. They separate
as if by some silent command
into small groups that spread like tentacles
along the arteries of the city,
human lava pouring into every crack.
In clusters they take up silent sentry at intersections,
where they await the city's arrival.

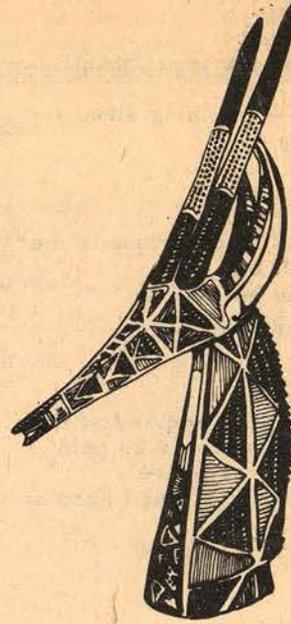
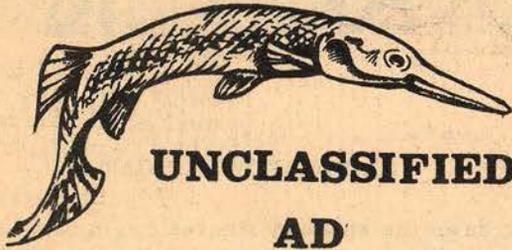
We come, well-fed, well-scrubbed,
in air-conditioned cars, to do our shopping,
and find them there.
At each stoplight, their graceless shapes
flop across the hood.
The toothless old men grin at us
as their bony fingers trace their names
with oily rags across our windshield.
"Here, Ben," my hostess calls,
rolling the car window down
and reaching to him with a coin.

In the evening they are gone.
They disappear as silently as they arrive,
returning to the location before curfew.
As we dine and plan our evening out,
they hunch around a common flame
somewhere in the lightless night
counting pennies and weaving tales
of swarthy warrior princes
and battles fierce and bright.

Mary McAnally-Knight

*The African location just outside Grahamstown, South Africa, where the main source of income is begging. Begging become such a problem to the white citizens of Grahamstown that in 1968 they made it illegal.

a



Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee

The Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee is attempting to create a socialist presence in the United States. We hold forums, discussions and conferences. We publish a lively monthly, *Newsletter of the Democratic Left*, which reports and analyzes what's going on in the mass liberal-left.

The DSOC participates in and learns from the feminist movement. We're for affirmative action, the Equal Rights Amendment, the maintenance of legal abortion; we favor adequate, federally-funded child care programs and the vigorous enforcement of equal pay and anti-job discrimination laws. To achieve these goals, DSOC members work actively in the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the National Organization for Women and Women's Political Caucus.

Along with liberal activists, we fight for:

- income redistribution through a genuinely progressive income tax;
- a shift of resources from the private sector to the public sector in areas like medicine and pensions;
- planned social investments, in energy resources, for example, to counteract the influence of private wealth.
- a government committed to full employment and to progressive social programs.

The great battles led by Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960's brought Jim Crow to an end in public accommodations and voting. But the very structure of the housing and labor markets still works to keep black and Spanish-speaking people disproportionately poor. There must be a greater sharing of the nation's wealth, decent jobs with futures, and an end to that ancient plague of racism.

Democratic socialism is our ultimate goal. We hope for—and work for—a society dedicated to full human equality, to cooperation instead of competition, to meeting human needs instead of maximizing profits.

But meanwhile we work in the liberal, labor, black and women's movements for social changes desperately needed now.



DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

853 Broadway, Room 617, New York, New York 10003 / Phone (212) 260-3270

NAME _____

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

- I want to join. Enclosed are my dues (dues include \$5 for a subscription to the *Newsletter of the Democratic Left*):
- \$50 sustaining \$15 regular
 \$8 student/limited income
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 \$2.50 student
- Please send me more information about the DSOC.

