

The Pan-African Movement

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Introduction

Pan-Africanism has been one of the most fundamental experiences within the history of the African world community. Before analyzing the historical evolution of this movement, it is first necessary to discuss its meaning. There is enough consensus among scholars and consistency within the movement itself to argue that Pan-Africanism has been and continues to be the cooperative movement among peoples of African origin to unite their efforts in the struggle to liberate Africa and its scattered and suffering people. More specifically, Pan-Africanism can be understood as the movement among African peoples in different parts of the world to unite Africa and its people in an effort to liberate them from oppression and exploitation associated with European hegemony and the international expansionism of the capitalist system. Furthermore, Pan-Africanism has always manifested a multi-dimensional character, which has included the use of political, economic, religious, and cultural approaches in the struggle to rehabilitate Africa and its people. In short, Pan-Africanism can be defined as the multifaceted movement for transnational solidarity among African people with the purpose of liberating and unifying Africa and peoples of African descent.

However, during most of the twentieth century, because of its entanglement with Western expansionism, Pan-Africanism has evolved into a variant of the socialist movement as well. In fact, the leading advocates of Pan-Africanism during the twentieth century espoused some form of socialism. Hence, the broadest definition of Pan-Africanism includes both unity (of Africa and peoples of African descent) and socialism.

Major terms and concepts: Pan-Africanism, diaspora, repatriation, African World, Berlin Conference, Garveyism, Nkrumaism, imperialism, Eurocentrism, assimilation, self-determination.

Origins and Early Emigration Efforts

Contrary to the conventional wisdom of most historians of the Pan-African experience, there is sufficient reason to argue that the origins of Pan-Africanism can

be traced to experiences on the African mainland during the period of the European-dominated, triangular slave trade. This is because the sentiments and desires for Pan-African unity have been an integral part of the movement. And clearly those mainland Africans who lost family, clan, and ethnic members to the slave trade manifested a pristine desire for Pan-African unity by grieving for their relatives' safe return to Africa. Similarly, the minority of leaders in Africa who led their people in battle against the European slave trade were putting original Pan-African sentiments into practice.

Instead, the standard approach to analyzing the origins of Pan-Africanism is characterized by a solitary focus on the efforts of African descendants in the Western Hemisphere who responded to the injustices of slavery by seeking to return to Africa or fighting for self-determination in the diaspora. Perhaps the most balanced approach to this question, for now, is to argue that the origin of Pan-Africanism was characterized by a form of mutual duality, thus recognizing the genuine sentiments and concrete efforts of the struggle for Pan-Africanism in Africa and in the African diaspora. It can be plausibly argued that Pan-Africanism originated in the dispersion of Africans and not necessarily just among those who were dispersed.

The struggle of Africans who had been (or whose forebears had been) forcibly removed from their homes to reunite with Africa began in earnest during the earliest years of slavery in the Western Hemisphere. Not only did the lyrics of songs sung by Africans during slavery, in both North America and the Caribbean, indicate a strong desire to reunite with Africa, but even attempted suicides often reflected their longing to return home. This rudimentary manifestation of Pan-Africanism among enslaved Africans and their emancipated descendants continued throughout the slavery period and for many years thereafter, albeit at different levels of momentum and with different degrees of success.

As would be expected, the interest among Africans in North America in physically returning to Africa was greater among those who were most oppressed and most excluded from American institutions. And since lower class Africans in North America experienced a far greater number of injustices than their middle class brethren, the desire to physically reunite with Africa was always greater among the former. This pattern of interest toward Pan-Africanism paralleled experiences in different parts of the Caribbean as well.

The repatriation experience of Africans in the diaspora, who returned to West Africa during the nineteenth century and established Sierra Leone and Liberia, is often included as part of the historical development of Pan-Africanism. However, this experience was more anomalous than congruent with the historical evolution of the Pan-African movement. Both states became, in effect, colonies of the West. And with the use of a class of educated, privileged or financially advantaged African descendants from abroad, the indigenous African population was compelled to provide exploitable labor for European capitalist investments. Still, the willingness of thousands of Africans in North America and the Caribbean to return to Africa, as arranged under white tutelage, is an indication of the sentiments for Pan-African unity among the scattered descendants of Africa at that time. Moreover, many emigration movements, organizations, and the leaders that emerged after the founding of Sierra Leone and Liberia often centered their efforts around the existence and symbolic nature of these two states.

Contrary to the white-dominated emigration schemes of groups such as the American Colonization Society, which transported thousands of Africans in

North America to Liberia, there were many black-controlled efforts to reunite with Africa. This activity also represented a genuine sentiment and burgeoning struggle for Pan-African unity. As early as 1773, slaves petitioned the colonial legislatures of North America to be emancipated in order that they may return to Africa. Around this same time, Africans from Jamaica who were exiled by Great Britain to Canada were making identical requests to their European captors. Also in the Caribbean, men such as Cinque in Cuba and Daaga in Trinidad led movements in the 1830s to reunite with Africa. However, throughout most of the nineteenth century, in general, the efforts by African descendants in the diaspora to reunite with Africa were better financed and organized than the attempts just cited.

The New Englander, Paul Cuffe, is often credited for organizing the first serious attempt to return Africans in the diaspora back to Africa. Driven by almost as much missionary zeal as a genuine thirst for freedom, Cuffe, had he not died unexpectedly in 1817, might have succeeded partially in his objective given the enthusiasm he received from fellow blacks interested in his plans.

By 1859, Robert Campbell of Jamaica and Martin Delaney of the U.S. travelled together in Africa in search for land for resettlement purposes and succeeded in signing an agreement with a Yoruba King that gave them and their followers the rights to uncultivated land. The advent of the Civil War in the U.S., however, was among other factors that prevented Delaney and Campbell from realizing their Pan-African goals.

One year before Delaney and Campbell travelled to Africa, Henry Highland Garnet founded the African Civilization Society, of which he became president. While this organization, like others before it, had ambitions that reflected the Eurocentric biases of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—which sought to “civilize” Africa with Euro-Christianity—it also had aims that were both militant and Pan-African. In addition to seeking to “strike the deathblow to American slavery,” one of its major objectives in Africa was “to establish a grand centre of negro nationality, from which shall flow the streams of commercial, intellectual, and political power which shall make colored people respected everywhere.” Despite his occasional vacillation, Garnet succeeded in keeping alive the notion of reunification with Africa; still, he was unable to implement his plans effectively, partly because of the hostility he received from men such as Frederick Douglass in the United States who adamantly opposed any efforts that were inconsistent with his aspirations for black assimilation into the North American mainstream.

During this same period, in the Caribbean and in Latin America, there were many African descendants who sought and advocated a return to Africa in order to assist in Africa's development. Although they mostly came as Christian missionaries, these black missionaries had motives that were often significantly different from their European counterparts, the latter of whom often worked in concert with European explorers and colonizers. One of the groups responsible for organizing this trek of black missionaries from the Caribbean to Africa was the West Indian Church Association, formed in the 1850s. One of the most successful products of this effort was Edward Blyden from St. Thomas, in the Virgin Islands, who began his evolution into Pan-Africanism as a Christian missionary. After dropping this pursuit, Blyden soon became one of the leading Pan-African intellectuals in the African world. Throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century, he worked laboriously for African descendants in the diaspora to return

home. Due largely to his encouragement, many other African descendants in the Caribbean sought to return to Africa.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, no one better embodied the notion that oppressed descendants from Africa, especially in the United States, should return to Africa in order to liberate Africa and Africans everywhere than Bishop Henry McNeal Turner. He was a leader in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and organized many efforts to realize his Pan-African goals. Turner made frequent trips to Africa and constantly promoted the idea of African emigration which nourished the growing disenchantment among the poorer segments of the African American population in the United States. Poor black peasants were especially receptive to Turner's message. Although he never succeeded in transporting any significant number of people back to Africa, he did make a significant contribution towards keeping alive certain fundamental Pan-African ideals. Foremost among these was the notion that the only hope for scattered African descendants was in building a powerful and independent nation of their own in Africa.

While there were many other emigration efforts that took place throughout the African world that have not been covered in this brief summary, a genuine appreciation of this dimension of the historical evolution of Pan-Africanism requires an understanding of several key points. First, the black controlled efforts never made claims on land outside or inside of Africa that required the eventual expulsion or political and economic subjugation of indigenous inhabitants. Second, the majority of followers of these movements belonged to the poorer segments of the African world population, as the more economically mobile African descendants observed with disdain. Third, in relative terms, the number of African descendants who actually returned to Africa was never that large, although the figures can belie the actual support that emigration schemes received from the masses of scattered Africans. Fourth, these movements, although never really anti-capitalist in their ideological orientation, were clearly manifestations of a resistance to the consolidation of black suffering and white supremacy under the growing domination of the international capitalist system. Fifth, the movements were very influential in the historical development of Pan-Africanism, as they became effectively interwoven with similar movements and events that occurred in the struggle for Pan-African unity throughout the twentieth century.

Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries Developments

Pan-African activity geared towards physically reuniting African descendants abroad with their ancestral homeland did not stop after the turn of the century. Bishop Turner continued to lead the emigration movement in the United States during the first decade of the new century. Replacing the void left by Turner after his death was Chief Alfred Charles Sam of the Gold Coast in West Africa. Chief Sam generated considerable enthusiasm for his emigration plans by travelling extensively, forming emigration clubs and selling shares of stock in his emigration company, the Akim Trading Company. He received his greatest support from all-

black communities in Oklahoma in 1914. Although Chief Sam succeeded in returning a small amount of followers back to the Gold Coast, conditions in Africa—the result of British lack of cooperation and African underdevelopment—led to disenchantment among the emigrants.

The evangelical dimension of the Pan-African struggle to return African descendants to Africa also continued. These efforts contributed in no small way to the radicalization of the religious leadership and laity in Africa. As a consequence, by 1926, white missionaries—the religious embodiment of European expansionism—grew so disquieted from the growing Africanization and radicalization of Euro-Christian doctrines, that they organized, in Le Zoute, Belgium, an international conference of missionaries concerned with Africa. One of its main purposes was to prevent the return of black missionaries whose teachings resulted in “serious disturbances” in Africa.

Although the European partitioning and colonization of Africa began nearly two decades before the beginning of the new century (formalized at the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884–1885), it was not completed until two decades into the twentieth century. The Pan-African response to this bold initiative on the part of the European capitalist powers was significant. Given the considerable amount of communication and interaction that had already taken place prior to the twentieth century between Africans on the mainland and their brethren scattered abroad, it is no wonder that African descendants in different parts of the world were able to engage themselves effectively in Pan-African cooperation against the injustices of European hegemony during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Several conferences, congresses, and conventions were organized by African descendants, some even before the twentieth century, to address the common misery and suffering experienced by Africans under European colonial rule in Africa and African descendants living in the Caribbean and within the colonial metropolitan governments in Europe and the United States. Some of the most important meetings of this type included the Chicago Congress on Africa of 1895; the Atlanta Congress on Africa of 1895; the Pan-African Conference of 1900 in London; the First Universal Race Congress of 1911 in London; the Pan-African Congresses organized or inspired by W. E. B. DuBois in 1919, 1921, 1923, and 1927; and Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association conventions that met in the United States between 1920 and 1925.

These meetings were organized and attended by outstanding Pan-African proponents as well as other notable intellectuals, businessmen, bureaucrats, and royalty within the African world. Although reformist in nature, the resolutions drafted at these meetings were consistent and demonstrated an anti-imperialist awareness; a strong desire for greater Pan-African unity and cooperation between peoples of African descent; an aim of industrializing and advancing Africa in particular and all African peoples in general; an effort to preserve and regenerate Africa's most worthy cultural traditions; and a responsibility to protect the sovereignty of Ethiopia, Liberia and Haiti against the attacks of European imperialist domination. It is interesting to note that, due to the political, economic and military hegemony of the West, all of these meetings were held outside of Africa, despite attempts by DuBois and others to hold such meetings inside.

In 1914, Marcus Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL) in Jamaica. He did so, according to his own account, in order to address the wretched condition of the

African World at that time—which he observed, firsthand, throughout his travels. Furthermore, Garvey benefitted from, and was deeply influenced by, the Pan-African efforts of his nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century predecessors. The impact that Garvey and the UNIA-ACL had on the African World in general, and the Pan-African movement in particular, was monumental. Their influence is still being felt today, in large part because of the tremendous organizational success that characterized the Garvey movement. With chapters and divisions of the UNIA-ACL in almost every corner of the African World, Garveyites could boast a membership of nearly six million. That Garveyism had a profound impact on the thinking and behavior of millions of African descendants struggling to be free during the 1920s and 1930s is unquestionable. Even Garvey's detractors had to admit that he "was undoubtedly one of the greatest Negroes since Emancipation, a visionary who inspired his race in its upward struggle from the degradation of centuries of slavery."

With great organizational skill and oratorical mastery, Garvey took advantage of the frustration and disillusionment that peoples of African descent were feeling after the First World War in which they had fought and died, supposedly, to make the world safe for democracy and to ensure the right to self-determination. Having been denied these basic human rights for so long and experiencing greater levels of economic penury, African people around the world, especially those in the United States who had migrated to either southern or northern cities with the false expectation that life would be better, placed unparalleled faith in the Pan-Africanism of Garvey and the UNIA-ACL. And while Garvey's program, despite its limitations, did address, concretely, many of the basic problems that confronted the African World community, most historians and other commentators have consistently and mistakenly reduced Garveyism to simply a "Back to Africa Movement." However, although emigration plans were undoubtedly a part of the UNIA-ACL's overall strategy, its primary and ultimate objective was to liberate and reconstruct Africa into a nation powerful enough to liberate Africans around the world. On behalf of the UNIA-ACL, Garvey declared:

We are determined to solve our own problem, by redeeming our Motherland Africa from the hands of alien exploiters and found there a Government, a nation of our own, strong enough to lend protection to the members of our race scattered all over the world, and to compel the respect of the nations and races of the earth.

In short, the contribution of Garvey and the UNIA-ACL to the struggle for Pan-Africanism was unrivaled, and explains the keen interest the imperialist powers had in seeing Garvey fail. As a movement staunchly opposed to European imperialism, the Garvey movement lionized the fundamental ideals of Pan-Africanism in a way never before done in the long history of the movement.

In addition to the Garvey movement, at the end of the First World War, there emerged a number of other activities centered in Western Europe, that were significant expressions of Pan-African struggle. While some of them received their initial impetus from the Garvey movement, these efforts, in the main, were also a product of increased disenchantment with colonial rule that resulted from the hundreds of thousands of black troops who returned from the war effort and were denied the basic human rights that they had been told they were risking their lives to defend. These expressions were manifested in the creation of several orga-

nizations dedicated to the realization of Pan-African aims. In London, Africans from West Africa and the Caribbean formed the Union for Students of African descent in 1917. A year later, also in London, the African Progress Union (APU) was formed, with the famous Egyptian Pan-Africanist, Duse Muhammed Ali, as one of its members. The APU's declared aim was to promote the social and economic welfare of African peoples throughout the world. By the mid 1920s, the influential West African Student's Union (WASU) was established, including in its membership, despite its name, Africans from other parts of Africa besides West Africa. Moreover, it was concerned with other issues besides student-related ones, such as the future advancement of Africa and African peoples throughout the world.

France, as the colonial power that had expropriated more of Africa's land than any other European nation, was not devoid of Pan-African activity after the First World War. In addition to its capital serving as the location of the 1919 Pan-African Congress, the Paris Peace Conference at Versailles was the target of further Pan-African efforts. DuBois, along with others, sought to arrange for Africa to have a voice at this Conference. Besides advocating the establishment of a Charter of Human Rights to guide the colonial powers in their relations with mainland Africa, they sought to affect the impending redivision of Africa by the victorious Allied Powers along lines consistent with their Pan-African goals. That the European powers chose to ignore these concerns and continue pursuing their imperialist interests in Africa should not overshadow the significance of this Pan-African attempt. Indeed, subsequent to this, not only did DuBois make similar requests to the newly-formed League of Nations, but Marcus Garvey and the UNIA-ACL made identical demands to this same body.

The French-speaking African community in France created several Pan-African organizations in Paris. Men such as Marc Kojou Hounou of Dahomey, founder and president of the *Ligue Universelle pour la Defense de la Race Noire*, challenged the assimilationist policies of French colonialism between the years of 1924 to 1936. Interestingly, Hounou was invited to the 1924 UNIA-ACL Convention in New York City. With the production of its journal, *Les Continents*, the *Ligue Universelle* pursued aims that were fundamentally Pan-African.

Also important during this period was the *Comité de la Défense de la Race Nègre*, led by Lamine Senghor from Senegal, and the *Ligue de la Defense de la Race Nègre*, led by Tiemoho Garon Koyate from the Sudan. These organizations, built by French-speaking African descendants from Africa and the Caribbean, showed great interest in the plight of the African diaspora in the United States, and were particularly impressed with the rise of Garveyism. Moreover, they were more radical than the *Ligue Universelle*, since they understood, and vehemently criticized, the collaboration between the rulers of French colonialism and the French-speaking African middle class. Consequently, they earned a considerable amount of hostility from French governmental authorities.

The ideological radicalization of the Pan-African movement continued during the 1930s. Led by African descendants from the Caribbean located primarily in Great Britain, numerous Pan-African organizations were established by committed socialists such as George Padmore and C.L.R. James—friends from childhood in Trinidad. During the mid 1930s, James formed the International African Friends of Abyssinia (IAFA). Shortly afterwards, Padmore created the International African Service Bureau (IASB), which was replaced by the Pan-African Federation in 1944. James and Padmore, along with other West Indians, were joined

by other notable figures from different parts of Africa, such as Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and I. T. A. Wallace-Johnson of Sierra Leone. Collectively, through the convening of several meetings and the dissemination of anti-colonial writings, they were essentially responsible for maintaining the only significant Pan-African opposition to imperialist plunder throughout the African World. While the ideological persuasion of this group of Pan-Africanists was diverse, they were practically all heavily influenced by the writings of Marx and Lenin.

In 1935, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia intensified the growing anti-imperialist orientation of the Pan-African movement. As chairman of the IAFA, James's reaction to this crisis reflected the views of many Pan-Africanists during this period when he wrote:

Africans and people of African descent, especially those who have been poisoned by British Imperialist education, needed a lesson. They have got it. Every succeeding day shows exactly the real motives which move Imperialism in its contact with Africa, shows the incredible savagery and duplicity of European Imperialism in its quest for markets and raw materials.

The Italian invasion also served to galvanize the seemingly latent Pan-African aspirations of African descendants around the world. For instance, in different countries they organized Ethiopian support groups, raised funds for weapons and medical supplies, boycotted Italian-produced goods, wrote articles condemning Italy and admonishing the League of Nations, petitioned European colonial powers to deny Italy loans and weapons, held prayer meetings, staged violent riots against colonial governments, and sought to join the Ethiopian military effort against the Italian invaders. However, despite the groundswell of popular support this movement received from countless black communities around the world, African peoples were still unorganized. Hence, they lacked any significant amount of power to save Ethiopia from the clutches of European imperialism or to achieve any other meaningful Pan-African objective.

Post-World War II Trends

The end of World War II, a decade after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, meant the beginning of the end for colonialism proper in Africa. Factors associated with this development had a profound impact on the Pan-African movement. Like the Italian invasion, factors related to the end of the Second World War stimulated the growth and development of Pan-Africanism significantly, contributing further to its radicalization. One of the most stimulating factors during this period was the international espousal of the right of all people to independence and self-determination contained in the Atlantic Charter, a document created by Great Britain and the United States. No less significant was the fact that, once again, hundreds of thousands of black troops from North America and the colonial dependencies in Africa and the Caribbean had participated in this war that was supposedly fought for the democratic ideals extolled in the Atlantic Charter. Hence, these circumstances contributed significantly to the growing unwillingness to tolerate inequality and oppression throughout the African World. Unlike the period following the First World War, during the post-World War II period the imperial-

ist powers would not succeed in denying, at least in principle, the right of African peoples on the continent, and soon afterwards in the Caribbean, to govern themselves. After the wreckage of World War II, the weakened European victors were in no position to reverse the anti-colonial movement that was gaining in strength, especially in light of the growing socialist threat in parts of Asia and Eastern Europe. And so it was in the context of these opportunities that the Pan-African movement, during and after the Second World War, became stronger and more militant.

This development culminated, to a large extent, in the Fifth Pan-African Congress of 1945 in Manchester, England. Organized by George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah and other important figures associated with the Pan-African Federation in Great Britain, this Congress symbolized in many ways the coming-of-age of Pan-Africanism. It differed significantly from other Pan-African meetings, conventions and congresses in that: 1) the numerical participation of native-born Africans was greater; 2) there was a greater ratio of delegates who represented the organized labor of African workers and farmers; 3) the socialist world view clearly dominated the discussions on the solution to the problems facing Africa and its people; 4) the more passive and reformist resolutions passed in previous Pan-African meetings were replaced with more radical resolutions (one of which did not rule out the use of force to achieve Pan-African objectives); and 5) a strategy to liberate Africa, in Africa, became the primary focus for the new, revolutionary Pan-African agenda.

Specifically, the Manchester Congress condemned the partition of Africa and the economic exploitation of the continent and the lack of industrial development, advocated a stronger stand against settler colonialism, demanded an end to illiteracy and malnutrition, and supported the independence of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. It further requested the recognition of the rights of syndicates and cooperatives by colonial powers, and approved the demand for independence by West African delegates present at the Congress, and embraced the UN Charter. That many of the participants at this historic Congress made quite notable contributions to the defeat of colonialism proper in Africa a decade or so later only indicates the importance of the Manchester meeting.

One such contribution was the pivotal role Kwame Nkrumah played in the struggle to wrest political control from the British in Ghana (in what was then called the Gold Coast). From 1947 until Ghanaian independence in 1957, Nkrumah led his countrymen in a Positive Action campaign of mass strikes, boycotts and demonstrations. The strategy used in Ghana by Nkrumah was heavily influenced by the Manchester Congress. The British were left with no other choice but to relinquish political power. The implications of this event for the rest of Africa and the entire African World were astounding. With practically every part of the African World experiencing, in some form or another, political subjugation at the hands of powerful white nations, Ghana's independence in 1957 symbolized, at least in the hearts and minds of countless African descendants around the world, the beginning of a new world order. Understanding the significance of this emerging sentiment, Nkrumah made his famous declaration that the independence of Ghana was meaningless without the total liberation of Africa.

It was at this juncture in the historical development of Pan-Africanism that Nkrumah became the leading embodiment of the movement. As such, he wasted no time in making Ghana the major citadel of the Pan-African movement. In 1958, Nkrumah, with the critical assistance of George Padmore (his African Af-

fairs advisor), convened two conferences in Ghana that were historical milestones in the struggle for Pan-Africanism. The first was a conference of Independent African states, held in April of 1958. The second was the All-African People's Conference in December of the same year. While there were many important resolutions passed at these conferences, their real significance lay in the fact that they were held on African soil. These conferences inspired the convening of other similar conferences later held in Tunis in 1960, in Cairo in 1961, and again, in Ghana, in subsequent years. Even the formation of the Organization of African Unity in 1963 can be traced to the efforts of Nkrumah to achieve his Pan-African goals for Africa. In short, until his death in 1972 (even after the 1966 coup d'état that toppled his government), Nkrumah's theoretical and practical efforts to realize the goals of Pan-Africanism had a tremendous impact on the world in general and the African World in particular.

The OAU is one example of this, for, although it has never measured up to the radical demands and expectations of Nkrumah and other revolutionary Pan-Africanists, it has provided some assistance to the Pan-African movement in Africa over the past three decades. The OAU's mild successes have included its contribution to conflict management, the struggle against colonial and settler colonial rule, and economic development and cooperation. However, because of its lack of genuine authority and control over its member states, and the ideological disunity of Africa's leadership, its resolutions and decisions have not been always adhered to and implemented.

In fact, the OAU, whose Charter was signed by thirty African States on May 25, 1963, in Addis Ababa, was a compromise between those States which advocated outright unification of the continent, comprising Morocco, Mali, Ghana, Guinea, Algeria, and Libya (with delegates from Ceylon), known as the Casablanca Group (so named after their conference in Morocco, in January 1961) and those who favored a gradual approach to unification and regional associations or groupings. The latter have been commonly known as the Monrovia Group (which had met in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, in May 1961.) Included in the Group were Somalia, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Congo-Brazzaville, Tunisia, and Ethiopia, joined by the Brazzaville Group, made up of several of the former French colonies, such as Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Chad, Senegal, Madagascar, and Cameroon.

In reality, the moderates, led by Felix Houphouët-Boigny (of Côte d'Ivoire) and Léopold Senghor (of Senegal), prevailed over Kwame Nkrumah (of Ghana), Modibo Keita (of Mali), and Sékou Touré (of Guinea). Thus, the objectives of the OAU were to:

Promote unity and solidarity of the African States; coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa; defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, and independence; eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa; and promote international co-operation having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The OAU Charter made Addis-Ababa the headquarters for the Secretariat-General, and provided for a yearly meeting of the Heads of State and a biannual gathering of the Foreign Ministers to prepare for the meeting of the Heads of State.

The civil war in Chad, for which the Organization dispatched a peace-keeping force in 1981, the Eritrean war, the protracted fighting in former Spanish (Western)

Sahara, the Somali-Ethiopian war of 1977-1978, and the dispute following the assumption of power by the MPLA in 1975 demonstrated clearly the powerlessness of the OAU and the ideological divisions, as well as the personal ambitions of the African Heads of State—all underscored by the lack of action by this august body during the recent civil war in Liberia (which saw the intervention, not by a OAU force but by that of the Economic Council of West African States [ECOWAS] entirely dominated by Nigeria). Hence, since 1963, the OAU has failed to solve many of the major problems confronting the African continent, despite the fact that, by 1990, its membership had risen to fifty-one countries. (The OAU's problems have been compounded by a low turnout at the meetings of the Heads of State, personal and ideological differences, external pressures, particularly from France and the United States, and inconsistency in the payment of membership dues). No matter its successes or failures, the OAU has not turned out to be the kind of a unifying vehicle or the real aim of the founders of Pan-Africanism.

The 1966 coup in Ghana was a major setback to the Pan-African movement. However, the emergence of the Black Power movement that same year in the United States, and later in other parts of the African diaspora, represented the continuation and spread of the Pan-African idea. Personified best by Caribbean-born Kwame Toure (formerly Stokely Carmichael), this radical movement was strongly influenced by the nationalist uprisings in Africa and the work of Pan-Africanists such as Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Frantz Fanon, and Malcolm X (whose courageous efforts, especially during 1964, played a tremendous role in shaping the consciousness of young activists towards a Pan-African orientation). After exhausting all reformist means possible (during the Civil Rights movement) to end the economic exploitation and political subjugation experienced by African descendants in the United States, a large sector of activists began seeing their plight as indistinguishable from other African peoples in the Caribbean, Europe and Africa. Hence, as early as 1968, Black Power activists in the United States, as they were encouraged by Nkrumah and Malcolm, began advocating that all peoples of African descent were African, and that Pan-Africanism was the solution to the problems facing the entire African World. By the 1970s, the Black Power movement was clearly manifested in the ideological and organizational development of young black radicals in the Caribbean, Western Europe, and South Africa. As in the United States, it soon transformed itself into a variant of Pan-Africanism.

In the United States, the generative effect of the Black Power movement continued unabated, with several Pan-African formations established during the early 1970s. The African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) was one important formation during this time. However, the most significant of these was the founding of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (A-APRP) in 1972, shortly after Nkrumah's death. The A-APRP was created by African descendants from different parts of the world who were committed to practicing the Pan-African ideas of Nkrumah, i.e., Nkrumaism (since Nkrumah himself had called for the formation of an A-APRP in 1968). Its original founders included, among others, Black Power advocates such as Kwame Toure and Willie Ricks, and Nkrumah loyalists such as Lamin Jangha of the Gambia.

During the 1980s, several events, some of them tragic, have had a significant impact on the Pan-African movement. Before the tragedies began, the birth of the Pan-African Revolutionary Socialist Party (PRSP), which split from the AAPRP in 1983, represented the further development of Pan-Africanism in the creation of

another Nkrumaist organization. Its newspaper, *The Nkrumaist*, is one of the few Pan-African publications, since Garvey's *The Negro World*, fifty years ago, that attempts to speak to and for the entire African World. However, Sekou Toure's sudden death in 1984 and the subsequent right-wing coup in Guinea, have meant a significant loss to the movement because of the late President's dedication to the Pan-African cause. Other similar and decisive events that have damaged the Pan-African movement have been the assassinations of presidents Maurice Bishop of Grenada (and the dismantling of the Grenadian Revolution) in 1983 and Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso in 1987. As committed Pan-Africanists, their deaths have deprived the Pan-African movement of potential and badly needed land bases on which the Pan-African movement could be better coordinated and consolidated. In the 1990s, other centers and sources of Pan-African activity emerged in different parts of the African World. The heightened level of struggle to end apartheid in South Africa is perhaps one of the most fertile locations for the development of Pan-Africanism today.

At the dawn of the 21st century, new Pan-African developments began to take shape in the face of the continued inefficiency of the OAU. Spearheaded by Libya's Muammar Al Qaddafi, and influenced by the growing strength of the European Union, a call for the creation of an African Union (AU) was made at the 36th meeting of the OAU in Lome, Togo, in July of 2000. By July 2002, in Durban, South Africa, the AU was formally launched. Designed to respond to the challenges faced by globalization and to enhance the pace of African development, African Heads of State and Government have formalized their effort to speed-up the process of African continental integration. Some of the main features of the AU will include the establishment of an African Central Bank, an African Monetary Union, an African Court of Justice, and a Pan-African Parliament.

However, while the AU seems to be an improvement from the erstwhile OAU, problems remain. There has been, for instance, very little effort to educate the masses of African farmers, workers, and youth about the imperative of African unity. In short, in the villages, towns, cities, and campuses where the concept of African unity must take root, nothing is being done to foster its development amongst the millions of people who must bring it into fruition. Furthermore, certain internal flaws in the constitutional structure of the African Union serve to detract from the realization of genuine African unity. For example, Article 3b of the AU constitution lists as one of its objectives "to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member states." Hence, like the OAU before it, the AU is in some ways serving to reify the balkanization of Africa.

Furthermore, despite the constant challenges of the AU to contribute to Africa's security, stability, and development, it continues to remain ineffective in the face of ever-increasing problems around the continent. Recent conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Liberia reinforce this fact—with foreign troops, including American, French, and British, still being relied upon to settle intra-African disputes. In fact, even a small army in the tiny Republic of Sao Tome e Principe can—as the recent coup makers there have proven—defy the existence of the AU. So far, the modalities for an African Union's intervention force are nonexistent and so is the mechanism for the election and seating of a continental (Pan-African) Parliament. Ambiguity also remains vis-à-vis a common front against international terrorism (usually defined in terms of violent, anti-West Islamic fundamentalism), some member states, such as

Kenya, favoring the US Administration's preemptive war to topple governments that are unilaterally declared the "axis of evil" and the assassination or "elimination" of their leaders. Others maintain a defiant stance but are unable to voice it openly, making their statements and policy on terrorism and the appropriate approach to deal with it utterly ineffective. Therefore, the new AU fervor notwithstanding, the jury is still out and Pan-African advocates should not be surprised if the new organ turns out to be just the old OAU in disguise.

Summary

In sum, Pan-Africanism has been a multifaceted movement that has undergone many changes and has experienced much development. However, it has not yet met its ultimate objective of unifying and liberating Africa and its people along the path of socialist reconstruction. There are a number of reasons that account for this fact, not least of which includes the manipulations and intransigence of imperialist domination, especially in its neo-colonial phase of development. Another significant and related factor is the failure of Pan-African organizations to build the type of unity among themselves that is necessary to achieve the objectives of Pan-Africanism. In other words, the Pan-African movement has always been poorly coordinated, with no umbrella organization having ever been created to consolidate it transnationally. This partly explains why so many Pan-African organizations have been created, only soon to be disbanded after a few years of existence. Thus, while the motive for Pan-African resistance seems strong and consistent, there still exists no institutionalized mechanism within the African World to ensure its continued growth and development.

Study Questions and Activities

1. Discuss the meaning of Pan-Africanism. ✓
2. What were some of the characteristics of the early emigration efforts of Pan-Africanists prior to the twentieth century?
3. Who were some of the major figures in the Pan-African movement, and what were some of the contributions they made? ✓
4. In what way has the Pan-African movement been influenced by major world events? ✓
5. Discuss some of the more recent developments in the Pan African movement that have occurred since the 1980s.

References

- Yassin Ei-Ayouty (ed.). *The Organization of African Unity After Thirty Years*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994.