

Pan African Renewal in The 21st Century

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The thrust of this contribution is to reflect on how the spirit of redemption and emancipation can be harnessed to make a decisive impact on humanity in the 21st century. The victories of the African peoples in rolling back the frontiers of colonial domination must be tempered by the realities of the conditions of the African at home and abroad. The elections and transition process in South Africa encapsulates the strengths and weaknesses of the liberation process this century. It is the changed political conditions for the African in the context of reorganised imperialism that the question of liberation needs to be reconceptualised.

In the call for the Seventh Pan African Congress which was held in Uganda, the International Preparatory Committee had hoped to maintain the old spirit of the broad nature of the Pan African movement of the past century. The meeting, the third of its kind to be held since the All African Peoples Conference in 1957, was open to all shades of opinion, groups and individuals in the Pan African world. The broad theme of "Pan Africanism: Facing the Future in Unity, Social Progress and Democracy" failed to find ways to harmonise the direction of this 7th Pan African Congress with the Congresses which are going on in the streets, valleys, villages and communities all across the Pan African World. In this sense, this conference marked the end of an era of a particular form of Pan African Congresses.

The broad themes of the conveners of the 7th PAC reflected the confrontation of the reality of the basic differences of Pan Africanism from above and Pan Africanism from below. Pan Africanism developed from among the slaves who created a vision of the unity of the struggles of the African peoples at home and abroad. It was the totality of the system of oppression which forced the African to create a vision of the world which was larger than the nation or ethnic group from which the slave was captured. The aspirations of the slave were larger than the plantation and the vision of the slave holders. African women were at the

forefront of the resistance to slavery by teaching the principal lessons of resistance and dignity.

From the period of slavery there has been field slaves and house slaves, those who want to overturn the oppression of Africans and those who want to find ways to live with that oppression. This division of Pan Africanism from above and below is now manifest in the distinctions between the African leaders (at home and abroad) and the broad masses of sufferers. As such, it is now impossible for Pan Africanism to have the same nationalist appeal embracing all classes and strata as did the appeals made in the period of constitutional decolonisation and armed struggles. The anti colonial appeal were the calls of the 5th and 6th Pan African conferences.

The Pan African movement is faced with a number of responsibilities. The conference organisers had spelt out the usual catastrophes of debt, war, food crisis, refugees, structural adjustment, the rise of racism internationally, and with the question of recolonisation figuring prominently. In this contribution, one would want to point to three of the tasks of the Pan African movement for the next century. Firstly, to make an impact on the African people in the process of transforming the nationalist consciousness of the 20th century. Secondly, to make a decisive impact on world opinion with respect to the Africans at home and abroad. And thirdly, to be able to realise the spirit of dignity for the renewal of the human spirit. Western European narratives of both the modern and post modern variants devalued the spiritual dimension of humanity with an artificial distinction between thought and matter, between the material and the spiritual. One of the principal challenges of the Pan African movement is "to offer spiritual leadership to a world corrupted by worship of market forces."¹

In essence, the spiritual renewal and revival which is at the core of the movement is part of the attempt to break with the crude philosophical traditions of materialism of Europe. This conception of materialism encouraged greed, corruption and the worse forms of individualism. At the philosophical level, this individualism promoted leaderism in the Pan African movement. Pan Africanism must inspire the spirit of collective efforts over individualism and plenty rather than poverty. The concept of scientific progress and capitalist development can now be critiqued clearly in the face of the way capitalism promotes death tendencies. The death tendencies are manifest in wars, poverty, aids, racism, destruction of the environment and the devaluation of the lives of women and deforming the lives of the youth. The objective of this period is to be able to encourage life tendencies, and discouraging and isolating death tendencies.

This conference met at a time when death tendencies were on the ascendancy. The urgency of the tasks as they face the African, whether in South Africa, Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, Zaire, Haiti or Brazil, presented the movement with the challenge to respond concretely to the demands

of the poor and powerless for a new vision beyond the old rhetorical approaches to Pan Africanism. The very traditions of mobilisation of the past meetings and strategies contained the seeds of demobilisation. Pan African Congresses in the past were important historical interventions, but the very nature of the organisation created the breeding ground for elite politics.

There are those who believed that the primary aim of the conference was to debate who is an African. This debate was undertaken in a spirit of democratic give and take and reflected the kind of tolerance which would distinguish this movement from those who exploit and manipulate differences of opinions. Most Africans live in multi ethnic and multi racial societies. In this instance, the supreme task is to struggle against racism globally while ensuring that we do not internalise the ideas of the oppressors. Because victimisation of people developed in racist cultures sometimes enters into the thought pattern of those struggling against it, one of the major challenges of the Pan African movement is to become self reliant in the realm of ideas. The Pan African movement must develop a strong critique of racism and constructive alternatives with an agenda of how to pool together to fight it.

Democratic decision making and new forms of political mobilisation in this period are required to place the movement on a new path from the nationalist leaders who demobilised the producers once they occupied the institutions of colonial governance. Democracy includes the freedom of speech, freedom of movement, freedom of expression and the right to participate in elections, and the freedom to be creative. The conference is itself part of the transition and the transformation of the forms of political intervention. One clear demand which is echoed from every corner is that Pan Africanism must be part of the transformation of gender relations internationally.

This paper is an attempt to reconceptualise the tasks of emancipation for the Pan African movement in the context of the reorganisation of imperialism (The World Trade Organisation - WTO), North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the expanded European Community, the Pacific Rim, resuscitated NATO and its expansion under the guise of a New World Order). Conferences represent one of the many fora where the African peoples are discussing how to respond to the new internationalisation of capital. At the forefront of these discussions are the African women who are discussing the principal weakness of the movement in the past. African feminists are exploring ways of dealing with the myriad forms of subjugation of the African woman. These progressive Africans seek the full emancipation of women and the consequent humanisation of the male. They want a Pan African Movement vibrant with social truth and activated by free women.²

The present struggles for self determination and transformation of gender relations lie at the centre of the wider struggle to liberate humanity from those

forms of economic and social organisation that are antithetical to our realisation of our full capacities as human beings.

The Reconceptualisation of African Liberation

The Pan African movement has historically been one of the principal currents of political change and a force against racism on both sides of the Atlantic. In the 20th century, Pan Africanism accepted the task of rolling back the frontiers of colonialism in Africa. This task assumed that the content and meaning of political independence would advance the dignity of the African. This position had been underlined by Kwame Nkrumah who had urged: "Seek Ye first the Political Kingdom and all will be added to thee." The intellectual and organisational tasks necessary for the conquest of political independence were undertaken by the Pan African intelligentsia. The victories over colonialism have been the high point of this century.

In April 1994, twenty years after the fall of Portuguese colonialism, the victory of an ANC government in South Africa was a historic turning point in achieving the goals of the 20th century. Yet, while it is important that the Pan African movement can celebrate the liberation of colonial entities, there are still the colonies of Puerto Rico, Martinique, Cayenne, Guadeloupe, Aruba and over a dozen colonies in the Caribbean. The movement must demand that England, France, Holland and the United States end the outmoded principle of colonial possession.

The call for solidarity with those struggling against colonialism will be a concrete step in bringing back the values and ideals of African liberation from the leadership who have delegitimised the ideas of African liberation. The fact is that in the discourse today the dominant literature on the so called civil wars and conflict resolution seeks to silence the history of African liberation. This has reached the point where instead of liberation and self determination being a source of inspiration to bring about a brighter future, the present process is seen as a never ending nightmare of death and destruction. The intellectual balance is still in the hands of those who profit from colonial forms and warfare and who see peace as a commodity imposed from outside of Africa.

Many of the leaders of the past Pan African movement and the African liberation struggle have contributed to this sense of nightmare and external dependence. These leaders can be found from Angola, the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Zaire, Kenya and Algeria. Movements in struggle and parties in governments began to clarify very early the difference between Pan Africanism from above and Pan Africanism from below. From the very beginning of the mass mobilisations against external rule, some of the most articulate spokespersons of the Pan African/Negritude movement reneged on one of the cardinal principles of Pan

Africanism: "that the people of one part of Africa are responsible for the freedom and liberation of their brothers and sisters in other parts of Africa; and indeed black people everywhere were to accept the same responsibility."³

This principle is at the heart of the conceptualisation of Pan Africanism in the face of leaders who foment ethnic, regional, religious and gender inequalities. The social composition of the OAU along with the inability to intervene in areas of disputes such as Liberia, Burundi, Sudan, Somalia, and Angola render the present leaders of the OAU a stumbling block to peace and renewal.

During the period of the liberation struggles, Africans waging war on the continent called for international solidarity in the struggles against colonialism. This call was important and in this period we must respond to the call of the people of the Caribbean and the Americas Haiti who need Pan African intervention to rise above the dictatorship and the recent history of the manipulation of the symbols of racial consciousness. The same solidarity is in the short run demanded by the Cuban people. Cuba responded with a major sacrifice to assist the African people to defeat the South African army at Cuito Cuanavale in Angola. At present the people of Cuba are being punished for daring to conceptualise a different form of organising society. The economic embargo against Cuba must be opposed by Pan Africanists everywhere, but especially by Pan Africanists in the Americas.

These short term tasks of social reconstruction will be deepened by the long term struggles against racism in Europe, North America and Brazil.

The reconceptualisation of the tasks of liberation must also seek to define the purpose of the movement. From the time of the David Walker appeal in the early 19th century in the United States, the struggle of the movement has been internationalist. Walker defined the tasks of Pan Africanism by declaring that "it was an unshakeable fact and forever immovable fact that your full glory and happiness, as well as that of all other coloured people under heaven, shall never be consummated without the entire emancipation of your enslaved brethren all over the world."

This call for global redefinition of Pan Africanism has been carried forward by every generation since David Walker. Unfortunately, the movement has so far responded to the written records and not to the oral traditions. In this way, the voices of women have been silenced in the call for the reconceptualization of Pan Africanism. Eusi Kwayana, one of the contemporary activists of the movement, stated in his contribution and in his personal call to African males, that the "cultural constitution of Africa in relation to women and in relation to youth is in need of revision. And this must not be done behind the backs of women and the youth. Pan Africanism will have validity only if it seeks to solve the fundamental problems of social injustice among Africans and supports every human community in its efforts for justice, freedom and development."

What Is Pan Africanism?

Kwayana's invitation seems to be basic and simple and summarises the issues which confront the movement as we approach the end of this century of depression, fascism, war, revolution and African independence. It is from this challenge that is necessary to reassess the conception of how to define Pan Africanism. Prior to the 6th Pan African Congress, Walter Rodney had declared that Pan Africanism was an exercise in self definition. In his words, inevitably this exercise in self definition "is undertaken by a specific social group or social class which speaks on behalf of the population as a whole." African women have been able to develop on this position by saying that in the past the self definition was simply in relation to the difference between Europeans and Africans. African women are at the forefront of developing a new self definition of the movement. At all meetings since the 6th Pan African Congress, the principal criticism has been that the movement has been male centred and that the very forces who were speaking of liberation on the continent and in political parties were carrying out domestic exploitation.⁴

The question which can be posed with respect to every level of the present movement is: which class is leading the present definition of the movement? What steps are being taken to end the historic silencing of women in the ranks of the Pan African movement? What steps are being taken to end the demobilisation and depoliticisation of the youth? How capable are the leading forces in carrying out the present tasks of resisting and rolling back the looming recolonisation? Which are the silent classes on whose behalf the calls for continental unity are being made?

The exercise in making the claim of which class is leading call for social emancipation has been made easier by the experience of the independent governments of Africa and the Caribbean over the past thirty years. The assumption of power by the nationalist leaders in Africa, Black Mayors, Senators and Generals in the USA and black electoral officers in Europe, has not changed the quality of life of the broad masses. If anything in the era of the transition from fordism (mass automated modes of capitalist production) to just-in-time production (the application of the most advanced forms of technology, computerisation and robotics to production) has meant the further impoverishment of the African people. The conditions of the black working class has deteriorated considerably in the period since the civil rights gains of the 1960s. This deterioration mirrors the oppression meted out under the name of "structural adjustment" in Africa.

The fact that the Pan African leadership of yesterday now constitute the problem and obstacles of today helps us to sharpen our understanding of Pan Africanism. Underlining the Rodneyite conception of the self emancipation of the working people. Kwayana developed a working definition which sees Pan Africanism:

"as a body of thought and action, shared but not uniform or dogmatic. A dynamic movement continually transforming itself and gaining new ideological perspectives in light of changing circumstance. Enriching itself through its own experience. Flowing from masses, groups and occasionally leaders of governments. Tending to the goal of the restoration of freedom and dignity for 'Africans at home and abroad.'"

This definition underlines the transformation of ideas which have gone on in the Pan African movement since the first conference was called in 1900. The dynamism of the movement is now apparent with those who are not satisfied with the present content and direction of the movement. The formation of the OAU in 1963 was the culmination of the asserted goals of self determination. In the context of the twenty first century, Pan Africanism will continue to mean the struggle for emancipation through diverse means; seeking unity and expressing the common purpose of fighting white domination and restoring African community. Undertaken by any group with the above purposes, both with and without international focus, the struggles for freedom continue on a day to day basis. The goals of Pan Africanism include: finding techniques of governing that build self reliance and community, identifying and rejecting the values of white domination and consumerism and holding that those educated in every tradition or discipline should put that education to work to serve the working people (Kwayana 1993).

African Women and the Redefinition of The Pan African Struggle

All of the issues of the emancipation of the African people in the 21st century converge on the principal question of the transformation of gender relations. All parties in the movement and in governments will argue that the African woman is the most oppressed section of the African peoples. Governments and official organisations for women will recite the statistics of the oppression and how the reorganisation of capitalism has impacted African women. The indices of public exploitation are present, but the issues of the relations between the public and the private sphere remains one area where many parties are conniving to silence African women.

This new form of silencing African women is very present in the plethora of women's groups and non governmental organisations which seek to promote a particular form of association among women. The leading culprits in this regard are those who seek to deepen capitalism in the rural areas of Africa by speaking of "women in development," of "empowering" women, yet shackle them with the onerous burden of structural adjustment and devaluation. The most odious in this enterprise are those who speak of women in development, yet support the economic measures which cut back on water supplies, health care, education

subsidies, electricity, food and those elements of the social wage which was developing in Africa, the Caribbean and in the social democratic areas of capitalism. In the process, a new and articulate social force have emerged who are termed "gender technicians."⁵

The conspiracy to silence women is well developed in the international arena where the centrality of the African women in the African liberation struggle was well known. This silencing has been taken over by the state sponsored women organisation syndrome. This is manifest all over the continent with women's organisations led by party functionaries or the wives of top government officials. Invariably, these organisations are in the forefront of the exploitation of women by calling on women to observe specific "traditions" and supporting degenerate leaders. These organisations assist in devaluing the lives of African peoples in general and African women in particular. Some of these organisations in supporting so called traditions extol the physical abuse of African women. They also dominate the circuit with respect to international meetings on women.

This form of state centred organisation of African women can be seen even in those organisations which were at the forefront of the Africa liberation struggle. From Mozambique to South Africa and from Namibia to Zimbabwe, it is now clear that the slogans of the emancipation of women which were carried in the liberation movements did not take concrete manifestation in the course of developing new institutions. More importantly has been the silence on the question of violation and rape of women in the ranks of the liberation movements. In Zimbabwe, the state centred party invoked its powers of censorship to suppress a documentary which raised the question of sexual abuse in the liberation war.

Mozambique, which was the most advanced of the liberation movements, in its declarations and state policies went only so far as to develop welfarist policies. These were positive in legislating equality with respect to employment, wages, health care and access to social services. The experience of the most advanced movement is that legislation is important, but could not deal with the fundamental oppression which is justified in the name of tradition.

All over the Pan African world, oppression in relation to sexual choice, conceptions of motherhood, nurturing, sexual oppression and harassment, genital mutilation, incest, rape and child abuse takes place outside of the public sphere and is not open to political discussion. Discussions of socialism were never carried out in gendered terms or in terms which could touch the deep cultural roots which supported concepts of women as minors and property.

The experience of Mozambique has been that though the elementary steps were taken for the "equality of women," the conception of equality is itself problematic. Elementary steps are being made by women's movements in the Pan African world to develop autonomous organisations to forward the struggle of women. Often times there is the mistaken belief that if Pan Africanism was

associated with great men, then to repair this historic imbalance, it is necessary to bring to the fore all the great women from Queen Nzinga to Harriet Tubman to Winnie Mandela who have been at the forefront of the African struggle.

The conception of Pan Africanism from below must celebrate the contributions of these women, but this celebration is not enough to bring to the fore the issues of the reconstruction of the African society away from the capitalist values of individualism, patriarchy and private ownership. Women as property in Africa and in the diaspora touches on deep cultural values and beliefs. The reconstruction of gender relations is tied to the search for spiritual renewal and in the transformation of cultural values. The emancipation of the continent and of all peoples require the fundamental restructuring of gender relations in the society. This is glaring in those societies where fundamentalism is the cover for theocratic doctrines which support discrimination against women.

The experience of the UNITA movement in Angola is a supreme example of an organisation which manipulates all of the symbols of Pan Africanism for the most obscene oppression of Africans. It is not accidental that it was from the ranks of the 6th Pan African Congress that UNITA sought to mobilise African Americans against the so called whites, mezticos and communists. This organisation had different messages for differing audiences and exploited the negative ideas of race consciousness when European men and women were prominent leaders in this party. The weapon of a women's organisation against the interest of women can be seen in the organisation of LIMA (League of the Independent Women of Angola) the women's arm of UNITA.⁶

The women in the areas controlled by UNITA were especially exploited since the ideas of military communism of UNITA precluded any form of independent thinking by women. In late 1987, women soldiers were integrated into the official fighting force of UNITA's army and there were seven who were even commissioned as officers. The organisational arm of UNITA which represented women was a vehicle to sing praises to the supreme leader of the organisation and women had no control over their lives. Sexual abuse and violence was the norm in conditions of warfare where women, especially the younger ones, had to be made available to the commanders. The leadership of UNITA established a tradition, where as the maximum leader, it was possible for the political leadership to arrange marriages. The traditional reproductive roles of women in these areas are seen as an extension of the war effort since women produce the human labour necessary for UNITA to continue fighting. Their roles as mothers are seen as essential in providing the next generation of fighters. UNITA recruits youths at six years old for military training. Women also act as porters carrying weapons for the South African supported forces of UNITA. Yet, in international meetings the spokespersons of UNITA reproduced the politically correct language on the "equality of women."

UNITA as an organisation represents the most vulgar form of the manipulation of the symbols of African liberation and the promotion of death tendencies.

This Pan Africanism of UNITA seeks to mobilise on the narrow issues of race, ethnicity, regionalism to foster the ambition of those who seek to reduce Africa to war and destabilisation. The experience of UNITA is the most extreme example of forms of the domination of women all over the Pan African world. African women suffer the most from war all over the continent and the reconstruction of the African peoples require new forms of mobilisation and a new mode of politics. UNITA is not unique in this respect. The conditions of violence, warfare and genocide in many parts of Africa reinforces the weakness of the African continent and forces progressive Africans to seek new ways to move beyond the present organisational and political forms.

Mobilisation and Demobilisation

One of the ironies of the present attempt to organise for the twenty first century is the ways in which the organisational forms of the 20th century have crippled imagination and creativity. African males inherited European forms of expression and communication. One of the principal weaknesses of this form of communication has been the importance of the speaker and organiser and the passive participation of the listener. This took the form of the mass political rally. These traditions were to have a major impact on the post colonial era when the very forces who called on the people used the same vehicles of communications for demobilisation.

This is very present all over the continent and among Africans where there is an intolerance for diverse views. This intolerance has led to the maximisation of differences and to wars of ethnic, regional and religious forms. The ways of processing and accessing knowledge in the West is fundamentally undemocratic. Pan Africanism must develop a new pedagogy, in essence, a new way for the reproduction, transference and use of knowledge. This new democratisation of knowledge must draw from orature so that one does not privilege any one form of processing and reproducing knowledge.

Participating in the oral traditions has been one of the sources of the strength and the creativity of the African person. These traditions are harnessed and preserved in song, poetry, dance, music and in other cultural forms. The vividness of orality has been reduced in the political movement by the emphasis on the idea of the great leader. Leaderism suppresses the creative instincts, and this can be seen in the ways in which public forms of entertainment in Africa are oppressive. In the state media and television, the dependence of the leaders on the West is manifest in the promotion of ignorance among the people. This ignorance ensures that the young have to find out for themselves many of the forms of the continuity in the struggles from the period of slavery to the present. The reconstruction of the cultural values will be one of the ways in which African peoples will make a statement to the world in the 21st century.

Pan Africanism in multi ethnic and multi racial societies

It is now clear that one of the demobilising factors of the 20th century has been the elaboration of racism and racist values. In the proposed reorganisation of imperialism, racist ideas and racist cultural instincts are on the rise. One of the ways some Pan Africanists have responded to this globalisation the ideas of apartheid is to deepen the concept of race consciousness. This is especially the case in the Caribbean, North America, South America and Western Europe.

The resistance against racism took many forms from the mass organisation of Garveyism and the Civil Rights movement to the armed struggles against Apartheid and settler colonialism. Among some Africans, the opposition to racism took the form of the glorification of the African past. This was a liberating experience under colonialism and helped to mobilise the people. Unfortunately, the unscientific ideas about racial inferiority and superiority were internalised to divide the working peoples. The experience of Guyana and Trinidad in the past thirty years has demonstrated that it is not possible to struggle against racism without developing an alternative interpretation of the world than that of the racists.

The present international situation demands that Pan Africanists become more self reliant in the realm of ideas to be able to fight racism. Pan Africanists cannot seek to dominate or discriminate against others. It is here important to learn from the experiences of Walter Rodney and the Working Peoples Alliance (WPA) in Guyana. Firstly, Africans were taken to Guyana where the indigenous peoples - the Amerindians - were nearly wiped out. Secondly, there were indentured workers taken from India to break the industrial muscle of the African workers and small farmers. European colonialists manipulated the differences between the Amerindians, the Indians and other ethnic groups. Thirdly, a so called Pan African leader in Guyana sought to develop these traditions to the point of assassinating one of the foremost spokespersons of the working people and of African liberation, Walter Rodney.

Eusi Kwayana, who is from the same political and ideological persuasion as Rodney, underlined the fact that Walter Rodney appreciated from the beginning , "that human development would not take place to its full potential outside a harmonious ethnic environment. Such an environment takes for granted the prior resolution of ethnic rivalries, indignities and oppression, a law that appears even more fundamental than normal class contradictions. . ."

"The alternative chosen by the Working Peoples Alliance (WPA) and by no other party in the Caribbean so far, that is to subject everything else to the creation of a politics based on ethnic reconciliation, the party affirming that it rather not go forward than to go forward with one race. The question is that in a multi ethnic

situation any sense of progress on the basis of one race is a mere illusion of progress."

This concept of rising above the nationalism and exclusivism of western Europe is a fundamental requirement of the Pan African movement in the 21st century. It is very simple and easy to point to imperialist domination but less easy to see the ways in which undemocratic resolution of racial and ethnic differences weaken the African everywhere. The genocide in Rwanda was a rude awakening of how far ideas of ethnic cleansing could go in Africa. This question of a multi ethnic society is especially true for Africans in the diaspora. "Pan Africanism must recognise first and foremost the remaining minorities of the great nations almost made extinct in several countries by the genocidal traditions of Europe."

Democratic approaches to dealing with ethnic and racial difference will distinguish democracy in the Pan African world from the elementary forms of democracy in Europe. The ethnic diversity of the African continent is a source of great wealth and great strength. Popular democratic interventions beyond the politics of leaders and manipulations are required for the peoples of the world to move forward. Kwayana, who has formulated the concept of Pan African humanism, has called on the movement to insist on conditions of empowerment and equal opportunity for the oppressed of all ethnic groups. This will be a lasting contribution to the anti racist struggle internationally.

The drive for spiritual renewal in the Pan African world

All of the indices of the destructive nature of capitalism are present before humanity. The ecological disasters, wars, Aids, drugs, biological warfare, land mines, exploitation and plunder are all hallmarks of the present era. The plans for the organisation of imperialism in the transition to just-in-time production seeks to completely marginalise the African at home and abroad. The discourse of liberalisation and privatisation are being formulated to reinforce the lopsided international division of labour. Cultural and ideological oppression are manifestations of the drive for the recolonization of the African continent.

The crisis of capitalism points to the crude materialism and values of the West. The so called myth of progress, science and technology has been exposed in many ways. The crisis in this form of materialism can be seen in the collapse of the planned economies and the inability for the 20th century concept of socialism to rise above the European conception of liberation. The fall of socialism and the retreat of many progressive forces has led to despair. In some parts of the world the opposition to the culture of capital seeks forms of religious fundamentalism.

The rise of fundamentalism in the Pan African world in many forms is an attempt by peoples to develop new cultural and spiritual values. Unfortunately,

in the attempt to develop spiritual reference points there are some zealots who develop religions and religious expressions to dominate and exploit the spiritual values of the African peoples. These elements develop extreme forms of bigotry in the process of opposing racism and cultural oppression. This bigotry further deepens the divisions in the Pan African world.

Spirituality is an area which encompasses our total being. When African peoples were oppressed and the oppression was extended to the spiritual realm by the church and schools of Europe, a gut reaction to domination emerged through spiritual expression. The self definition of the African people through spiritual and religious realms became central to political struggle. There are numerous examples of this in the anti colonial period. Spirituality offered an emotional outlet to the masses and religion developed out of this. African religion became a popular form of relating to Pan Africanism. This was because Western philosophy demonised African philosophy.

In the era of the consumer culture of the West and the debased values of greed and corruption, African religious forms and other forms of spirituality are now important forms of Pan African expression. Africans and other oppressed want to identify with spiritual values which can provide a base for emancipation and redemption. African customs, values and traditions are being interpreted in a way which could oppose the cultural domination. However, in many cases there are those who exploit the spiritual values to promote organised forms of religious expressions which are also oppressive.

The fact of religious fundamentalism in many forms (African, Christian and Islamic) exploiting the spiritual values of the poor demand that the Pan African movement is in need of spiritual renewal. Eusi Kwayana who understood the importance of class struggle and the appreciation of some aspects of historical materialism was also aware of the necessity to develop a political philosophy which built upon the positive spiritual attributes of the African peoples. The spiritual values of self reliance, love, redemption and deliverance are values which can unleash the creativity of the African to develop new forms of organising and conceptualising society. The task is to find new ways to harmonise the relations between human beings and between humans and nature. Africa is a rich continent. Thus far, the conception of the Pan African leaders have been to mobilise resources and raw materials based on the vision and demands of Europe.

The Pan African movement must move in a new direction and at the core of this direction is the spiritual and cultural renewal of the African peoples. Spirituality means different things to different peoples, but in this presentation we want to draw from the insights of Kwayana,

“Spirituality speaks about a strength which cannot be assimilated, assassinated or eliminated by other means. It is the reservoir closest to the mind, interflowing with it, gaining and receiving. In domestic, political and social life, it is the extent to which a community and individual sustain an option for virtue rather than vice,

for justice rather than injustice, freedom rather than oppression, purity rather than perversion, plenty over poverty and the future of universal love rather than universal greed."

The Pan African Struggle

At every stage in the past two centuries the spiritual values of love and the collective good of humans has been at the base of the Pan African movement. Pan Africanism is about the dignity of the African person and it is now clear that this dignity cannot be quantified in material terms. During the twentieth century the demands for self respect and freedom were articulated as the demand for political independence and an end to apartheid. The leaders and the intellectuals articulated the concept of African Unity as one of the principal elements of freedom.

The issue of unity and freedom of movement is still at the core of the political demand and remain one of the short term objectives of the movement. This short term objective has to be linked to the strengthening of the movement and the attention to the urgent issues of oppression and death tendencies on the planet.

With the impending political defeat of apartheid, the major stumbling block to African political unity and social development will be removed. Popular participation, the transformation of gender relations, cultural freedom and the development of new forms of social existence remain part of the task to place Africa on the road to alternative forms of economic organisation. The political unity of Africa is an elementary precondition for the task of economic change so that the African peoples everywhere can draw strength from the spiritual and cultural strength of Africa.

This task is also sharpened by the economic and social marginalisation of the African peoples in South America. The cultural resistance of the African peoples in Brazil, Cuba, Haiti and the rest of the region provide a fertile base for real multi racial democracy in this region. Thus far, however, even those social movements aspiring for democracy continue to predicate development on the catching up with Europe and America. The models of consumption of the culture of capitalism reserve this mode of consumption for a small minority of humanity in Europe, North America and Japan.

Pan African Liberation in the twenty first century is thus inscribed in the struggle beyond the culture of capital and the effort to lobotomise humanity into mindless consumers. The liberation of the African peoples is linked to the liberation of other oppressed and sharpens the elements of Pan African humanism. Pan Africanism which seeks to reproduce the chauvinism of the European categorisation of race has been unable to inspire the kind of humanism necessary to emancipate human beings from the European classification of races. The battle against racism cannot continue to accept the unscientific category of race. The

struggle for democracy includes the ability to benefit from the cultural and ethnic diversity of Africans. This challenge is clearest in the field of developing Pan African educational institutions.

Pan African liberation is not only linked to the quest for a new social system, but also one in which the development of the productive forces is not simply linked to the production of goods but also the creation of new human beings. This perspective of the transformation of gender relations, free men, women and children, of cultural freedom, of harnessing the positive knowledge of the African past now forms part of the conception of the struggle for Pan African liberation in the twenty-first century.

The tasks of emancipation are formidable and requires a new theory of social reality. Small steps are being made with the social commitment of those in the movement who see liberation not as the work of individual leaders or intellectuals but as part of the process of self mobilisation and self organisation of the African peoples.

Notes

1. Eusi Kwayana (1993) "Pan Africanism in the Caribbean", SAPEM, Harare, December.
2. Bonita Harris (1993) "Combatting Women's Over Representation Among The Poor in the Carribean," SAPEM, Harare, December.
3. Walter Rodney (1975) "Towards the 6th Pan African Congress: Aspects of the International Class Struggle in Africa, America and the Carribean." In Horace Campbell, *Ed, Pan Africanism: Documents of the Sixth Pan African Congress*, Toronto.
4. This has been brought out in the book *In Search of Mr. McKenzie*, "McKenzie-Mavinga, Isha and Perkins, Thelma (1991), London: The Women's Press.
5. Bunie M. Matlanyane Sexale (1994) "The Politics of gender Training," in *Agenda: A Journal about Women and Gender*, No.23, Durban, South Africa.
6. For an elaboration of this argument see Horace Campbell (1993) "Angolan Women and the 1992 Electoral Process," *Africa Development*, Dakar, Senegal.