

**TOWARDS AFRICA WITHOUT BORDERS:
SOCRATES, DIKE AND BLACK AFRICA'S WHORING
ELITES***

Introduction

This paper is constructed on very simple lines. While it does not fail or hesitate to recognize the theme and vision of the conference as bold, courageous and forward-looking, it seeks to remind the distinguished participants that some of the real first things about the study of Africa, and which should form the foundation for the brave new Africa envisaged, are still to be attended to. To put it another way, it seeks to draw attention to "old unhappy far off things and battles long ago" that continue to dog Africanists like their shadow. It is a call for a return to basics. It contends that when, for instance, the great Philip Curtin and his intimidating cohort claim that African history has come of age,¹ or Lallage Bown asserts that African studies has grown from a cottage industry to a multinational enterprise², we are being treated to the light-hearted optimism or even to the usual flippancy of academics who draw a good living from practicing their "useless" discipline. What is the use of a multinational enterprise whose products and earnings do not empower those they should endow with all the muscles - political, economic, social, intellectual, psychological and other - they need to stand to their full height amongst those who should be their equals?³

Perhaps there is not much that is new in the position maintained here. It is, if you like, another "yell" from a distraught mother to her prodigal children who are also hard of hearing. This "yell" has become necessary because, in our view, the programme "Towards Africa Without Borders" suggests a case of premature and abject surrender to the advancing wave of globalization. The surrender is premature on two grounds. First, Africa is still to achieve clear self-definition - a task that must be done in response to the challenge embodied by Socrates in his eternal injunction: "Man Know Thyself" - a challenge that applies to individuals and cultural

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groups. Secondly, Africa is still to give birth to a civilization that is distinctly her's which she is to bring to the pool of emerging global culture if she hopes to secure a recognizable niche in that new world. Otherwise, she will continue to be a pauper in that world just as she was in the world that is rapidly speeding away. Dike believed that such a break-through for Africa would come about only when Africa is able to attain mental liberation through creating on African soil her own autonomous intellectual command and control centers. To the extent they have failed to face these tasks fully and squarely, we charge Black Africa's intellectual elites with having gone awhoring after epistemologies and modes of knowledge production spurn beyond the borders of their continent. In this case, they have gone awhoring after the ideology of globalization which we define here as "Western Civilization Without Borders".

To make our point clear in this regard the paper takes up and discusses in turn the following questions: (a) "What Africa?" with the intention of showing what confusion and uncertainty still dog Black Africa's steps at self-definition; (b) "What Borders?" to remind ourselves of the bewildering number of borders with which Africa is saddled and to interrogate the programme on which of these it intends should be abolished. After that we will proceed to show that Africa's elites are yet to recognize and address the two important challenges from the two great minds - Socrates and K.O. Dike - facing them in this whole enterprise.

What Africa?

Not very long ago, in any case early in the twentieth century, an African American wit, W.E. Du Bois, said Africa, meaning the map of Africa, is a question mark on the earth's globe. May be this has something to do with Africa's self-definition remaining till date an unanswered question. Yet there is no alternative to answering it. Africa's need for clear self-definition arises from four factors or imperatives that cannot easily be wished away or waved aside. These are - first, geography, second, race; third, historical and cultural traditions; and fourth, confrontation with other civilizations (especially Western-Christian and Arab-Muslim) with its heightened

sense of uneasiness at the risk of being totally engulfed by Western Culture, good and ugly.

The available evidence shows that the attempt to define Africa has been going on for a long time now - from when Africa meant an insignificant portion of the coastlands of the Maghrib to today when a new breed of Africans would drag in the entire coastlands of the mighty Atlantic Ocean into the meaning of that word. For instance, if allowed, Professor Ali Mazrui would abolish the Red Sea and bring in the Arabian Peninsular.⁴ In this effort emphasis has so far been placed on three factors - geography, race and history (or cultural relationships). On this matter, three works stand out markedly - Arnold Toynbee's *Between Niger and Nile*, Jacques Maquet's *Africanity* and Ali Mazrui's recently issued *Africanity Redefined: Collected Essays of Ali A. Mazrui*. Of the three, I find Toynbee and Maquet more convincing and more on target than Mazrui in spite of the latter's scintillating brilliance and mesmerizing verbal jugglery.⁵ To define is to draw boundaries on as many planes as possible rather than to create or multiply grey areas. Toynbee, for instance, shows convincingly that if one uses geography, or race or culture (religion), it is possible to arrive at working definitions.⁶ Jacques Maquet also shows that if you use race, or what he calls that possession of "common certain hereditary physical characteristics... that cannot be acquired by an individual in a life-time", you can also achieve a clear definition.⁷ Using the same criterion, Chinweizu sees no problem in Africa's self-definition. What he sees is incompetence, cowardice and lack of focus on the part of the so-called independent nations of Black Africa for having thus far done nothing to recover for Africa territories, stretching from Mauritania in the West to the **Red Sea in the East**, seized from her by imperialistic Arabs some **fourteen centuries ago**.⁸

To complications arising from the concepts, methods, techniques and paradigms used by academics - wayward, erratic and stable - practical actions in daily life make their own additions. Thus unthinking erstwhile colonial nationalists, delirious with joy on the morning of independence, formed and ran the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (a club of former colonial territories) in a

manner that deceived the unwary into thinking that it represented the realization, on the plane of politics, of one of the dreams of the Pan-African Movement. Then UNESCO, more diplomatic in bearing than precise in methods, sponsored a history of Africa on the same basis as those who sponsored the OAU - that is geography, thereby ignoring serious racial, cultural and historical imponderables. Meanwhile different individual academics write histories of Sub-Saharan or Black Africa which are presented as *Africa History*, that is as the history of Africa seen as a geographical concept.

Our interest here is not to rehearse the arguments for and against definition along the lines of one imperative or the other, but merely to show that until Africa's elites, especially the intellectual and political elites, give us an acceptable working definition of Africa, we cannot even begin to discuss meaningfully the idea of "Africa Without Borders". "What Africa?" is the question - Ali Mazrui's Africa or Chinweizu's Africa? Beyond the geographical, racial, cultural and historical criteria that should help to determine self-definition, there is another, *consciousness*, which many have tended to ignore. By this we mean an unshakable inner acceptance, manifesting also in outer speech and action, that one is first and foremost an African - rather than an African of a second or third order because one is something else before that. Gamel Abdul Nasser of Egypt, for instance, saw himself first as an Arab, second as a Muslim and then as an African after that. And there is no evidence to suggest that his perception in this case was the exception among the Arabized populations of the Maghrib and the Nile valley.

What Borders?

The description of the theme of the conference does not make it quite clear what borders - internal borders or external borders - the organizers have in mind. So we shall touch on both here, starting with the internal borders or boundaries. These are almost legion. We take up first the natural regions or zones each of which has its own borders. By a natural region we mean a zone or region that is not the result of human design and conscious action. These include the geographical regions (i.e. rainfall and vegetation zones) and the

'human', that is race, ethnic and language. *Ala* Peter Murdock, Africa has four rainfall zones each with its borders; six (6) vegetation zones each with its own borders; five races each with its own borders; and nine (9) language families, each with its own borders.⁹ When it comes to ethnic groups we begin to approach the innumerable - at least it does not appear anyone has actually sat down to count them up. If we take modern Nigeria, the purported giant of Africa, for instance, authorities give an estimate of between three hundred (300) and three hundred and fifty (350) ethnic groups each with its own borders.¹⁰

From the natural zones or regions we go to the man-made ones, which arose from both conscious and unconscious human design and action. These include civilizations, cultures (or units of ways and means of doing and being which, when those units, which are alike come together, make up a civilization), political entities, economic and religious zones each of which has its own borders. With respect to civilizations, Jacques Maquet has delimited six.¹¹ The present writer is not aware of any attempt so far to delimit the number of cultures within each of the civilizations. Similarly, no one knows the number of political entities which existed in pre-colonial Africa many of which continue to enjoy some kind of existence in contemporary Africa in spite of the fact that colonial authorities and nationalist politicians have traversed and re-traversed the terrain heedlessly in jackboots. The Igbo of Nigeria alone are said to have had well over 300 independent political units, each with its own borders.¹² If we take up religion, another man-made social technology, we discover that perhaps only one border is traceable on the ground - that between the two imperialistic religions of Islam and Christianity. Traditional religion continues to exist but cannot be said to have any kind of territorial borders with either Islam or Christianity. This happens to be one of its main weaknesses *vis-a-vis* these two religions. When we talk of political entities in the context of modern Africa, we are talking of over 50 nation-states - the result of bewildering colonial balkanizations and amalgamations.

Man, as already pointed out, did not make the natural zones

and he cannot abolish their borders much as he may be able to modify them. Nor do I think that anyone or any group would try to do so. The man-made zones and their borders have, since the dawn of the 20th century, been denounced and demonized by Africa's rulers - colonial and post-colonial - as being responsible for the difficulty experienced in the attempt to organize, develop and modernize Africa. One suspects that if the conference theme refers to internal border it is these that many people would like to see abolished so that the pipe-dream of Pan-Africanism may be achieved. One can fault any such plan or dream on a number of grounds. The so-called developed world, especially the West, did not develop by abolishing such human borders. On the contrary, they have put their energy and efforts into managing them. The United Kingdom, for instance, has not abolished the borders of Anglo-Saxon, Irish, Welsh, and Scottish ethnic cultures, languages and what have you, but sought to manage them. Indeed, with the program of political and constitutional "Devolution" which the United Kingdom Government has adopted, these borders are assuming greater intensity today. Much more important is the fact that any such program would be doing the greatest wrong to the identity and psychological balance that has kept them going in the modern world since nothing alternative to it has been created by those who denounce and demonize these units and their borders. These constitute the one solid heritage of African peoples from their long past. African peoples may not have had a pan-African consciousness in the pre-colonial period, or even today, but, says Jacques Maquet, "they were very much aware of their own societies, each of which had a name and territorial or psychological boundaries separating them from neighbouring groups"¹³ In any case, he goes on, it is from "these social and cultural realities" that we shall have to "construct the broader, more abstract concept of Africanity".¹⁴ You do not take from a child what it has in hand until you offer in return something better and equally concrete.

Perhaps, it is the modern nation-states within Africa whose borders are being programmed for abolition so that Africa would emerge as one monolithic political entity - the supposed end mission

of Pan-Africanism. If this interpretation is correct, it will merely portray what Nigerians would call the "borrow borrow mentality" of Africa's elites. Since the end of the First World War a campaign for the abolition of the nation-state as an obsolete social technology has been waged by certain groups in Western society because, they say, it was the nation-state idea that plunged Europe into that holocaust.¹⁵ But then by the time that campaign started, the nation State had served Europe for about seven centuries and probably almost exhausted what it could do for European society. But in Africa that technology is only about forty years old and thus has not even been mastered. To abolish it without disaster, Africa must make sure that the projected alternative will take her to where the nation-state took Europe and beyond into the globalized age. But if the truth must be told, the West has campaigned against but not abolished the nation-state, that is Europe has not created a Europe without internal borders, much as she may have blunted severely the cutting edge of the nation-state.

A second question that should be raised is whether the egg-heads, in making this proposal, have ascertained the real intentions and desires of Africa's political Machiavellis who have run and exploited the nation-state at the expense of the people since the supposed end of colonialism. A third question is whether the abolition of the boundaries of the nation-state is expected to go along with the abolition of the borders of the other human zones or regions already discussed in this paper? If it does, is the intention to create a featureless terrain within whatever is our definition of Africa?

In such a terrain, how does the average African, not the average egg-head, find his or her political, economic, social and cultural bearing when he comes face-to-face with the fast rhythm of the globalized world? Perhaps we should leave the issue of internal borders here and come to the question of external borders.

But for what may be called a small accident, geographic Africa's external borders would have been completely defined by nature using the large bodies of water known to geographers as the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. This accident took the form of the narrow neck of land known

as the Isthmus of Suez, which stood out stubbornly against the joining of the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Sea. In the nineteenth century, however, man came to the aid of nature when Ferdinand de Lesseps's engineers cut this narrow neck of land, thus creating what is today known as the Suez Canal which made it possible for the waters of the two seas to join, thus making Africa an Island continent, such as Australia has been since about historical times.

Like was the case for other continents, Africa's external geographic border was and has continued to be breached by historical, political, economic, cultural and other influences emanating from Africa and also from other lands and peoples sharing this globe with her. The most important of these influences, for our present discussion, are those going to and coming from Arabia, and those going to and coming from the Americas and Europe, with the latter being still more important than the influences coming from Arabia. The influences going to and coming from Arabia we may label *Influences 'A'* because they are earlier in time and closer in geographic distance than *Influences 'B'* which built up the nexus between Africa and the West, and which were associated with the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade which began in the course of the 16th century. A call for the abolition of Africa's continental and cultural borders is a call to end every effort at Africa's self-definition or drive for identity. It is designed to achieve three objectives. One is to side-step the awkward problems created for scholars and politicians, pursuing the African self-definition agenda, by the racial and religious distinctness of the nations and peoples of North Africa and Egypt. A second is to enhance African American identification with their mother continent, Africa. A third, which is of very recent origin, is to promote the globalization agenda of those who campaign for the abolition of nations and nation-states. We can thus see why, if given the opportunity, Ali Mazrui would abolish the Red Sea as well as why Afrocentrists from Marcus Garvey and W.E. Du Bois would regard all Blacks throughout the world as forming one community.

"Towards Africa Without Borders" thus looks like a

programme for "Africa without identity". To begin with, abolishing the Red Sea will not end the problem, which arises from Arab and Islamic presence in Africa and their intervention in her affairs, but increase it. The Afrocentrists are not just African but also American. Therefore, the Afrocentric project also means the introduction of more, not fewer American, factors and influences into Africa and her affairs. When we look at the call from the standpoint of the globalizers, we discover that it is globalization gone rabid for it will make it impossible and unnecessary for Africans to, in the words of Professor Elliot Skinner, "bring their own brick to the construction of a universal civilization".¹⁶ But then Africa without borders is not just Africa without *identity* but, much worse. It is Africa without a *name*. Not to have borders or boundaries is not to have a name. "Names set boundaries"¹⁷ says the *Shariyat-Ki-Sugmad*, one of the holy books of the world. According to *Tao Te Chin*, "Naming is the origin of all particular things."¹⁸ According to the Christian Bible, creation came to a conclusion only after Adam gave names to the different creatures and entities, that is set up boundaries between the one and the others.¹⁹

Socrates and the Elites of Black Africa

By almost universal consensus Socrates of Athens, Greece, is believed to have been the originator of the cryptic advice "Man Know Thyself, And Be Thyself". Conformity with this advice is supposed to make man live in harmony with himself, with his fellow men, with his immediate and remote environments and with the Absolute, the source of life and being. However, in our view this advice applies not only to the individual human being, but also to each level of social grouping in the ladder of societies or communities in which man organizes his life and being from the nuclear family to the continental community. Indeed, in the context of all life and existence, it applies also to our globalized world in its relationship, existing or projected that each community or society can be in harmony with itself and with its neighbours. Only with such harmony can the community maximize its use of the resources placed at its disposal by nature. Where a community does not or cannot

achieve such maximization in the use of her available resources, it is in asymmetrical relationship with itself and its neighbours. Then also it does not know **itself and, not knowing itself**, it cannot be itself but a bastardized **imitation of something else**.

Here we come to the **crux of the Africa question**, which appears to be defying a solution. **The excitement** which accompanied the birth of African Studies properly so-called, in the late forties and early fifties of the last century, derived not only from the **fact that it widened the job and intellectual space for those equipped to pursue it**. More important was the fact that, for the first time, **perhaps**, it was offering Africans the opportunity to place Africa and Africans where they can each know and be themselves, optimize their abilities and maximize the exploitation of their resources, as well as become part creators and partakers of whatever peace and blessedness may be the subsisting lot of the world community.

To fulfil that function, African Studies had to be about the investigation and analysis of issues and problems which are really African in origin, scope and import so that the resulting synthesis will offer answers which are relevant and "usable".²⁰ And having regard to the nature of the intellectual history and sociology of the continent in the pre-colonial period, the main part of such effort had to do with basic *reconstruction* arising from in-depth investigation. Another pre-condition for meeting the above expectation was that the men and women who would prosecute the research had to be, for the most part, **African in the deepest sense of the word** - African in their perception, orientation, thought, methods and style of life - and not deluded intellectual hybrids as Professor Emmanuel Ayandele would describe them.²¹ Thirdly, there had to be available locally the funds, facilities and congenial environment for such work.

Unfortunately, none of these three pre-conditions could be met. With respect to placing the emphasis on basic reconstruction and full coverage of all categories of African experiences, it did not take long before academic interests from **outside the continent** began insisting on the need for theory as well as for comparison with extra-African realities. That is the toddler-discipline was prematurely

pressed into competition and comparison with the mature traditions of Europe and America. It is on record in one case that Polly Hill, who was attempting to pioneer the economic anthropology of Africa, confessed to being "alarmed at the insistent demands (being) made on her for theory before the empirical data to construct it were available".²² At the time this was happening African Studies properly so-called was less than forty years old and perhaps less than 5% of the field had been investigated. It was about the same time that Lallage Bown was demanding, and her British colleagues agreed with her, for the need to ensure that African Studies did not "exist in isolation from studies of Asia and Europe" but should "serve as a base from which comparisons can be made".²³ At the same time African Studies was being persuaded that it was in a state of crisis, or in any case that its historical branch was 'artificial' and 'distant' "from real issues".²⁴ The result was a tendency for the discipline to veer away from emphasis on basic detailed reconstruction and the coverage of a wide range of cases to easy comparison and theorizing on the basis of a patchwork of empirical data and a very limited number of case studies.

With respect to the African-ness of the practitioners of the discipline, this was foreclosed from the very start by the fact that they were carbon copies of the imperial elite that gave birth to them. To be exact, the first generation of them was made up of those who had eaten the forbidden fruit of European culture and civilization in Europe or America or in the nurse-beds of creolism in the four communes of Senegal, in Freetown, in Bathurst, in Lagos or in the other coastal enclaves that had enjoyed intimate contact with European slavers and sea dogs for over three centuries.²⁵ The second generation of them was made up of those produced by the colonial system of education which would appear to have been exactly designed to breed agents of European culture and civilization in Africa. The main achievement of colonial education, says Professor Iweriebor, was "the creation of a culturally disoriented elite" whose members had been "taught to question the validity of (African) cultural institutions, conventions and practices" and to "contrast these negatively with European cultural conventions". In this way,

through psychological colonization, "they became the native carriers of the colonizers views"²⁶ about Africa, and about the orientation, methods and essence of African studies.

All these help to explain the flight of black African students of Africa from research targeted on particular African societies and problems to general topics and themes such as Pan-Africanism, Africanity, feminism and gender, the development of underdevelopment, Afrocentricity, Atlanticity, liberal democracy, law and order, ethnicity, Negritude, authenticity, African Personality and so on. In the 1920s when the agitation of the National Congress of British West Africa rattled the authorities of the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria, Sir Hugh Clifford, the British Governor of Nigeria, told the Legislative Council in Lagos how he wished he could bring the leaders of the movement, with their rounded muscles, glittering skins and Western suits, before "the naked cannibals of the Bauchi Plateau" to explain what they meant by "West African Nationality". I suspect that many members of today's Black Africa's intellectual elite will not have an easier job than the British West African Congress Nationalists, explaining to the hundreds of millions of Africa's "wretched of the earth" the meaning and relevance of their pot-bellied concepts and conceits. Says V.B. Thompson, the realities even today in Africa go beyond these ideas so beloved of the intellectual elite. "Summed up", he goes on, "they relate to the mass impoverishment which is a feature in most African states"²⁷. African Studies thus remains what it was at birth - the intellectual masturbation of the elite by the elite for the elite.

Dike and Africa's Black Elite

We mentioned earlier on in this paper that one of the conditions that must be met for African Studies properly so-called to flourish was the existence within Africa of the local competence to fund African studies institutions and research and to create the appropriate political and cultural environment for those in the discipline. It was in this area that Dr. Kenneth Onwuka Dike, perhaps the greatest in the first generation of African-born African historians, posed for Black Africa's intellectual elite a challenge as fundamental to the discipline as that posed by Socrates for man in general.

Speaking to the First International Congress of Africanists in Accra, Ghana, in December 1862, he expressed the following opinions, which deserve quoting at length "I know", he said

that you will agree that in the last resort inspiration for the study of Africa will come from within Africa, and just as we would expect the main center for Japanese studies to be in Japan, so we must in future insist that the mainspring for the study of Africa comes from within Africa itself. And just as we should expect the main interpretation of the Japanese past to come from Japanese (born) scholars, so in future the interpretation of Africa's heritage must increasingly be undertaken by Africans.²⁸

After giving vent to his delight at the "enormous increase" within Africa "in the number of academic and cultural institutions concerned with African Studies", he expressed the hope that "the vast number of new institutes abroad concerned with African studies will be able to look increasingly to them (the African based centres) for their source of inspiration."²⁹ Because Dike knew that he who pays the piper calls the tune, he insisted that Africa must assume the main financial responsibility for the support of her institutes and centres of African Studies and their work. The first Congress had been able to meet with the aid of extensive financial support from Europe and America. He hoped subsequent ones would be able to meet their costs mainly from African funds.³⁰ Dike was challenging Africa to build a civilization of the intellect that is original, independent and self-reliant, not one that would be just one other out-post of Western or Eastern intellectual civilization.

This was not to be because the post-colonial states of Africa soon slipped into neo-colonialism becoming thereby states without political, economic or intellectual muscle of their own. Indeed, both the states and their academic institutions soon started decaying. By 1974, that is only ten years after Dike's clarion call for intellectual independence for Africa, a major meeting at Edinburgh of the British students of Africa left it on record that it had become "an unspoken assumption that the serious and important decisions (in African Studies) *must always* be made outside Africa".³¹ As recently as 2002 Professor Toyin Falola of the University of Texas was compelled to

observe that "given the circumstances of unequal wealth and political influence between African nations and their Western counterparts, we must concede that this development (i.e. the dawn of an autonomous African intellectual enterprise) will be a long time in coming".³² In accounting for this situation Professor Falola did not mention the predilection of Black Africa's intellectual elite to "long to swallow foofoo wherever an antelope has been shot", as the Igbo put it. Much more worrying is that, as he mentions, "such introspective questions" as the African-ness of African studies "have faded into the background".³³ Consequently, Western priorities, paradigms and methods in intellection rule the waves in African Studies, like Britannia once did in global geo-politics, not only in the Western world, but also in Africa. The euphemism for this is, of course, globalization.

Concluding Comments

In the same work from which we have quoted, Professor Falola points out that Africa's loss of initiative in the management of her own studies notwithstanding, "Africanist scholarship has blossomed and branched out in every direction."³⁴ Now one of the main branches or directions is *Diaspora* studies. *Diaspora* studies are a valid, necessary and stimulating branch of African studies. It has grown, is growing and should continue to grow. But it is not yet what it could be and has not achieved what it could achieve because the tree of which it is a branch is suffering from serious etiolation. The interaction and cross-fertilization between the branch and the main trunk, which should be the hallmark of their existence, is yet at a very low key. In fact, the branch is draining away much of the life-giving sap of the trunk through uni-directional secondary and tertiary *diaporic* flight of intellectual capital. *Diaspora* African Studies cannot come to be seen as the main African Studies. To attain its full stature and potential, it must show interest in the health and growth of the parent trunk by contributing some of the human and material capital required to realize Dike's dream *on* African soul. *But above all it must try to ensure that it does not help in channelling Africa's intellectual energies into what is nothing more than the*

*advancement of the agenda of Western civilization for unchallenged world dominion.*³⁵

To summarize, we insist that the bane of Africa, especially of Black Africa, since about the 19th century has been what in Nigeria is referred to in vulgar language as "copy-copy" mentality - that is the uncritical borrowing of modes and fashions in thought and action from extra-African civilizations, especially from Western-Christian and Middle-Eastern Islamic civilizations, but especially from Western civilization. The Pan-African idea is one such evidence, being tailored after pan-movements in other parts of the world and earlier periods of history - Pan-Hellenism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, Pan-Arabism and so on. Such ideas as feminism, genderization and globalization, when mouthed by Black African scholars, suffer the same handicap. As already mentioned in this paper, globalization simply is "Western Civilization Without Borders". But whereas we know what the West is and what Western Civilization is, we do not know what Africa is or what is African Civilization, if such a thing exists. Thus "Africa Without Borders" is bound to remain something of a puzzle and a chimera until Black Africa's elites abandon their whoring after alien intellectual and cultural gods and give to Africa not only self-definition but also an autonomous and viable civilization.

It is thus not surprising that Africa is not moving forward and has not moved forward in the meaningful sense of undergoing fundamental beneficial changes. You cannot experience fundamental change when you do not know where or what the fundamental is. This is not surprising for as the great Edward Blyden pointed out, no people can be helped or benefited by ideas and institutions not rooted in their own culture and soil. Therefore, Africa and her self-serving elites must go back to the drawing board by facing the challenges posed to them by Socrates and Dr. K.O. Dike - by engaging in self-definition and by building, running and funding in Africa the command and control centres for her own study. That done, she will come to be the one to determine what research is to be done, how it is to be done and why it has to be done and thus start on the road to her own distinctive civilization. Continuously

chasing the latest headlines in the Western press or research agenda, as the best educated of her children currently do, can only keep her forever panting and breathless in the futile bid to catch up with the Western Joneses.

NOTES

1. Curtin, P., S. Feierman, L. Thompson, J. Vansina; *African History* (N.Y.: Longman, Inc., 1978), p.v.
2. Fyfe, C. (ed.), *African Studies Since 1945*. (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1976), p.2.
3. Chinweizu, "Mobilising the Mind for a Black World Renaissance", Editorial to *Black Renaissance*, vol. 1, No. 1, 1994. Here he says "We (i.e. Black Africans), have been like a giant who was knocked down into a deep sleep; he has awakened at last, scrambled to his knees and hands, but still needs to stand up and stretch to his full height", p.5.
4. Lavemont, R.R. and T.L. Seghatolislami (ed.): *Africanity Redefined, Collected Essays of Ali A. Mazrui*, vo. 1 (N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 2002). pp.11-13, pp. 79-86.
Okpewho, I., C.B. Davies, A.A. Mazrui (eds.), *The African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 1999). See in particular the 'Introduction and Chapter 1, "An African Diaspora: The Ontological Project" by M.J.C. Echeruo.
5. It is interesting that although most of the seminal essays in which Professor Mazrui sought to define Africa were written much later than the works of Toynbee and Maquet, he does not refer to any of them.
6. Toynbee A., *Between Niger and Nile* (O.U.P. 1965), pp.1-3.
7. Maquet, J., *Africanity: The Cultural Unity of Black Africa* (N.Y: O.U.P. 1972), p.11.
8. Chinweizu, see Editorial to vol. 1, No. 1, 1994, of *Black Renaissance*, pp.5-9.
9. Murdock, G.P., *Africa: Its Peoples and their Culture History* (N.Y: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959), pp. 4, 5, 11, 15.
10. For Nigeria, for instance, see O. Otite, "Nigerian Peoples and Cultures" in *Nigeria: A People United, A Future Assured*, vol. 1, edited by Ajaegbu, H.I., B.J. St. Matthew-Daniel and O.E. Uya. (Abuja: Federal Ministry of Information, 2000), pp. 11-20.
11. Maquet, J., *Africanity*, p.140.
12. Forde, D., and G.I. Jones, *The Ibo- and Ibibio-speaking Peoples of South-Eastern Nigeria* (I.A.I., 1953).
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Meek, C.K., *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*, (O.U.P, 1937).
13. Maquet, J., *Africanity*, p.141.
14. *Ibid.*, p.141.

15. For aspects of this campaign see Spengler, O., *The Decline of the West* (First published in 1918, see abridged O.U.P. edition); Toynbee A., *A Study of History*, 10 vols. (OUP 1934-1954); Childers E., "The United Nations and Global Insitutions: Discourse and Reality" in *Global Governance* 3, 1997.
16. Skinner, E.P., "The Restoration of African Identity for a New Millennium" in Okpewho *et. al.* (eds.) *The African Diaspora*, p.41.
17. Twitchell, P, *Shariyat-Ki-Sugmad*, vol. 1, (Eckankar, Minneapolis, 1987), p.118.
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28. Dike, K.O., "Address of Welcome to the First International Congress of Africanists" in Crowder, M. and Lallage Bown (eds.) *Proceedings of the First International Congress of Africanists* (Northwestern University Press, 1964), p.24.
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32. Falola, T., and C. Jennings (eds.) *Africanizing Knowledge: African Studies Across the Disciplines*, (New Brusnwick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), p.1.
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34. *Ibid.*, p.1.
35. "The best solution to the problem", says Professor Falola, "naturally, would be the flowering of institutions of higher learning within Africa, drawing back to the continent not only the best Africanist scholars, but also the financial resources to fund research, to publish books and journals and to sponsor institutes and conferences", *op. cit.*, p.1.