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U F A H A M U

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Manuscripts may be of any length, but those of 15-25 pages are preferred. (All manuscripts must be clearly typed, double-spaced originals with footnotes gathered at the end. Contributors should endeavor to keep duplicate copies of all their manuscripts.) The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit any manuscript to meet the objectives of the journal.

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MAINA-WA-KINYATTI: Former lecturer of history at the Kenyatta University College, Kenya. Ndugu Maina is now serving a six year sentence for an alleged "possession of seditious documents." An unrepentant fighter for the freedom of intellectual expression, and champion for the rights of the Kenyan people to criticise the wrong doings of the Kenyan Government, Maina's appeal

against his sentence was rejected. Our publication of his article here is the least we can do in solidarity with him and for the cause he defends. To his wife, Mrs. Mumbi-wa-Maina, we send our sympathy and moral support.

MWANGI-WA-GITHUMO: Kenyan historian, focusing on the British colonial settlement policies in Kenya. His article on the proposals to settle Jews in Kenya is a natural complement to Maina-wa-Kinyatti's topic on Mau Mau.

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EDITOR'S QUILL

In retrospective recapitulation, we started off this volume with an analysis of political economy as a theme. An effort was made in that issue to differentiate between the conventional (Western) concept of the topic--by which economic development is seen and measured in terms of "growth"--and the political component of that development. This latter case took this definition: "We understand by 'political economy' a body of scientific knowledge of laws determining the production and exchange of material subsistence in a definite economic system" (vol. 12, no. 1, p. 4). The articles by WILLY MUTUNGA, CLIVE THOMAS, AYO DUNMOYE, JOSEPH NGU and others substantiated this point.

"African Drama" was the theme of the second issue of the volume. The objective of the endeavour was to examine the constituent parts of, and delineate the cultural elements pertaining to the concept and application of Drama in Africa. The task involved philosophical perceptions allowing for 'differences' between science and art. For this purpose, ADOLFO VÁSQUEZ came to our rescue. In introducing the theme, he pointed out that both science and art deal with the interpretation and presentation of reality, the main 'difference' between them being the manner of execution. In literature, for example, writes Adolfo, "the problem of truth...is presented...through its specificity as creative "activity," which makes it a special kind of knowledge, "because, in a strict sense, only propositions can be true or false" (vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 16 and 14 respectively). But what is true for "Drama" per se, i.e., in the restrictive sense of fictional presentations of reality, applies with brutal magnitude to the social reality of Africa. Hence "African Drama," in the metaphorical recognition of the political upheavals now underway in our continent. The reproduction of LUCAS SITHOLE's "Wounded Buffalo" on the cover illustrated this image of general indisposition. Then NGUGI-WA-THIONG'O, GILBERT MINOT, MOHAMUD TOGANÉ and DENNIS BRUTUS made their dutiful contributions to the subject.

We now fold our files--and our arms--for volume 12 with an issue on African History. The articles included here on the topic are diverse in approach. They deal with a wide choice of subject matter, ranging from the concept of Pan-Africanism to that of slavery. But the framework within which this is realised is one in which we conceive history as a social arena for the transformation of reality. As the authors of one of the best works on the subject put it elsewhere: "Our history must properly be seen as a record of the efforts of our people to transform nature for their use."*

*See *Independent Kenya*, anonymous authorship, London, Zed Press, 1982, p. 1.

To introduce the theme, MARVIN WILLIAMS addresses the totality of the African posterity, both within and without the continent. In the poem: "Dialogue with Posterity," AYELE and ALMAZ, constituting and representing that posterity have many questions to ask for which they must set out to seek the answers. If they can find the answers to such questions as:

What does Ayele mean?
Where does Ayele come from?

and:

What does Almaz mean?
Where does Almaz come from?

then it should be easy to come up with a ready answer to this one:

What is Pan-Africanism?

Or is it.

ROBERT HILL looks at this question more closely in his article on WALTER RODNEY. He writes in this respect: "As a view of the emancipation of African peoples, Pan-Africanism was no different from other ideologies. Walter stated...that Pan-Africanism flowed out of 'the possibilities inherent in their (African peoples') own actions'." The proponents of Pan-Africanism, KWAME NKRUMAH, SEKOU TOURE and JULIUS NYERERE among others, were aware of the power of the unity which Pan-Africanism was intended to foster. But then political events of recent times have made it impossible for this goal to be consummated. This failure is explicable in terms of the fear of the African ruling class that a truly united Africa "might threaten or negate 'their narrow class welfare'." This transforms the idea of Pan-Africanism into "a continental program that is antithetical to the consolidation of the class interests of the African petty bourgeois state," concludes the author.

The implication that Pan-Africanism had, on its agenda, an item about the possibility of raising the consciousness of the African people to fight for their liberation brings Dr. NEGUSSAY AYELE on the scene with an analysis of how this was actually done in one country. In "The Ethiopian Revolution," Dr. Ayele recounts the events leading to the overthrow of HAILE SELASSIE, and looks at the present state of that revolution. His is not a detached so-called "objective" presentation, but a political statement of a committed champion of the revolution, delivered with an ideological passion worthy of an Ethiopian patriot. In this vein he says: "Perhaps one of the most widespread and dangerous predispositions in the West is the assumption that one can be objective in the sense of being neutral about a given revolution, like the one in Ethiopia. On the contrary, one way or another, one is drawn to be for or against in the main, a given revolution. Not to be for or against a given revolution, ...is to be irrelevant." And, in response to a question about whether or not the Ethiopian Government has taken the necessary

steps to encourage those Ethiopians living abroad to return home, he makes his position about the matter unambiguous: "...if one considers oneself a revolutionary, considers oneself patriotic, I think that one should also do one's revolutionary and patriotic duty to take the necessary steps..." As to the substance of the subject, Dr. Ayele shows that there are still many problems to be solved both in the political and economic sphere of the revolution. What is not in question is the obvious fact of a revolution having taken place in Ethiopia.

If that fact is undeniable in Ethiopia, the same cannot be said of the rest of Africa. Take the Congo (so-called Zaire), for example. Events in that country, as SERGE MUKENDI reveals, are evidence that a revolution is in the offing. As an imperialist lackey, MOBUTU may flatter himself that he is in control of the situation, as his recent dispatch of troops to Chad implies. But the Swahili saying, "Dalili ya mvua ni mawingo," (gathering clouds signify rain) may, at any time, translate for him as "Revolution in the Congo."

In "Congo: Background Scenes to a Revolution," Ndugu Serge presents us with the inside story of a revolution in the making. The oppressive and depressing social and political situation under which the Congolese people have to live, the reasons for the revolutionary activities, the presence of imperialist forces in the country, all these facts are given in simple and clear terms for general information.

On the "past" as such, we include three articles dealing with three separate but thematically connected aspects of African History. The first of these by MAINA-WA-KINYATTI analyses one of the most famous guerrilla movements in colonial Africa, the MAU MAU of Kenya, which forced the British colonialists to grant political independence to the country. The aims of that struggle have since been betrayed by those who now hold the political power. It should be remembered in this connection that Maina-Wa-Kinyatti together with WILLY MUTUNGA (another anti-imperialist Kenyan patriot, see vol. 12, no. 1), along with many other progressive Kenyan intellectuals, are still behind bars, victims of President Moi's recent repressive measures against academic freedom in the country. In "Mau Mau: The Peak of African Political Organisation and Struggle for Liberation in Colonial Kenya," Maina-Wa-Kinyatti explores and exposes the historical conditions giving rise to the struggle for independence, and the subsequent events leading to the present neo-colonial set-up in Kenya.

The second article on revolutionary change is by Dr. EDWARD A. ALPERS. In "The Role of Culture in the Liberation of Mozambique," Dr. Alpers documents the cultural forces behind what in time congealed into solid anti-colonial sentiments, subsequently finding full expression in FRELIMO, the Liberation Front which

won independence for Mozambique by force of arms. These cultural forces are well represented in many artforms, including the well-known Makonde sculptures. The article is fully illustrated with photographs of these artforms corresponding to anti-colonial and revolutionary themes.

"The Social Character of Slavery in Asante and Dahomey," forms the subject of Dr. BONIFACE I. OBICHERE's article on the essence of slavery in Africa. Dr. Obichere's contention is that "slavery in Dahomey and Asante was not primarily an economic affair," contrary to the conclusions of most studies on the phenomenon. He defends his thesis on the grounds that "there is abundant evidence to show that most pre-colonial African societies regarded slavery as an outgrowth of their socio-political organization and structures." The argument is an interesting one in view of the little that is actually known about the nature of slavery in Africa, vis-à-vis Western societies. Further investigation should shed more light on the matter in order to provide the material evidence for a definite concept about the issue. It should be said in this regard, however, that the function of a thing is not the same thing as its essence. If slavery in Africa was social, as opposed to economic in function, that does not necessarily mean that its origin was also social. The objective forces from which slavery arose are discernible in all those human societies where slavery existed. These are general in character and have to be analysed on their own terms, in the process of which other factors more economic than social could be shown to have been operative.

The forum section carries the sad story of "Coloured Politics," in South Africa. In a very fitting imagery, TREVOR ABRAHAMS, himself a black South African, describes the politics of the 'Coloured' Labour Party as "The Quislings' Trek into the Abyss," in reference to the Party's decision to participate in the so-called "President's Council Proposals" to incorporate the "coloured" people in the political machinery of the Apartheid system. Relying on an ample range of press reports and documents, the author points out that this "participation" amounts to out-right sell-out on the part of the L.P., and a political manoeuvre, albeit doomed to failure, by the Apartheid regime to buy itself a new lease of life. He writes: "The present course of Black opposition has increasingly sounded the death knell for 'coloured politics' per se, triggering the desperate scramble by these quislings for the latest offer the Massah in Pretoria has designed to frustrate the overthrow of the Apartheid regime."

All in all, we have tried in this issue to summarize the efforts of the three issues of volume 12. The cover design and illustration are intended to reflect the historical crossroads at which Africa now finds itself. The question is no longer "which way Africa" as BASIL DAVIDSON, the "famous" British

Africanist would put it. As we see it the chips are already down, leaving no room for speculation about the direction Africa will follow. For the African people, there is only one way to go: the socialist way.

* * * * *

We wish to thank our readers for the keen interest they have shown in our journal, judging by the growing number of subscriptions we have been receiving throughout this year. We welcome comments, criticisms and suggestions on any aspect of this journal.

K.M.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Ufahamu intends to prepare a SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE OLYMPICS, due to be held here in Los Angeles in the summer of 1984. The focus-point will be South Africa, with the express purpose of revealing how the Apartheid system functions in the sports arena. Our readers are welcome and encouraged to make contributions to that effect. Please forward your articles and other documents to reach us by the end of April, 1984.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

We are sorry to inform our readers that our immunity to inflation has finally been broken! Accordingly, starting with Volume 13, No. 1, subscription rates will change as follows:

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