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## Contents

Editorial Preface. ....	3
Uses and Abuses of Yoruba Invectives - <b>Adebayo Faleti</b> .....	7
Culture, Democracy and Good Governance - <b>Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola</b> .....	34
Traditional Cultural Values and the Challenges of Socio- economic Transformation in Contemporary Nigeria - <b>Gbemisola Adeoti</b> .....	52
Africa's Contribution to the Development of Science and Technology: Real or Imagined?- <b>Idowu Awopetu</b> . ....	68
Customary Criminal Law in Africa and its Lessons for Western Jurisprudence - <b>Adeniyi Olatunbosun</b> .....	80
Highlife Music: Origins, Dimensions and Reinventions - <b>Austin Emielu</b> . ....	100
In Search of Icons for National Ideology through the Nigerian Home Video Film Industry - <b>Akeem Mojisola Adeyanju</b> .....	116
Synergizing the Private and the Public in Modern African Poetry: A Reading of Tony Afejuku's <i>An Orchard of Wishes</i> - <b>Sunny Awhefeada</b> .....	129
Between Ritual and Theatre in Tivland: The Issue of Relevance - <b>Awuawuer Tijime Justin</b> .....	150
A Study of Duro Ladipo's Theatrical Scenery in <i>Oba Moro</i> and <i>Oba Koso</i> - <b>Seyi Ogunjobi</b> .....	165



<i>Egungun be Careful: Reconciling Yoruba Culture and Contemporary Nigerian Law on the Status, Powers and Immunity of the Masquerade</i> - <b>Babafemi Odunsi</b> .....	189
Culture, Globalisation and National Development <b>Dele Layiwola</b> .....	228
Impact of Globalisation on the Science of Yoruba Oral ‘Magical’ Poetry – <b>Adebisi Ademakinwa</b> .....	249
Book Review– Omodele, Remi (ed.) <i>Weighing the Cost of Pin-Making: Ulli Beier in Conversations</i> - <b>Stephen T. Ogundipe</b> .....	265
Notes on Contributors.....	268

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# Culture, Globalisation and National Development

Dele Layiwola

## Abstract

In several publications, CLR James, the Trinidadian Pan-Africanist and writer, affirms that persons of African descent in the new world squarely belong in the historiography of the Western world and now have a Western identity. To this end, their empirical, positivist world is Western, since their day to day living is now in their various nationalities which are geographically situated in the Northern hemisphere. As a researcher and culturalist, one is inspired to seek confirmation or denial of this assertion, since the speaker was himself, both a Caribbean citizen and a Pan-Africanist. However, CLR James's assertion, apart from raising both identity and methodological questions, implies that we live in a plural world where we have multiple clustered identities. The notion of being African also encompasses the notion of being larger than Africa. The whole enterprise of Diaspora Studies must, therefore, invent such principles and methods that go beyond the normative or given parameters that we are hitherto used to.

In the present enterprise, the study of history automatically invokes the excavation of African and Diaspora philosophy and psychoanalysis. It is in this form of advocacy that we can enrich that which sees itself as either African or diasporic. On a global scale, we should be able to apply identity categorization to who we are in our particular as well as various nations. In Nigeria, for instance, how do we claim to be a member of our ethnic group as well as a citizen of Nigeria? It is not a question of which comes first, but which supersedes the other on each given occasion.

## Introduction

In discussing culture and identity formation in post-colonies and in globalising environments such as Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, the Congo and Angola or the Caribbean Islands, most African countries seem to share a common predicament. This reason is not far-fetched: those countries have in common, the historical burden of slavery, colonialism and late or delayed development. What more, their citizens, by virtue of their state economies, are yet to attain the status of global citizens. At the same time, their economies and environment, like their history, have been the most permissive of external intrusion in the scheme of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century network of cultural interactions. In Africa, there are no sacred spaces; no delimited or classified arena preserved only for the primordial owners of the continent. The cultural identities of African citizens are often expressed in the image of other multi-national or mega-nations. Their languages, currencies and cultural expressions are often denominated in relation to those of other developed nations. The reality is that each single time, we are citizens of a world and live in that world which constantly seeks to reshape our identity in spite of what we think of our environment. The only difference, however, is whether we are inexorably ruled by that world or whether we determine how we are ruled by that world if we are to be ruled at all by the same world. The reality is such that we live in one world but are ruled, ultimately, by the economic realities of another world. We have become citizens in a continual process of extraversion. Our civilisation is unique but not sacrosanct. The fact that we claim to live in a nation presupposes a cultural choice or a related number of choices. Our nation determines our identity and our identity re-invents or re-confirms our national affiliation in the context of a given geographical border.

Two key words that have made the concept of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century identity formation functional are historical TIME and SPACE. While globalisation is converging these two indices into a compliant, fairly uniform global village, a scientific school of thought infers that the universe is actually expanding, not shrinking as we might suppose [Hawking, 1989: 153]. Wherever we situate our starting point in the world or whenever we conceive of our being as active in that world, there are crucial issues in identity



affirmation and self or group representation. Our existence in time and space constrains us to think and to establish the sheer fact of its reality. That thinking is affirmed in many ways – in dreaming, in wielding a placard or in the use of a peculiar alphabet of the spoken word. Meanwhile, let us discuss the simpler, more empirical context of identity in an identifiable nation and in a specified historical period.

### **Identity, Culture and Nationality**

The first of our illustrative examples will come from Derek Walcott's *Dream on Monkey Mountain* [1970], given its basic conception of civil existence. We get the feeling that much as Makak, the protagonist, knows that he is a stranger in the new world to which he lays claim, he has to make that surreptitious claim to reality via the world of dreams. He is unsure because he has been dislocated in history [time] as well as in space [geography and environment]. He realises that to claim an objective reality of his world, he first approaches it as an innocent dreamer, a place inherited 'in the beginning' *illo tempore*. Hence the Cartesian analogy, 'I am, I exist because I dream'. The agency of the law, a character known as Corporal Lestrade, confronting him with an empirical tool of state legislature and discourse to establish the authenticity of this protagonist that he refers to as the Lion of Judah, invents the following dialogue:

CORPORAL

Your name in full, occupation, status, income, ambition, domicile or place of residence, age, and last but not the least, your race?...

Where is your home? Africa?...

MAKAK

Sur Morne Macaque...

CORPORAL



[Infuriated] English, English! For we are observing the principles and precepts of Roman law, and Roman law is English law. Let me repeat the query: Where is your home?

MAKAK

I live on Monkey Mountain, Corporal.

CORPORAL

What is your name?

MAKAK

I forget.

CORPORAL

What is your race?

MAKAK

I am tired

CORPORAL

What is your denominational affiliation?

After a measure of silence and having taken a cue from the overwhelming genealogy of Roman law, he smiles and pronounces himself a Catholic. His prosecutor, at the mention of a preferred pedigree identifies with the master culture and language, relaxes and invents an alibi for his victim thus:

CORPORAL

[Revising notes] You forget your name, your race is tired, your denominational affiliation is Catholic, therefore, as the law, the Roman law, had pity on our Blessed Saviour, by giving him, even *in extremis*, a draught of vinegar, what, in your own language you would call *vinegre*, I shall give all and sundry here, including these two thieves, a handful of rum, before I press my charge.[218 – 220]

This fraudulent prosecutor, a citizen of the same environment, has granted himself privileges on account of being a mulatto, with lighter skin. Hence, the doubly significant medium of the play being a subconscious elucidation of a dream world.

It is only one who exists at an existential, primary level, with claims to arms and legs who could then throw up the alter-ego of a monkey. The animal image, the surrealist medium of a dream are the extensions of the magical reality that makes him real; a citizen of a nation and a patriot. But the further invocation of identity indices – nation(alism), patriot(ism) both go beyond the validation of citizenship. These become the basis for activity and activism in the world where we must make constant differentiation to affirm the legality of our claim to its identity and citizenship.

There is also a sense in which the psychoanalytic prompt of Derek Walcott conceptually invokes the thesis of Frantz Fanon on the evolution of national cultures. Each sovereign nation state invents her own culture such that citizenship grows from an existential rather than a dislocated reality. History and geography are crucial phenomena in the concept of the modern nation state. From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the African American, the Afro-Caribbean have come to realise that their histories are mutually dependent but not co-terminus. Fanon observes:

Negro-ism therefore finds its first limitation in the phenomena which take account of the formation of the historical character of men. Negro and African-Negro culture broke up into different entities because the men who wished to incarnate these cultures realized that every culture is first and foremost national, and that the problems which kept Richard Wright or Langston Hughes on the alert were fundamentally different from those which might confront Leopold Senghor or Jomo Kenyatta [1978:174].

I shall like to proffer an analogy already foreshadowed in my abstract. CLR James, writing in 1964, a few years before the present play was written had affirmed of the Caribbean peoples:

We of the West Indies are a people who have not got much substantial history of our own at the present time...

We are essentially an international people. We have no native civilisation of our own; we have no native language; we have no native religion – even the Rastafari when they discovered that the emperor of Ethiopia was God had to go to the English Bible to prove it. And therefore, we are particularly open, owing to our history and owing to the fact that we constitute such a great number of disparate civilisations [1984: 143].

In the statements quoted above, two things are immediately apparent. First, the West Indies is a *pot pourri* of nationalities and civilisations. Second, there is the flexibility and freedom that gives room for national reinvention and patriotism.

The circumstance to which James speaks is that of a period when the Caribbean was young as nations and the mother continent was still under the shackles of colonialism, but much of that is still true today. The postcolonial factor recognizes the diversity of peoples within the Commonwealth of Nations which make them either English or French and, at the same time, indigenous to their own countries. For instance, an African from Benin republic calls himself Beninois, French and African just as much as a Nigerian identifies himself or herself as Yoruba, Hausa or Igbo with his/her *lingua franca* as English. On the same continent, there are territories that are Spanish or Portuguese. There might have been German colonies but for the vicissitudes of history.

In the face of ethnic and linguistic diversities, it is difficult to create a culture that is uniform and coherent. It may be that the Diaspora may forge something with a difference when it has had the force of history and geographical evolution in its favour, but this is certainly beyond conjecture. We must also acknowledge that the borders are so diverse even when they share the same historical predicament or experience. A national or multi-national culture will need time to fit the definition that Fanon gives of



a national culture as ‘the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence’ (1978: 188). It thus, stands to reason that for a national culture to emerge, there must first appear the sense of a nation in the context of a definable history of nationalism and patriotic zeal. It will be necessary, at some point, to identify the nuances between nationalism and patriotism which makes the twenty-first century a unique period in the evolution of mankind. We also need to establish the fact that globalisation must reinvent the wheel in such a way as to localize itself in particular civilisations. It must have a strong local inflection as to make our expanding universe a convergent one. Hence, the conjoining terminology, *Globalocalization*.

There is a sense in which the colonial enterprise has foisted the same consciousness on African nations in their quest for nation-building and nation-making. In this regard, the relationship between the mother continent, Africa, and the rest of the African diaspora which includes sections of the West Indies and Brazil would have brought two significant developments to the concept of global initiatives:

- [a] a spirit of critical and creative enterprise to intellectual, historical, artistic and technological developments of the new age and
- [b] a reawakening of nationalistic passion deeply influenced by a spirit of patriotism.

There is a sense in which James’ assertion has precipitated a conundrum in the context of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century thinking on nationalism and patriotism. There is an unspoken consensus that globalisation refers to the growing economic, social and cultural integration among nations. In this regard, economists would regard goods, means, factors of production and fixed assets as uniform everywhere and nation states could no longer be seen as having autonomous identity and national goals [Mittelman, 1997: 3; Kozul-Wright, 2006: 102].

It would appear that the cultural liberalisation of global markets meant a complete control of state and boundary limits or a partial limitation of dirigisme and traditional boundaries. This might therefore, truly foreshadow, the end of history [Fukuyama, 1992] and the end of geography [O'Brien, 1992; Gereffi, 1997: 53 - 56]. Fukuyama's scientific postulation of the end of history is empirically anchored in the dialectics provided in the tension between the thoughts of Friedrich Hegel and those of Karl Marx:

Both Hegel and Marx believed that the evolution of human societies was not open-ended, but would end when mankind had achieved a form of society that satisfied its deepest and most fundamental longings. Both thinkers thus posited an "end of history": for Hegel this was the liberal state, while for Marx it was a communist society. This did not mean that the natural cycle of birth, life and death would end, that important events would no longer happen, or that newspapers reporting them would cease to be published. It meant, rather, that there would be no further progress in the development of underlying principles and institutions, because all of the really big questions had been settled [1992: 12].

It is clear from the 'resolution' of the cold war and the collapse of the Berlin wall that Hegel, not Marx, carried the day, though this does not make Marx any less brilliant or rigorous. Given the non-linear mode in the historical development of Africa and attendant post-colonies, it is doubtful that the thesis of Hegel and Marx will accurately apply. On the contrary, history is constantly re-born and repeated in nations that are struggling with the 'long history' of postcolonial mentality. It is also patent, as Kozul-Wright observes, that international economic forces were responsible for the rapid growth in several European high-performance economies and migration (or internationalisation) became a visible index of that growth and expansion. Indeed, pluralism is a cultural index of prosperity where insularity, base primordial instincts and a sense of inequality do not predominate to counteract or stifle it. In this sense, James' reiteration of the concept of transnational citizenship is incontrovertible except that the presumption on the rights of citizenship in the new world post-colonies



tended to reverse the logical notion of transnationality as Walcott's play illustrates.

The position of Jacob F. Ade-Ajayi, an eminent Nigerian Historian, on the nationalist ethos in Nigeria in the middle of the 20th century is worthy of note. By the end of World War II in 1945, there appeared a nationalist fervour in Nigeria with the General Strike by the Nigerian Railway Workers Union. But the pervasive temper of the nationalist movement at the time was not so much to demand self-government but to prepare Nigerians for self-government. That is, to demand improved education and scholarship programmes; employment of Nigerians in the upper echelons of the public service; credit facilities in the banks for businessmen; democratisation of Native Authorities and constitutional reforms which will grant western-educated Nigerians some voice in government [Ade-Ajayi, 1990: 12]. Ajayi's position is supported by the fact that about the same time, Nigerians had clamoured for the establishment of an indigenous university which, based on the reports of various committees, was established as a college of London University in 1948.

However, by the 1950s, the nationalists had bought the slogan of Kwame Nkrumah's "Seek ye first the political kingdom and all else shall be added unto you". It was clear that the need for self-government was not an end in itself, but a means to an end, that is, to invent a nation which will not merely replace the colonial nation but grant self-determination and a truly African identity. The colonial era had undermined people's self confidence that they had no history outside the history of the colonial empire. It would appear that in the battle for self-government and the invention of a nation, the concern and the portfolios of both the nationalist and the patriot are fused, but let us make the subtle distinction which would give each its own flavour. One could not agree better with Ade Ajayi in his distinction between patriots and nationalists:

In an attempt to clarify the nature of nationalism in Nigeria, I tried to make a distinction between protest movements of patriots seeking to protect the traditional polities against colonial invaders, and the nationalist movement seeking a new order, a new nation able to compete on an equal basis with the nations of Europe [1990: 14].



Much as this distinction is handy, it is somewhat difficult to articulate as distinct media of praxis because the concern of both groups not only dovetail, they conflate in particular contexts such that the nationalist cannot but refer to himself as a patriot and vice-versa. It is also true that though 19th century European nationalism inspired many African nationalists, the contexts were very different:

In Europe, the basic aim of nationalism was to fit people who share the same culture and language into a nation state, the fundamental yearning of African nationalism has been to weld peoples speaking different languages and having different traditional cultures into one nation state.  
[Ajayi, 1960, 1990: 14].

The dilemma of the Pan-Africanist and of a Nigerian nationalist or patriot in the 21st century, is the fear of undue localisation as well as the fear of identity loss in a multilingual nation. This is akin to the phobia for the imposition of boundaries; the fear of geography as opposed to the fear of history. It was quite clear that like early Nigerian nationalists, James looked up to European nationalists and had hoped that that model of nationalism will eventually give direction to the remaking of society on the African continent. Unfortunately the historical reality and the geographical contexts were radically different. This has not changed much and our concern should always seek to address the notion of a complex locality in *space* and in *time*. How do we re-unify or *re-member* the idea of an Africa that is so divided; so interspersed in space and time? What is our place in globalisation? How should Africa, or even Nigeria, *globa-localize*? How should African citizens at home and in the diaspora identify when they speak different tongues and live in a world so vast as to be separated by prejudices of ethnicity and the bogey of religious faith and constant racial, political or economic persecutions? Do they have to invent a new language to underscore independent or distinct levels of cultural identity?

In addressing the necessity of *culture* in the 21st century, we must pay attention to our nation-states in an Africa that exists in both real and

virtual space; an Africa that has shrunk whilst the outer space has expanded by quantum leaps. The formation of a national, as well as multiple, or transnational identities has become so relevant for Africa, her diaspora and the various countries of our continent. This will help to invent that spirit of critical and creative enterprise to intellectual, historical, artistic and technological developments of the present age. Bill Freund comes close to my assertion on multitudinous Africa here when he avers that:

North Africans and Egyptians are Africans, whatever their skin colour, and Muslim West Africans from the savannah feel relatively more at home with them than they would with South Africans of any colour. Malagasy and Mauritians, of whatever descent, must be considered as Africans, not as people who somehow don't belong. Highland Ethiopians speak languages structurally closer to Hebrew than Kikongo or Yoruba, but they are still very much Africans. Nor can Africa be understood if one excludes Kenyans of Asian origin or South Africans of European origin from one's reckoning, or simply insist on them as intruders [2006: 95].

If the present assertion is being said of Africa, how much more of Nigeria that has more than twenty percent of Africa's entire population and over two hundred ethnic groups!

Colonialism in Africa, aside from the scourge of slavery and indentured migrant labour in the new world, only lasted the better part of a century. In fact, it lasted less. There is no reason why the new elite in Africa should not take advantage of the new global phenomenon and technology to overcome the essential dehumanization and erosion of confidence that subjugation has inflicted on the psyche of postcolonial peoples across the world. The major failure of vision in African leadership of the present century is the fact that the elite could not discern that the strategy and office of the coloniser cannot work for him/her as it did in the era before political independence. It is, therefore, a mistake to adopt the nationalism of Europe for the creation of new nations which, in themselves, have ceased to be colonies. The administrative structures and the modes of education that will liberate must be radically different from those that



will subjugate. The stories of the Asian and Middle Eastern tigers bear eloquent testimony to the fact that it is possible for a global, transnational concept to unite and revitalize Africa and her diaspora. Now is the time to do away with the concept of the 'rhizome' state [Bayart 1995] whereby governance emanates from underground cabals in secretive caucuses and ethnic comprador enclaves.

Essentially, it is not so much that Africa, in any of her representative states, has had a long, agonising 20th century but the inability of an elite to distinguish between categories of status in the form of power and privilege. The resulting consequence is the production of a comprador, lame-duck state priding herself on privileges rather than on responsibilities. The words of Bill Freund once again aptly re-echoes this:

Some parts of Africa...were really only subdued by colonial forces after the end of the first world war and were subjected to colonial rule in any real sense for well under half a century. Claims for a long century make sense only if we consider that the post-colonial decades represent essentially continuation of the most important trends of the colonial period. This, of course, fits the view that neo-colonialism best characterises this phase, that the broad patterns of class formation, state structure, of what is called development, changed largely from the point of view of the skin colour of those making the decisions, at least locally [2006: 106].

### **Civilisation and the Limits of Globalisation**

Since Fukuyama's prognosis on the end of history and the coming together of both halves, east and west, of the original western civilisation, there has been much contention on the rise and the clash of civilisations. The introduction of Samuel Huntington to his essay on the clash of civilisations goes thus:

World politics is entering a new phase, and intellectuals have not hesitated to proliferate visions of what it will be – the end of history, the return of traditional rivalries between nation states, and the decline of the nation state from the conflicting pulls of tribalism and globalism, among others.



Each of these visions catches aspects of the emerging reality. Yet they all miss a crucial, indeed a central, aspect of what global politics is likely to be in the coming years.

It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. . . . The fault lines between civilisations will be the battle lines of the future (1993: 22).

Huntington's proposition is systematic and logical because it is true and that after the battle of empires and the war of princes and monarchs, the era of the cold war emerged as the world was divided into socio-political and economic systems as the first, second and third worlds. The classification is now along such unquantifiable parameters of culture and civilisations. In contemporary times, even when such euphemistic epithets as global north and global south are used, it is in veiled terms referring to Western and non-Western civilisations. However, it cannot be denied that the global north is considered somewhat more prosperous than its southern counterpart. The merit of this new nomenclature is that it has fine-tuned the elements of religious ideology into the conception of culture. It would appear that a differentiation between quantitative, material terms and the more qualitative aspects of societies is beginning to gain currency. Communities here are being gradually identified with those things that create the notions of identity rather than those of crude commerce and industry.

Huntington defines civilisation in this words:

A civilisation is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people. People have levels of identity: a resident of Rome may define himself with varying degrees of intensity as a Roman, an Italian, a Catholic, a Christian, a European, a Westerner. The civilisation to which he belongs is the broadest level of identification with

which he intensely identifies. People can and do redefine their identities and, as a result, the composition and boundaries of civilisations change. (1993: 24).

There are civilisations and cultures limited to one nation state or its fraction as much as there are civilisations spread across many states. There may also be contiguous overlaps and correspondence in the content and appearance of civilisations. Occasionally too, only the rumps and relics of particular civilisations survive but the strength and dynamism of such entities determine how firmly they influence succeeding generations.

We may wish to consider Nigeria to be a nation comprising different ethnic nationalities, and for the same reason, varying group interests akin to that of a multi-racial nation. In a situation of the sort, is it possible to fashion a truly federal constitution or are there other overriding interests that might deter the formation of a national identity? Absolutely not, as long as the problems associated with slavery and late colonialism are consciously avoided.

It is appropriate to consider the fortunes that Nigeria's rich cultural heritage has for her citizens as well as for the African continent as a whole. We have been endowed with some of the richest mineral and natural resources and a most friendly eco-system that is free of the cataclysms, tremors and earthquakes that are often reported around the world. The only thing that prevents the development of a robust tourism industry is the lack of political stability.

African elite is also known to encourage intense capital flight whereby national resources are carted abroad to develop foreign economies to the detriment of the nations. Statistics on youth unemployment, disease and malnutrition and poverty in sub-saharan Africa are most unsettling. More than any period of national history, now is the time to balance that sense of nationalism, of which we have always been proud, with that of the patriotism of the those founding fathers and railway workers of 1945. The instance of 1945 lends the interest to the second and final dramatic illustration of this essay. It is also quite natural to pair a play of Wole Soyinka with that of Derek Walcott whom I cited earlier. Though *Death and the King's Horseman* was written thirty years after its historic event,



it reaffirms those elements of nationalism, patriotism and identity formulation as have been discussed in the earlier part of this paper. It is also relevant in the title of Samuel Huntington's essay, "The Clash of Civilisations?" and the counterpart book by Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*.

In the protagonist of Soyinka's play, a question mark at the end of Fukuyama's book would not have been exactly out of place. Soyinka's Elesin-Oba, much like Walcott's Makak, is both a hero and an anti-hero. Both plays instantiate the making of a peculiar character who is both a hero and a foil to himself. They tell the story of a man who is a hero in spite of himself; a hero who prevents himself from achieving heroism; a character who contests his own characterization. As James has observed in a fictional piece: "A Star that would not Shine". This is simply in not being able to combine patriotism with nationalism. The only difference in the nationalism of both characters is that one performs on the homeland whilst the other performs in the diaspora. Each typifies a postcolonial personality grappling with the realities and surprises that history has sprung upon it. How does Elesin interpret that world but as of dreams like Makak on a hill that would trip him to murder and suicide in the same act?

Let us narrate the bare historical reality of the King's Horseman, Oyo's number two citizen in the days of the empire. This is how James Gibbs and Akinade M. Bello (1986: 117-18) tell the story:

On Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> December, 1944, the Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Siyanbola Ladigbolu 1, died after a reign of thirty-three years. The keeper of his stable, Olokun Esin Jinadu, who had enjoyed unparalleled privileges in the life time of the king, is expected to follow his majesty to the grave by an act of ritual suicide. On the day of the King's death, he had borne a message from the king to a suburban town of Ikoyi hardly realising that his master would pass on before his return. About two weeks later on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 1945, bedecked in symbolically white apparel, he returned to the streets of Oyo and dances towards the home of Oyo's Prime Minister, Bashorun Ladokun. This ritual dance is always the prelude to the act of ritual suicide; the immolation necessary for the royal obsequies. But the inevitable happened. A new twist was given to the ceremony and the course of history in Oyo tradition. The British colonial officer ordered that Jinadu



should be apprehended and detained at his residency. The reason for this being that under His Majesty, George VI of Great Britain, there could be no concept of ritual suicide. Suicide was murder! Soon as the news made the round that Elesin Oba could not fulfil his patriotic obligation, his youngest son, Muraina, killed himself to avail the family honour.

Soyinka's dramaturgy found an excuse for Elesin Oba's misadventure. He had been distracted by his sudden liking for a young virgin in the course of the ritual 'dance' during which time he ought to be in trance. The image of a damsel lodged deeply in his imagination became his undoing. It is the same with the image of the white woman that has to be exorcised from Makak's imagination. Elesin Oba loved life and his whole concept of citizenship and patriotism was subjugated to it. Worse still, his concept of citizenship under foreign rule granted him rights which might be denied under native law and custom. This is the self-same legality which Corporal Lestrade, the equivalent of the Colonial Officer, pressed on Makak in Walcott's play. These two citizens under foreign rule are drifters. Makak suffers from selective amnesia, Elesin from extreme hedonism and lasciviousness:

The world I know is good.  
The world I know is the bounty  
Of hives after bees have swarmed.  
No goodness teems with such open hands  
Even in the dream of deities.

On the surface of it, he lays claim to some rootedness, but on the other hand he is most unstable:

How can that be? In all my life  
As horseman of the king, the juiciest  
Fruit on every tree was mine. I saw,  
I touched, I wooed, rarely was the answer No.  
The honour of my place, the veneration I  
Received in the eye of man or woman  
Prospered my suit and

Played havoc with my sleepy hours.  
And they tell me my eyes were a hawk  
In perpetual hunger. Split an Iroko tree  
In two, hide a woman's beauty in its heartwood  
And seal it up again – Elesin, journeying by,  
Would make his camp beside that tree  
Of all the shades in the forest. (1975:17–19).

This is how Elesin gets entangled in mundane matters at a time he ought to summon all the resources of his spiritual powers. He lost it and drowned in a gulf of amnesia where self and soul is lost, only excuses left:

My powers deserted me. My charms, my spells, even  
My voice lacked strength when I made to summon the  
Powers that would lead me over the last measure of earth  
Into the land of the fleshless. You saw it, Iyaloja. You saw  
Me struggle to retrieve my will from the power of the stranger  
Whose shadow fell across the doorway and left me floundering  
and blundering in a maze I had never before encountered.  
My senses were numbed when the touch of cold iron came  
Upon my wrists. I could do nothing to save myself. (p. 68)

The major lesson of these plays is that citizenship never counts as an alloy. It is either pure or compromised. Elesin and Makak choose to compromise patriotism by their lack of focus. They look to the invading empire for the spirit of nationalism which should have been home grown. If we re-visit the thesis of C.L.R. James that the Caribbean nations do not have any substantial history of their own, and for that reasons belong in the Western world, there seems to be a point in favour of localization. It is clear, therefore that no amount of the global is valid without some local content. Globalization must first and foremost be local before it can be global. But this does not solve the puzzle for the Pan-Africanist in the Caribbean since his/her roots are multiple. He is African first before he is Western. The point of emphasis would be what content competes to overcome the other? The clash of civilisations would be an ongoing, an



unrelenting contest for dominance in the present century. While it is being contested on the hard ground and environment in places like Africa and the Middle East, it will be more subtle in places like the Caribbean where the theatre of contest would be internalized and determined in the identity and personalities of great populations of persons. It will no longer be the West and the rest of us, the multitude of civilisations must learn to coexist with others to reduce the friction generated by supremacist tendencies.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The focus of this paper has been largely African, but the conclusion seems to tally with that of Huntington whose focus is Western:

Western civilisation is both Western and modern. Non-Western civilisations have attempted to become modern without becoming Western. To date only Japan has succeeded in this quest. Non-Western civilisations will continue to attempt to acquire the wealth, technology, skills, machines and weapons that are part of being modern. They will also attempt to *reconcile this modernity with their traditional culture and values*. Their economic and military strength relative to the West will increase. Hence the West will increasingly have to accommodate these non-Western modern civilisations whose power approaches that of the West but whose values and interests differ significantly from those of the West... For the relevant future, there will be no universal civilisation, but instead a world of different civilisations, each of which will have to learn to coexist with the others (1993: 49).

The only omission in Huntington's claim is that it is not only Japan that has succeeded in becoming modern without becoming Western, China and her satellite states have also succeeded in that quest. Increasingly, India and the Asian tigers would also succeed in doing the same.

The youths are usually the most vibrant group and the largest in the demography of any nation, so we must consider them an important statistical and technological factor in the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century nations. There is no reason why African nations should not invest in the education and empowerment of that most vibrant segment of society.



Our national elite have been in the saddle for about the same number of years that colonialism had ruled Africa before the era of independence, yet, the nations under their control have gone deeper into the morass of underdevelopment. Some African countries like Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are on the verge of collapse. Even Nigeria that seemed to have surmounted the debt burden a few years ago, has now declined and has gone aborrowing again. The Asian Tiger nations which became independent at the same time as Nigeria have now joined the league of developed nations. The prospects for Africa is often so bleak that some researchers leave it out of regional configuration in matters of world development.

No doubt, the potentials for development are there and the human resources are there. The human capital excludes those young persons who are either trafficked or who have trafficked themselves to Europe, the Middle-East and the Soviet Union for a new round of slavery or sexual exploitation.

More than ever before, this is the time that the educational sector needs the most funding because the case of Malaysia has shown that only investment in education and research can help a nation to make the breakthrough needed in the 21st century. Whilst UNESCO recommends a minimum of 26% of the national budget on education, Nigeria spends about 8% of her annual budget on Education. Ghana and South Africa spend about 31% of their annual budget on their education sector. Statistics reveal that Nigeria has about 20 million persons living with varying forms of disability, yet there is no skill acquisition or comprehensive educational programme in favour of this group. They constitute 12.5% of the population, yet no effort is made to harness their productivity for national development. They litter the streets in the cities, begging for alms. The same is true of youths who are not keyed into the programme for national development through direct or indirect employment. Even the National Youth Service Corps does not have the statistics and the database of its virtual and prospective participants. The nations and the nationalities of Africa have come a long way and the future must begin now.

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