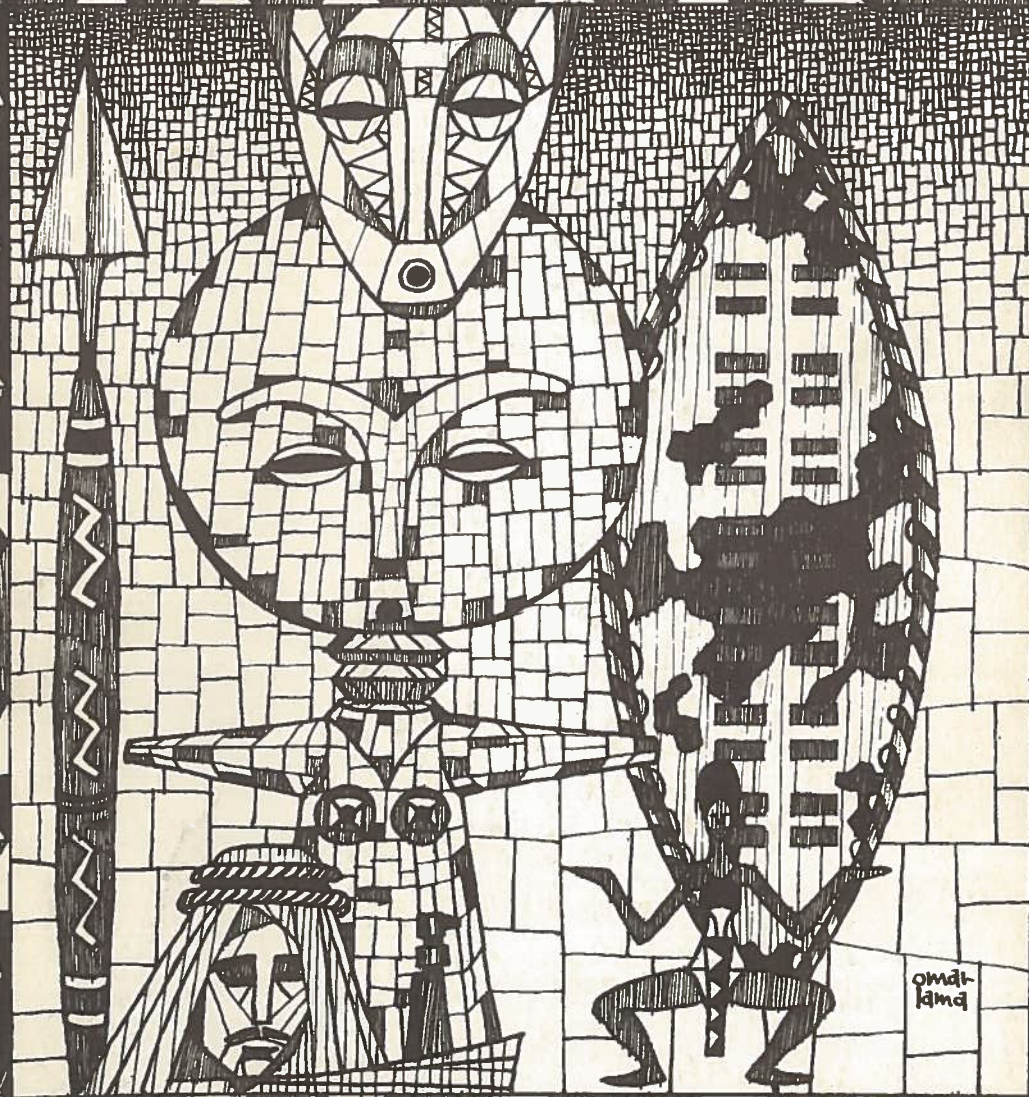


\$1.25

Journal Of Black Poetry Pan African Issue



owm-
lma

Guest Editor: Don L. Lee
Special Issue

Common Problems, Common Solutions: TOWARD A PAN AFRICAN IDEOLOGY

by Abd-al Hakim Ibn Alkalimat
(Gerald McWorter)

Several controversies have raged through the years blinding Blacks from reality. The issues raised by certain popular positions are frequently obscured by their opaque reflections revealed in the white media, and by the expressive emotional style associated with our mass movements. Moreover, our intellectuals have often played faggot roles by being second rate bitchy white imitators, raging in expressive protest over white rejection. So while there have at times been heated debates, this has not established a way to create history as much as to insure that history would repeat itself.

History can best be created by those who come to understand it, and those who understand it know that every man chooses to be part of mankind's problem or part of a solution to the problem. Black people throughout the world have had to deal with this problem of history, not as an ideological weapon but as "value free" social science, not as the dynamic of a people's reality but as the chronology of personalities and events, not as freedom but as slavery. Black people everywhere have had common problems throughout history, but have never had common solutions. What we need are common solutions, correct solutions, ideological solutions. This article deals with developing a common ideology for Black people everywhere. Admittedly this is a presumptuous undertaking, but it is the necessary theoretical task for us so that we can move to create a new history of a United African People.

This article will deal with three specific questions:

1. What is Ideology?
2. What are common African problems?
3. What are common African solutions?

Clarifying the nature of ideology gives a framework for dealing with the nature of our reality. Answers to the last two questions make up the substance of Pan African ideology, of relevance to all African Peoples everywhere.

An ideology is a set of beliefs about history and contemporary society. It establishes a view of how things ought to be and requires a moral commitment to change them that way. There are five basic parts to an ideology. (1) *IDENTITY*: Who are we (am I)? Who were we (was I)? Who are we (am I) going to become? These identity questions reflect three approaches, historical, participational and referential identification. While these approaches are all different, it is their collective substance that accounts for who we are. We must know who we are if we are to know our friends and enemies. (2) *ANALYSIS*: What is (was) the structure of the world? How does it change? What ought to happen? Black people must understand systematically the structure and process of historical action. For it is only through a clear precise grasp of our past that we will be able to forge out a future that is positive and worthy of our peoples' efforts. (3) *COMMITMENT*: What is our (my) desire for change? And to what extent are we (am I) willing to go to achieve that change? While there are always

Islands of Georgia, and some communities in North Carolina and Louisiana.) While we have not continued carrying the external culture of tradition, we have been moulded into a PanAfrican community forcing our cultural values and style to become manifest in the forms of white people. We now see experimentation with various cultural activities to connect up with the wisdom and insight of our ancestors.

Black people are a PanAfrican people because there are no serious traditional divisions except those that are recreated. Most important is the fact of a common language. The oppression of the west has resulted in the breakdown of traditional languages and the near universal use of the colonial language, English. This has become a topic for white linguists who have used the term substandard to describe the use of English by Blacks in the United States, although this reeks of the academic imperialism that has been western anthropologists' major function. Also there is the entire continent when speaking or thinking of Africa, extending fraternal identification to all indigenous Black Africans on the continent. (Even if this is because we don't know what our precise tribal identity really is.)

BASIS OF PANAFRICAN IDENTITY

Traditional Tribalism	Past	Historical Identity
Colonial Nationalism	Present	Participational Identity
Continental PanAfrican Nationalism	Future	Referential Identity

The matrix of forces that give rise to African identity are summarized in the chart. Even though one's tribal ancestors give proof of the colonist's lie about history, tribalism is a thing of the past. We must not be "slaves to the slavery of our forefathers," nor be destined to replicate what is truly glorious about our past. The fact that tribal conflict brutalizes Africans today is proof that colonialism profits by helping the dead rule the living. Our tribal historical identification is at best inspirational. Colonial nationalism is the force that drives together tribes oppressed by common colonial administrations, but it is reactionary when it leads to reformist deals to make oppression lighten up a bit, or to promise not to export the forces of National Liberation. Nationalism is revolutionary when it brings people together to violently tear colonialism down, e.g., FRELIMO in Mozambique, UNITA in Angola, PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau, SWAPO in Namibia, ZAPU in Zimbabwe, and ANC in Azania. These struggles against European control ultimately can only be understood on a continental scale. If one examines the post-independence of countries tied economically to European powers then it is clear that no African will be free unless all are free and united.

PanAfricanism must become the most important identity for Black people everywhere. It is an identity of the future because it necessitates a total restructuring of the world. An identity of the past will make us the walking dead, while an identity of the present inevitably will result in compromise to consolidate the gains of the moment. Ancient African royalty is cool on an inspirational level when we all claim descendency from the

throne. But who would desire the creation of royal families among us today if the hierarchy put us on the bottom. And when they shout "I am somebody" it rings true on the most basic level of psychological self acceptance. However if a colonized man has the white man's foot up his ass and he says I am somebody without getting free and kicking ass, then he is resigning himself hopelessly to colonial oppression. An identity of the future requires movement and struggle for a goal. To achieve this goal we need a plan based on a correct analysis of our condition, what we're up against.

ANALYSIS:

The issue of analysis is equally important because it requires both the identification of the problem as well as the solution. White people have focused a considerable portion of their Social Sciences to an analysis of colonized people, and methods to intensify colonialization. What is important, though, is that the analysis has always been based on European assumptions and conceptual framework. We must see the white man's concepts about us as another social disease he has put on the world, and turn it back on him in fatal proportions.

It is possible to look at white terminology and terms more in the interests of African (Black) peoples and see that one's conceptual framework for interpreting research makes more impact on what people understand and believe.

**TERMS OF WHITE
SOCIAL SCIENCE**

segregation
integration
equality
assimilation

**TERMS OF BLACK
SOCIAL SCIENCE**

colonization
liberation
freedom
Africanization

White social science has held the problem was *segregation* and the solution assimilation. This was to be achieved through integration for equality. We know this as brainwash tricknology. All of the white terms march us toward a marriage with those we meet everyday as our enemies and serves to reduce social and political realities to individual "accomplishments". So any individual Black would easily measure his apparent success in white terms, while the only reality of Black terms is a collective reality.

A Black analysis would focus on a collective reality by using the concept colonialism to clarify our basic problem. We are captured Africans suffering domestic colonialism in the midst of a country that is a conglomeration of European groups bound together by antagonistic cooperation. Colonialism means one group of people - one whole community - is systematically oppressing another group, totally subordinating every aspect of the oppressed people's culture, way of life, etc. It means total destruction and control. Our only recourse is total liberation based on freedom from colonial rule in any form. Since we see colonialism as a disease, our movement for change will not lead us to the colonizer but to ourselves, and since we are Africans it will surely result in Africanization. We know that the true nature of African colonization is world wide and the decolonization must result from a world wide African liberation struggle. Hence the true process will be PanAfricanization.

In this formulation of our problem we must take care to indicate the role of racism and class exploitation - both exist and reinforce each other. Racism is the organization of beliefs and behavior of one group that declares another group genetically inferior, incapable of competitive participation, and unworthy of "human" status. Class exploitation is the organization of beliefs and behavior of one class that holds power, control and distribution of economic resources for itself and uses the labor and consumption of another class to sustain its economic growth and prosperity. We need not view the struggle as a simplistic choice between a race or a class approach. Our struggle must be sophisticated in managing both, recognizing that both exist and both must be dealt with.

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION:

	Support it	Oppose It
	European	White Radicals
Benefactor	Colonial Imperialists	
WHITE RACISM		
	Colonized (Black) Bourgeoisie	Black Revolutionary Mass
Exploited		

As the chart indicates the major struggle is between the Black Revolutionary Mass and the European Colonial Imperialists. We can safely say that this is the death struggle for the survival of one group or the other, with a significant process being the polarization of both groups. The correct revolutionary analysis includes the need (1) to facilitate the colonized (Black) Bourgeoisie to renounce their class interests and join in solidarity with the Black Revolutionary Mass, and (2) to expose the fraudulent and reactionary intention of colonial pacification programs to recruit more Blacks to achieve as well as aspire Bourgeoisie status. But stopping there would encourage race war based on strict racial polarization. Also, the correct revolutionary (1) encourages whites to reject class interests of their system setting whites against each other, and (2) views white radicals as potentially revolutionary but only to the extent that our interests coincide (think about USSR and Peoples' Republic of China).

Any analysis of African Colonization, unique in blending racism and class exploitation, must provide a critique of the past system and a model for a better system. The two competing systems of solution are capitalism and Socialism. As we look around the world capitalism is always associated with colonizers or colonized countries, whereas Socialism is connected with countries after their colonial liberation, e.g., Cuba, Algeria, and China. Socialism provides an understanding of political economy based on property relations, the basic concept being the collective interest of all men exclusive of criteria used to support exploitation. This must be dealt with since it is a living historical alternative to capitalism. But we must avoid romantic hopes for scientific analysis. Nkrumah clarifies this when he instructs:

"Socialism is not spontaneous. It does not arise by itself. It has abiding principles according to which the major means of production and distribution ought to be socialized if exploitation of the many by the few is to be prevented ... It is the elimination of fancifulness from socialist action that makes socialism scientific. To suppose that there are tribal, national, or racial socialisms is to abandon objectivity in favor of chauvinism."

No simplistic analysis will adequately deal with our complex problem.

COMMITMENT, PROGRAM, AND ACTION:

There is no ideological development without dealing with identity and analysis because all else follows. This is when there is ideological coherence of a position rather than ideological contradictions or omissions. When one has a view of the future, and a clear understanding of historical alternatives, it is necessary to decide how committed one must be to make the desired alternative happen. A total ideological commitment involves a moral imperative, a passionate obsession to realize the goals of analysis because only that is just and right. All forms of life are committed to survival, the lowest common force including the possibility for recreating itself. Even slaves are committed to survival. Revolution is the creation of a totally new alternative, and is the only commitment consistent with creating a new history, a liberated people. As Stokely Carmichael has said of this, "We must have undying love for our people."

But the best ideas of the most committed must face the test of the people's reality, a complex maze of historical forces flowing and erupting. Historical stages are predictable, but episodes and actions are not. The events of history are both accident and design, with reason and emotion mixed as in man. So when we the people rise up we must do so as giants among men -- strangers to the past of slavery, models of revolution for the present, and prophetic forces for the future hopes of our people. Our organization must be grounded in our present day realities but only justified by the future we work for.

The recent escalation in the decade of civil rights protest activities was grounded on optimistic notions about the natural capacity of colonized society to decolonize itself. "One man, one vote" has been a universal cry for rights by colonized people. We now know that would mean voluntary suicide for colonialism, the romantic illusion of bourgeois slave self-deception. So instead of civil rights, the focus is on human rights, a focus necessitating the development of a national liberation front organization. The civil rights movement spoke to the needs of middle class Blacks, whereas a national liberation front would include all of the peoples' interests. As suggested earlier, "the goal of the national liberation movement is the redemption of complete and unconditional independence, and the building of a society of peoples in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

This discussion has presented a basic framework for ideological development. It is obvious that such a framework is necessary because there has been so much ideological confusion throughout the PanAfrican world. We must know that our course is just and right, and that history

is ours. This is what Amus Mor really means when he says:

Please Black America
Heed my song
You know the monkey shook his tail
And say "It won be long"



UNITE!