Malcolm X and United States Policies towards Africa: A Qualitative Analysis of His Black Nationalism and Peace through Power and Coercion Paradigms

by

Abdul Karim Bangura, Ph.D.
theai@earthlink.net

Researcher-in-Residence, Abrahamic Connections and Islamic Peace Studies at the Center for Global Peace, American University; Director, The African Institution; Professor, Research Methodology and Political Science; Coordinator, National Conference on Undergraduate Research initiative at Howard University, Washington, DC; External Reader of Research Methodology at the Plekhanov Russian University, Moscow; Inaugural Peace Professor for the International Summer School in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Peshawar in Pakistan; and International Director and Advisor to the Centro Cultural Guanin in Santo Domingo Este, Dominican Republic.

The author is also the author of more than 75 books and more than 600 scholarly articles. The winner of more than 50 prestigious scholarly and community service awards, among Bangura's most recent awards are the Cecil B. Curry Book Award for his *African Mathematics: From Bones to Computers*; the Diopian Institute for Scholarly Advancement's Miriam Ma'at Ka Re Award for his article titled "Domesticating Mathematics in the African Mother Tongue" published in *The Journal of Pan African Studies* (now *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*); the Special United States Congressional Award for "outstanding and invaluable service to the international community;" the International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation's Award for his scholarly work on ethnic and religious conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and promotion of peace and conflict resolution in conflict areas; and the Moscow Government Department of Multicultural Policy and Intergrational Cooperation Award for the scientific and practical nature of his work on peaceful interethnic and interreligious relations. Dr. Bangura is fluent in about a dozen African and six European languages, and studying to increase his proficiency in Arabic, Hebrew, and Hieroglyphics. He is also a member of many scholarly organizations, has served as President and then United Nations Ambassador of the Association of Third World Studies, and is a Special Envoy of the African Union Peace and Security Council. Bangura holds a B.A. in International Studies, an M.A. in International Affairs, a Graduate Diploma in the Social Sciences, an M.S in Linguistics, a Ph.D. in Political Science, a Ph.D. in Development Economics, a Ph.D. in Linguistics, a Ph.D. in Computer Science, and a Ph.D. in Mathematics.

Abstract

The flier for the conference on "African American and United States Foreign Policy" convened at Boston University on October 26-28, 2010 is reminiscent of how mainstream academia ignores the role of Malcolm X in influencing United States policies towards Africa through his actions and speeches in the United States, in Africa, in Great Britain, and at the United Nations. This essay seeks to remedy this shortcoming by demonstrating that very few, if any, African American have been more effective than Malcolm X in influencing, directly and indirectly, United States Africa policies. Using a qualitative explanatory case study methodology, the paper shows that it was Malcolm X's Black Nationalism and peace through power and coercion paradigms that underlay *how* and *why* he pushed American policymakers to rethink their policies towards Africa, and direct African leaders to take appropriate positions toward the United States' agenda at the United Nations, and in Africa.

Introduction

It is quite unfortunate that when United Nations diplomat Conor Cruise O'Brien wrote his famous book, *To Katanga and Back* (published in 1962),[1] he did not even mention African Americans, much less their role in dealing with the Congolese crisis. Also unfortunate is that revered African scholar Ali Al'amin Mazrui in the chapter entitled "Africa & the USA" in his equally famous book, *Africa=s International Relations* (published in 1977),[2] committed the same omission. Yet, a careful examination of a number of government and non-government sources, as shown in the works of Herschelle Challenor[3] and Baba Zak Kondo,[4] reveals that African Americans, and particularly Malcolm X, were quite active in dealing with the United Nations and United States' handling of the Congo crisis of the 1960s.

Another important work is Adam Hochschild's book, *King Leopold's Ghost* (1998),[5] which highlights the fact that African Americans' efforts in trying to influence United States foreign policy in the Congo date back to the late 1800s. It is highlighted in the book that George Washington Williams, an African American lawyer, journalist, minister and historian, wrote the first full expose of Leopold's reign of terror in the Congo. Also noted is the Rev. William Sheppard, an African American missionary who sent letters to the United States and led the Congolese resistance movement to Leopold's terror.

Indeed, as a number of scholars[6] have pointed out, African Americans are Africa's most important external human resource, precisely because they constitute a large concentration of people of African ancestry lodged in the most powerful nation in the world, and certainly a nation with immense capacity to do Africa harm or good. Yet, even though there are twice as many African Americans as there are Jewish Americans, the African American impact on United States foreign policy towards Africa is still only a tiny fraction of the Jewish American impact on United States foreign policy towards the Middle East.

Like other minorities in the United States, African Americans have indicated special interest in some foreign policy issues. For more than a century, prominent African American activists and scholars emphasized the important linkage between American foreign policy towards Africa and their struggle for equal rights. As economic activities have become overwhelmingly global in nature, African Americans are increasingly stressing the importance of international affairs for their own economic advancement.

Nonetheless, it is true that overall, African Americans have not been very influential in shaping United States foreign policy towards Africa. The following three reasons, following Allan Goodman[7] and Mazrui,[8] explain this lack of influence: (1) the deliberate effort of the foreign policy elite to thwart the influence of African Americans on United States foreign policy, (2) entrenched patterns of recruitment and policy making roles that keep African Americans out of the foreign service, and (3) the limited political clout of African Americans in making the political system respond to their foreign policy interests.

Still, given the work of African American organizations like TransAfrica, coupled with the changing international scene, there are small signs that are indicative of increasing influence by African Americans in shaping United States foreign policy towards Africa. Although it would not be easy, African Americans must become more involved in the full range of the implementation of American foreign policy towards Africa in the future. This calls for educating the African American population about the importance of foreign affairs, for better communication among those African Americans within the foreign policy establishment, and for greater efforts by African Americans to achieve a greater voice in shaping United States foreign policy towards Africa.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that Malcolm X was quite effective in influencing, directly and indirectly, United States Africa policies. The paper therefore seeks to answer two major, albeit simple, questions: (1) What did Malcolm X do? (2) How and why did he do it? Using a qualitative explanatory case study methodology (which emphasizes words, as opposed to numerical values, to answer the questions *how* and *why*), the paper shows that it was Malcolm X's Black Nationalism and peace through power and coercion paradigms that underlay his actions to push American policymakers to rethink their policies towards Africa, and African leaders to take appropriate positions toward the United States' agenda at the United Nations and in the continent. Before doing all this, however, it makes sense to begin with a brief discussion of the lessons that shaped Malcolm X's perspective and actions on Africa.

Lessons that Shaped Malcolm X's Actions on Africa

That Malcolm X was bothered by the history of distortion, misrepresentation, subjugation and exploitation of Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora through the transatlantic slave trade, European colonialism and neocolonialism, and United States imperialism is hardly a matter of dispute. As he recounted in his book titled *On Afro-American History*, for 300 years, the slave maker knew that he could not make African people slaves until he first made them dumb, and one of the best ways to make an enslaved African dumb is to take away his/her language. Once his/her language is gone, s/he cannot communicate with people who are his/her relatives, s/he can never have access to information from his/her family.[9]

Malcolm X added that if one will notice, the natural tongue that one speaks is referred to as one's mother tongue, not father tongue, and the natural intelligence that a person has before s/he goes to school is called mother wit, not father wit, because everything a child knows before s/he gets to school s/he learns from his/her mother, not his/her father. And if the child never goes to school, whatever native intelligence s/he has is from the mother, not the father. And the mother is also the one who teaches the child how to speak his/her language, so that the natural tongue is called the mother tongue. Thus, whenever you find as many people as African Americans who are unable to speak any mother tongue, it is because something was done to their mothers. Slavers had laws that made it mandatory for a Black child to be taken from his/her mother as fast as that child was born. The mother never had a chance to rear him/her. The child would be brought up somewhere else away from the mother, so that the mother could not teach the child what she knew—about self, about her past, about the child's heritage. S/he would have to grow up in complete darkness, knowing nothing about the land or people from where s/he came, not even his/her own mother. There was no relationship between the Black child and his/her mother, as it was against the law. And if the master would ever find any child who had any knowledge of his/her mother tongue, that child was put to death. The masters had to stamp out that language; they did it scientifically. If they found any one of the children who could speak the language, off went his/her head in front of the mother. The slave masters knew that they had to take away the enslaved African's language in order to make him/her dumb.[10]

Malcom X recalled from reading a book in which it is stated that some of the enslaved mothers would try to get tricky. In order to teach their children, who would be off in another field somewhere else, the mothers would pray in a loud voice in their own languages. The children in the distant field would hear the mothers' voices, and the children would learn how to pray and pick up some of the language. As soon as the master found out that this was being done, he would immediately step up his effort to kill all the small children that were benefitting from this. So it became against the law for the enslaved African to even pray in his/her tongue, if s/he knew it. Some people even say they had to pray with their heads in a bucket. Blacks were not praying to Jesus as they are today. The White man will let them call on that Jesus all day long; in fact, he will make it possible for them to call on him. It is when they are calling on another deity that they had more fear of that deity. The calling of that deity in their African language is what causes fear among Whites.[11]

Enslaved Africans, Malcom X further pointed out, used to steal away and pray. All those songs that the enslaved Africans talked or sang and called spirituals had wrapped up in them some of what was happening to them. And when the child realized that s/he could not hear his/her mother pray anymore, the enslaved Africans would come up with a song, "I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray," or the song, "Motherless Child": "Sometimes I feel like a motherless child. Father gone, mother gone, motherless child sees a hard time." All of these songs were describing what was happening to enslaved Africans in the only way they knew how to communicate—in song. They did not say it outright, so they put it in song. They pretended that they were singing about Moses in "Go Down, Moses." They were not talking about Moses and telling "old Pharaoh to let my people go." They were trying to communicate to one another over the slave master's head. Everything they sang was designed toward freedom, designed toward going back home, or designed toward getting Whites off their backs.[12]

Meanwhile, according to Malcom X, as the White man was working on enslaved Africans in America, his brothers in England, France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Germany were busy working on the Africans in the continent. They were stomping out all signs that ever there was of civilization in Africa, making slaves of Africans over there too. And by working together as partners, the White man on the European continent, in cahoots with the White man on the American continent, succeeded in taking over Africa, Asia and the rest of the world while Africans went to sleep.[13]

Malcolm X further pointed out that book after book showed that the White man had brought upon the world's Black, Brown, Red and Yellow peoples every variety of the sufferings of exploitation. He saw how since the 16th Century the so-called "Christian trader" White man began to ply the seas in his lust for Asian and African empires, and plunder, and power. He saw how the White man never has gone among the non-White peoples bearing the Cross in the true manner and spirit of Christ's teachings—meek, humble, and Christ-like. He read how the collective White man had been actually nothing but a piratical opportunist who used Faustian machinations to make his own Christianity his initial wedge in criminal conquests. First, always "religiously," he branded "heathen" and "pagan" labels upon ancient non-White cultures and civilizations. The stage thus set, he then turned upon his non-White victims his weapons of war.[14]

Malcolm X had also read how, entering India—a land of half a billion deeply religious Brown people—the British White man, by 1759, through promises, trickery and manipulations, controlled much of India through Great Britain's East India Company. The parasitical British administration kept tentacling out to half of the sub-continent. In 1857, some of the desperate people of India finally mutinied—and, excepting the African slave trade, nowhere has history recorded any more unnecessary bestial and ruthless human carnage than the British suppression of the non-White Indian people.

In addition, Malcolm had read that over 115 million African Blacks—close to the 1930's population of the United States—were murdered or enslaved during the slave trade. When the slave market was glutted, the cannibalistic White powers of Europe next carved up, as their colonies, the richest areas of the Black continent. And Europe's chancelleries for the next century played a chess game of naked exploitation and power from Cape Horn to Cairo.[15]

According to the book titled *Anti-Slavery* by Professor Dwight Lowell Dumond, 100 million Africans were uprooted from the African continent, noted Malcolm X. So he asked poignantly: "Where are they today?" He points out that at the end of slavery, there were not even 25 million Africans in the Western Hemisphere. That means the bodies of 75 million Africans are at the bottom of the ocean, or their blood and their bones have fertilized the soil of the United States.[16]

Despite all this, Malcolm X repeatedly emphasized the common interest of the oppressed. As he put it in *On Afro-American History*,

> Our interests are worldwide rather than limited just to things American, or things New York, or things Mississippi (and) we look upon ourselves not as a dark minority on the white American stage, but rather…as a part of the dark majority who now prevail on the world stage….When you realize you are part of the majority, you approach your problem as if odds are on your side rather than odds are against you. You approach demanding rather than using the begging approach.[17]

At a time when many saw imperialism as invincible, Malcolm X focused on how the growing struggle of the exploited was changing the world. He said in one of his speeches:

> There is no nation today that can brag about its power being unlimited, or that it can take unilateral action in any area of the earth that they desire. No white nation can do this. But just twenty years ago they could do it. Twenty years ago the United States could do it, twenty years ago England could do it, France could do it, even little old runt Belgium could do it, and Holland could do it. But they can't do it now.[18]

Malcolm X then pointed to the Cuban Revolution, which triumphed against a United States-backed tyrant, Fulgencio Batista, in 1959. In Malcolm X's words, "The Cuban revolution—that's a revolution. They overturned the system."[19] At a meeting sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum on May 29, 1964, he explained that "When Castro was up in the mountains of Cuba, they told him the odds were against him. Today he's sitting in Havana and all the power this country (i.e. the United States) has can't remove him."[20]

Malcolm X's sense of Africa's history of grandeur was equally impeccable. He talked about the African civilization called Carthage. One of the most famous persons in Carthage was Hannibal The Great. Malcolm X and other Africans had been taught that Hannibal was a White man. This is how they steal African history just as Hollywood produces a movie showing a Black man as a White man, he pointed out. He recalled one day when he told a Black college student that Hannibal was a Black man, and the student had a fit and wanted to fight Malcolm X on that. Hannibal, Malcolm X notes was famous for crossing the Alps Mountains with elephants. Europeans could not go across the Alps on foot by themselves. Hannibal had with him 90,000 Africans troops, defeated Rome, and occupied Italy for between 15 and 20 years. Malcolm X added that it is because of some of that Hannibal blood that many Italians are dark. Even the Irish got some of the Black blood when the Spanish Armada was defeated off the coast of Ireland. The Spanish in those days were dark; they were the remnants of the Moors, and they went ashore and settled down in Ireland and right to this very day their descendants are called Black Irish.[21]

Indeed, Malcolm X's internationalism and optimism in the future and confidence in the capacities of the oppressed were well founded. The pattern he described continued with the crushing defeat of the United States in Vietnam in 1975; the defeat of the South African army at Cuito Cuanavale, Angola, in early 1988 by Cuban, Angolan, and Namibian forces; and the democratic revolution against the racist White Rhodesian system in Zimbabwe and the racist Apartheid system in South Africa in the 1980s and 1990.

Furthermore, as William W. Sales, Jr. points out, the last period in the evolution of Malcolm X's political thought began on April 22, 1964, when he embarked upon the first of two trips to the Middle East and Africa. These trips, according to Sales, pushed forward Malcolm X's development in his thinking. After his return from the first trip in late May of 1964, Malcolm X was no longer satisfied with the formulation of Black Nationalism he had articulated earlier. He no longer felt that the Muslim Mosque, Inc. could be the proper organizational form for moving toward a politics of African American liberation. Upon his return from Africa, Malcolm X was committed to Pan-African internationalism, leading him to form the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) on June 28, 1964.[22]

During this period of Pan-African internationalism, according to Sales, Malcolm X's formulations were not finished theoretical postulates but a rapidly developing perspective which he was never allowed to complete. Consequently, many of the questions which he addressed were incompletely answered or not answered at all. It was clear, however, that Malcolm X was quite certain that the Eurocentric international system had to be transformed into one which could extend justice and equality to all of the world's people. It was equally evident that Malcolm X believed this had to be done in such a way as to preserve the plurality of cultures and nationalities and not through the forced homogenization of "integration." Malcolm X had only begun to formulate the actual contours and mechanisms which would empower such new social forces, and most often with specific reference not to the entire Third World but to the African American community and Africa.[23]

According to Sales, historically, Black Nationalism emerged as a response to racism. It was necessary for it to be concerned with the status and treatment of the race no matter the national boundaries. Black Nationalism was therefore at one and the same time a legitimate nationalism but also a "pan" movement, an international movement for the redemption of the race; in fact, scholars often refer to 19th-Century Black Nationalism as "Pan-Negro Nationalism." This, for Sales, might have been obscured in Malcolm X's case because his most explicit formal definition of Black Nationalism did not mention an international dimension. Sales adds, however, that whatever ambiguity existed on this point was clarified by Malcolm X in this last period of his development, as late in 1964 at Harvard University, Malcolm X argued that African Americans "are just as much African today as we were in Africa for hundred years ago, only we are a modern counterpart of it."[24]

As a result of his two trips to Africa in 1964, observes Sales, Malcolm X came to recognize the inconsistency of Black control of Black communities in a monopoly capitalistic economy rooted in Western imperialism. He realized that coexistence was impossible in such a system and frequently described capitalism as a "blood sucker." He now felt that capitalism could not be relied upon to eradicate racism and poverty. Malcolm X looked closely and favorably on African nationalists' attempts to create an African socialism. He noticed on his travels that most of the newly independent nations had turned away from capitalism to the direction of socialism. His interaction with heads of state and nationalists of African socialism exposed him to the various theories of African socialism that they espoused. Leaders like Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Gamal Abdel Naser of Egypt, Sekou Touré of Guinea, and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana all had some formation of a mixed economy that they labeled socialist. At his death, however, Malcolm X had not established clearly what kind of socialism should supersede capitalism. No information exist that shows Malcolm X's commitment to scientific socialism or communism.[25]

Furthermore, as Jan Carew recounts, Malcolm X seemed to be racing against time during the final year of his life. Between December of 1974 and February of 1965, he visited Britain twice. In the course of those visits, Malcolm X made what Carew believes were the most sophisticated, brilliant and conciliatory speeches of his career. In early December, immediately after his second pilgrimage to Mecca, Malcolm X took part in a debate at the Oxford Union, one of the most famous debating societies in the English-speaking world. Less than three months later, on February 11, Malcolm X was invited back to London by the African Society to address a large audience in the Old Theatre at the London School of Economics. In both addresses, Malcolm X moved the political discourse from civil rights to human rights and stated clearly and unequivocally that the Black liberation struggle had to be internationalized rather than ghetoized. He also affirmed with the passionate conviction that was his trademark his willingness to work with people of goodwill regardless of their race, color, or creed. He was welcomed by a Third World immigrant population drawn mostly from the West Indies, Africa, and the Indian subcontinent.

As a descendant from a Grenadian mother, as a Pan-Africanist and a Garveyite, and as a Muslim, Malcolm X in 1965 was able to reach people from a broad range of backgrounds. Weaving through that brilliant speech was a pristine belief in the African Revolution. It was a declaration of faith by someone who would not live long enough to see the twists and turns that revolution would take or the brutal and savage low-intensity warfare unleashed against whole societies that were trying to free themselves from the yoke of imperialism.[26]

Dealing with the United States and the United Nations

Early in 1961, protesting over what they believed to be United Nations and United States' complicity in Patrice Lumumba's death, African activists in America created a disturbance in the organization's visitors' gallery. The deterioration in the Congo situation in part precipitated the creation of the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa (ANLCA). During its meeting at Arden House in New York, the ANLCA brought together a select group representing 28 African civil rights organizations, sororities and fraternities, labor unions, professional associations, religious and African-centered organizations in America.[27]

In addition to the specific resolutions on the Congo that were passed, position statements were also made on United States programs in Africa, Southern Africa, Kenya, and the then Central African Federation (which comprised Malawi, Zambia, and Southern Rhodesia—now Zimbabwe). Called together by James Farmer of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Dorothy Height of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), Martin Luther King, Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Whitney Young, Jr. of the Urban League (UL), participants at the conference made the following commitment in their final communiqué:

> We rededicate and reaffirm our ethnic bond with and historic concern for the peoples of Africa and our complete solidarity with their aspirations for freedom, human rights and independence. We commit ourselves to a wholesale involvement in the affairs of Africa and the yearning of the African people for full freedom, and we call upon the entire Negro community in the United States to join with us in this commitment to the end that our total influence as a group will be used to aid Africans in their march toward freedom.[28]

While the conference did not establish a formal organization, it nevertheless asked the six conveners to report the gist of the conference to President John F. Kennedy and authorized them to "evaluate developments in the areas discussed and consult with constituent organizations on continuing activity." During the six representatives' meeting with Kennedy in December 1962, he agreed that the 20 million Africans in America "had a responsibility for the role of the United States in Africa."[29]

An obstacle to efforts to formalize influence activities was suspicion from members of those African organizations in America that were not included in such meetings. The first ANLCA meeting was repudiated in the *Voice of Africa* in January of 1963 in an article entitled "Negro Stooges' Bid for Africans Challenged," which called the participants Uncle Toms and accused them of having "had the audacity to make attempts to move ahead of the African nationalists in America." The article further charged the ANLCA with representing "American colonialism, imperialism and exploitation."[30]

In spite of all this, the United States government's recognition of the potential significance of the ANLCA became evident when then Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Undersecretary of State for African Affairs G. Mennen Williams, and United States ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson all agreed to address the organization=s second meeting in September of 1964. However, the ANLCA's effectiveness to lobby was hampered when its members requested tax exempt status for the organization.[31]

It was evident only two months later that the ANLCA could have wielded influence in the implementation of United States foreign policy towards Africa when its members sent an open letter to Kennedy strongly protesting the Belgian-United States paratroop drop into Kisangani (Stanleyville). Farmer was sent to the area. In response, State Department personnel quietly surveyed the options of official African Americans working in the Congo, and the United States embassy extended every courtesy to Farmer.[32]

Also in September of 1964, more developments magnified the threat Malcolm X posed to United States' pro-human rights image. Malcolm X sent a letter to an unknown African delegate to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, stating that if the OAU needed recruits to aid African revolutionaries fighting to liberate the Congo, he would guarantee 10,000 recruits in Harlem. This was not mere rhetoric; not only did Malcolm recruit Africans in America, he also began secretly meeting with African leaders and Cuban revolutionaries like Che Guevara to organize a continental African army for service in the Congo.[33]

A few days after Malcolm X's return to the United States on November 24, 1964 from his African trip, the Congolese war escalated as foreign troops intervened. The United States dropped the anti-Cuban paratroopers and South African mercenaries into Kisangani to recapture the Congo. During the months before the United States intervened, Secretary of State Rusk predicted two inevitable consequences of United States intervention: (1) charges of neo-colonialism and (2) opposition by Africans in the United States. Malcolm X single-handedly made both Rusk's predictions a reality by denouncing the United States government=s "criminal" activities in the Congo while whipping up opposition among African Americans in the United States. As Malcolm X put it,

Right now, in the Congo, defenseless villages are being bombed, Black women and children and babies are being blown to bits by airplanes. Where do these airplanes come from? The United States, the U-n-i-t-e-d S-t-a-t-e-s. Yes, and you won't write that. You won't write that American planes are blowing the flesh from the bodies of Black women and Black babies and Black men. No. Why? Because they're American planes. As long as they are being piloted by anti-Castro Cubans, that makes it all right.[34]

Malcolm X added:

Take Tshombe.... He's a cold-blooded murderer. He murdered Patrice Lumumba, the rightful prime minister of the Congo.... They take Tshombe and they prop him up with American dollars.... He's a murderer, who has been hired by the United States government and is being paid with your tax dollars by the United States government.[35]

Although American officials should not have been surprised at Malcolm X's outcry, they were more than shocked when African delegates to the United Nations denounced the United States in similar spirit for the same reason. The delegates also accused the United States of being indifferent to the fate of Africans in America and cited as evidence the attitude of the United States government towards the civil rights struggle in Mississippi. This was the same line of attack Malcolm X had urged them to employ while he was in Africa—get leverage when dealing with the United States by using its Achilles hill: American racism. This move by the African delegates profoundly disturbed United States government officials, who gave the impression that they had been caught off guard. The officials should not have been caught off guard; they knew in May that Malcolm X's influence in Africa was strong. In August, they knew his influence was even stronger.[36]

The United Nations dialogue on the Congo was one of Malcolm X's finest hours. The State Department credited him or rather blamed him for a good part of the strong stand against American imperialism in the Congo. Malcolm X unquestionably was threatening the United States' role as leader of the "free world." This fact was underscored by Rusk's special assistant (Ben Read) sending several State Department reports on Malcolm X to Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Deputy Director for Plans Richard Helms in early December. Helms was responsible for "cloak and dagger" operations and was in the forefront of American government assassination efforts. Malcolm X was given free access to the delegate lounge of the United Nations and was seen frequently meeting with diplomats from African and Asian countries to pursue his United Nations objective. On at least one occasion after a speaking engagement, he was even picked up from the airport by a car registered to the Tanganyika Permanent Mission to the Union Nations.

This was clearly not an encouraging sign to United States officials who feared Malcolm X's United Nations campaign was gaining momentum. The Congo debates, among other activities, convinced United States officials and/or intelligence officers that Malcolm X deserved to be neutralized because he jeopardized relations between the United States and its African friends. If United States government officials needed more evidence of Malcolm X's threat to American foreign policy, it came in the form of a report by journalist Jack Anderson less than one month before Malcolm's assassination. On January 25, 1965, Anderson, a certified friend of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), made the following statement over radio station WINS in New York City:

> Federal Bureau of Investigation: Malcolm X, the American Black nationalist leader, has been secretly contacting African governments to strengthen the ties between Africa and American Negroes. Malcolm X is also expected to be a star attraction at the coming Afro-Asian conference in Algiers where he likely will join in the propaganda against his own country for its racial discrimination.[37]

Obviously, American intelligence officers and government officials did not want Malcolm X to meet with African and Asian leaders. They rightly feared that Malcolm X would use this arena to denounce the United States and damage its global image. Certain intelligence operators probably knew, however, that Malcolm X would not live long enough to attend the Afro-Asian conference.

Malcolm X's Black Nationalism Paradigm

During one of his speeches delivered in New York City in 1964, Malcolm X explained what Black Nationalism is all about. First he provided an analogy to characterize the very explosive condition in which the world was. As he put it, "Sometimes, when a person's house is on fire and someone come yelling fire, instead of the person who is awakened by the yell being thankful, he makes the mistake of charging the one who awakened him with having set the fire."[38]

Malcolm X went on to make a very important distinction between religion and Black Nationalism. He stated:

> I'm still a Muslim, that is, my religion is still Islam. I still believe that there is no God but Allah (SWT) and that [the Prophet] Muhammad (PBUH) is the apostle of Allah (SWT). That just happens to be my personal religion. But in the capacity which I am functioning in today, I have no intention of mixing my religion with the problems of 22,000,000 black people in this country. Just as it's possible for a great man whom I greatly respect, Ben Bella, to be a Muslim and still be a nationalist, and another one whom I greatly respect, Gamal [Abdel] Nasser, to be a Muslim and still a nationalist, and Sukarno of Indonesia to be a Muslim and still be a nationalist, it was nationalism which enabled them to gain freedom for their people.[39]

Malcolm X continued by conceptualizing Black Nationalism by saying:

> I'm still a Muslim but I'm also a nationalist, meaning that my political philosophy is black nationalism, my economic philosophy is black nationalism, my social philosophy is black nationalism. And when I say that this philosophy is black nationalism, to me this means that the political philosophy of black nationalism is that which is designed to encourage our people, the black people, to gain complete control over the politics and the politicians of our own community.
>
> Our economic philosophy is that we should gain economic control over the economy of our own community, the businesses and the other things which create employment so that we can provide jobs for our own people instead of having to picket and boycott and beg someone else for a job.
>
> And, in short, our social philosophy means that we feel that it is time to get together among our kind and eliminate the evils that are destroying the moral fiber of our society....We believe that we should lift the level or the standard of our own society to a higher level wherein we will be satisfied and then not inclined toward pushing ourselves into other societies where we are not wanted.[40]

Thus, it is obvious that Malcolm X's prescription is still the viable one for the African. Consequently, we can begin by acknowledging that True African Consciousness must first and foremost be built on a sound spiritual basis that highlights those aspects of African spiritual life that have enabled African people all over the world to survive as a human community throughout the centuries.

It should go beyond European classical humanism with its class, socio-economic and geographical limitations based on Greece and the Athenian City-State, which was based on a system of slavery. Pan-African humanism must lead to "enlarged humanities" and recapture that original meaning of humanity which Western scholars, beginning with Plato, in their hollow and lopsided search for material progress, abandoned. By privileging "reason" above everything else and abandoning the spiritual aspects of life, including the idea of the immortal soul, Western scholarship embarked on a path that is increasingly bringing humanity to the brink of destruction through violence and ecological destruction.

The task of Black Nationalism and other African-centered philosophies is to critique the Eurocentric "idea" and "general philosophy" in their metaphysical belief that European humanism is superior to that of the African people. This falsehood, which Europe and America perpetuated and still do, in so many ways, is based on the idea that the rest of humanity has to be forced to believe like Europe and America in order to be "humanized" into a singular humanity. This, in the words of Tsenay Serequeberhan, implies the "singularisation of human diversity by being forced onto a singular track of historical 'progress' grounded on an emulation and/or mimicry of European historicity." According to Serequeberhan, this "pretext" that flattens all difference has to be critically "de-structured" by contemporary African philosophy if "our shared humanity" is to be realized and critically appropriated. Indeed, for him, "the task of contemporary African philosophy─its critical-negative project─is the critique of Eurocentrism and recognition and de-structuring of its speculative metaphysical underpinnings, which still holds us in bondage."[41]

The African Renaissance, which should guide our thought processes, therefore, must recapture those basic elements of African humanism (ubuntu, eternal life, and immanent moral justice) as the opening of the way to a new humanistic universalism. This, according to Chancellor Williams, "is the spiritual and moral element, actualized in good will among men (and women), which Africa itself has preserved and can give to the world."[42]

The University as an institution of learning and knowledge reproduction has its origin in Africa. The Sankore University founded in the City of Timbuktu in the Songhay Empire was the latest and best of its kind anywhere in the world. The University was the intellectual capital of the Western Sudan and provided a vibrant learning environment for the learners and the teachers. Felix DuBois, in his book, *Timbuctoo the Mysterious*, described the scholars at this University in the following words:

They astounded the most learned men of Islam by their erudition. That these Negroes were at a level with the Arab savants (men of exceptional learning) is proved by the fact that they were installed as professors in Morocco and Egypt. In contrast to this, we find that the Arabs were not always equal to the requirements of Sankore.[43]

Thus, before colonization and the Arab and European enslavement of Africans, Africa provided the best institutions of learning that existed at the time. It is recorded that when the Moroccans invaded Timbuktu in 1552, Professor Ahmad Baba, the last Chancellor of the University, was the author of some 40 books on different subjects. He had a collection of some 1,600 books in his library. He was exiled, and this treasure was destroyed in the hands of the Arab invaders.[44] The basis of African civilization was weakened and efforts were made to destroy it. But although weakened, it neither died nor was it destroyed.

The physical structures were destroyed but not the soul of the Africans who believed in eternal life and immanent moral justice of humanity. It is this soul of humanity that survived and that seeks to rebuild what was lost of the institutions Africans created in the past, but which have relevance in their lives in today's world. Indeed, as George James pointed out in his *Stolen Legacy: Greek Philosophy is Stolen Egyptian Philosophy*, much of the 1,000 books credited to Aristotle were not his products. Most of them were copied from Egyptian texts, which Alexander the Great had looted from the libraries of Egypt during Greek conquest and occupation of that African civilization. From his research, James was able to observe that,

> Certainly he (Aristotle) could not have obtained them from the Greeks, for that vast body of knowledge, which bears his name and which was presented as new, would really have been the traditional common possession of all who were members of the Greek Schools of philosophy for they would have been the only persons inside Greece permitted to own such books; for knowledge was protected as secret. Under these circumstances it is evident that the vast body of scientific knowledge ascribed to Aristotle was neither in possession of the Greeks of his time, nor was there any one in Greece competent to teach him Science and, least of all, on so vast a scale.[45]

James concluded that the Greeks, among the surrounding nations, were the most anxious to obtain the valuable secrets of the Egyptians, in the Ancient Sciences, and this opportunity came when Alexander The Great invaded Egypt. According to Strabo and Plutarch, who James quoted, Alexander entrusted these books in the hands of Aristotle; and upon Aristotle's death, the looted books fell in the hands of Theophrastus who succeeded him as head of his School. Later, the Roman Army looted these books in style when Greece fell to Rome in 84 BC. They were carried by Sulla to Rome, where Tyrannio, a grammarian, secured copies and enabled Andronicus of Rhodes to publish them.

Cheikh Anta Diop had pointed out that until Africa is able to reclaim this historical and promethean consciousness that is embodied in the achievements of ancient Egypt, the history of Black Africans and that of humanity in general will "remain suspended in air." According to him, such a history can never be written correctly "until African historians dare to connect it with the history of Egypt."[46]

In his view, even the study of languages, institutions, etc. cannot be treated properly until this is done: "in a word, it will be impossible to build an African humanities; a body of African human sciences, so long as the relationship does not appear legitimate."[47]

For us to respond to this historic challenge and be part of the correction of the historical distortion and theft of our African heritages, we must provide deeply thought out and well-conceived vision and mission, with a well-articulated strategy to achieve our objectives. To succeed, our effort must be part of the creation of a counter-hegemonic discourse which can enable, as Odora Hoppers and colleagues characterized it, the "triple agenda of deconstruction, reconstruction and regeneration to be undertaken at the same time."[48] To achieve this counter-discourse, we must engage in work that can help and contribute to reshaping the direction of education on the continent and in the Diaspora towards a more culture-specific and culturally relevant curriculum of liberation. We must carry out theoretical formulations and reflections in an interdisciplinary, pluridisciplinary and comparative manner. We must provide conditions for the acquisition of knowledge not only for "its own sake" but for the sake of humanity and African recovery and rebirth. We must develop new methodologies and techniques for accessing, utilizing, and storing all knowledge based on an African epistemology and cosmology. This would imply, according to Dani Nabudere,[49] the development of an all-inclusive approach, which recognizes all sources of human knowledge as valid within their own contexts. This requires the adoption of hermeneutic philosophy in its African essence.

Our methodological approach should be hermeneutical. It should be open-ended to permit cross-cultural communication and exchange of ideas and opinions to promote understanding between all knowledge systems in their diversities.[50] This African philosophical approach is based on the acceptance of pluralism and cultural diversity. The name of Hans-Georg Gadamer is associated with this line of argument in hermeneutics, in which he stressed the need for the "fusion of historical horizons" as the best way of transmitting understanding between the different lived histories or experiences of different communities as the basis of their existence. Hermeneutics insists on both the cultural context as well as the historical contingencies of events as necessary in bringing about a true understanding of the different lived experiences. Furthermore, hermeneutics has its roots in the African/Egyptian mythical figure of Herms, the messenger of knowledge from the gods to mortals, and that is why "hermeneutics is without reason, named after Herms, the interpreter of the divine message to mankind."[51]

This philosophic-Black Nationalistic approach should be based on premises that encourage learning and teaching, which encompasses knowledge, interests, and real life situations that the learners and teachers can bring to learning situations. This notion of site-specific knowledge tries to correct the Eurocentric tendency to universalize knowledge around Occidental centers and sites of knowledge which are privileged to the disadvantage of others, claiming to be the only sites of "rationality" and "scientific knowledge." The recognition of these other sites and centers creates a truly multipolar world of global knowledge drawn from all sources of human endeavor. Also, as Professor Hubert Vilakazi argued,

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The peculiar situation here is that knowledge of the principles and patterns of African civilisation remained with ordinary, uncertificated men and women, especially of those in rural areas. The tragedy of African civilisation is that Western-educated Africans became lost and irrelevant as intellectuals who could develop African civilisation further. Historically, intellectuals of any civilisation are the voices of that civilisation to the rest of the world; they are the instruments of the development of the higher culture of that civilisation. The tragedy of Africa, after conquest by the West, is that her intellectuals, by and large, absconded and abdicated their role as developers, minstrels and trumpeters of African civilisation. African civilisation then stagnated; what remained alive in the minds and languages of the overwhelming majority of Africans remained undeveloped. Uncertificated Africans are denied respect and opportunities for development; they could not sing out, articulate and develop the unique patterns of African civilisation.[52]

Professor Vilakazi added that Africa, therefore, finds itself in an awkward situation. Africans need to develop educational systems founded upon and built on the civilization of the overwhelming majority, yet their intellectuals are strangers to that civilization. They have no spiritual or intellectual sympathetic relationship with the culture and civilization embracing the masses of African people: "The biggest spiritual and mental challenge to African intellectuals is that in this massive re-education process (which is necessary), the only teachers they have are ordinary African men and women who are uncertificated, and who live largely in rural areas." He concluded by stating that,

We are talking here about a massive cultural revolution consisting, first, of our intellectuals going back to ordinary African men and women to receive education of African culture and civilisation. Second, it shall break new ground in that un-certificated men and women shall be incorporated as full participants in the construction of the high culture of Africa. This shall be the first instance in history where certificated intellectuals alone shall not be the sole builders and determinants of high culture, but shall be working side by side with ordinary men and women in rural and urban life. Intellectuals must become anthropologists doing fieldwork, like Frobenius. But unlike academic Western anthropologists, African intellectuals shall be doing field work among their own people as part of a truly great effort aimed at reconstructing Africa and preparing all of humanity for conquering the world for humanism.[53]

Indeed, like Professor Vilakazi, Malcolm X had challenged all of us to wake up to this clarion call and create a new thought process that will resurrect the deep values of African humanism (*ubuntu*) that is so badly needed in today's gadgetized and digitized world without the human touch and spirit. Indeed, we must work diligently to bridge that gap.

This approach would be one which departs from the one-sided Western "Africanist" who, in his or her search for the "authentic" African and the depository of genuine African discourse, seeks to locate the "real" African and to establish an iron wall between "the man in the bush" vis-à-vis the Westernized educated African. Y. V. Mudimbe, too, would like to see the emergence of a "wider authority" of a "critical library" of the Westernised African intellectual's discourses developed together with "the experience of rejected forms of wisdom, which are not part of the structures of political power and scientific knowledge."[54] This is a useful reminder, despite the fact that Mudimbe himself, as Masolo correctly pointed out, "lamentably fails to emancipate himself from the vicious circle inherent in the deconstructionist stance" of how this "usable past" should be used by African "experts" to construct an "authentic" African episteme.[55]

African languages shall, therefore, be at the center of developing our knowledge sites. Language, as Amilcar Cabrai rightly pointed out, is at the center of articulating a people's culture. He also noted that the African Revolution would have been impossible without African people resorting to their cultures to resist domination. Culture is, therefore, a revolutionary force in society. It is because language has remained an "unresolved issue" in Africa's development that present day education has remained an alien system. Mucere Mugo quoted Franz Fanon who wrote: "to speak a language is to assume its world and carry the weight of its civilization."[56] We must, therefore, be diligent in making sure that, as Mwalimu Carter G. Woodson once urged us in *The Mis-education of the Negro*, our students are no longer made to scoff at our African languages. Indeed, Professor Kwesi K. Prah has argued consistently over many years that the absence of African languages has been the "key missing link" in African development.[57]
The methodological approach should also be one that uses open and resource-based learning techniques available in the actual learning situations. It has, therefore, to draw on the indigenous knowledge materials available in the locality and make the maximum use of them.

One of the fundamental problems facing African economies and African scholarship is the dependency syndrome. This condition has replaced colonialism in the form of neo-colonialism. According to eminent philosopher Paulin Hountondji, research in Africa has been extroverted (externally oriented) just like African economies because knowledge production is a specific form of production "akin to the production of goods."[58]

What all this suggests is that we must revisit African teaching that takes these epistemological, cosmological, methodological, and Black Nationalistic challenges into account. Hence, we should be culture-specific and knowledge-source-specific in our orientation. As such, we must work very hard:

(1) to increase African knowledge in the general body of global human knowledge;

(2) to create linkages between the sources of African knowledge and the centers of learning on the continent and in the Diaspora;

(3) to establish centers of learning in the communities and ensure that these communities become "learning societies;"

(4) to link knowledge to the production needs of African communities;

(5) to ensure that science and technology are generated in relevant ways to address problems of the rural communities where the majority of African people live and that this is done in African languages; and

(6) to reduce the gap between the African elites and the communities from which they come by ensuring that education is available to all Africans and that such knowledge is drawn from the communities.

Free exploration and discourse that give every human being a right to an education is the very expression of human freedom and will help to debunk one-sided theories such as those advanced by Darwin's Origin of the Species and their advocacy of "survival of the fittest"—theories that have given license to particular power groups to exterminate the weak ones. Instead, the enlarged humanities and the science of humanity should explore cooperative ways of survival of the entire humanity in the spirit of ubuntu or humanness, which holds: I am because We Are.

Thus, a process of redefining the boundaries between the different disciplines in our thought process is the same as that of reclaiming, reordering and, in some cases, reconnecting "those ways of knowing," which were submerged, subverted, hidden or driven underground by colonialism and slavery. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith has correctly noted of native Australian knowledge systems, which were colonized,

> In terms of the way knowledge was used to discipline the colonised, it worked in a variety of ways. The most obvious forms of discipline were through exclusion, marginalisation and denial. Indigenous ways of knowing were excluded and marginalised....Discipline is also partitioned (like land-DWN), (where) individuals (were) separated and space compartmentalised....This form of discipline worked at the curriculum level, for example, as a mechanism for selecting our 'native' children and girls for domestic and manual work. It worked also at the assessment level, with normative tests designed around the language and cultural capital of White middle classes.[59]

Creating holistically defined thought processes will, therefore, of necessity, mean reasserting African ways of knowing and ordering of knowledge. Such a process of reclaiming our own ways of knowing is in fact a liberation process, which must be reflected in our academic curricula by participatory research in which the masses of the African people must participate.

The study and research will reflect the daily dealings of society and the challenges of daily life of the people. Therefore, as Sémon Pathé Guéye pointed out, the problematic of the African Renaissance must be tackled through a fruitful dialectic between theory and practice, intellectual elaboration and practical experience. He added:

> This dialectic will be based on, and underlined by, a permanent and constructive dialogue between the scientists and politicians who are committed to the same objective of renewing our continent, but also between the masses and the elite, who pretend to think and act in their name but sometimes confine themselves to intellectual speculation that has nothing to do with the daily life of the common people. The concept which will result from our discussions would be able to meet the needs and demands of the masses and to become, in their hands, a powerful instrument for positively transforming their current situation and opening the prospect of a better future.[60]

Professor Taban lo Liyong, Head of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Venda, South Africa, who has been involved in elaborating an African-centred curriculum for teaching at the Centre, has argued that each discipline must elaborate and extend its curriculum to embrace the African indigenous worldview, or social practices, or scientific and technological usages and developments. According to Professor Liyong, past technological developments and achievements of Africans, their techniques, arts and artistry, the products and processes of production must be studied with a view to "modernizing them." At the same time, he argued that technological innovations from Europe and Asia "should be married to the native ones to produce a third new and appropriate technology." In whatever event, he advocated that the "African rhythm should control the speed of adoption or adaptation; African ethos of communal care and spiritual life should determine what we get from outside or keep from our past."[61] This is the correct approach because besides recognizing other systems of knowledge, it leaves open the need for African systems of knowledge to acknowledge and learn from others in a discourse of cross-cultural understanding.

Fatnowna and Pickett are also correct when they said that to achieve such a synthesis would, in one sense, be a "return" but also a "a re-integrative process of recovering wholeness." In this sense, according to them, such integration "goes beyond itself because the same process engages us in transformation." It is a dialectical transformation of the different parts that existed before, but which now exist in a new form and with a new content.

It is a transformation that involves the liberating of knowledge at both ends of the sites of knowledge as well as "being intimately bound up with the transformation of values and a sense of belonging to a whole-earth, a perspective that privileges the local within commitment to the global." This, essentially, is a transformation of human consciousness "both driven by and necessary for those changes in knowledge systems" creating a relational nature of things."[62]

As we recall, during the establishment of the Medieval University in Europe, the first University in Southern Italy utilized the African practice of palaver and to teach law students rhetoric, speechifying and oratory. This is today's legal art called advocacy, which has encompassed other areas of human communication.

Professor Mucere Mugo of Kenya has perfected the combination of literal and oral techniques of learning and transmitting knowledge and messages in her acidic work. She has used oratory interludes as a methodological approach in critical analysis as a way of developing an emancipation and liberation education and culture. The interludes "punctuate" the literal discourse and the discussion. She continues to do this because she has argued that literacy should not be privileged over orate traditions, consumed by the majority of African people.[63] The approach is tenable. Life Long Learning (LLL) has recently become a vogue in many countries of the developed world as well as international organizations as a new approach to learning in the 21st Century. Yet this educational approach is deeply embedded within African cultures and epistemology. According to Professor Mucere Mugo, learning and culturalization in African societies were considered continuing processes "that took place from birth until death with the family unit, extended family, the village and the entire community participating." She added that

> This extended, collective participation in educating children and inculcating cultural ethos, however, did not replace the efforts of the professionals who taught very specialised knowledge and skills, especially at given milestones of the journey of life. The education was also very practical in conception and methodology. It was oriented towards problem posing and problem solving at individual and communal levels.[64]

Professor Mugo referred to Jomo Kenyatta's anthropological work about the Gikuyu, *Facing Mount Kenya*, and Julius Nyerere's *Arusha Declaration and Tanzania Ten Years after Independence* as approving this method of learning and as justifying them on the basis of the long African cultural experience.

Malcolm X's Peace through Power and Coercion Paradigm

Conceptions of peace span religions and cultures, incorporating such values as security and harmony as well as justice and human dignity. Every major system of faith and belief, whether religious or secular in character, has in some way or other promised peace as an outcome of the implementation of its precepts. While peace is absolutely one of the most universal and significant of human ideals, Raimon Panikkar describes it as one of the few positive icons that has meaning for the whole of humanity.[65] Furthermore, the ways that we think about peace are often diffuse and content-dependent. Peace has always been considered a far reaching goal, for we honor peace in the abstract. For example, within a framework of religious precepts and affirmations, we organize our thoughts about life and politics around more mundane ends and objectives.[66] Implicitly, we circumscribe the meaning of peace to accommodate a system of largely implicit beliefs about how the world works, about what power consists, and about what is expedient. As a result, the peace ideal is either co-opted by competing value priorities or remains distant from our daily activities and experiences. The "ideal" becomes separated from the "real," and peace becomes a pious invocation, a means to an end, or an empty term of rhetorical self-justification.[67]

Peace, whether it be in Islam or anywhere else, cannot always be achieved by inaction and passivity. On the contrary, many have espoused other means by which to find peace. Malcom X looked at the ways by which peace is found through coercive power, using the theories of Realism and Realpolitik. In power politics, strength through tactics to win over an opponent is used to earn peace. He was realistic in seeing that individuals gained peace by using their leadership qualities to focus the world on that which they needed resolved. Whether it be the acceleration of the creation of the state of Palestine, or the creation of a movement for universal brotherhood through equality in 1960s America, aggressive speech and a show of courage was needed for any of these to occur.

The theory of Realpolitik, idealized by then Prussian/German Chancellor Otto Von Bismark, explains the means by which to gain peace through coercive power. This theory believes in "a ruthlessly realistic and opportunistic approach to statesmanship (and thus power), rather than a moralistic one" (http://www.wordreference.com/english/definition.asp?en=realpolitik). Much like the Ancient Romans who fought for the creation of an empire ushering in an age of *Pax Romana*, or Roman Peace, Bismark used his 'Blood and Iron' courage and strength to carve a United Germany in 1870. Power politics is the traditionally dominant framework in the field of international relations. This paradigm, grounded in classic works such as Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* as well as in a more recent body of political works that invokes Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Hans Morgenthau, promulgates a pessimistic reading of human nature and a competitive model of international politics.[68]

Advocates of this paradigm, who refer to it as "political realism," contend that there are no universal values that can be held by all actors in the international system. Furthermore, the absence of a world government or "higher power" to which states must submit themselves renders politics among nations anarchic and unpredictable, characterized by shifting alliances and the ever-present threat of violence. In the face of chronic insecurity and shifting balances of power, states must craft policies that serve the private good of their immediate "national interests"─construed as the acquisition of material power and military capability to compel and deter others─while steering clear of broader, humanistic ideas that depend on the trustworthiness or goodwill of others for their fulfillment. In other words, because there is no shared moral yardstick that can be used as a basis for stable cooperation among nations, states have no choice but to compete with one another for scarce resources and for the security that these resources are believed to provide.

Although not necessarily indifferent to global problems linked to widespread poverty and ecological deterioration, exponents of power politics argue for an outlook of moral minimalism, in which the world is construed as a "self-help" system. Justice is defined as an absence of gross abuses of human rights, such as genocide, and peace is conceptualized simply as an absence of war or, more precisely, as a temporary suspension of hostilities secured by military power. "If you want peace," argue proponents of the power politics paradigm, "prepare for war." Violence arises inevitably from human competitiveness and covetousness; peace is secured through the forceful imposition of order.[69]

The theory of Realism is another approach used in understanding the justification of action over inaction in Islam. This theory believes in the "awareness or acceptance of the facts and necessities of life (and believes in a) practical rather than a moral or dogmatic view of things" (http://www.wordreference.com/english/ definition.asp?en=realism).

Some modern-day Muslims have used coercive power for their own religious needs. To repudiate a creeping modernization, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 was an example of "Muslims hav(ing) taken charge."[70] Furthermore, it can be noted that some radical Islamic leaders have used Realpolitik to advance their causes. An example of this is Lebanese Shi'i leader Imam Moussa Sadr and his role in creating *Amal*, a movement aimed at "galvaniz(ing) the south (of Lebanon) and demand(ing) the transformation of Lebanese political life"[71] through force. Malcolm X was another advocate of peace through coercive power. He believed that peace, freedom, and action were tied in undeniable ways. Furthermore, Malcom X used his "true" Islam, discovered through brotherhood, to send messages of peaceful action to all races and religions, all of which presently contribute to Malcolm X's legacy.[72] Whether it be Ruhollah Khomeini, Yasser Arafat, or Malcolm X, Islamic peace through force and resistance was deemed necessary.

Malcolm X used Realist power politics to radically change the United States based upon the tenets of the Nation of Islam. As one of its most fervent leaders, Malcolm X first preached "hate of the White devil, Christianity and (emphasized) the supremacy of the Black man."[73] Although contrary to many future beliefs Malcolm X was to later espouse, these beliefs were the ones that shaped his Realist attitude when dealing with issues he deemed vital to himself and others. One way by which Malcolm X was able to shape his belief and use Realist politics to encourage its growth was through the internalization of his beliefs. As a follower of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X was "a strong advocate of the internalization of the Nation of Islam."[74] By using this Realist method of playing in politics, Malcolm X traveled widely to and from the Middle East and Africa to gain support and legitimacy for the Nation of Islam. Malcolm X understood that his national movement would only grow and become fruitful with African, Arab, and Muslim support, both financial and political. His ultimate aim, according to Fatiha Rosa Belkadi, was the creation of "a separate nation for African Americans and (the) encouragement of Blacks to educate themselves to build their own lives in order to receive respect."[75] By preaching these words, Malcolm X was taking action. He used speech, along with the internalization of his movement through foreign visits, to use power politics to bring his movement into the spotlight of American society.

Malcolm X, as a follower of the Nation of Islam, also sought to increase its effectiveness, both politically and economically. He, unlike the movement's spiritual father, Elijah Muhammad, understood that the Nation of Islam needed proper guidance to transform American society and the plight of Blacks in the society. By 1963, it became clear that "while Elijah (Muhammad) had a purely religious message to preach to Black Muslims, Malcolm gave social and political dimensions to the movement."[76] Furthermore, Malcolm X "also promoted Black Nationalism."[77] It becomes clear that although a fervent religious man himself, Malcolm X also had the necessary skills to use coercive power courageously. Although the Nation of Islam was still in its infancy, Malcolm X dreamed of higher goals for a cause to which he felt bonded. Much like Giuseppe Mazzini's speech and power politics to fuel the idea of an Italian *Risorgimento*, or nationalist movement for a unified Italy, Malcolm X began his dreams and aspirations humbly, only seeking victory down the road. Blinded by no other motive than his own movement, which had engulfed his soul, Malcolm X used force when necessary to escalate the Nation of Islam's presence in America.

Malcolm X, a fierce follower of Realpolitik, countered American racism and violence with the same weapon. He opposed "the non-violent and integrationist civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King and argued that self-defense and action were vital for achieving freedom, justice, and equality for African Americans."[78] In a time when civil rights had to be protected through force, such as with the presence of National Guards in Little Rock, Arkansas, to end school segregation, Malcolm preached violence to counterattack violence. Infuriated by the atrocities of Jim Crow laws and Ku Klux Klan violence in the Southern states, Malcolm X saw an increase of resistance violence as the only answer to an augmentation of rights.

Malcolm X preached for Black unity in fighting for freedom and against all types of segregation in America. In his famous 'The Ballot or The Bullet' speech, Malcolm X only encouraged "violence in the context of self-defense, which is a fundamental principle of Islam."[79] Using more violence, justified in the eyes of the movement, to cure "the African American's mental, spiritual, economic, and political malaise,"[80] Malcolm X simply used Realpolitik to defend his cause against a perceived enemy. Using force against force is perhaps the oldest power politics method of bringing about change and termination to a bitterly feuded cause.

Following his pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca, Malcolm X was to reverse his beliefs from those espousing active resistance and violence to more humane and tamed ways of achieving change. The mix of races in Mecca led him to believe that through Islam, all races intermingle freely without the issues of racism. By preaching love and peace under Islam, and by emphasizing a focus of "the Negro struggle from the level of civil rights to the level of human rights,"[81] Malcolm X's days as a preacher of violence and separation of the races were well behind him. Yet it is important to stress that the Malcolm X celebrated around the world as an Islamic source of peace and tolerance was once a very different man. Furthermore, his past fervor in bringing the Nation of Islam to the forefront of American society aided his future movement in gaining popular support. Malcolm X had developed the necessary skills to seek both political and economic support, from both in and out of the United States, to allow his 'true' movement to flourish. By visiting African and Middle Eastern nations, as well as dignitaries and heads of states, Malcolm X espoused the correct Realist and Realpolitik tactics that make him loved around the world today. Malcolm X had the correct vision and courage to meet violent force and vicious resistance with an equal dose of bloodless affection and loving un-resistance to embrace national unity. Perhaps more courageous is Malcolm's public *mea culpa*, recognizing that change and reform are often the only possible solution to a problematic and violent struggle.

Conclusion

Several factors acted as constraints on the organized African American effort to influence United States policies in Africa. The first major constraint involved the means of articulating and aggregating policy priorities in a manner comprehensible to decision makers. African Americans were not apathetic, but were traumatized by the failure of the American political process to respond fully to their interests. As a result, some African Americans resorted to confrontation politics; others chose not to participate.

The second major constraint is that African American leadership styles and cleavages militated against a coordinated program to strongly influence United States foreign policies towards Africa. In addition to the persistent ideological struggle between the liberal and radical African Americans, there was disagreement over tactics.

Finally, United States government officials found ways to discourage efforts by African American leaders and groups to identify with the struggles of the African continent. Malcolm X's burgeoning ties with African states and the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union) were feared. And the persistence of racism in the United States prevented the majority society from according the same tolerance to African Americans who sought to influence United States policies in Africa that had been accorded to other hyphenate groups (e.g., Jewish Americans, Irish Americans, Italian Americans, etc.) engaged in such activities.

Indeed, as Sales points out, through anti-Apartheid activism and grassroots mobilization, veteran African American activists were able to introduce Malcolm X to a new generation of youth. Organizations like Peoples College in Chicago, the Patrice Lumumba Coalition in Harlem, and the New Afrikan Peoples Organization (NAPO) nationally kept Malcolm X's image and message in the forefront of a resurgent youth generation. This approach stood in stark contrast to the bourgeoisie-led anti-Apartheid movement of organizations like TransAfrica, which too often conflated the South African liberation struggle with a struggle for civil rights. These groups raised the philosophy of nonviolence and the image of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the face of a South African freedom struggle which had affirmed the inherent right to pursue liberation "by any means necessary." Thus, for Sales, of all the recent African American leadership figures African American youth felt Malcolm X could best fulfill the inspirational role they first saw in Nelson Mandela.[80]

Today, tens of millions around the world are attracted to Malcolm X, the outstanding working-class revolutionary leader whose words speak the unvarnished truth about their lived, history, common struggle, and aspirations. In essence, Malcolm X was right all along. The answer for Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora to triumph over their challenges is still Black Nationalism and peace through power and coercion. The major question that remains now is the following: What took many of us such a long time to realize this, and why do many of us still fail to realize this truism?

Endnotes

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