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PREFACE

The present issue of the African Studies in Russia, 2002 proceeds with the publication of anthologies in the series of yearbooks published by the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Like previous publications, the 2002 miscellany contains articles, reviews, annotations, and other publications of Russian scholars on problems of Africa, which have appeared in print in the year of 2002.

The key goal of Russian publications on African Studies is to introduce the findings of Russian researchers to their foreign colleagues in the field. The matter is that the vast majority of the Russian scholars' studies are being published in Russian only. On considering the difficulties the language barrier can pose for foreign scholars, the present issue intends to outline just the general directions of the Russian students of Africa and certain of their findings. To be sure, it is impossible to review all the works and all the findings even for one year. So, the editors decided to include only some samples of such works and only some conclusions made by Russian scholars.

The book is opened by a part under the title 'Articles, Papers Presented to Conferences'. The first article by Prof. Alexei Vassiliev deals with the problems of African development versus challenges of the XXI century. Prof. Igor Sledzevsky discusses the problem of drawing cognition closer to the object of study within the framework of African studies as an independent field of scholarly research. In this part the reader will find also an article of Dr. Anatoly Savateev who attracts attention to the Russian Studies on Islam in sub-Saharan Africa. The views of Dr. Vyacheslav Usov on the formation of the African Union – AU concludes this part of the miscellany.

The next part – 'Essays' contains extracts from books and some articles published and prepared for publication in 2002. Prof. Vasili Solodovnikov shares his experience in the attempt to adjust the policy in South Africa pursued by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze to the national interests of the USSR. Prof. Vladimir Shubin and Dr. Lyubov Prokopenko in co-authorship tackle the conception of 'African renaissance', whose main advocate is Thabo Mbeki, the South African president and leader of the African National Congress. Another duet of scholars, Dr. Vladimir Vigand and Dr. Tatyana Deich

investigate the preliminary results of African economic growth in 2001–2002. Dr. Alexander Tkachenko discusses the economic relations between Russia and the countries of North Africa. Dr. Natalia Ksenofontova provides the reader with the picturesque sketch on a figure of blacksmith in Africa. Prof. Natalia Krylova addresses the problems ofmetis children’s adventures in the in the sphere of civil law.

Among a number of conferences, symposiums, round table discussions on Africa held in Russia in the year of 2002 the main event was the 9th Conference of Africanists under the topic ‘Africa in the Context of North-South relations’. The article by Dr. Lyubov Prokopenko describes the proceedings of the above Conference. Prof. Alexander Balezin also outlines the International Academic Conference on African Studies of the 20th Century: Epoch, Persons, Views held in Moscow at the Institute of World History of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Asian and African Studies of the Moscow State University.

The last part of the book contains book review and a list of books and pamphlets published in Russia in 2002. The titles of the listed literature are translated into English to enable the foreign scholars to choose the books and pamphlets in Russian according to their interests and choice.

All the readers of the book are welcome to share their opinions with the authors and editors of the publication. Our address is:

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ARTICLES, PAPERS PRESENTED TO CONFERENCES

AFRICA AND CHALLENGES OF THE XXI CENTURY

*Alexei Vassiliev**

Africa, like a beautiful but unendowed bride, seems to increasingly attract her rich uncles’ attention. They bustle up, pretending to be concerned with her destiny, and club together to purchase dowry, continuously reproaching the girl for squandering, inability to keep house, laziness, improper acquaintances, and so on. True, they cannot allocate a sufficient amount for dowry, but just listen to them: they give so correct pieces of advice with so good intentions!

Other people chant like this: you, baby, don't make yourself out to be a touch-me-not, don't insist on retaining your independence but come to us (voluntarily, of course, in a friendly way) to become our slave for some years. We are honest people, we'll teach you civilized life, and you will eat your cake without losing it.

To speak seriously, hardly any other region in the world receives so much attention at international forums, meetings, symposia, conferences and even summits. If all declarations and statements were to accelerate economic development pace, Africa would, probably become the region with the most dynamic economic growth*. Alas...

* **Vassiliev, Alexei**, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS), Director of the Institute for African Studies, RAS.

The article ‘Africa and challenges of the XXI century’ has been published in ‘Countries of Africa, 2002’ («Страны Африки 2002») Reference Book published by the Institute for African Studies in 2002.

* Let me add the usual reservation: Africa does not exist as an integer; its individual countries sharply differ in civilizational characteristics and economic development level and pace, so that they seem to lie in different continents. We are speaking about the region where most of the poorest countries of the world with degrading economies are located; they are called developing countries for the sake of international politeness or because of coquetry. Vagueness of this formulation is strengthened by the fact that some people use to denote as “Africa” the whole continent and some others for sub-Saharan Africa less the RSA.

At the Genoa summit, held in July 2001, the Genoa Plan for Africa was adopted at the initiative and with participation of a group of African leaders (president of the RSA Thabo Mbeki, president of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo and president of Algeria Abdelaziz Bouteflika). The Eight proclaimed its intention to create relations of a “new partnership to solve the problems of crucial importance for the development of Africa”. At the next Eight summit in Canada, scheduled to the summer of 2002, the African problems will be discussed again.

The Genoa statement created a new stimulus for drafting the “African Renaissance” conception. An important step in this direction was the Millennium Programme of Partnership for Rehabilitation of Africa, proposed by the presidents of the RSA, Nigeria and Algeria. However, soon thereafter the president of Senegal Abdoulaye Wade came with his own version of the programme, the Omega Plan for Africa. As a result of negotiations between Senegal and the RSA, held in early July 2001, both programmes were united. The new document was titled the New African Initiative and approved by the OAU summit in Lusaka (July 2001). After Genoa, this version was modified. On October 23, 2001, a conference convened in Abuja (Nigeria) approved the final version of The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

It is specially emphasized in the NEPAD that it is a development programme “elaborated and implemented by the Africans themselves”. Their role in drafting the NEPAD is beyond any doubts. At the same time, it is clear to an unbiased observer that conceptually, methodologically and sometimes practically it is based on the “Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?”, a World Bank report, published in April 2000. It unites studies, conclusions and proposals of several international organizations and forums that deal with the development problems, such as African Development Bank, African Consortium for Study of Economic Development, Global Coalition for Africa, ECA of the UN and the World Bank. Those who authored the programme are both renowned Western scholars and researchers from developing countries. This report is of rare quality, honesty and objectiveness though not free of a great deal of declarative ness and even romantic attitudes. It was not a disgrace to use some of its provisions and conclusions in the African document.

At the same time, the NEPAD programme continues traditions of the declarations, plans and programmes approved by international and African forums dealing with the task of overcoming Africa’s backwardness. Unfortunately, they remained dusty files in the archives of history.

Among them, I’d like to mention three documents drafted by UN agencies: the Programme of Actions for Economic Growth and Development of Africa for 1986–1990, New Agenda for Development of Africa in the ’90s and UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. One can add to this list the Agenda for Action, stated in the report Accelerated Development in sub-Saharan Africa (Berg’s Report), prepared by the WB in 1981.

Politically, special importance must be attached to the Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000 and supported by all 191 UN members. It defines the concrete tasks in the field of development and poverty eradication, which directly apply to Africa. In particular, it is planned to achieve the following objectives by 2015:

- * to halve the number of people who get less than \$1 daily;
- * to halve the number of the people affected by starvation;
- * to halve the number of the people who have no access to safe drinking water;
- * to introduce universal primary education;
- * to achieve gender equality in the access to education;
- * to reduce maternal mortality by three quarters;
- * to reduce mortality of children below five years by two thirds;
- * to reduce and reverse spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other particularly dangerous diseases.

The investments needed to achieve these objectives are sizeable but not expressed in astronomic figures. A top level expert group, headed by former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo and appointed by the UN Secretary-General, calculated in June 2001 that in addition to the current development aid, which is ca \$50 bn and amounts to the lowest share of the total world income within the recent 30 years, this programme will cost another \$50 bn yearly. More detailed studies of the WB, published in January 2002, lead to similar conclusions: additional aid of \$40-60 bn would enable the world to achieve the millennium targets in development.

The African documents on these topics include the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa (1979), the Lagos Plan of Action (1980), the Priority Programme for Economic Recovery of Africa for 1986-1990 (1985) and the African Alternative to Structural Readjustment Programmes (1989). Some developed countries and their associations also come with initiatives concerning Africa, such as the Africa–Europe Summit’s Cairo Plan of Action, Japan led Tokyo Agenda for Action, the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act of the USA and the Eight’s Okinawa declaration about Africa, continued and expanded in the Genoa plan. I would not

describe these documents as mere verbiage, but a sceptical attitude to them is a legitimate approach of any researcher.

The NEPAD also deals with fresh issues, mainly related to the development of new politico-economic trends, including expansion of democratization in Africa. Its authors put to the forefront combating poverty and social inequality, strengthening democracy and good governance, combating corruption, involvement of the continent in the informational revolution and spread of modern technologies.

My attention was attracted by the fourth part of the programme, Appeal to the Peoples of Africa, as an attempt to mobilize the masses for achieving the objectives of “new partnership” and make it a kind of the new ideological doctrine.

On the whole, the NEPAD is based both on liberal ideas, related to globalization in its Western interpretation with private enterprise in the leading role, and on the principles of mixed economy with the state playing the crucial role in creating preconditions for economic growth.

Fifteen African countries that are members of the NEPAD's Implementation Committee decided to recommend the constituent conference of the African Union, which would be held in Durban (RSA) in July 2002, to define the commitments, measures and actions as components of the notion of “good governance”. This document was titled Initiatives Concerning Democracy and Political Governance. It states which countries will be eligible for NEPAD membership and what will be the basis of their membership. It deals with such fundamental questions as necessity of new standards of governance, more efficient regional and international institutions, more resolute application of political will in order to prevent abuse of power within a state without undermining its sovereign rights, and responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

The NEPAD authors admit that Africa's greatest difficulty is weakness of many states, which lack opportunities, resources and/or will to become efficient regional partners and react to new challenges of globalization. According to Nelson Mandela, democratic development means establishing good governance and making governments more accountable for their conduct in domestic policy. An important element of the new document is the proposal related to joint actions of the African community against the regimes that violate democracy, constitution and human rights, but the mechanisms of such joint actions have not yet been elaborated.

An important feature of the NEPAD is an attempt to draft a complex of financial, economic and organizational measures, relying on the real social forces, which can ensure achievement of the development objectives.

In this context, it is important to:

- * unite efforts on the basis of regional co-operation and economic integration (as a rule, the African countries are too small to solve their economic problems individually);

- * use all available forms and organizations of international co-operation, including the principle of mutual interest in defining its purposes and standards for both donors and recipients, with regard for the new global scope of co-operation (it is implied that both parties discuss common purposes and methods of achieving them on the partnership basis);

- * create guarantee mechanisms and financial methods in order to reduce risks of private capital in Africa (the NEPAD authors are well aware that it is tempted only by highly profitable mining enterprises in a handful of African countries, virtually ignoring all others);

- * adjust the reforms drafted by multilateral institutions (including financial ones) to the requirements of the African countries;

- * create efficient mechanisms for combating corruption, including guarantees of repaying the money spent for bribing officials (African corruption will be dealt with later).

Notably, the most important conditions of implementing the NEPAD are considered peace and security in the continent and cessation and prevention of armed conflicts of whatever origin.

The programme sets the concrete tasks mentioned, at international forums more than once. The main of them is to reach the GDP growth rate of 7% within 15 years as the basis of achieving the objectives of the Millennium Declaration and many other international documents.

The “new partnership” programme may evoke theoretical and practical objections; some its provisions resemble pieces of propaganda. Some its passages resemble a list of purposes, tasks and good intentions, which do not ensue from sober economic analysis or rely on efficient realization mechanisms.

At the same time, the NEPAD, this expression of African leaders' collective will, widely supported by developed states, may become a kind of a basis for real development programmes and a sufficiently effective political, diplomatic and legal instrument of revising the international aid conception that formed in the bipolar world, optimizing it to a degree with regard for the real interests and requirements of the development of the African continent and world economy on the whole.

In spite of ambitious purposes and excessive optimism of the NEPAD authors, their programme has won a quite wide international recognition. In

fact, it was approved by the Eight, European Union and main international financial and credit institutions and economic organizations. They are attracted by the fact that the NEPAD mostly follows the strategical lines of globalization and liberalization of world economy. They welcome the African leaders' declaration about their resolution to bear responsibility for the future of the continent and expand domestic development sources. Apart from it, it is clear to the leaders of the developed countries, the UN and Bretton-Woods institutions that, firstly, Africa must be helped in any way and, secondly, co-operation of authoritative African leaders is a must.

Realization of the dangers that emanate from Africa, makes the Western leaders strengthen their efforts to prevent further degradation of the socio-economic situation in the continent and create a world "coalition to combat poverty". More organic involvement of the African potential in world economy would amount to some improvement of the conditions for corporations' global activity. Today, the greater part of Africa is closed to modern capital because of lack of infrastructural, market and other facilities it needs.

At the same time, degradation of living conditions, progress (though slow) of democratization, advent of a new generation of political leaders with their better awareness of the modern requirements, weaker adherence to ideologies and higher readiness to be guided by the national and state interests, stimulate the top echelons of African authorities to deal with the problems of socioeconomic development of their countries more actively and concentrate on their essence.

Thus, the NEPAD was a result of wide coincidence of the real interests and political declarations of developed countries and Africa concerning strategical issues of its further development.

This may be the main feature and the strongest aspect of "new partnership".

It is proper to note here that the leaders of the Eight, UN and Bretton Woods institutions rejected the very idea of legalizing the neo-colonialist plans and depriving many African countries of political independence. These plans are spread so widely that they are supported even in Russia by such a renowned scholar as V. Inozemtsev. The arguments in favour of returning to colonial dependence "voluntarily" are purely technocratic. Staying in New York, Paris or Moscow, the authors of the "voluntary colonialism" doctrine do not even guess that, adopting it, the African elites would be swept away from the political scene. Therefore, partnership is the only real and acceptable way towards stopping degradation of Africa in any manner.

Speaking generally, Russia's attitude to the NEPAD seems favourable and positive.

It is for the first time that Russia agrees with the West concerning the cardinal questions of international co-operation with Africa. The NEPAD creates additional opportunities for Russian interaction with her partners within the Eight. It is an instrument of certain improvement of Russia's rating in Africa and expands the framework of dialogue and co-operation with the African countries. The "new partnership" conception agrees with the Russian strategy of facing the challenges of the 21st century and building a multipolar model of international relations. This strategy has not yet taken its final shape, but it is under consideration.

At the same time, the Russian leaders strive to serve the country's own interests and achieve the objectives that ensue from the national priorities in foreign policy and foreign trade and material and financial resources of the state and private capital in order to, on the one hand, expand co-operation with Africa and, on the other, prevent involvement of Russia in the programmes and project it cannot afford or implement.

At this point, it may be stated that the Russian-African relations are not very dynamic and their level lags behind Russia's global interests and the available opportunities for co-operation. The trade turnover, after falling to \$1 bn by the mid-90s, has reached \$1.5 bn, which is 1.2% of Russia's total foreign trade turnover.

The NEPAD provides for concrete action programmes in various fields and branches of economy.

Yet even a preliminary analysis and the available calculations cannot but cause scepticism.

The task of enhancing the annual increase in the African GDP to 7% within 15 years is hardly practicable. To achieve this target, the African countries have to raise (mainly from the outside) \$64 bn yearly, i.e., 12% of their total GDP, in addition to the current aid.

In 1999 (the WB World Development Report, 2000/2001) the capital inflow that covered the investment deficit was just \$14.3 bn or 2.7% of the African GDP, and the domestic savings covered 16% of the investments, being even less than in 1990. In addition, investment efficiency continued reducing. Whereas economic growth reached 5% in a handful of African countries in the mid-90s, it has decreased in the last two years in the continent on the whole. Social inequality and foreign indebtedness increased even in the countries with fair economic growth indices (Uganda and Ghana).

To consider dynamics of direct foreign investments in individual regions, in the last three decades of the 20th century investments increased

150 times in East Asia, 34 times in South Asia and just 1.5 times in Africa. With the exception of the RSA and (partly) Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, almost all investments were made in mining and oil industry as it was in the colonial period.

The proposals about expansion of financing sources formulated in NEPAD also evoke some doubts.

The weakest component of the NEPAD is the hope for a sharp increase in foreign investments to Africa, based on the expectation of official development aid (ODA) of 0.7% of the GDP of the developed countries. The conception and practice of international aid are undergoing a crisis. Its mechanism, formulated in the years of the Cold War, was, first of all, an instrument of the donor countries' foreign policy, a method of achieving their geostrategic objectives and protection of their economic, political, diplomatic and ideological interests. It was seldom aimed at concrete socio-economic results.

On average, ODA as a percentage of the GDP of the donor countries was already decreasing when the international community established the lower contribution threshold of 0.7% of the GDP in 1970. Up to the early '90s, this ratio was 0.3-0.35% and then began to go down. In 2000, the average ODA of 22 OECD members was 0.22% of their GDP. Even if one eliminates the USA, which never tried to reach 0.7%, from this list, the average ratio is only 0.33%.

After the end of the Cold War, the Western aid substantially diminished. The per capita ODA reduced from \$32 in 1990 to \$19 in 1998. In this period, the USA curtailed the funds allocated for this purpose by 20%. In absolute terms, without allowing for inflation, aid increased up to 1992. However, the peak reached then was \$60 bn, falling to \$53.1 bn in 2000. The reasons were loss of motivation after the Cold War ended, the donors' "fatigue", i.e., doubts concerning efficiency of the programmes and projects funded from ODA.

Nonetheless, Africa remained a major aid recipient. The actual ODA inflow was \$300 bn in the 30 recent years (in current prices), which is many times more than the financial component of the Marshall plan (even with regard for dollar depreciation). The aid inflow was 10% of the GDP in most of the African countries. However, this did not lead to material shifts in their economic development or diminishing of poverty. As early as the 1980s, the question of efficiency of the foreign financial contribution to their development became very acute.

A significant or even the most part of the aid returned to donors in whatever form or was spent to support the "obedient" regimes, governments

and presidents (e.g., Mobutu). The funds distribution system also was and remains inefficient. In 1997, \$4 bn or 25% of the total aid to the countries of Tropical Africa were used to pay Western experts. Today they number ca 100.000 in the continent, working in parallel with local ministries in many countries. The actual expense for this item seems to be much higher, if one allows for their offices, cars, apartments, leaves, travels, insurance and medical services. \$3.1 bn were spent to political and economic reforms, with the exception of writing off debts. The rest was used to implement investment projects and cover the budget deficit.

Aid was distributed among the regions very unevenly. In the 1980s, most of it (with the exception of North Africa) was directed to five countries, namely, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Zaire; in the 1990s, the major recipients were Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda.

The NEPAD authors insist on linking the aid volume to solving the indebtedness problem. They declare that unless indebtedness is reduced to the level corresponding to the African countries' capacities, international aid will not yield the expected result. The indebtedness of the sub-Saharan countries amounts to \$228 bn; they spend \$13.4 bn yearly to repay all kinds of debts (in 1998 the ODA inflow was \$13.1 bn). Nevertheless, it is unrealistic to suggest rigid interconnection of these problems. The donor countries would never agree to this. It is no less unrealistic to urge a privileged procedure of writing off debts of the countries with average incomes, i.e., almost all countries of the continent.

"In the '80s and '90s, the developing countries proved actually unable to service their liabilities", wrote V. Inozemtsev. "At the beginning of this period, as a result of the Reagan administration's new policy of limiting monetary supply and raising the interest rate, the value of new borrowings sharply increased. In 1982, in all developing countries, except OPEC members, the share of funds used to serve foreign liabilities was 23.9% of the export proceeds, reaching 50% in the most indebted countries. To compare, in 1932, with this level below 13%, Germany imposed moratorium on servicing its foreign debts".

The Eight might appeal the world community to accelerate the realization of understandings aimed at diminishing the debt burden of the poorest countries, reached under auspices of the Paris Club, IMF and WB. In particular, the WB initiative related to expanding the circle of the countries whose debts may be written off got widespread approval. This circle includes the countries with the highest indebtedness and the lowest income. If

this initiative is realized, the number of such countries will double, and the written off amount will reach \$20 bn.

However, let us return to \$300 bn received by sub-Saharan Africa. It is rational to ask: how much money fled Africa through the channels of “black” economy, apart from debt servicing? Mobutu alone misappropriated \$7-9 bn; Abacha seized ca \$5 bn within a short period. How much have other major and minor dictators stolen? It is considered that well-off Africans invest about 40% of their savings abroad. And what about smugglers of diamonds, rare-earth metals, precious plants, animals, skins, ivory, timber of valuable species?

It may be supposed with full conviction that legal debt servicing, illegal export of capitals, savings flight (a sizeable part of them was “earned” by corruption) and direct smuggling, taken together, are much more than the capital inflow to Africa. This means that the poorest continent of the planet is merely haemorrhaged financially, being a donor of the developed countries.

After all declarations and rejoices concerning the NEPAD, what has the West put into the “new partners” hand? No, not a stone but...

The conference held in Monterrey (Mexico) in March 2002 was carefully prepared. It was attended by 50 heads of states and governments, representatives of the UN and Bretton Woods institutions, numerous NGOs and TNC leaders.

The Monterrey consensus repeated the whole set of beautiful, correct and necessary statements and reiterated the declarations and recommendations known to everybody. Yet it did not allocate sufficient means to realize them. The USA promised to increase its aid from \$10 bn to 15 bn within three years; the EU undertook to add \$21 bn to the present amount of 25 bn, also within three years. These amounts are meant not only for Africa but for all poor countries.

Let me reiterate: to halve the total volume of poverty in the world by 2015, it is necessary, according to the UN, to add \$50 bn annually; the African estimate is much higher.

The poorest countries, including Africa, have not got anything like this. Given the present state of affairs, the GDP growth of even 5%, which amounts to preserving the present poverty level, is doubtful.

Africa faces this bitter truth.

Its situation is tragic.

B. Runov, a researcher from the Institute for African Studies, wrote: “By the moment when the economic growth model changed radically in the

advanced countries and world economy began to move towards the globalized model of a new type, the sub-Saharan countries proved totally unprepared for changes; their resource potential lost its earlier importance and attractiveness at the market; the main parameters of their economic, social and political setup became incompatible with the requirements of the ‘new economy’. The state of transition from the preindustrial to the industrial stage was replaced by a kind of dual transition (from the preindustrial to the post-industrial economic system); respectively, the scope of the problems Africa is facing considerably increased”.

Today, Africa is the largest poverty zone. Of 800 mn Africans, 300 mn have a daily income of \$0.65. Of the most underdeveloped countries of the planet, 34 are in the African continent. The per capita GDP in sub-Saharan Africa (less the RSA), according to purchasing power parity in constant prices, was less, often 50% less in the '90s than in the '60s. Deepening pauperisation of the African population and further marginalization of the continent are fraught with real menaces to global stability. Combating poverty is the cornerstone of all UN programmes. The gap between the upper and lower crusts is as wide in Africa as in Latin America, but the African poor are the poorest in the world.

Africa is seized by armed conflicts and wars. 20% of the sub-Saharan population live in the conflict zones. Although armed clashes have ended in Sierra Leone and Angola, the hostility zone remains as large as Western Europe. Hundreds of thousands of combatants and millions of civilians have perished. Sometimes, massacres are based on ethnicity and acquire the form of genocide. Millions of Africans have become refugees. Conflicts are accompanied by starvation, epidemics, economic decay and destruction of the whole infrastructure. Wars take the shape of ethnic and religious conflicts, but their real reasons are struggle for resources and territories, unemployment, poverty, ignorance, males' inability to find a social niche, social exclusion of large groups of population and egoism of the ruling ethnic or religious elites. It is difficult to prevent such conflicts and much more difficult to stop them. In North Africa, a creeping civil war is waged in Algeria; the conflict in the Sudan continues for decades.

African agriculture, which employs the most part of the population, is backward in comparison with other developing regions. The main problems are catastrophic shortage of capital, poor and expensive transport network and noncompetitiveness at world markets. The “green revolution” remains just a dream. In the recent 30 years, the share of Africa in world export of even its traditional items, such as cocoa, peanuts, rubber and bananas, has

decreased; it has been almost halved in coffee and slightly risen in tea and tobacco. Again, it is difficult to apply this to Africa as a whole. In Egypt, agricultural production has taken a surprising leap in the recent 25-30 years. However, a half of Africans is undernourished, and many people are just starving.

In this context, it is topical to ask: is it always advantageous to the Africans to curtail unprofitable production? If rice production, subsidized by, say, 20%, is ceased in a country, it has to find currency amounting to 80% of the previous production to import the same amount of rice. Otherwise, it has to count for loans, donations and aid of the developed countries, where storage of surplus cereals is often more expensive than their transportation to Africa and distribution as "aid". Then, how to feed the peasants who cultivated rice earlier?

A conclusion suggests itself: it is irrational to cease unprofitable production until a new one is created. It makes no sense to stop subsidizing some productions. Skilled and incorrupt hands may make subsidies an efficient tool of economic development or, at least, of delaying a catastrophe, the acme of the crisis. However, unlike developed countries, Africa is deprived of domestic conditions for expanded reproduction, for self-generation of new enterprises and new forms of activity. Expelled from the world production sphere, the African countries become chronic dependants, forming a "marginal" stratum of the international community. The result is the growth of the informal shadow sector in all African countries, criminalization of life and businesses, and armed conflicts, fraught with dangers for the whole world community.

As for agricultural export, it is hampered by the conscious policy of double standards pursued by the West. Swearing allegiance to liberalization, free trade and the state's non-interference with economy, the Western countries subsidize their agriculture, creating obstacles to import from African and other developing countries. Subsidies allocated to agriculture in the OECD countries reached \$361 bn in 1999, which is more than the whole GDP of the sub-Saharan countries less the RSA.

Surely, cessation of agricultural subsidies in the OECD is a double-edged weapon to Africa, because it will cause price rise. Some its countries may increase their export; others, depend on food import, will find themselves on the verge of starvation.

It would be much more important for Africa to get elimination of the custom barriers that hamper export of many their goods to Europe and the USA. Nowadays, the deeper is manufacturing degree of the goods exported from the developing countries, the higher tariffs are imposed on them by the

developed countries. Elimination of the trade barriers would enable the developing countries to increase their export proceeds by \$130 bn annually, thus decreasing the importance of additional \$50 bn of development aid, needed to achieve the targets provided for by the UN's Millennium Declaration for 2015. Some measures are taken by the West in this field, but they are obviously insufficient.

If Africa were to retain at least its share in world trade at the level of the '60s, it would earn \$70 bn more than it does really. The aid problem would have a totally different shape. Yet their main export items are raw materials, which are getting cheaper and cheaper. Export diversification remains a desired objective, but there is no hope to achieve it in the foreseeable future.

The present total shift in world economy towards high-tech products has not facilitated but aggravated the situation in Africa. Information-based economy, development of resource-saving technologies, higher intellectualization of labour, transformation of science into the main factor of increasing productivity of labour and creation of new materials have depreciated such comparative advantages of Africa as cheap labour and rich natural resources. Some researchers forecast a forward leap of the African countries provided they master Internet and learn to use the fruits of the revolution in information. However, it is merely impossible without additional investments, amounting to dozens of billions of dollars, which the continent lacks. According to the former Oumar Konare, the former president of Mali, the Africans "must keep cool heads", remembering that an expensive computer may cost as much as an employee's salary for eight years or school education of 20 children.

Enumerating the African woes, one cannot but mention the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is a global catastrophe. It destroys the social fabric of the most affected socii, reduces the average life span and considerably increases mortality among the people of productive age. By late 2000, there were 36 mn adults and children with HIV/AIDS in the world, and almost 22 mn people died of it. 5.3 mn people more are infected every year.

Africa is the continent most affected by the pandemic. There are 25.3 mn patients with HIV/AIDS in the sub-Saharan countries. In 16 countries, the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS among the people at age of 15 to 49 years has reached or exceeded 10%. Enterprises, farms and households already face recession of production and huge expenses for treatment and funerals. Families lose their breadwinners; many professionals die, and there is nobody to replace them. In addition, HIV/AIDS weakens the stimuli for saving because of the enhanced fatal risk. Lastly, the expenses for one patient with HIV/AIDS are equal to those for ten pupils of a primary school.

Unless the pandemic is stopped and reversed, many African countries are doomed disintegrate.

The African curses may be enumerated in any order and any combinations. Their total scope is dreadful anyway.

Yet I would like to mention another terrible social disease, which is familiar, unfortunately, not only in Africa but in Russia and dozens of countries in other continents. I mean corruption.

Corruption is the malignant tumour of Africa. "Corruption often flourishes where state institutions are weak, where laws and formal rules are not observed, where political patronage is a rule, where independence and professionalism of the public sector are subject to decay, where the civil society has no opportunity to put pressure of the authorities", read the aforesaid WB report. All this is correct. Yet, how can one evaluate this terrible phenomenon when the state institutions are alien to the society, the salary paid in the public sector is below the subsistence level, laws and formal rules are created not in the citizens' interests, the patronage-clientele relations are a component of the traditional social relations and psychology and there is no civil society in fact?

The major agents of corruption are the topmost state officials who take bribes from TNC representatives and invest their capital in foreign banks. Private business has been inseparably intertwined in Africa with the state machinery and is often of a criminal character.

At worst, the corrupt topmost officials treat their country like a conquered territory, consider its economy their booty and spend the civilizational and economic resources of the socius they allegedly serve in their egoistic interests. In this situation, such states may be really considered as "failed states".

"Screwing" corruption (this term from the criminal slang is common in Russia) undermines legitimacy of the state, destroys the fabric of the society and makes economic and social development impossible.

In Africa, whose countries share championship in corruption with Pakistan, this social disease nowadays is at least mentioned; attempts are made to combat it by improving legislation or by muscular methods. This is a reassuring symptom, although it is too early to be an optimist in this respect.

However, efforts of the Africans alone are insufficient. Africa needs international co-operation, and some its elements are already visible.

In the light of the events of September 11, the concern with the closely interrelated problems of terrorism, money "laundering", uncontrolled international money transfers and "black" or "grey" money have become especially topical.

As early as 1996, the president of the WB J. Wolfensohn described combating the "malignant tumour of corruption" as one of the Bank's priorities. In the same year, international support of the anticorruption struggle was expressed in a resolution of the UN General Assembly, which appealed all states to outlaw bribes given to officials while doing international financial deals and prohibit taxation of such payments. The Assembly also supported the framework Code of Officials' Conduct.

In 1997, the OECD approved the Convention on Combating Foreign Officials' Bribery in International Deals.

A provision aimed at preventing money "laundering" also may be found in the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (the Vienna convention of 1988). Obstacles (with a low efficiency at present) have been created for diamond smuggling as a source of financing armed conflicts.

The parties to the Monterrey consensus stated: We undertake to agree upon and prepare the final version of the UN Convention on Combating Corruption in all its aspects as soon as possible, including return of misappropriated sums to the countries of origin, as well as to prompt the strengthening of the co-operation aimed at eradicating the money 'laundering' practice. We appeal the states that have not done so to consider ratifying the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Is the train on its track?

...Evaluating the African curses, one can easily fall into pessimism and resign oneself to an inevitable catastrophe. Yet, let us reconsider the arguments of the "catastrophists" and their opponents.

May we not be suppressed by the authority of summits and world leaders, may we not be deafened by kettledrums of solemn declarations. Let us try to avoid sinking in the ocean of major and minor facts, wise conclusions, proposals and reasoning of honest and skilled experts, ignoring all scoundrels who claim to be scholars from the very start.

Let us try to install the accumulated volume of the empirical knowledge in a system. I mean the present global economic system, nothing but this. I mean global economy, based on new technologies, scientific knowledge and R&D results as the source of enhancing labour productivity, i.e., economic growth. I'll try to avoid definitions of such notions as the "post-industrial society", "informational community", etc. To simplify the problem, let us define the present economic system as merely "new economy" without claiming that this definition is of a purely academic character, although it has already acquired the right to exist. Let me not repeat my description of

the features of globalization, referring the audience to my earlier report during the previous conference. We must merely bear in mind that the definitions of this system are unusually numerous and varied in the Russian and world academic literature and in the media slang.

To consider new economy at the present stage of globalization, a backward (in this case, let us do without the euphemistic term “developing”) country that wants to join the club of developed countries has to jump over a high bar, which no individual backward country can overcome without foreign aid. Maybe, the states with a relatively numerous population and developed scientific and productive potential, such as China, India, Russia, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico etc., can make this jump owing to a totality of circumstances, although investment attraction is a key question there also. Other countries cannot do so. Low labour productivity is punished at the global market by unprofitability and losses. If the production price is below the cost, the universal and inevitable result is decay and bankruptcy, the more so under conditions of the increasing trade liberalization and erosion of custom tariffs, increasing role of R&D in high-tech and increase in its share in the world GDP and trade. As for the developed countries, in particular their leader, the USA, this profitability bar favours them: eliminating all barriers, their higher labour productivity and lower costs per a unit of products create ideal conditions for their profitable and efficient operations throughout the world. On the whole, the developed countries are not afraid of closure of obsolete and unprofitable enterprises, replaced by new kinds of activity or more advanced enterprises. On some occasions, some productions, especially environmentally harmful ones, are shifted to developing countries, as it happened with steel industry, mainly shifted to the “new industrial countries”.

“Increasingly acquiring the role of the regulator of international proportions, strengthening the punishment for backward participants and encouraging the advanced ones more and more, the world market increasingly prevents the backward countries from developing and actively expels them from among producers”. This is a bitter but objective conclusion drawn by the late researcher M. Golansky. Most of the African countries merely cannot overcome backwardness at their own. Moreover, when we face the laws of the market competition and striving for the maximum economic efficiency and profitability, we find that many actions of concrete individuals or their communities, seeming immoral and egoistic; actually follow these objective but blind laws. Even African corruption, on the one hand, enhances competitiveness and profits of the TNCs and, on the other, helps the outflow

of capitals from Africa to developed countries with their stability, reliable deposits and profits. The agricultural subsidies in the developed countries and reduction in the GDP share directed to poor countries as aid objectively increases the capacities and incomes of the TNCs and the whole society of the developed countries (not to mention votes sought for by politicians). The attraction of the best brain, the best professionals from the developing countries (Africa loses several dozens of thousands of professionals annually!) bleeds white the continent intellectually and professionally and objectively helps the economic development and enhancement in competitiveness of the developed countries themselves. Wasteful exploitation of the richest mines, forests and fish resources and extermination of valuable animal species are too well-known phenomenon to speak again about them. The deindustrialization of Africa makes it an ideal market for any industrial goods, and the destruction of the African and Arab identity and the civilizational values of the African and Muslim society makes the continent inhabitants consumers of the Western mass culture in the worst versions, supplied by the media empires. The emergence of foci of the ultramodern production in Africa, such as gas liquefaction plant in the islands near Nigeria, does not change the general picture.

Full freedom of the market forces, urged once by the neoliberals (nowadays, it is rarely urged), may lead only to the disappearance of production in the backward countries, throwing them back to the preindustrial society.

However, a pivotal question arises: is the global system of new economy itself stable and vital in its present shape? Does not it carry elements of chaos and self-destruction? Were not even the terrorist acts of September 11 just symptoms of deeper and more dangerous diseases of the world system, which we are still unable to detect on the whole? How can one explain the more rapid growth of informal economy and even criminal paraeconomy in comparison with legal business under conditions when the formal rules of economic activity globalize?

The standards of international and national law are being eroded; new forms of criminal activity develop. They do not fall under the existing definitions. I mean financial speculations of a global scope, which could lead to regional financial crises, financial pyramids and crimes in the cyber space. Simultaneously, many poor countries and those with economy in transition conduct privatization; boundaries between state services and international criminal groups are becoming increasingly vague. These groups are illegitimate but insolent children of globalization. A parallel system of criminal

social organization is created in economy, commerce, financial world, law and the bodies that must enforce it. We see how Weber's monopoly of the state for violence is going to pieces, strengthening general chaos.

To take world economy on the whole, despite the fantastic development of information-based and all other high-techs in the last decades of the 20th century, we find recession of the world per capita production in some years, which naturally results in a decrease in the per capita income in dozens of African countries. The per capita cereal production goes down, raising the expenses for food and deteriorating its quantity and quality.

A decrease in social inequality was considered a sign of the health and stability of any society. What is the present situation? Finnish MP Kimmo Kiljunen exclaimed: "An economic system cannot be considered healthy when the total wealth of 225 richest men of the world exceeds \$1000 bn, which amounts to the annual income of 2.5 bn poor, who form 47% of the mankind. Is not it nonsense when the total wealth of three richest men of the world exceeds the total GDP of the 48 least developed countries?" Is not this fact an evidence of misbalance of the world system and absurdity of its components? Yet this misbalance strengthens even within the "golden billion". The disappearance of the USSR as at least a propagandistic counterbalance, a declarative symbol of the lower crusts' equality and opportunities enabled the developed countries to give up improving the standards of living of the poorest strata, and the gap between the incomes of the upper and lower 20% of the population began to grow rapidly, especially in the USA, although it is for sure that the developed countries are still far from the level of Latin America, Africa or Russia in this respect. Yet, who can predict when will this process cease?

The growing gap in the per capita production between the most developed and most backward countries already exceeds 300 : 1. Let us remember that G. Myrdal wrote as early as the '60s that under conditions of accelerating economic progress in the Western countries, increasingly disproportional exchange between the North and the South and lack of serious domestic sources of progress in the developing countries, the aggregate "market forces" would aggravate international inequality. However, the formal figures are not the point. The "human capital" becomes the main form of social wealth in new economy, and its importance often cannot be measured statistically.

Let us turn to another element of the misbalance of the system. In the developed countries, the growth of productivity of labour leaves behind that of real production on the whole, and investment efficiency goes down round

the world. As a self-reproducing system, new global economy, left on its own, may begin to shrink. Here, our calculations must allow for the most cardinal conditions of the mankind's survival.

To return to M. Golansky's position, he wrote: "Unlike other biological populations, the human does not resign himself to the capacity (maximum permissible population) of the natural environment allowed by the biosphere and creates a new artificial medium from the material of the same biosphere in the shape of producing the consumption fund. Up to the recent time, the artificial medium capacity was added to the natural capacity. The human took energy from the biosphere; the latter, being a self-reproducing and self-developing (SD) system, restored the borrowings. The biosphere resources seemed endless. However, now, when they are exhausted, the artificial medium capacity does not supplement but replaces that of the natural medium. The anthropogenous impact on the biosphere has become so great and has so much undermined it as a self-reproducing SD system by exhausting its energy reserves that it cannot compensate the further expansion of energy borrowings therefrom by the human and all related losses. The creation of an artificial capacity is connected now with the destruction of the natural one. In this case, one should deem it a blessing if the total capacity does not decrease. Now, the problem is not merely preserving the energetic resources of the biosphere but maintaining and saving it as such, as a self-reproducing SD system, as a cradle of life on the Earth".

Maybe, relative doubts about the author's conclusions will appear if the thermonuclear is put under control; thermonuclear power plants can supply absolutely cheap energy to the mankind. However, this is a problem of the future, and the gist of the matter is not only energy. Maybe, labour intellectualization and the increase in the role of the human capital can help enhancing the artificial human habitat medium without consuming additional biosphere resources. Yet, on the whole, the process whose importance M. Golansky accentuated continues within the framework of the globalized mankind.

Therefore, to proceed from the objective and blind forces of the globalization, the development of the advanced countries may take place at the expense of the developing countries of Africa and other continents, consuming the bio resources meant for the whole mankind. It is clear that even the present resources and economic opportunities can ensure the life standard achieved in the USA for maximum 18% of the world population, provided the rest gets nothing at all (V. Inozemtsev).

The pressure on the biosphere makes it incapable of self-regeneration and self-development; this entails a menace to the whole mankind, who have created the global economic system.

The question is if the *Homo sapiens* is able to curb the blind forces of the monster he has created. According to the rigid laws of new economy, domestic production is ceased in the backward countries, and environment is being rapidly destroyed there. Let us remember, at least, the lungs of the planet, i.e., the forests of Brazil, Africa and Russia. Another question is related to the destinies of concrete people in the poor backward countries, who seem to be unnecessary for new economy and globalized world production. The blind logic of world economy requires destruction of almost all kinds of industrial and agricultural activity in Africa for their incompetitiveness as waste of manpower and material resources. Yet, the main question remains unanswered: what will happen to the people secluded from productive labour?

To think in global terms, advanced countries cannot but help the backward ones. Otherwise, armed conflicts will seize not 20% of the population of the sub-Saharan Africa but the whole continent, with exceptionally grave consequences for the world. This could be not the only but the most blatant and visible result of ignoring the African problems by the "golden billion" countries.

The response of the world system and new economy again consists of the actions of the *Homo sapiens*, who tries to confront blind determinism. What will be the response to this challenge? Let me emphasize that all decisions of the recent international forums aimed at rendering aid to Africa and other poorest regions of the world, in spite of demonstrative bows to neoliberal ideas and values, are essentially of a "command-administrative" character. The actions of the African governments, aimed at saving their enterprises, plantations, schools, universities and hospitals, also are of same character; nevertheless, it is admitted that they meet the good governance standards. The financial aid (though still insufficient), allocated by distribution methods, easing of the debt burden (though very imperfect), partial opening of markets for African goods, police and fiscal methods against corruption and money laundering and more active participation in preventing and resolving armed conflicts hardly agree with the theory that claims that market can do everything and cope with everything. This is a really new phenomenon, which requires additional analysis.

"It would be proper to give up the hopes for a more or less tangible return of the earlier investments in and aid to the Fourth World countries and

turn to a more selective policy, based on understanding the danger posed to the post-industrial countries by the developments in this region", writes V. Inozemtsev. "It is important that the developed countries give up the idea of getting a unilateral advantage from these undertakings".

One cannot help remembering the statement by Vasili Leontiev, a renowned economist, who said something like this: "Market is a wind that blows the sails, but a ship cannot sail without a captain".

The same idea, expressed in other words, may be found in the E. Zedillo group report. In particular, it reads: Obviously, a system developed by and large for the world as it was 50 years ago cannot solve the present globalization problems adequately. The changes in the international economic management system lag behind the growth of international interdependence. The group supported the proposals of the Commission for Global Governance Questions on creating a global council at the highest political level to guide the solution of the global management questions. Its membership was supposed to be wider than the seven industrial countries or Bretton Woods institutions. Its decisions would not be binding legally, but, owing to its political leadership, they would determine the long-term strategic policy in order to encourage development, ensure consistence of the vital objectives of the main international organizations and help in reaching an intergovernmental consensus concerning the problems of global economic and social governance.

Antiglobalists' mass protests, terrorist acts, the blatant gap between superwealth and mass superpoverty and growth of the criminal component of new economy demonstrate instability of the system and prompt the world leaders to apply the administrative-command methods, whose (maybe, unconscious) purpose will be to alleviate the growing crisis of the global system until it assumes a threatening scope and form and, maybe, change the development paradigm itself.

Some researchers, including aforesaid M. Golansky, believe that the West is marching towards a new kind of totalitarianism. To save the system, leaders, organizations and authorities will have to apply not market but administrative or even coercive methods. This is an extreme viewpoint, but it should not be ignored.

One of the ways of stopping the crisis is to concentrate a sizeable part of the efforts of the developing (alias backward) countries, especially in Africa, on maintaining the biosphere or, in narrower terms, on environment protection and rehabilitation. The developed countries flourish just because four fifths of the mankind live in poverty on its verge. In the light of the

reasonable measures taken to prevent crisis of new economy and the whole mankind, the work aimed at protecting the biosphere, maintaining it in “good working order” and preserving its self-reproduction functions is no less useful than creation of an artificial biosphere. However, this activity of the Africans, which is in the interests of the whole mankind, which is aimed at restoring the systemic balance, must be funded by the developed countries. This is anything but charity. By definition, this activity cannot be profit-oriented (with some exceptions). By definition, it must be performed by command-administrative methods. If the developed countries continue destroying and polluting the atmosphere and the developing ones save and clean it, the latter are eligible for due remuneration without being considered dependants, justly or otherwise.

However, it would be a naive simplification to deem that only environmental activity, exempted from the free market competition rules and the laws of new economy, is destined exclusively to the African and other backward countries. This activity must become a component of the efforts of both developed and backward (developing) countries aimed at overcoming backwardness; undoubtedly, it will occupy an important place in their economy.

To conclude, let us admit that it is very difficult both objectively and subjectively to break the vicious circle of poverty and backwardness.

The outlined programmes will yield a result only if their participants obey numerous “ifs”:

- * if the amount of developed countries’ aid to Africa for concrete purposes, agreed upon on the partnership basis, sharply increases;
- * if the present armed conflicts are settled and the forthcoming ones are prevented;
- * if governance is improved and made more transparent, accountable and predictable, and corruption is limited;
- * if investments in humans, human capital, in particular, in education and health care, including, first of all, combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis are continued and increased;
- * if women are more actively involved in the economic and social life;
- * if drain of capitals and skilled experts from Africa is stopped;
- * if barriers are erected against laundering criminal African money in Western banks;
- * if Africa is involved in the information-related revolution.

Understandably, Africa is so diverse that there cannot be a universal

formula for all its countries. Understandably, the above, anything but full, list of the “ifs” is just a general outline of what should be done and what are the directions of the future activities.

Are there grounds for optimism in this respect?

To think not in the terms of a decade or the life span of a human but of centuries, one may say that the situation in Africa is at least better than in the early 20th century. Education has spread; native elites, who are more or less modern and capable of reacting in a way to the new realities have emerged; a stratum of professionals has appeared; the life span has increased; communications have been created. It is a different matter that the situation has sharply deteriorated relative to other parts of the world, but there is a HOPE. In the early '60s, one could not even imagine that South Korea would become an industrial power. Its per capita export was less than that of Ghana, but it has increased 400 times and that of Ghana only four times. In the '60s, G. Myrdal preferred the African development model, believing that South and East Asia had no chances to develop. The present situation is opposite. It may be assumed that Africa will start its renaissance, if... Let me not reiterate the above “ifs”.

There is a hope, and hope is known to spring eternal in the human breast.

AN ESCAPING STUDY OBJECT:
A COGNITIVE CRISIS IN AFRICAN STUDIES?

Igor Sledzevsky*

Since the very emergence as an independent field of scholarly researches, the African studies face the problem of drawing cognition closer to the object of study. This problem is present in many branches of African studies, but its perception and understanding depends on the experience of a researcher himself or, to be specific, on the 'matter' that is difficult to define and that may be described as the sense of Africa. The problem becomes obvious when he feels the presence of communicative, mental, ethical, political, sources-related, etc. barriers to the cognition of African realities. The gist of the problem is whether it is possible to reconstruct the African reality in the terms of the European culture and using the cognitive tools of modern science.

The problem of adequacy of academic description to the object of study is extremely acute in African studies carried out in Russia. To the overwhelming majority of my Russian colleagues, Africa is a speculative or theoretical concept rather than an empirical or vital reality. The source basis of studies related to African history, sociology, and political situation is extremely limited or secondary. Few people have a chance to carry out field researches, which are so essential to ethnologists and anthropologists, and there are no chances of their expansion in the foreseeable future. Whereas these difficulties were made up for earlier to an extent by the foreign literature about Africa received by the central academic libraries of Russia, this source of information was gradually lost in the subsequent period.

Surely, cognitive difficulties not only are present in African studies but also play the role of a powerful stimulus to their development. Africanists actively use various methods of penetrating African peoples' cultural and behavioural codes, history, and mentality. These methods ensure an ever

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**Igor Sledzevsky. An Escaping Study Object:
A Cognitive Crisis in African Studies?**

increasing adequacy and comparability between the subject and object of study and, therefore, understanding of the African reality.

These methods include the quite advanced reconstruction of the ancient cultures, which had no written languages, on the basis of the oral tradition, study of the lexicon of contemporary African languages as a reflection of the material and mental world of those who speak them, the use of the 'included observation' method, the study of behavioural strategies under fixed social conditions, and models of sociocultural synthesis and symbiosis. The application of these and other 'understanding' methods determines maturity and academic significance of African studies to a large extent. I mean maturity not only as a subjective sphere but also as a peculiar methodological and epistemological complex. This also leaves a definite imprint on the 'objective aspect' of African studies. Many their objects are mainly or to a degree constructed objects with not only the studied people, cultures, and institutions but also the researches who maintain contacts with them in an active or even the leading role.

However, cognitive barriers have not been eliminated. Moreover, their presence is felt stronger now than it was 15-20 years ago in many branches of African studies, which may be quite apart from each other. Museologists say that an adequate description of the articles of African collections is impossible without turning to African traditional mythology, and an adequate reconstruction of the respective senses and images in the terms of the European culture also is impossible. The ethnologists who have studied the African traditional ethnosocial systems for a long period doubt if the notion of 'ethnicity' is applicable to these systems (at least in the case of the pre-colonial period) [1]. Specialists in economy and political science mention the marginalization of Tropical Africa relative to the world community at the verge of the 20th and 21st centuries, collapse of the social sphere, and increasing alienation of the population from the state; these processes run counter to the development models offered earlier as an unconditional political and cultural value and standard for the African countries [2].

When doubts arise among scholars concerning reliability and adequacy of their descriptions, conceptions, and theories, this is enough to speak about a cognitive crisis (to be adequate, a crisis of the epistemological fundamentals of science, its practice, standards, and images that ensure adequacy of academic knowledge to the reality). It is now, when a huge and diverse amount of knowledge about Africa and its peoples has been accumulated, that African studies face the most serious crisis of their epistemological fundamentals in the recent decades. This crisis clearly manifests itself in the

phenomena (cases) of misunderstanding or, to speak more specifically, escape and disappearance of the initial object of study. These phenomena are very dangerous: they bring the researcher to a dead-lock, making him be tortured by doubts: does he study real Africa or his own ideas about the African reality?

The phenomena of object disappearance manifest themselves most tangibly in the branches of African studies with the most complete, profound, and comprehensive penetration of the society under research and its people's mental world, such as African city as a social sphere and specific cultural object; ethnic processes and ethnicity in various regions of the continent; emergence and evolution of 'sovereign statehood' in Tropical Africa. The more one immerses himself in studying these phenomena, their historical dynamics, relations between the trends towards modernization and retraditionalization, and discursive expression in the system of European or American cultural codes, the more the objective content of these processes evades understanding, and the more rapidly objective reality is substituted by constructions of values and terms and by the cultural images that coincide with those of the European culture. Despite the presence of empirical understanding of the structure and dynamics of the transformation of the local societies, methodological basis for the reconstruction of the African substratum of sociohistorical changes, and detailed description of the local ethnological terms, we cannot be absolutely sure that we fix the initial object of study and cognize it as it is rather than as an artefact.

For instance, the notions of tribe and tribalism may be considered as an effective cognitive and political construction, which corresponds to the realities of Tropical Africa more than those of nation-state, civil society, etc., which correspond to a quite different cultural and civilizational reality. However, the more the conception of tribalism is transformed into the constructed reality of politicized ethnicity (this is inevitable due to the dependence of the contemporary African political culture on the Westernized cultural discourse), the more components of this new reality disappear or dissolve; the traditional social systems become invisible as the initial object of study. Politicized ethnicity was quite uncharacteristic of these systems, which, as well as social groups, were ethnically heterogeneous. Thus, the borderline between the studied object and our vision of this object disappears. One can change the viewpoint by, e.g., fixing the relatively late emergence of the paradigm of ethnicity and ethnocentrism in Tropical Africa in comparison with social, regional, confessional, and other determinants. However, this leads to a substantial rearrangement of the studied object:

tribalism becomes a novation, a modern phenomenon rather than a product of traditionalism. True, one cannot be totally sure in this situation that, reconstructing traditional social systems, one does not distort them, masking the initial object of study by such distortions.

The question about objectivity of academic knowledge is not new in African studies in our country. It was raised quite definitely in the 1960s and 1970s, when our Africanists developed two different scholarly traditions. Those of them who gravitated towards D.A. Olderogge and the department of African ethnography of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, identified the measure of objectivity in African studies with the degree of using ethnographical and sociolinguistic data. To another group, who were concentrated mainly at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, objectivity meant applying the global laws of social development to the past and present of Africa in the form of the theory of socioeconomic formations and world revolutionary process. Despite some elements of self-sufficiency and too high self-evaluation, both traditions formed an integer, an integral cognitive space, divided not according to the principle of empiric vs. constructed reality but according to that of a unique fact vs. a typological scheme.

By the 1990s, both traditions (schools?) mostly resolved their differences. The borderline between them lost its rigidity, the Africanists from St. Petersburg spread their ethnographical approach to the theory of politogenesis, social organization (governance), and social history (works by V.V. Bocharov, N.M. Girenko, V.A. Popov, etc.) [3]. At the same time, the ethno cultural and sociolinguistic context replaced abstract theory to a large extent in Moscow and other regions of Russia (publications by A.S. Balezin, V.A. Beilis, V.B. Iordanskii, N.B. Kochakova, E.S. Lvova, M.D. Nikitin, V.E. Ovchinnikov, etc.) [4]. In 1991, V.B. Iordanskii noted

‘signs of the growing interest of the Soviet academic thought in the deep strata of African popular culture. Various categories of archaic social consciousness surfaced gradually; the latent mechanism of its functioning and some regularities of its development were detected. At the same time, it became obvious that the problems faced by Africanists are extremely intricate.’ [5]

The difficulties of the present are qualitatively different. Researchers doubt not about the comparative ability of the ethnographical or socioeconomic approach to provide us with full and objective knowledge of Africa but about significance of this knowledge. These doubts are quite substantiated in the interdisciplinary research spheres, e.g., globalistics and culturo-

ogy. The former develops outside African studies but spreads its influence to the understanding of the problems of the continent; the latter has a ground of its own in African studies and helps the relativization of the traditional academic knowledge.

In globalistics, the most powerful factor of disqualifying the significance of African studies is the global systemic approach, based on I. Wallerstein's ideas: world as an integral sociohistorical system, capitalism as the global system of capital accumulation and surplus product appropriation, and bourgeoisie and proletariat as global classes. To follow this approach, African and generally national and regional communities do not play the role of a 'unity' of academic analysis and, therefore, have no independent objective content (as well as relations among such communities); the social whole is identified only with global integrity, which develops together with the expansion of capitalism and is divided into the centre, periphery, and semi-periphery. This conception is well-known among Russian Africanists (works by A.M. Cheshkova, A.V. Fursov, A.V. Poletaev, etc.) [6] and is used in African studies by M.M. Golanskii and other experts.

To turn to the considerably 'milder' post-Wallerstein versions of the global development, which emphasize the trends towards regionalization and historical diversification of the world, strengthening of autonomy (identity) of its individual parts, and revival of historical traditions, including archaic ones, they also weaken the academic and practical importance of African studies they acquired at the beginning of the decolonization [7]. Africa is identified either with the zone of 'archaic Deep South' as the 'proscenium of mass destructive processes' and 'periphery of civilization', affected by the 'new poverty virus', or with the periphery of the world, which lacks definite civilizational identity and suffers 'excess diversity' of its subregions [8]. The accumulation of ethnographical and socioeconomic information about Africa loses its value-in-itself and even significance against this background. As M.M. Golanskii noted in 1999,

'only incorrigibly naive optimists can believe now in the possibility to eliminate backwardness by Tropical Africa's own efforts in the new setting of the global development' [9].

Culturology seems to take an opposite stand: African traditions, identity, and personality are recognized and defined as a partly self-sufficient world with the values of its own. In fact, this attitude weakens confidence in traditional African studies no less than the globalistic paradigm does.

A radical version of this approach has already manifested itself in African studies in Russia; it criticizes generalizing theoretical schemes for their

alienation from the real object of study and connects the possibility of a qualitative expansion of our knowledge about Africa with a direct contact between the subject and object of study and existential (emotional, intuitive) penetration of the 'alien' world. This practice is not new as an alternative to explanatory logical models; it is a basis for several spheres and disciplines of the so-called non-classical science (ethnomethodology, cognitive sociology, everyday life sociology, historical hermeneutics, etc.). However, the practice of 'merger with the object' is still new and exotic to our Africanists with their limited experience of field researches.

One of the ardent advocates of this methodology is V.R. Arsenyev. Studying the society and culture of the Bambara, he combined the hermeneutic approach with the traditional, empiric analytical one:

'My central problem is to determine the integrity parameters of the Bambara culture in the unity of their way of life (conditionally, "objective reality"), world images (conditionally, "reflection" or "subjective reality"), and "pieces of art" (i.e., the symbolical system).' [10]

T.B. Shchepanskaya, who agrees with Arsenyev, used same methodology for radical criticism of the logic theoretical approach (the field of distraction and generalization according to V.G. Arsenyev corresponds to that of cultural classifications according to T.B. Shchepanskaya). Radicalism of her criticism means that she doubts or even negates objectivity and reliability of ethno-social and ethno-cultural reconstructions and describes them as mythological unless the researchers participated in the culture they studied.

We had better listen to the authors themselves. V.R. Arsenyev:

'First of all, the academic tradition requires an author (observer) to abstract himself from his individual experience of maintaining contacts with an alien culture, get rid of the emotions generated by such contacts, and convey the essence of the information he has obtained, classifying it in accordance with the stable academic clichés and matrices in a strictly logical and, which is of a particular importance, "reproducible" manner, without the author's influence on this essence. It is a process of the author's abstraction from the flesh of his material, from his feelings and impressions as a kind of "objectification" of a subject. A scholar seems to project himself to another time dimension, impassionately recording facts and phenomena. In the final analysis, it is not a secret that this kind of narration is fictitious. However, the cliché works, as well as a definite mythologizing line in realizing science itself' [12].

Then:

‘the process of mythologization of science is sophisticated and must be considered in the context of the cultural phenomena of the present’ [13].

T.B. Shchepanskaya:

‘Ethnology tries to change its scope, speaking and asking questions on the behalf of Science as the cognitive subsystem of the society; in field researches, it also faces a society, but the latter is organized and acts in a different manner. (...) When a researcher works at home or in his study room, processing and even verbalizing the collected data, another adequacy emerges: wits try to cognize a different rationality using the means of rationalization of their own. One who cognizes this reality faces the paradoxical effect of Alice going through the looking-glass: the deeper he penetrates the mental system world, the farther he is from its understanding, increasingly distorting it and reconstructing its own structure on the basis of an exotic material’ [14].

The logic of these statements borders a conclusion on incomplete penetrability and limited conveyability of the senses of one culture in the language of the concepts of another culture, irrespective of the means a researcher uses (such as the included observation method, empathies, etc.); then, the only radical solution for a researcher is to identify himself with the culture he studies. V.R. Arsenyev and T.B. Shchepanskaya seem to deem this situation not only possible but also acceptable: science ‘is ready to obtain new information only until the latter agrees with its own rationality system’ [15]; the extrapolation of ethnographical materials to the traditional (historical) state of ethnoses is ‘no less a myth than... the myth about the authors' abstraction from the directly observed material’ [16].

Most of the Russian Africanists who deal with culturological problems are not ready to go so far. They understand the identification of a researcher with ‘exotic cultures’ in order to perceive them more adequately as the necessity to coordinate academic definitions with the local linguistic standards and terms more precisely, as the fixation of the dominant elements of local cultures, or as the necessity to allow for the influence of the sociohistorical and mental-cultural environment on the essential features of African societies. All this does not preclude the construction of generalizing schemes and models. This fact was clearly fixed by V.A. Beilis: the set of cultural features is limited and may be expressed quite adequately ‘by a formula V.Y. Propp suggested for a fairy tale on the basis of describing hundred tales as one (as a single text)’; ‘originality of a culture consists not of pres-

ence or absence of an element but of their dominance, the manner of their combination, the system of accents’ [17].

However, the ‘mild’ versions of the culturological paradigm also tend to relativize objectivity of scholarly conclusions. They admit that any attempt to logically express polysemy, motility, variability of cultural and linguistic senses, the more sore in isolation from life situations, may lead to the reduction, distortion, or disappearance of the initial object of study [18]. (This agrees with the conclusions drawn by V.R. Arsenyev and T.B. Shchepanskaya.)

Of course, globalistics and culturology are not the only spheres of Russian Africanists' interests. Those who study the place of Africa in the globalization processes pay little attention to ethnological, anthropological, and cultural studies, whose authors, in their turn, easily do without a picture of the united global world, considering it as something very far from ‘life reproduction’ in Africa or even negating the destruction of local traditions under the influence of the Western civilization. For instance, V.A. Beilis does not doubt that ‘the interaction (of African cultures. – *I.S.*) with the West leads not to the destruction but to the strengthening and expansion of the traditional cultures and enhances their viability, in particular, as a result of competition (!) with other civilizations, at least in the spiritual sphere’ [19]. The habitual discursive practice also restrains our Africanists from the extremes of globalism and culturologism; this practice still makes them use such terms as ‘the African society’, ‘socio-political structure’, ‘contemporary (national) state’, etc. This discourse enables us to stay within the single conceptual field and creates a sensation of integrity of our knowledge about Africa.

As a matter of fact, this integrity seems to face a menace or disintegrate despite preserving the traditional theoretical clichés. We mean the integrity that presupposes interaction between or unity of the generalizing and individualizing approaches. The essence of the cognitive crisis in African studies in our country is quite concrete: it is gradual polarization and active or passive mutual alienation of both approaches. The prerequisites for this crisis are created by strong competition between the globalistic and culturological paradigms, which weakens the possibility and necessity of Africanists' theoretical self-determination. Before the 1990s, they suggested or modified numerous ideas and conceptions, which occupied the place above empirical and applied studies concerning individual countries. This drew them closer to the middle level theories. Some of them are the conceptions of the ‘colonial society’, ‘secondary formational development’ (stadial sepa-

ration of politogenesis from the class formation), 'early state', 'interrelations among kin, community, and extended family', etc.

However, the significance of these conceptions was questioned by the globalist and culturological paradigms. If African studies as a discipline were to follow the standards of globalist or culturological knowledge, there would be no necessity of structurizing knowledge on the basis of disciplines. Then, the role of regional studies would be determined by the importance of their concrete spheres in a concrete cognitive situation or even 'orientation towards usefulness' [20]. This situation would be bad to African studies in Russia: most of African countries would be relegated to the background of globalization, and it would become impossible to study Africa from the inside.

However, the main factor of the crisis is becoming the divergence and even polarization of the generalizing and individualizing methods of studying Africa. It was mentioned above that these methods are related to two research traditions in African studies in Russia. One of them emphasizes the general regularities and trends, applying them to individual societies; another gives priority to studying individual cultures, human collectives, and institutions on the basis of theoretical conceptions, typological schemes, etc. The former tradition gravitates towards politico economic studies, is characterized by a political tendency, and identifies itself in the context of development, modernity, and globalization; the latter tradition has a historical-ethnological or anthropological basis, proceeds from the political situation, and evaluates its significance in the context of the preservation of traditions, life reproduction, and historical succession.

We deem it improper to 'divide' these traditions on the parochial basis of Moscow vs. St. Petersburg. Both some researchers of the Institute for African studies (N.B. Kockakova, I.E. Sinitsyna, etc.) and Africanists of the Institute of World History (Russian Academy of Sciences), who belong to the cultural-historical trend and are led by A.B. Davidson, have paid their contribution to individualizing the images and senses of African history, while it is difficult to imagine the works by D.A. Olderogge, V.V. Bocharov, N.M. Girenko, V.A. Popov, etc. free of the influence of the generalizing approach. Some of our Africanists (L.E. Kubbel, Y.M. Kobishchanov, etc.) combine both approaches.

At the same time, as it was noted above, elements of self-sufficiency and too high self-evaluation were intrinsic to both traditions. Each of them claimed adequate and deep understanding of the African realities. However, the trend towards competition and alienation developed latently up to the

1990s. Officially, the approaches to African studies might be identified only with the Marxist-Leninist theory, which dictated the ratio of general to individual in our knowledge about Africa. Now, when this theory has lost its monopolist position, this ratio is open for discussions. These approaches are polarized when a researcher confines himself to one of two traditions of African studies, which becomes a value-in-itself and the only method of the researcher's academic self-identification.

After the prolonged crisis and disintegration of the old scholarly approaches, Russian Africanists are looking for new ways towards theoretical self-determination. However, they have not yet synthesized the general with the specific, the universal with the individual, and the logical with the historical. On the contrary, we see signs of self-isolation of the generalizing and individualizing trends, researchers' self-identification with the habitual research tradition that formed them as scholars. This spreads the cognitive crisis to methodology: both traditions begin to compete for it or overlook the alternative approach.

A factor of absolutizing the individualizing approach is the idea of cognizing Africa through the artefacts created by research and interpretation, such as volitional motivations, a peculiar style of description, poetic images of Africa (including even 'sensation of Africa'), and ability to create myths about oneself, one's colleagues, and the study object. In the 1960s and 1970s, immediate sensation of Africa was considered as a monopoly of writers, artists, and newsmen. Now, the semi-magic 'sensation of Africa' often acquires the status of a value-in-itself, an almost sacral reality, which replaces empirical reality of facts. An independent importance is attached to artefacts in fiction, art, and generally creative activity. Sometimes, the hopes for the cessation of the crisis and recession period in Africa are pinned on such artefacts as a constructed reality. V.A. Beilis formulated an optimistic scenario of the development of Africa ten years ago, proceeding from African literary men's experiments. His construction was idyllic if not utopian: love and romantic family relations, described by modern African writers, will find analogues in real life; 'genuine love' will become the main value and fundament of culture, saving Africa (and not it alone!) from a fall [21].

The basic attitudes of the generalizing approach also change latently. It retains not so many vestiges of the earlier tradition of the formational attribution of African societies, paying more attention to the search for an integral image and general theoretical landmarks for the practical evaluation of the processes that take place in Africa. The earlier typological schemes are replaced by binary models of values and standards: wild vs. regulated mar-

ket; strong vs. weak state; decolonization vs. re-colonization, etc. These models serve as a kind of reference standards, which enable a researcher to judge about the changes in the empirical reality.

Recently, African studies witnessed signs of even wider and more comprehensive relativization of their methodological fundamentals. It begins to affect integrity of the methodological core of these studies and unity of the cognitive space of their individual spheres. In some works, the traditions of the generalizing and individualizing approaches lose their independent significance and are replaced by various types of constructing social reality not as an empirical structure or fundamental typological scheme but as an empirical process of identifying the studied object and the researcher himself with definite culturomental principles (the 'anti-Western' cultural environment) or certain scenarios of the global development. Social constructions are separated from empirics.

The first 'globalists' among Russian Africanists determine scholarly knowledge in the terms of strategies, projects, programmes, etc., which fix their attitude to the reality as a process and a result of constructing projects, where subject is inseparable from image, trend from intention, sense from plot, and the real situation from the strategic choice. A.I. Neklessa reflects this new context as follows:

'An impression arises that the real task of contemporary *economy* lies not so much in the sphere of fundamental science as in that of universal technologies and behaviour strategies with our limited and contradictory knowledge about the depths of economic cosmos. This deficit is particularly tangible at the transitional stages of history, when many old dogmata collapse. Perhaps, it would be easier to understand the present condition of world economy, if economists would give up conscious and subconscious claims for the status of a natural science (...) and perceive the sphere of their researches as a part of ethics and politics, where purposes are set and the "categorical imperative" of humans' behaviour in the world is determined' [22].

The culturological (culturocentric) version of academic knowledge, which also forms in contemporary African studies in Russia, eliminates, in its turn, the vague boundary between general significance of academic knowledge and identity of the study subject and object, as well as between rational academic approach and knowledge of a mythological (pre-scientific?) type. Science is likened to a cultural tradition, which makes it impossible to distinguish it from an image, a symbol, a ritual, a myth. Applied both as a general principle and as a research strategy, this approach

manifests itself in the recent works by V.R. Arsenyev. He considers the construction of a fiction text, where the author reincarnates himself as an African character, not only as an additional (literary or hermeneutic) method of cognizing an alien culture but also as a peculiar reality, i.e., the language of images and associations, which is closer 'to the nature of the object than rational scholarly thinking' [23]. Is it possible to construct a single subject field with general significance for African studies on the basis of this 'peculiar reality'?

* * *

Africa always was a nut too hard to crack, when positivist scholars tried to describe social reality 'as it is', not because it was difficult to reduce the studied societies to the empirical and theoretical reconstructions of the primary African reality, but in the sense of adequacy of the theory to the reality. Both empirical models and 'great theories' exist, so to say, in parallel with this reality, sometimes in contact and merger with it, imposing political and ideological constructions on it, without reflecting it adequately and objectively in their fundamentals. This was the situation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the period of crisis of classical evolutionism and then of diffusionism and social anthropology, which replaced it. This was the situation in the late 1920s and 1930s, when it was found that the functionalist theory did not correspond to social changes, and political anthropology developed in Africa as an independent academic sub discipline. This is the situation today, after the theoretical and ideological conceptions of modernization, African originality, and Afro-Marxism (from the Ujamaa theory to the conceptions of non-capitalist development and socialist orientation) proved inconsistent.

The conception of African studies as a finally established interdisciplinary complex depends on the current evaluations of the possibility of universal and rational academic cognition of African realities, on what dominates scholarly cognition: belief in the objective character of the approaches to the studied societies or doubts concerning their objectivity, reliability, and importance, i.e., methodological relativism. Notably, the trends towards crisis and stabilization coexist in the development of researches concerning African societies; they gain the upper hand in turns.

The trend towards stabilization is characterized by confidence in ability of both foreign and African political scientists and intellectuals to grasp all aspects of the development of Africa as a process governed by general, fundamental, and logically understandable regularities. The dominant of this process was and is scientism, i.e., orientation of knowledge towards mod-

ernization and innovations, supported by the belief in the Eurocentrist ideals of progressism, rationalism, etc.

The crisis situation emerges as a result of disappointment with the successive models and recipes of Africa's development, when the speculative and artificial character of these constructions, incompatible with the African reality, is felt most keenly. As a rule, the crisis condition of African studies paves the way for radical criticism of their theoretical fundamentals and methods as Eurocentrist; attempts are made again and again to create alternative Afrocentrist theories and strategy with emphasis on the traditional nature ('indigenous development') of the local social structures and their historical succession and cultural originality rather than on development itself. The anti-Westernist and anti-modernist trend that characterizes these theories is easily combined with more profound and fundamental anti-scientist attitudes and approaches. In spite of apparent diversity of these attitudes (ethnic romanticism, racial Afrocentrism, mythologization of African history and culture, etc.), they mostly rely on romantic culturocriticist consciousness, which negates an independent role of science and its functions in culture, considers a scholar's inclusion in the life of the society he studies a value-in-itself, and equalizes logical statements with judgements on values and standards.

The stabilizing trend of scholarly consciousness seems to correspond to the existence of African studies as a complex of academic knowledge proper with a definite level of interdisciplinary relations and general theoretical fundamentals more than the opposite approach. One can object that the development of African studies was most dynamic in the crisis periods of social disintegration and political conflicts, e.g., the decolonization process. This objection is justified only to an extent. The sphere of problems and subjects of African studies rapidly formed and expanded in the decolonization period, whereas this sphere was grasped empirically, consolidated, and reconstructed theoretically on a 'firm foundation', e.g., scientist (or quasi-scientist) ideas and projects, meant to put an end to Africa's backwardness, crisis, and instability. In the 1960s and 1970s, the complex of knowledge about African societies rapidly expanded, consolidated itself on the basis of the ideas of development sociology (from 'catching up modernization' to dependent development), economic-centrist theories, and the conception of 'Thiersmondism'.

The present condition of the fundamentals of African studies is quite unstable. The very ability of scholars to create a rational basis for adequate understanding of Africa's historical experience and prospects of its devel-

opment by applying universal schemes and general rules is questioned today. According even to the most optimistic evaluations of the level of real knowledge about the mechanisms of African societies' development, its accumulation lags behind the formal perfection of the conceptual tools of African studies and technology of collecting information; the existing gap widens instead of narrowing. This is obvious from the weakening forecasting capacities of the theoretical spheres of African studies. Even the total amount of knowledge about the cultural and social 'cosmos' of the African continent is not impressive. We have to agree with A.B. Davidson that we know not so much about Africa [24].

The failure of almost all global projects and attempts of modernization in many African countries gave rise to a doubt concerning objectivity and reliability of the conceptions and theories based on the non-African experience, which ignore the indigenous dynamics, priorities, and values of African 'periphery'. One cannot but criticize a typically African situation, when, as V.S. Mirzекhanov wrote, 'humans are relieved of the burden of choice, and all peoples must think about development alone' [25].

Tracing the changes in the image of Africa in anthropology and sociology in recent 30 years (in the 'station log of a generation of Africanists', as he wrote), J. Copans, a renowned French Africanist, studied the transformation of the idea of 'modernism' and related conceptions from political and intellectual fetishes to theoretical fictions and semi fictions, which have little to do with real life. As a result,

'recent 30 years witnessed an impressive increase in knowledge about Africa, but this was of no avail for Africa's development; this knowledge is affected by the illusions of developmentalism, Thiersmondialism, and reliance on Africans' own forces or liberalism (...) The African crisis is that of knowledge and theories, related to a protracted stage of the development of Black Africa, a phases of the mutation of ill-defined structures' [26].

The universal theories of development, which dominated in the 1960s and 1970s, are subject to a rigid relativist criticism as a result of 'Afropessimism'. The first objects of this criticism were the economic-centric theories, which faced the crisis of modernization as early as the 1980s, followed by the whole development ideologeme based on the perception of 'universal modernism'. Africa is described by this criticism as a model of the strongest deculturation under the influence of the Western civilization.

The natural and quite rational response to relativist criticism is the emergence of comprehensive development models with emphasis on genu-

iness and originality of such development (rapid development of informal economy with its 'informal' social system, successful projects of agricultural development, etc.). The culture-centrist position is a component of these conceptions by definition. However, relativist criticism goes even farther: culture-centrism becomes a negative paradigm relative to modern development on the whole. Culturalism concentrates at criticizing the role of the West in modern civilization and thus 'traditional science' for being confined to the Europe-centrist vision of the world as the tradition of suppression.

Culturocriticism might play a more positive role if contemporary Africanists continued absolutizing scientist approaches to traditional societies. In practice, all main trends and conceptions of African studies alleviated their scientist standards, giving up the extremes of organicism and evolutionism. Economic conceptions fit to comprehensive constructions with a cultural dimension (from globalist ideas to the cultural-historical theory of 'modernism'). Social anthropology resolutely separates the regularities of biological and sociocultural evolution, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of evolutionary changes in the society and their multilinear or stochastic and nonlinear character. Sociology accents African cultures' perceptivity to social changes and development. Thus, the confrontation between scientists and antiscientists is not so strong among Africanists. Does not this mean that romantic culturocriticism lies beyond African studies, expressing the aspirations of the anti-Western counterculture?

I would not draw a conclusion like this. Culturocentrism and relativist criticism seem to play a useful role in the development of African studies at least in one respect, forming a necessary element of their self-development. I mean reflexion, i.e., critical evaluation of the relations between two types or levels of the African reality: the primary objective (independent from the researcher's will and motivations) reality as a product of African succession and originality and reality as a theoretical or political construction, determined by ascribing certain cultural principles and certain logic of behaviour to it. After J. Needham and E. Said published their works, the question of the relation between objectivized scientific knowledge ('oecumenic science') and cultural traditions as stereotypes, images, and values acquired an independent scientological importance [27], especially in Oriental and African studies, which willy-nilly operate the images of the East and Africa.

Today, when the forthright progressist schemes of the development of Africa have been discarded by and large, it is obvious that the basic image of 'other', African reality plays a no less (or even more) important role than

the research methodology itself. This image is intrinsic to the culture whose attitudes and stereotypes the researcher shares. This image manifests itself no less really than the studied object. Unlike the latter, the image is constructed and based on the features and criteria ascribed to the study object. Moreover, a priori presence of such an image alone may radically weaken uncertainty concerning the object: to use historical or statistical sources effectively, one must have a stereotypic image of these sources in his consciousness. Preserving the image of the studied object, he confirms significance of his culture as a participant in the intercultural dialogue.

For instance, it is clear that scholars of the former colonial powers determined development and modernization relative to Africa on the basis of the images and attitudes concerning Europe's cultural superiority, which date to the period of the creation of colonial empires. Due to the influence of these images, the conceptions of acculturation were the core of the African versions of the modernization theory up to the early 1970s. These conceptions argued that successful modernization is possible if Africans borrow the external images of the Western culture [28]. Another characteristic example of 'cultural simulation' of scholarly knowledge about Africa is its image as an undivided space or a single country. J. Copans wrote that never would the idea enter anybody's head to claim that everything what is good for Iran is good for Singapore, but this is possible in the case of Black Africa [29].

Culturalist criticism of the fundamental ideas related to development, modernization, etc. demonstrates an internal, 'intimate' connection between these ideas and the attitudes that characterize the European cultural tradition and 'world picture': a universal world outlook, absolutization of the universal principles of being, and orientation towards rational behaviour and rational organization of social life. Culturalism also reveals the great importance of the constructivist approach to reality as identification of an individual with cultural standards and behaviour examples and absence of an absolute borderline between this approach and the objectivist view on a social object as an invariant or type of social interaction. Science creates theoretical abstractions, which often do not claim description of real phenomena and are constructed objects in this sense. On the other hand, the social reality itself is an almost indivisible combination of invariant, systemic, and structural features and situationally changing patterns of ascribing common features to oneself and others. It is the more difficult to divide them the farther is the observer from the culture he studies.

Nonetheless, science cannot arbitrarily combine empirical reality, which does not depend on the observer, with the objects constructed by it-

self, especially if this is done on the basis of moral or emotional motivation, without due reflection and evaluation of one's and others' identity.

Synthesis of the objectivist and culturalist approaches is possible and often necessary, but their syncretism is dangerous when a researcher begins to speak on behalf of an 'alien' culture or ascribes his own cultural characteristics to the society he studies. What is dangerous are not constructed images by themselves but their shift based on fictitious and factual sense, emergence of cultural fictions, quasi-objective imaginaries, and their treatment as real essences.

Africanists choose the sphere of their studies relying mainly on the use of constructed objects. Due to shortage of sources, they construct African history on the whole (especially its early stages) and reconstruct African traditions and traditional fundamentals of ethnosocial structures (proceeding mainly from so-called vestiges). In the 1960s and 1970s, the dominant construction of contemporary African societies as nations-states was a purely model construction, which was not dangerous by itself. What is a menace to African studies is to identify such constructions with social integrity and real motive forces of Africa's development. The belief in the success of decolonization and irreversibility of modernization of Africa concealed this menace. Now, this belief is ruined, which undermines the objective status of many theoretical and ideological constructions of the past, present, and especially future. Who can guarantee that nations-states embody Africans' future? Can one be sure that genuine social evolution of the real local societies will lead to a rupture with the traditions rather than to their modernization, revival, and strengthening on a new basis?

There are no works in Russia about the general condition of the theoretical and methodological fundamentals of African studies. When the question of the relations between constructed and empirical reality is raised, the authors deal only with concrete methods and operational procedures of research. In my opinion, this testifies to the slow or latent development of crisis trends in our African studies rather than to stability of our knowledge about this continent. I believe that nobody can deny that the stabilization trends in the development of our African studies were replaced by crisis trends in the 1990s. The theoretical and methodological core of our studies, i.e., the fundamental conceptual apparatus and connection between theorizing and description of individual objects, was destabilized. Relativization of the methods, theories, and conclusions correlates well with the general crisis of African studies as a field of objective and reliable knowledge. In Russia, this process is more open and comprehensive due to stronger in-

tegrity of the interdisciplinary complex, close relations between the individualizing and generalizing approaches, and weakness of culturalist criticism.

The cognitive crisis in African studies and its possible consequences require special researches and discussions. It is still difficult to unambiguously evaluate the implications of this crisis for the further development of our studies. The main purpose of Africanists' methodological work done in the pre-crisis period was to expand added knowledge, based on sources, and improve its reliability. At the same time, the condition and development of so-called prerequisite or a priori knowledge were neglected, although it is closely connected with a researcher's cultural self-consciousness and the images and values of his and studied culture and performs the function of purpose determination and sociocultural orientation [30]. The crisis under consideration demonstrates, first of all, weakness and limitations of prerequisite knowledge and its inadequacy to the sophisticated processes that take place in Africa. In this context, the problem of relations between empirical and constructed objects in African studies is more acute than it was ever before.

Many versions of these relations are possible, and each of them may influence the prospects of the development of African studies and their integrity as a subject. The version presented for discussion as a set of new paradigms of the study of peripheral societies (globalistics vs. culturology) emphasizes the topic of prerequisite knowledge and the necessity to renovate it. At the same time, it is unclear how special attention to the images and models of the world (global and local culturally) may affect the quality of knowledge about Africa.

Let us raise two questions:

1. Will African studies preserve their integrity as a particular subject?
2. Will they preserve the quality of a fundamental science, or the functions of expert, geopolitical, technological, and quasi-mythological knowledge will come to the forefront?

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3. This led to rethinking many basic theoretical conceptions (polito-genesis, state, social governance, political culture, etc.) and to the development of sociological and political researches concerning the African regional version of the theory of formations.

4. L.E. Kubbel's scholarly heritage combines the traditions of both schools.

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6. The global systemic approach and its capacities and shortcomings are discussed in: Osmyslivaya mirovoi kapitalizm (I. Vallershtein i mirosistemnyi podkhod v sovremennoi zapadnoi literature) (Grasping World Capitalism: I. Wallerstein and Global Systemic Approach in Modern Western Literature). IMEMO RAN. Moscow, 1997.

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RUSSIAN STUDIES ON ISLAM IN SUBSAHARAN AFRICA

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The Russian scholars' experience in studying Islam in sub-Saharan Africa is much more limited than the rich traditions of researches concerning this religion that existed in the Russian empire (studies on Islam in Central Asia, Northern Caucasus, the Volga region, the Middle East and North Africa). The territories of sub-Saharan Africa populated by the Muslims lay at the periphery of Russian researchers' attention sphere, first owing to the dearth of information about this part of the continent and later, in the Soviet period, because of the general shift in the system of social priorities; as a result, religion was classified as a thing of the past in the social sphere. Islamic studies, as well as religious studies in general, were not considered a promising sphere of scholarly research until the rapid re-Islamisation of the 1970s and 1980s began round the Muslim world, including the countries of Black Africa, making our Orientalists look for the reasons of the strengthening role of this religion in public life.

Islam of Tropical Africa was mentioned in Russia for the first time in an atlas, published in 1773 by Philippe H. Dilteille, a French lawyer and historian, who served at the Russian Academy of Sciences and guided legal studies. In addition, he paid a serious contribution to teaching humanities at the Moscow University, publishing a series of textbooks for schools and universities. One of them was the atlas for children, created by Dilteille when he already was a renowned scholar.

Africa was dealt with in the second part of the sixth (last) volume of this book. The author provided brief but meaningful information about almost all littoral countries and some inside regions, describing the location of each country, anthropological features and religious beliefs of its population

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and the state set-up. The textbook was written in the form of questions and answers. For instance, the author asked the reader: 'What do you know about the coasts of Zangebar?' (Zanzibar) and answered: 'The countries of Zangebar near the kingdom of Monymuchi (probably, Monomotapa. - A.S.) form a 400 miles long and 200 miles wide belt from the tropic of Cancer to the equator. It consists of 7 kingdoms, such as Angoge or Angos, with the capital called by same name; its king is of the Mohammedan faith, but most of his subjects are pagans.' The author spoke about the middle part of the eastern coast of Africa, where Islam began to spread in the second half of the 15th century.

The second mention of Islam appeared when the author described the Horn. 'What do you know about the countries of Ayan? These coasts lie between the line (equator. - A.S.) and the Red Sea, forming a 200 miles long and 120 miles wide belt. Four kingdoms lie there, one of which is Magadoxo with the capital called by same name. It is ruled by an independent king, and the population professes the Mohammedan faith.' [1]. Probably, this was the first mention of Mogadiscio, a Somalia sultanate, in the Russian literature.

Answering to a possible question about the sources he used, Philippe H. Dilteille mentioned Edward Gibbon, a British historian, who authored *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, a fundamental work. The textbook written by Dilteille, who had no opportunity to see Africa and Africans by his own eyes, reflected the level of the historical and anthropological thought in Russia at the end of the 18th century.

In the 19th century, owing to such eminent scholars as Evgenii P. Kovalevskii, Vassilii V. Yunker, Alexandre K. Bulatovich and Alexandre V. Elisseev, the Russians' knowledge about Islam in Africa considerably expanded. After prolonged travels, mainly in North-East Africa, they left detailed descriptions of Africans' everyday life and social relations and the political set-up of the local chiefdoms and proto-states, as well as information about the spread of Islam. Our compatriots' travel diaries testify to their scholarly honesty, impartiality, sympathy for the Africans and striving to study the conditions of their everyday life. Their humanity and selfless service to science were their important advantages in comparison with the Western Africanists, who used to combine scholarly and mercenary interests. These descriptions, written expressively in a rich and full-blooded language, may be considered specimens of a particular genre of literature.

None of the above Africanists studied Islam specially, but the observations scattered in their works testify that as early as the mid-19th century

prophet Muhammad's religion became no less influential than Christianity and even exceeded it in dynamism of propagation and political potential. Our compatriots' objectivity is indirectly confirmed by their similar evaluations of religiousness of the indigenous population of Africa. For instance, Evgenii P. Kovalevskii, a geographer who traveled almost a half of the world, from Japan to Morocco, went to an unprecedentedly risky and fascinating travel in the inside regions of Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. Both he and Vassilii V. Yunker, a Russian physician and ethnographer, noted fanaticism of the inhabitants of Darfur, a state in the southern part of Sudan. 'Many pilgrims and merchants go from Darfur to Mecca via Khartoum... I was at friendly terms with Ali, a rich merchant who came from Darfur recently. The people of Darfur are among the few Muslims who strictly observe the prescriptions of their faith, often falling in fanaticism; they differ in this from, e.g., Egyptians.' He repudiated the rumours spread in Europe and the allegation of Combe, a French officer, about the people of Darfur as cannibals by two arguments. Firstly, no European scholar has been to Darfur; secondly, the Muslims' holy book prohibits such behaviour: 'To which deity can they offer human sacrifices? How can they find a justification of such cruelty in Qur'an, their civil and spiritual code?' [2]. Despite this, he states that the Muslim ruler of this country gets rid of possible rivals for the throne (his brothers) by confining them to a cave, where they die of starvation.

Without falling in the anti-Islamic attitudes, which seized the Western European public, including scholars, as a result of the Mahdist revolt in Sudan, Alexandre V. Eliseev and Vassilii V. Yunker, Russian physicians, impassively and objectively tell about the leader of this movement Muhammad al-Mahdi (his genuine name was Muhammad Ahmed), a carpenter's son. The glory of the legendary leader of the Sudanese Muslims, who opposed the Anglo-Egyptian rule, made the Russian researchers pay more attention to his figure and try to find the reasons of this mass and enthusiastic support for Islamism.

Alexandre V. Eliseev wrote: 'As early as 1881, we heard in Egypt that a new prophet was going to appear in Sudan, who would be even greater than Muhammad. This al-Mahdi would renovate Islam and liberate the Muslims from the infidels' yoke. In 1883, whole East was proud of invincible al-Mahdi, who conquered whole Sudan and forced out the Egyptians and British therefrom. Going from Tripoli to Fezzan in 1884, we were stopped by an explosion of popular support of al-Mahdi, whose emissaries agitated this area of the great desert.' 'Russia with millions of Muslim subjects could not be indifferent to the powerful movement that began to seize whole Muslim

world; so, we decided to visit the nest of the Mahdists.' Alexandre V. Eliseev was among the few Europeans who dared penetrate the centre of the Islamic revolt and meet the entourage of the Sudanese messiah. Being a courageous and resolute person, Vassilii.V. Yunker did not dare, nonetheless, go to the areas occupied by Mahdists during his second expedition of 1879-1886.

Alexandre.V. Eliseev believed that the economic oppression of the indigenous population of Sudan and local Arabs and the humiliating attitude of the Anglo-Egyptian administration, who debarred them from occupying important positions in the political and religious hierarchy, evoked hatred of the whole population for the oppressors. After a series of brilliant victories, won by the rebels owing to their religious inspiration and belief in their spiritual leader's supernatural abilities, al-Mahdi became the ruler of a theocratic monarchy, which spread from the Abyssinian frontier in the east to the Lake Chad in the west and from Wadi Halfa in the north to the equator in the south. He died in 1885, and his death prevented him from establishing a regime that would correspond to his plans [3].

Travelling in the upper reaches of the Nile, Vassilii V. Yunker, a future member of the Russian Geographical Society, also noted people's hostility or even hatred for the Egyptians, whom they used to call Turks. He wrote in his fundamental work *Travels in Africa* [4] that the Niambara tribe, most of whom professed Islam, unanimously, with the exception of 14-15 sheikhs, hated the Egyptians and used any opportunity to harm the 'Turks' as much as possible. Therefore, the Egyptian garrisons were actually besieged and had to *gazwe* (raid) the local population to stock up food. He also found Muslims in the upper reaches of the Uele. In the Mundi tribe, who bordered the Azande (Bambe) in the west, the village chiefs were ex officio sheikhs, like they were in another tribe, whose chief Lemin 'was so strongly influenced by the Arab pseudo-culture that wore an old, once white shirt as a holiday garment.' All peoples of that region used Arabic words (*kitab* or *wirana*) for book, and, according to Vassilii.V. Yunker, even the Azande chiefs knew Arabic, as well as interpreters grown in *zeribs* (militarized Egyptian settlements). They were converted to Islam; being Muslims, they were free, served as interpreters and became soldiers only when necessary.

The Russian researchers willy-nilly contrasted the Africans to the Arabs while considering the observation of the religious standards. For instance, the sympathy and respect with which Vassilii V. Yunker described the local population, including Muslims, were succeeded by sarcasm when he dealt with the Nubian Arabs, 'cunning and felonious people', who spent time

drinking alcohol and playing hazardous games, contrary to all moral and legal standards of Islam. Describing the indigenous population of Ethiopia, Evgenii P. Kovalevskii noted that the Africans were not devoted to their traditional religious beliefs and gave them up easily: 'The Negro soldiers and other [Africans] are zealous worshippers of the Prophet.' [5]

According to Russian geographers, the main missionaries of Islam were the Arabs. Evgenii P. Kovalevskii mentioned the activities of the Arab traders, who brought the elementary knowledge of Islam and the Prophet's prayer to the land of the Galla. Alexandre K. Bulatovich, a Russian officer and explorer of Ethiopia, dates the beginning of the spread of this religion to the early 16th century. He connected this with a revolt of the Mohammedan Galla, led by Ahmed Granie, who capitalized on the Galla's striving to occupy the Abyssinians' lands. He 'raised the Prophet's banner among the Muslim population of the littoral belt and, declaring the holy war, ... invaded Abyssinia, burning and destroying monasteries and churches.' 'Inspired by the Islamist idea', Granie conquered and destroyed Aksum. After he died in 1545, the Galla's invasion lost the character of a religious war. The Mohammedan Galla occupied the best lands in Walo province and established their domination. However, in Kaffa area, where our compatriot was the first European visitor, he also found that a half of 12 provinces were governed by Muslim *Rases* [6].

Russian geographers evaluated religiousness of African Muslims quite soberly. Doing justice to 'fanaticism' of the Mahdists and believing that their religious extremism was caused by their hostility for the Anglo-Egyptian administration, they also noted that even the Arabs had no mosques and clergy, 'and whole their faith was confined to pronouncing the sacred prayer: *La Illahi bilal-Lahi, wa Muhammad Rasulullah* (No God but Allah, and Muhammad is Allah's Prophet). Observing the Arabs of Egypt, Sennar and Tunisia, Evgenii P. Kovalevskii concluded that they did not abandon the ancestors' faith only because it promised the tempting heaven, 'because it somewhat limits, indeed, their freedom.'

As for the Africans' intellectual and moral level, our compatriots, unlike Phikippe H. Dilteille, considered them 'well-behaved and kind beings' and explained their shortcomings by their ignorance. They wrote that the black-skinned inhabitants of the continent are characterized by perceptivity and good memory, which enable them to learn Arabic quite quickly.

Being sporadic and fragmentary, the observations made by the Russian travellers demonstrate, nonetheless, that Islam stroke deep roots in Africa as early as the beginning of the 20th century, in particular, in the north-eastern

and central parts of the continent, manifesting itself in the institutional, political and cultural spheres of the local peoples' life. They were not experts in religion, but their descriptions with their brilliant content and literary style still remain a valuable source of information about the history of Islam in Africa. Unfortunately, the few our compatriots who visited the remote continent later almost did not mention Islam in their works, failing to produce any serious results for Islamic studies.

The troublesome period of revolutions in Russia, when the country's destiny was at stake, militant atheism that stroke roots in the Soviet period and neglect for the spiritual component of the Russian people's life resulted in the fact that religious studies were considered prospect less; it was customary to hold that they cannot explain the grandiose social transformations that took place in the country. Teaching fundamentals of the traditional religions was ceased at the universities; the succession of generations in this sphere of knowledge was upset. In particular, this affected studies in African religions.

The situation began to change somewhat after the 'Islamic revolution' of 1979 in Iran. This event made our Orientalists rethink the role of religious studies and of Islam and other religions in the social life. Moreover, the explanation of the upsurge of Islam and forecasting the trends of its revival (the Iranian revolution intensified activities of almost all Muslim communities, including those in sub-Saharan Africa) ceased to be a purely academic problem and became a sociopolitical issue of a national importance. The 1980s witnessed the revival of the traditions of Islamic studies inherited from Vassilii V. Bartold, Evgenii E. Bertels, Evgenii A. Belyaev and Igor P. Petrushevskii. The authors of numerous monographs tried to comprehend the phenomenon of Islamic renaissance in the traditional areas of its influence. This process did not spare the African studies.

Typologically, the works about African Islam may be divided into four groups: (1) the monograph and articles dedicated to this world religion and its various aspects; (2) the works concerning social and sociopolitical issues whose authors use the 'Islamic materials' to substantiate their conclusions; (3) historical books (in particular, from the History of African Countries series), where Islam is considered an important factor that determines many aspects of the character and direction of the social development in Africa; (4) the works that deal with the problems related to the Islamic revival.

The historiography of the studies in African Islam may be divided conventionally into two periods.

The first of them began in the late 1940s (no serious studies on this topic were carried out before), when Sergei R. Smirnov published his

monograph *The Mahdist Revolt in Sudan* [7]. Overcoming the official canons without sacrificing scholarly truth, he demonstrated the spiritual and religious roots of the sociopolitical, economic and cultural movement for the emancipation of the Muslims from 'infidels' rule'. However, as a whole, African Islam was studied then within the framework of socioeconomic analysis; this topic was just a background, a set of facts to be tolerated; allegedly, it did not materially influence the economic, ideological and political situation. Most of the works published in that period concentrated at the traditional African religions, Christianity and Afro-Christian cults. Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa was perceived then as a purely local phenomenon, implanted artificially, not characteristic of the subcontinent and having no prospects in the local society.

Nevertheless, this period witnessed the publication of collections of texts in the history of West and North-East Africa written by such Arab and African travellers, geographers and historians as Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Battutah, Leon African, etc., translated by Lev E. Kubbel and Viktor V. Matveev [8]. Their authors paid a lot of attention to Islam and the Muslim culture. They still remain valuable primary sources of information for historians and experts in religion and culture, because they throw light at almost all aspects of the then Africans' life, from rulers to ordinary peasants. Contrary to the predominant position of that period, Lev E. Kubbel and Viktor V. Matveev witnessed the existence of an important aspect of the social life in Sub-Saharan Africa, which played a major role.

It was then that the first monograph concerning the theme under consideration was published. It was *The Spread of Islam in West Africa* by Ekaterina A. Tarverdova [9]. The author quite thoroughly considered the ideological, political and cultural role of Islam in the mediaeval period and demonstrated that the legal system of the Muslim societies is based on Sharia. What is of a special importance, she attracted attention of the scholars to the very existence of a developed Islamic culture in Black Africa, an area that was traditionally considered the stronghold of animist and fetishist cults.

Another Soviet expert in African religions was Berta I. Sharevskaya, who allocated a modest place to Islam in her typology of religious sociopolitical movements [10].

A great contribution to the studies in African Islam was paid by Yuri M. Kobishchanov, who systematized the main concepts of this religion, professed in Sub-Saharan Africa. He demonstrated the genetic relations between local Islam and centers of the Muslim Arab civilization [11] and was first to study

the activity of Muslim spiritual orders (the Sufi tariqas alias fraternities). Analyzing the African states' policy towards these orders, he concluded that they were the main motive force of jihads earlier; now they have become the main instruments of the consolidation of Muslim communities.

A lot of useful information, especially statistical data about the ethnic composition of Muslim communities, their purposes and mystic rites is available in *Religions of African Countries. A Directory* written by Genrih A. Shpazhnikov [12].

Nonetheless, the formation-based approach curbed the development of religious studies in the Soviet period, relegating to the background such phenomena as Islam, culture and interethnic relations. In accordance with the Marxist ideology, they were evaluated proceeding from the class struggle theory and usually treated as outer coverings of the movement of the oppressed social strata for their political and economic rights. Many Russian Africanists strove to overcome this methodological tenet. Sergei R. Smirnov paid due attention to the dogmata of Mahdist Islam and its role in the ideological and political support of the Mahdist movement and formation of a theocratic state in his above monograph, which became a notable phenomenon not only in African studies but in Soviet historiography as a whole.

Another valuable publication of that period was *The Songhai Empire* by Lev E. Kubbel [13]. The author treated Islam as an independent phenomenon rather than a result of the impact of material factors of a historical and economic character, such as the relations of production. Relying on documents, he restored a picture of the society where Islam itself influenced the character of the relations of production and was a major factor in the formation of the political model of Songhai, a mediaeval state. He drew important conclusions about the synthesis of the Muslim and pre-Islamic socio-cultural standards that emerged in Songhai, where the traditional beliefs were predominant. This monograph was the first harbinger of the forthcoming emergence of the civilizational approach in the African studies.

Among the major achievements of Russian Africanists, one should mention the studies in the social and political history of Nigeria by Igor V. Sledzevskii, Yuliya N. Zotova and Grigoprii S. Kisselev and a monograph about Guinea by Semyon Ya. Kozlov [14]. They noted that the Islamic idea of inseparability of spiritual authority from political power, based thereon, is used as the ideological and legal substantiation of the Hausa and Fulbe rulers' position. Igor V. Sledzevskii and Grigori S. Kisselev concluded that Islam was the main component of the cultural and religious fundamentals of the trend towards the centralization of the Hausa society.

The monograph *West Sudan in the 15th to 19th Centuries* by Dmitrii A. Olderogge [15] demonstrates narrowness and insufficiency of the socio-economic approach to Islam. It is among the best works in Soviet historiography of Africa, frequently cited in the West. Despite his universal knowledge, the author underestimated the independent influence of Islam and did not even mention its role in the formation of the cultural community of the sub-region. He described the Sufi orders as 'Muslim sects', applying this term to denote the Kadiriya tariqa, which played the central ideological and spiritual role in the formation of the Fulbe state ruled by Osman dan Fodio, the Sokoto Caliphate. Being a culturologist and paying a lot of attention to this Islamic reformer in his monograph, Dmitrii A. Olderogge failed to (or dared not in the soviet time) describe the phenomenon that lay literally on the surface. Later, Igor V. Sledzevskii characterized it as the creation of a 'religious community' [16].

The beginning of the second period of studies in African Islam may be dated to 1984, when under the influence of the developments in the Muslim world, which clearly demonstrated effectiveness of the Islamic spiritual fundamentals with strong socio-cultural roots and considerable political impact of Islam, a group for religious studies, headed by Yurii M. Kobishchanov, was formed at the Institute for African studies (Academy of Sciences of the USSR). The first major publication prepared by the group was *The Traditional and Syncretic Religions of Africa* [17]. It was the first volume of the Religions in the 20th Century series, published under the guidance of Iosiph R. Grigulevich, a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Some its chapters dealt with Islamic-African syncretism, e.g., in North Nigeria, Mali and some other African countries.

In this period the Afro-Islamic studies were carried out from the point of view of political science and sociology; thereafter, the culturological approach became the main method of these studies. Yurii M. Kobishchanov studied Islam in his History of the Spread of Islam in Africa not only as a religion but as a civilization borrowed 'by the African societies that began the transition from the primary formation to a class society; in this capacity, they needed an appropriate religious-political ideology; they also had to create the lacking elements of the civilization' [18].

Several important works that dealt with various aspects of African Islam were published in the recent decade. A valuable contribution to Afro-Islamic studies and African studies as a whole was a series of collective monographs prepared by the group for religious studies. Their authors analyzed the influence of Islam on the public and political life of African coun-

tries and the inverse impact of political and other institutions upon it [19]. Refuting the customary stereotypes of the Soviet historiography, they drew the readers' attention to the fact that Islam had become the most widespread form of ideology in many African countries. This is why the further political evolution of the countries of East and West Africa cannot be considered in isolation from the Islamic factor, used more and more proactively by various political forces in their competition for power. It ousts the socio-cultural standards of people's life borrowed from the West.

Dina B. Malysheva, who studied the relations between religion and politics in Africa and the Middle East, came to similar conclusions [20].

Russian scholars pay a special attention to the phenomenon of tariqates. Igor V. Sledzevskii, the author of the chapter about Nigeria in Islam in West Africa [21], came to the conclusion that tariqas perform the function of social integration, which makes them the socioeconomic mechanisms that helped to adapt the order members to modern life. Following him, the author of this review demonstrated the possibility of effective symbiosis of the Western political standards and institutions and the social practice of the Muslim spiritual orders, which serve as a reliable mechanism of power [22]. He concluded that the orders may be conducive to the emergence of the civil society with an African face, as it follows from the experience of Senegal and some Nigerian tariqas [23]. This trend confronts the striving for the centralization of the society and rigid regulation of all spheres of human life, up to totalitarian trends, which manifest themselves in the offensive of Islamism. On some occasions this is done from above: the state usurps the human rights and freedoms, pretending to establish egalitarianism [24]. Such trends may also originate from the bosom of a Muslim community [25].

In the second period Russian Africanists demonstrated an ever increasing interest in Islam as a civilizational phenomenon that draws the Sub-Saharan peoples closer to the cultures of the Middle East and North Africa. This is a kind of return to the traditions of Vassilii V. Bartold, Angel E. Krymskii, Vassilii A. Zhukovskii, Ignatii Yu. Krachkovskii, etc. Lev E. Kubbel continued these brilliant traditions: he was first among the Soviet Africanists to consider socio-historical and socio-cultural integrity that emerged in some Sub-Saharan societies on the basis of Islam with its universal principles of spirituality, social organizations and cultural universals and characterize it as the Islamic civilization [26]. He relied on such a solid basis as the Sudanese Chronicles, which fixed the evolution of the African society and Songhai state with Islam as the cultural and political pivot of the system. The publication of this historical and cultural text was Lev E. Kubbel's great merit.

The interaction between Islam and local cultures and sociopolitical institutions was considered by Yurii M. Kobishchanov, Viktor A. Beilis, Anatolii D. Savateev, Pyotr A. Kutsenkov, Olga Yu. Bessmertnaya, Nikolai A. Dobronravin and Andrei A. Zhukov. Most of them came to the conclusion about synthesis of Islam with the traditional African religions and cultures as the basis of stable syncretic forms of the Afro-Islamic civilization. These forms manifest themselves in the features of the local script (Ajami), adapted to convey the phonetic features of the African languages (Hausa, Fula, Bamana, Susu, Swahili, Lingala, etc) [27], specific features of stylistic forms of masks and wood carving as a whole [28], appearance of Islamic motives in African folklore [29], the fact that Africans realize that they belong to the world Muslim community and culture and the use of the religious-political potential of Islam by the state in order to strengthen its power and consolidate the nation [30]. Some authors note symbiosis of Islam with traditional African cultures; their interaction leads to the emergence of more organic civilizational systems with fair historical prospects [31].

Thus, the Russian experts in Black Islam covered the path from fragmental and sporadic observations without purposeful study of this religion to special studies in its individual aspects and manifestations in the sociopolitical life of Africa. In addition to profound research of Islam, they expand the range of topics of these studies: beginning with the first reactions to the rapid expansion of Islam at the end of the 20th century in the social, cultural and political life of the African peoples, the researchers have reached the stage of comprehensive studies in Islam, in particular, concerning the conditions and reasons of its revival, analyzing it as a civilizational system.

At the same time, scholarly activities in this sphere are hampered by lack of special training in religious affairs in most of the specialists who study African Islam and impossibility to carry out purposeful field researches in Africa. Obviously, if these difficulties are gradually overcome, this will be conducive to the further expansion of studies in African Islam.

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CHANGES IN AFRICA: FROM PAN-AFRICANISM TO THE FORMATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION

*Vyacheslav Usov**

On July 8-9, 2002, the 38th Assembly of the heads of the states and governments of the OAU countries, convened in Durban (RSA), officially proclaimed the formation of the African Union (AU), a new organization of African states, as the successor of the OAU, which played a very important role in Africa's history.

According to African politicians, scholars, and public figures, the formation of the AU is a continuation of the efforts made by the African diaspora leaders in the 18th and 19th centuries and such heads of independent African countries as Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Sekou Toure, Kenneth Kaunda, Leopold Senghor, etc., in order to ensure a better future for Africa and its peoples and make the world treat them with justice.

One of the first important steps towards this purpose was signing the OAU Charter on May 25, 1963, by 32 African states in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, the only African state that managed to retain its independence.

THE THORNY PATH TOWARDS THE UNION

When South Africa became the 53rd member of the OAU (1994), its main purpose of the full liberation of Africa from colonial dependence and apartheid as the legacy of the latter was achieved. The next item of the African agenda was economic and social liberation. The changing economic, social, and political circumstances, including the globalization process, gave

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rise to an increasing gap between the dynamically developing postindustrial West and Africa as the most underdeveloped part of the world periphery.

This made the African countries and international community think about new approaches to the development of the continent and solutions that would be helpful in overcoming the deep and all-embracing crisis in Africa.

It would be wrong to say that the African leaders did not try to modernize the OAU. Such attempts were made since the 1970s. The most famous documents on this issue are the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa (1970), the Lagos Action Plan (1980), where the idea of forming the African Economic Community was formulated for the first time [1], the Priority Programme of Economic Recovery of Africa for 1986-1990 (1985), the African Alternative to the Structural Adjustment Programmes (1989), etc.

The most important of these documents was the Abuja Treaty (1991) about forming the African Economic Community. This treaty, which developed many ideas of the Lagos Action Plan, envisaged a 34-year-long six-staged process of the economic integration of the African countries, which is to be completed by 2025 by forming the African Economic Community. The treaty provided for the formation of the Pan-African Parliament, Economic and Social Council, Special Technical Committees, and a pan-African court [2]. At present, these agencies function within the framework of the African Union. Essentially, when the Abuja treaty came into effect, this meant that the OAU had to rely on two quite different legal acts, i.e., the OAU Charter and the treaty establishing the AEC.

In addition to African programmes, the international community drafted many plans of the development of the continent, such as the Cairo Africa-Europe Action Plan (1995), declarations of the Okinawa (2000) and Genoa (2001) G8 summits on Africa (2000) [3], and the Plan of Actions in Africa, approved by the Kananaskis summit (2002) [4]. The special UN agencies prepared and approved a series of recommendations and plans concerning the development of Africa.

It is well-known that the earlier programmes yielded no material results. The hopes pinned on the economic liberalization and opening the African domestic markets for foreign capital also were belied by and large by the late 1990s. By the early 21st century, the African countries were no less disintegrated and much poorer than at the beginning of the independence period.

In this setting, when M. Qadhafi invited the African leaders to an extraordinary OAU summit held in Sirt (Libya) in September 1999, they

adopted a declaration aimed at strengthening the organization's ability to react to the challenges of the new millennium [5]. To achieve this purpose, it was decided to transform the OAU into the African Union.

The personality of M. Qadhafi, on whose initiative the AU was founded, left a notable imprint on the discussions about the character of and paths towards implementing this plan. After his attempts to integrate the Arab countries failed finally by 1998, he turned to Africa. Speaking at the Sirt summit, he insisted on forming the United States of Africa as a federal state as early as the beginning of 2000 and advocated elimination of intra-African frontiers, introduction of a pan-African currency, and formation of a joint financial system, joint army, and pan-African court and parliament [6]. Many points of this plan repeated the idea of the United States of Africa formulated by K. Nkrumah under different historical conditions, before the OAU was formed.

M. Qadhafi made a lot of organizational efforts to achieve these purposes. Libya paid membership fees to the OAU that were due from ten countries, mainly the French-speaking states of West Africa. On the eve of the 36th OAU summit, convened in Lome (Togo) in June 2000, M. Qadhafi covered 4000 km by car, visiting several African countries. His purpose was to demonstrate unity of the continent and imaginary nature of the intra-African frontiers. Then he pitched his tent in Lome, on the oceanic coast. All the walls of the capital were covered with posters with Qadhafi's portraits. Crowds met him enthusiastically whenever he appeared in public.

However, when the draft Constitutive Act of the AU was discussed, M. Qadhafi's plans of the accelerated formation of a supranational structure were opposed by such influential African states as the RSA, Nigeria, and Algeria. They advocated a gradual transition to the African Union on the basis of consolidating the existing sub regional groupings, such as SADC (South Africa Development Community) and ECOWAC (Economic Community of West African Countries); unlike the pan-African bodies, they had already achieved some economic and political results. In fact, this attitude was supported by Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the UNO, born in Ghana. This highly authoritative politician referred to the example of the European Coal and Steel Community, which became the precursor of the European Union, and proposed to start the economic integration of Africa with forming the African Oil and Diamond Community; he did not even mention the AU in his speech [7].

As a result of a prolonged discussion, the Lome summit adopted a revised version of the Constitutive Act of the AU, which was to come into

effect after being ratified by two thirds of the OAU members (36 states). The fact that the presidents of the RSA and Nigeria withdrew from the meeting before it ended was a sign of the tension that prevailed there. Kenya, an influential East African state, did not take part in it at all. The ratification process continued for almost a year. The RSA was 35th and Nigeria 36th to ratify the act [8].

THE EUROPEAN MODEL AND AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

As a result of several subsequent meetings and negotiations, the plan of transforming the OAU into the AU acquired its present shape by late 2001. In the final analysis, the large African states, supported by international economic organizations, the UNO, the U.S.A, and the European Union, managed to shelve M. Qadhafi's and his supporters' too radical proposals.

The model of the AU formation was based on the scheme of the EU's involvement, i.e., regional economic integration. Noting that 'Africa should not invent the wheel', the African leaders emphasized at the same time that the Union must be of a new type, based on the African experience [9].

Unlike the overpoliticized OAU, which only discussed economic and social problems without making decisions, the AU is planned to be an organization aimed at the economic integration and social development as prerequisites of political unity [10]. An important feature of the AU is the participation of nongovernmental organizations, trade unions, business circles, and other components of civil society in its activities. They will take part in the functioning of the Economic, Social, and Cultural Council, one of the AU bodies [11].

On the whole, the structure of the AU agencies was inherited to a large extent from the African Economic Community. Although it is still difficult to comment the principles of the division of authorities in the AU because of vagueness of the functions of some important agencies, it seems more balanced than in the AEC, and the structure of the executive branch is comparatively simple. Another important feature of this branch is the possibility of delegating a part of authorities to subordinate bodies [12].

The main bodies of the Union are the Assembly of the Heads of States and Governments, Executive Council, Committee of Permanent Representatives, aforesaid Economic, Social, and Cultural Council, and Commission (Secretariat). In addition, it was decided to set up seven Specialized Technical Committees, Pan-African Parliament, Pan-African Court, and such fi-

nancial institutions as the African Bank, African Monetary Fund, and African Investment Bank [13].

In comparison with the OAU Charter, the Constitutive Act of the AU includes some basically new political provisions. Article 4 of the act empowers the AC to intervene in the affairs of the member states in the cases of emergency, such as genocide, military crimes, and crimes against the mankind. This requires the support of two thirds of the member states. No less important is the denunciation of the unconstitutional change of regimes in the member states. Moreover, the governments that come to power in this manner are not allowed to participate in the Union's activities (Article 30 of the Constitutive Act) [14].

The AU Assembly is entitled to impose sanctions on the member states whose actions run counter to the AU's policy and violate its decisions. The provisions of Article 23(b) of the act amount to the possibility of imposing economic blockade on the violators of the Union's policy [15]. However, the mechanism of sanctions has not yet been drafted.

'NEW PARTNERSHIP: THE ECONOMIC PROGRAMME OF THE UNION

The programme of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was prepared as the AU's working tool.

The history of this programme is, perhaps, even more dramatic than that of the Union itself. From the very start, it was drafted with regard to the necessity of solving the African indebtedness problem. Presidents A. Bouteflika of Algeria, O. Obasanjo of Nigeria, and T. Mbeki of the RSA, charged by the Sirt summit to outline the programme, met the G8 leaders and representatives of the WB and IMF several times. As a result, the Millennium Programme of Partnership for Recovery of Africa was drafted by mid-2000. The representatives of the RSA played a considerable role in its preparation.

The programme provided for making Africa a continent that may be of interest to potential investors. It attached a special significance to the observation of African leaders' obligations to respect democracy and human rights and reform economy of their countries. The plan was supported by G8 in Geneva in the summer of 2001 [16]. Soon thereafter, A. Wad, the president of Senegal, proposed the OMEGA Plan for Africa, where social programmes and development of infrastructure were considered priority tasks. The plan appealed the developed countries to increase their aid to Africa as atonement for their historical guilt of colonizing the Black Continent [17].

As a result of a negotiation between Senegal and South Africa in early July 2001, both plans were united. The new document was entitled New African Initiative and was presented at the Lusaka (Zambia) summit of the OAU in July 2001. The meeting held in Abuja (Nigeria) in October 2001 approved the final version of the document under its present name NEPAD [18].

The document stresses that the NEPAD is the programme of the development of Africa drafted and implemented by the Africans. This is undoubtedly true. However, it is no less true that many its provisions are based on the plans of international economic and financial organizations and on the agreements concluded by the African leaders with international financial institutions and the main industrial countries. International financial institutions, first of all, the WB, and governments of the G8 countries have promised credits amounting to billions of dollars to the African countries that ensure democratic and effective political and economic governance and create a favourable investment climate [19].

Obviously, the NEPAD is an attempt to combine the solution of several grave problems of Africa, such as overcoming the shortage of development funds, strengthening democratic rule, combating corruption, etc. The NEPAD authors tried to formulate a new system of values for the political elites and peoples of Africa. The fourth chapter of the programme, the Call to the Peoples of Africa, is an attempt to mobilize the masses' support in order to achieve the purposes of 'new partnership' as a kind of new ideological doctrine [20].

NEPAD is based on liberal ideas, related to the globalization in its Western understanding, and the Background on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, a document prepared by the South African foreign ministry, formulates the purpose of integrating the NEPAD into the multi-lateral system of world financial and economic institutions [21]. At the same time, the programme admits the state's role in achieving economic growth and development and mixed economy principles [22].

The NEPAD action programme includes three strategic tasks: (a) to create prerequisites for starting the process of overcoming the crisis, such as establishing peace, security, and democracy in Africa and arresting corruption; (b) to select priority sectors to be supported under NEPAD, including the development of infrastructure and human resources; and (c) to mobilize resources for fulfilling the programme [23].

Organizationally, NEPAD is a quite independent structure, a kind of an 'exclusive club'. Its secretariat is in Midrand (RSA) [24]. The committee for the programme implementation, elected on the basis of equal representation

of all African sub-regions, consists of five countries that initiated 'new partnership' (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa) and Tunisia, Mali, Cameroon, Gabon, Sao Tome e Principe, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Rwanda, Botswana, and Mozambique. Representatives of the presidents of five initiating countries are members of the Managing Committee, which is in charge of preparing concrete projects and supervising the secretariat's activities [25]. The document entitled Initiative on Democracy and Political Governance, approved by 15 members of the committee for implementation, defines the notion of 'good governance' and decides which countries will take part in implementing the programme and how they will do this [26].

Many documents of the AU and NEPAD emphasize that the NEPAD is a programme of actions approved by the African Union and aimed at achieving its objectives. At the same time, it is planned to form another AU agency, the Conference for Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation in Africa. According to the AU founders' plan, it must become a basic institution for formulating the common values of the AU and the criteria for evaluating its successes. Another important task of the Conference will be creating a mechanism of implementing the AU's decisions and supervising this process [27]. The authors of NEPAD and AU officials themselves admit that some functions of their agencies overlap and intend to discuss this problem later.

The NEPAD authors tried to solve the quite complicated question related to the coexistence of the AU and such regional groups as SADC, ECOWAC, etc. Many participants of the negotiations held in 1999-2000 considered this problem as a major factor of the inevitable failure of the Union. According to M. Qadhafi's initial plan, sub-regional economic groups were to be dissolved gradually as the AU agencies were formed [28]. However, a compromise was found. The NEPAD authors point out that their plan is not to replace these groups or compete with them but to coexist with them and take their interests into account while preparing development plans [29].

The scope and forms of this cooperation will be considered additionally, but reliance on the existing regional economic groups seems preferable to M. Qadhafi's plans. Many African countries are too small to solve their economic problems and too weak to be effective regional partners and react to the challenges of the globalization independently.

The 'new partnership' programme sets the tasks mentioned at many international forums that discussed the problems of Africa. Its long-term purpose is to stop marginalization of the African countries. To this end, it is planned to bring the annual increase in the GDP to the level of 7% within

next 15 years [30]. According to most of the Russian and foreign experts in African affairs, it will be difficult to perform this task [31].

The planned volume of financial inflow (mainly from the West) also is in doubt. The annual amount of \$ 64 bn, needed to implement NEPAD, is far in excess of the promises of G8. Even if a part of African countries' debts is written off, this will not solve the problem of programme financing [32]. Speaking at a press conference in Pretoria after the constitutive summit of the AU, held in Durban, Vijay Makhan, assistant Secretary General of the OAU and AU, said that NEPAD had been approved by the WB and IMF, but they had not yet allocated the necessary funds [33].

Nonetheless, NEPAD is the best programme the African countries have now. A.M. Vassiliev notes:

'In spite of the ambitious purposes and excessive optimism of the NEPAD authors, their programme has won wide international recognition. In fact, G8, the European Union, and the main international financial and credit institutions and economic organizations have approved it. They welcome the fact that NEPAD mainly corresponds to the strategic course of globalization and liberalization of world economy and that African leaders are ready to bear responsibility for the future of the continent and expand the domestic sources of development. In addition, it is clear to the leaders of developed countries, the UNO, and the Bretton Woods organizations that, firstly, they cannot turn a blind eye to Africa's problems and, secondly, the cooperation of authoritative African leaders is a must' [34].

WITH HOPE BUT WITHOUT ILLUSIONS

Thabo Mbeki, the South African president, became the first chairperson of the AU. Speaking at its launch on July 9, 2002, he emphasized the necessity to establish peace, security, and stability in Africa as the prerequisite of sustainable development. He said that the African countries' most important tasks are to strengthen democratic institutions and political culture, respect rule of law and human rights, facilitate access to education, develop science and technology, improve sanitary conditions, make quality water available, and combat such grave diseases as tuberculosis, malaria, AIDS, etc.

In fact, the South African president gave an answer to those who deem the industrial development of the continent impossible and see no future for it other than that of an object of neo-colonialism or a biosphere sanctuary. He said that Africa has no alternative to concentrating all available domestic and foreign resources and investing them in plants, mines, agriculture, and

infrastructure. Africa must not remain a mere exporter of rare goods to the West, he added [35].

The decisions of the Durban summit (the most notable of them is the resolution about forming a pan-African army [36]) show that, despite a definite compromise between the advocates of a moderate approach to the development of the AU (first of all, the RSA and Nigeria) and M. Qadhafi's radical supporters, both parties still are divided by deep contradictions. In addition, M. Qadhafi put forward many other proposals and amendments to the Constitutive Act aimed at accelerating the rapprochement of the African countries in the field of defence and security; earlier, this approach had been rejected by large African states. The next session of the Assembly of the Union will consider these proposals [37].

The African leaders, in particular, those of Sub-Saharan Africa, have to do a lot unless they want the Constitutive Act and NEPAD programme to be covered by dust in archives, as it happened to many earlier documents on the development of Africa. Both internal differences concerning the further paths of the AU's development and the possibility of bureaucratic degeneration of the Union are serious menaces to the African reformers' plans.

The African leaders seem to understand how difficult their tasks are. Inaugurating the 38th (and the last) OAU summit, T. Mbeki called the participants to overcome inertia that made them act in the habitual manner and establish effective partnership with the popular masses in order to radically reconstruct the economies of the continent [38].

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18. Background on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)... P. 1-2.
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23. Background on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)... P. 2; *Maloka Eddi*. Op. cit. P. 10.
24. Background on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)... P. 4.
25. Ibid.
26. The Durban summit of 2002 decided to increase the number of the Committee members to 20. One of the new members was Libya, whose leader M. Qadhafi repeatedly criticized the NEPAD programme for its pro-Westernism. It seems that this fact testifies not so much to a compromise concerning the balance of forces in the AU as to the beginning of the deformation of the 'good governance' principles, which include respect for democratic forms of governance and rule of law as an inalienable component.
27. Background on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)... P. 6.
28. ITAR-TASS, 12.07.2000.
29. Background on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)... P. 3.

30. *Vassiliev A.M.* Op. cit. P. 8.
31. *Cherkasova I.V.* The Strategy of 'New Partnership' for Africa's Development (NEPAD) or the Creation of Socially Useful Free Market. Report at the 9th Conference of Africanists. Moscow, May 21-23, 2002; *Tette Kofi, Desta A.* Analysis of the Alternative Strategy for Africa: Criticism of the NEPAD Programme. Report at the 9th Conference of Africanists. Moscow, May 21-23, 2002.
32. ITAR-TASS, [11.07.2002](#).
33. Ibid.
34. Quoted from: *Vassiliev A.M.* Op. cit. P. 8.
35. Launch of the African Union, 9 July 2002: Address by the Chairperson of the AU, President Thabo Mbeki // [www.dfa.gov.za/AU2002](#). P. 2.
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ESSAYS

THE POLICY PURSUED BY GORBACHEV AND SHEVARDNADZE IN SOUTH AFRICA CONTRADICTED THE USSR'S NATIONAL INTERESTS

*Vassili Solodovnikov**

In 1989 and 1990, I addressed E.A. Shevardnadze, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, three times, suggesting some modifications to the USSR's policy in South Africa. On March 30, 1989, I wrote to him:

'Dear Eduard Amvrosievich,

'Our present approach to the problems of the South of Africa and, in particular, our policy on the RSA makes me somewhat uneasy. Responding to your calls to scholars and diplomats about being more daring while expressing their opinions related to foreign policy, I would like to share some considerations, based on my 25-year-long experience of studying the problems of Africa and my practical work in that continent.

'I hope that you will allot some of your precious time to get acquainted with my analysis of the situation.'

An analytical note headed *New Soviet Approach to the Settlement in South Africa and Its Possible Consequences* was attached to my letter.

Getting no answer, I sent another letter to E.A. Shevardnadze on December 8, 1989:

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The article '*The Policy Pursued by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze in South Africa Contradicted the USSR's National Interests*' has been published in a collection under the title '*South Africa at the Threshold of the Third Millennium*' («Южная Африка на пороге третьего тысячелетия»), Moscow, 2002, p. 164-169.

‘Dear Eduard Amvrosievich,

‘Responding to your call to scholars about being more daring in formulating their considerations about the USSR’s foreign policy, I sent an analytical note to you in last April, where I evaluated the new Soviet approaches to the problems of South Africa. Unfortunately, I have got no answer from your ministry, with the exception of Comrade A.L. Adamishin’s promise to receive me and discuss my considerations. Meanwhile, our policy in South Africa still makes me uneasy. The process that develops there may result in an erosion of our political prestige both in that region and elsewhere.

In my opinion, the gist of the problem is lack of a clear and comprehensive conception concerning our national interests in South Africa, based on profound analysis of all aspects of the situation that prevails in the RSA and neighbour countries. As a result, we lack a balanced programme of actions aimed at safeguarding our interests. This leads to inevitable errors.

‘I would like to present my analysis of some aspects of our policy in South Africa, which are of my particular concern, and make two concrete proposals:

‘1. Hold consultations between the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs and the international department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, on the one hand, and the ANC and SACP, on the other, in order to frankly discuss the problems that have accumulated in our relations.

‘2. To form an interagency task force of experts in South Africa, which would analyze the situation in detail and prepare a conception concerning our national interests and practical recommendations about our policy in that country within three or four months.

‘With kind regards,

‘V.G. Solodovnikov.’

An analytical note On the USSR’s Policy in South Africa was attached to my letter.

This message also remained unanswered.

Being reluctant to reconcile myself to the further complication of the relations between Moscow and the ANC, I wrote to Shevardnadze for the third time, suggesting normalizing our relations with the ANC, thus safeguarding the USSR’s interests before it was too late.

‘To: the Minister of Foreign affairs of the USSR

Comrade E.A. Shevardnadze

‘Dear Eduard Amvrosievich,

‘Last year I sent two letters to you regarding our policy in South Africa. Unfortunately, they remained unanswered. Being aware of the fact that major

and urgent European affairs take almost all your time, I have decided, nonetheless, to try once again to attract your attention to the problems of my concern.

‘In Africa as a whole and in South Africa in particular, we are losing the political capital earned by decades of hard work with huge expenses. Things are moving to a situation when at the beginning of negotiations in the RSA, we can find ourselves in the role of at best a "junior partner", who is not indispensable to the West, the government of the RSA, and the ANC. It is well-known that our influence in South Africa is based on our prolonged cooperation with the ANC. Weakening these relations, we question our whatever participation in this process.

‘Our participation in the settlement cannot be an end in itself. Our real purpose is to safeguard our economic interests in that country, which can become our important partner: the USSR and RSA account for more than a half of the world gold output. If both countries skilfully cooperate at the gold market alone, we can get hundreds of millions of dollars as an addition to our present hard currency proceeds. However, to all appearance, what happened in Zimbabwe, with which we could not even establish diplomatic relations for two years, is going to happen again in this case.

‘The plot of the West has been clear on the whole. On the one hand, it prompts us to expand political, economic, and cultural relations with the RSA; on the other, these contacts will be publicized immediately in the Western press to discredit the USSR in the opinion of its future government. This is a paradoxical situation: expanding our relations with the RSA, we simultaneously undermine the potential of our relations with it in the post-apartheid period.

‘Of course, I do not suggest mechanically continuing our earlier course of full rejection of whatever contacts with the RSA. We are in a basically new situation now. But it requires us to be even more discreet and cautious, maintaining these contacts in a regulated and controlled manner.

‘The problem is, in my opinion, lack of profound analysis of our long-term national interests in that country, prepared by all leading experts in the South African affairs. Unless we study the situation in that country in detail and analyze the consequences of all versions of our policy, our volitional decisions will be oriented towards short-term and tactical current interests. You know the results of this practice better than I do.

‘I am convinced that our long-term interests may be safeguarded by strengthening our decades old relations with the ANC, which, as all experts agree, will become the key element of the South African government. Today, it is already more difficult to do so than it was yesterday. Our relations are progressively deteriorating. To eliminate increasing tension, we need a mechanism

for regular consultations with the ANC. Its absence (the more so that such a mechanism functions in our relations with the government of the RSA) will create additional difficulties to us.

Apart from this, it is undesirable to perceive the problems of South Africa only as an element of global relations between the superpowers. This is a quite major independent problem, which receives personal and permanent attention of all Western leaders, including Mr. Bush. If we treat developing countries as the periphery of world politics, we shall inevitably face same problems as those we are facing in the relations between the centre and the republics of the USSR.

‘Let me reaffirm my readiness to cooperate with the ministry of foreign affairs of the USSR in considering our approaches to the problems of South Africa.

‘V.G. Solodovnikov,

‘Corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Ambassador. November 23, 1990.’

My third message was answered unexpectedly soon. I think that it was because of strengthening criticism of the course of Gorbachev's group in the Central Committee of the CPSU and Supreme Soviet. Soon thereafter, Shevardnadze pointedly resigned, being reluctant to be held responsible for all he had done. He sent his answer to me after the resignation.

‘Minister of foreign affairs of the USSR. Moscow, December 29, 1990.

‘Dear Vassili Grigoryevich,

‘It was very interesting to me to read your recent letter. I am grateful for your considerations about the Soviet Union's policy in our relations with the RSA. I share your deep concern about the problem of correspondence of our new political line to our national interests.

‘In this context, let me tell you, first of all, that, in our opinion, the main task of the Soviet policy is to accelerate the liquidation of apartheid and political settlement of the conflict in the RSA. Solving this problem, we rely mainly on our traditional friendly relations with the ANC and its allies as democratic forces. At the same time, it is obvious that the Soviet Union can play a tangible role in the settlement in South Africa only if it maintains dialogue with other main forces that advocate political settlement, including F. de Klerk's government.

‘You surely understand that it is not our plan to bring any South African political organization to power. This question must be solved by South Africans themselves. It is most important that the processes that develop in that country result finally in creating democratic South Africa, with which we can develop comprehensive and mutually advantageous relations.

‘Having no permanent mission in the RSA, we experience some difficulties in maintaining stable contacts with the participants in the settlement in the RSA. When the ANC leadership shifted their headquarters to the RSA, this weakened our regular contacts with them; we hope that this is a temporary phenomenon. Recently, a delegation of the ANC was received at our ministry, and we had an interesting exchange of opinions about the liquidation of apartheid and our bilateral relations.

‘Let me add that our experts pay keen attention to the prospects of our relations with post-apartheid South Africa. A lot of close work is done in this sphere. We maintain intense contacts with our scholars; it seems pressing to me to meet them again for a detailed and comprehensive analysis of our possible actions aimed at safeguarding our both short-term and long-term interests.

‘Let me wish you good health and academic successes.’ Signed by E.A. Shevardnadze.

Speaking frankly, the minister's reply did not satisfy me. He advocated his course towards cooperation with the apartheid regime and further curtailment of the interaction with the ANC, using the pretext of ‘having no Soviet mission in the RSA’. He was hinting that, to maintain contacts with the ANC, he needed a Soviet mission in Pretoria, i.e., official relations with the RSA established before the completion of the negotiation process. He deemed this necessary to overcome ‘some difficulties in maintaining stable contacts with the participants in settlement in the RSA’. But recognition of the apartheid regime by the Soviet Union would further weaken the ANC's positions. I opposed establishment of official relations with the racist government of the RSA before apartheid was completely abolished. This would weaken the ANC's and its allies' positions, which ran counter to our interests not only in South Africa but in the whole Third World.

To conclude, my letters to Shevardnadze testify that my addresses to the ministry of foreign affairs manifested my concern about preserving our positions in Africa and the whole Third World.

M. Gorbachev's perestroika led not only to the destruction of the Soviet Union and a deep crisis in Russia but also to the weakening of our positions in Africa and other regions. It is well-known that the relations between the USSR and African countries developed quite dynamically in the 1970s and 1980s. They were mutually advantageous, contrary to the assertions spread in the period of perestroika to the effect that our cooperation was a burden to the Soviet Union.

The USSR's interaction with the countries of the southern part of Africa, decolonized as a result of considerable efforts of Moscow, was, in my

opinion, quite promising both politically and economically. However, to make it really fruitful, it was necessary to eradicate South African apartheid.

The USSR's consistent course towards cooperation with the ANC and its allies was supported not only by the people of South Africa itself but also by the democratic circles in the West, where national anti-apartheid committees were formed.

By the late 1980s, a political settlement in the south of Africa became really possible. The general election was conducted in Namibia in November 1989, and it attained independence in March 1990. The government of the RSA and the democratic forces of the country, led by the ANC, were considering the chances of a political settlement. Yet it was in that period that the Soviet leadership changed its tack in South Africa, curtailing the cooperation with the ANC and its allies and establishing relations with the racist regime of the RSA. After 1991, Yeltsin and Kozyrev became even more stubborn in pursuing this policy to the detriment of our country's interests.

The question the Russian historians, including Africanists, have to answer is as follows: why did the Gorbachev-Shevardnadze-Yakovlev group, who were in charge of the USSR's foreign policy in the late 1980s, deviate from the long-term course of supporting the ANC and SACP and begin to curtail cooperation with them, developing relations with the white minority's government, whose days were numbered?

This happened just when the USA imposed sanctions on the RSA in 1986 and began to establish contacts with the ANC, when it was clear that the racist rule was drawing to an end and N. Mandela would head South Africa. Where should we look for an answer, in Moscow or in Washington? It is desirable to have documents from the foreign ministry's archives published as soon as possible to find this answer.

‘AFRICAN RENAISSANCE’: A CONCEPTION OR A SLOGAN?

Vladimir Shubin & Lyubov Prokopenko***

The conception of ‘African renaissance’, whose main advocate is Thabo Mbeki, the South African president and leader of the African National Congress, the ruling party of the country, became widespread in the south of Africa and elsewhere at the beginning of the 21st century. It became the key element of both domestic and foreign policy of the country.

Speaking at the United Nations University in Tokyo on April 9, 1998 on the African Renaissance, South Africa, and the World, Thabo Mbeki proclaimed ‘African renaissance’ the political doctrine of the South African government and enumerated its key components: socio-cultural, political, and economic reintegration and improvement in Africa's geopolitical status [1]. In October 1999, the African Renaissance Institute (ARI) was founded in Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, with active participation of the RSA.

According to Eddi Maloka, the director of the Africa Institute of South Africa, the debates about various aspects of ‘African renaissance’ set a progressive, ‘Afrocentrist’ task for the ‘post-apartheid epoch’ [2].

The authors of Strategy and Tactics, the programmatic document of the ANC, connect the very conception of ‘African renaissance’ with grasping the scope of the problems and difficulties caused by the colonial domination and ‘unjust international relations’, which resulted in the debt crisis and underdevelopment [3]. Reasoning from this and emphasizing that imperialism supported authoritarian regimes to safeguard its vested interests, E. Maloka

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believes that 'African renaissance' may be considered in this context as a 'part of the broad anti-imperialist movement' [4].

At the same time, many participants of the debates about 'African renaissance' accentuate its 'pan-African dimension'. For instance, Chris Landsberg and Francis Cornegay from the Johannesburg Centre for Political Studies ask whether 'renaissance of the Pax Africana' is a mask of the 'renaissance of the Pax Pretoriana' with the RSA's domination, at least, in the southern part of the continent. They insist on a pan-African approach, considering pan-Africanism as an embodiment of the political, economic, social, and cultural movement that strives to encompass the whole continent, overcoming political differences. The scholars describe 'African renaissance' as 'a version of pan-Africanism of the late 20th century' [5].

This approach is close to the positions of those who consider 'African renaissance', first of all, as a 'return to the roots'. The increasing interest of Africans, including South Africans, in the traditional African customs and beliefs turns into their idealization.

William Macgoba, a renowned South African scholar (now he prefers his non-Christian name Malegapuru) emphasizes that the African ethics is not based on warfare. He believes that Africans are not inclined for conquest but are good in defence [6]. Some advocates of 'African renaissance' like to quote Leopold Senghor, who held that emotions are as inherent in the Africans as reason in the Hellenes [7]. However, many people do not share this viewpoint.

Some adherents of 'African renaissance', such as Kwezi Pra, a Ghanaian scholar, who works at Capetown University, hold that the decisive factors of this renaissance are African languages. They want these languages to be rehabilitated and developed to a degree that will enable them to describe the achievements of modern science and technology. This requires standardization and harmonization of cognate linguistic structures [8]. According to K. Pra, Africans are the people whose culture and history are of African origin. First of all, they are a product of their culture. This is the viewpoint of 'culturists', who believe that Africans must be courageous enough to consider discarding some ineffective and culturally alien institutions and agencies, copied from those of the West by accident.

WHO WILL REVIVE THE BLACK CONTINENT?

South African leaders emphasize the 'mobilization of African peoples for an independent determination of their destinies' and strive to create appropriate agencies in the RSA and abroad, which will attract South African

'patriotic' bourgeoisie and intellectuals, as well as poor and marginal social strata.

At the same time, some scholars attach an important role in achieving 'African renaissance' to the state; evaluating the state machinery of African countries as 'weak' or even 'collapsing', they doubt the possibility of a 'renaissance'.

Some people hope to achieve renaissance by intensifying the activity of regional economic groups, which, as they hope, can help Africa occupy a proper place in the globalizing world.

The RSA's role in 'African renaissance' is a topic of fierce discussions. The main debated question is if the country can and must lead this process. The South African leaders demonstrate sobriety in this question; they do not understate or overstate the country's capacities. The Strategy and Tactics reads that it would be improper to forget that South Africa is a small country with moderate incomes, but it is relatively influential due to its successes in the democratization, strategically advantageous geographical position, and huge resources and potential [9].

One of the advocates of this attitude is Muletsi Mbeki, a renowned journalist and the president's younger brother. Supporting the idea of 'African renaissance', he warned that new South Africa lacks experience in this field [10].

Vusi Mavimbela, once Thabo Mbeki's political adviser, participated actively in the discussion about 'African renaissance' before being appointed the head of the National Intelligence Agency. He characterized this renaissance as the third important stage of modern history of Africa after its decolonization and the 'democratic upsurge' of the 1990s [11].

Using the term of 'African renaissance', its advocates willy-nilly compare it with European Renaissance, considering similarities and differences between both phenomena.

E. Maloka notes that the conception of European Renaissance is treated in different ways in Europe itself. He refers to Arnold Toynbee, who wrote that the metaphorical use of this French word in the capacity of a synonym of the revival of a dead culture or a drying branch of a live culture has become customary in the contemporary Western lexicon [12].

E. Maloka emphasized that unlike its European twin, 'African renaissance' is an expression of hopes for the future rather than glorification of the past. Being a metaphorical projection to the future, it presupposes that a minimum of objective prerequisites and subjective factors will enable Africans to predict the future with definiteness.

LOOKING FOR A NATIONAL IDEA

The issue of African renaissance has a rich history. This idea was popular among the participants of the pan-Africanist movement as early as the 1930s. For instance, Nnamdi Azikiwe, who later became the first president of Nigeria, wrote a book entitled *Renascent Africa* in 1937 [13].

The interest in this conception strengthened again after the OAU adopted the Lagos Action Plan in 1980 and approved the treaty on forming the African Economic Community at its summit convened in Abuja, the new capital of Nigeria, in 1991. A conference dedicated to the memory of Sheikh Anta Diop was held in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, in 1996. Its topic was African Renaissance at the Dawn of the Third Millennium.

As for South Africa, it saw a rebirth of this conception. Speaking at the parliament on May 8, 1996, on the occasion of approving the permanent constitution of the country, T. Mbeki made a revealing statement at the very beginning: 'I am an African,' thus proclaiming himself a descendant of all ethnic groups of South Africa, including white Afrikaners. He underlined the 'great masses' right to formulate a definition of an African of their own and noted that the new constitution rejects the dependence of 'Africanness' on the race, skin colour, gender, or historical origin. This was a reiteration of the most important provision of the Freedom Charter of 1955, which read that South Africa belongs to the both black and white people who live there.

The president also mentioned the heritage of the whole continent, saying that Africans' mind and knowledge about themselves are formed by their victories, which shine like brilliants in the African crown, by the victories they won in the battles of Isandlwana and Khartum, the victories of Ethiopians, Ashanti of Ghana, and Berbers of the Sahara [14]. In his opinion, the very fact of adopting the constitution confirmed that Africa continues to rise from the ashes.

It was a year later that T. Mbeki put forward the conception of 'African renaissance' in an explicit form, speaking at a conference on attracting investments to Africa in Virginia (USA). We believe that the president chose this occasion to emphasize the pan-African character of his conception and his hopes for an active participation of foreign capital in the recovery of the continent. In particular, this was a message to the African diaspora, i.e., the Afro-Americans and African immigrants to the USA.

Considering the history of 'African renaissance' in South Africa, E. Maloka distinguished its stages: the formation of the ANC as a result of the strengthening of African nationalism in the early 20th century; the pe-

riod between the world wars, when organized workers' movement began in Africa; and the post-war 'renaissance', when the ANC became a radical mass movement. He also mentioned the Black Renaissance Convention of 1974, which formed the Action Committee for Renaissance, whose activity ceased soon because of the racist regime's reprisals.

It may be supposed that the 'African renaissance' conception had a dual purpose. On the one hand, it specified the new democratic RSA's role in Africa; on the other, it was used as a national idea to unify the population of the country after the programme of eliminating apartheid was implemented.

According to T. Mbeki, the liberation struggle in South Africa resulted in the development of the strongest and most resolute pan-African solidarity movement in the history of the continent; it involved both governments and popular masses of all countries. He welcomed several African countries' initiative concerning the foundation of the African Renaissance Institute [15].

T. Mbeki described the domestic tasks of 'African renaissance' as follows: (1) creating democratic political systems to ensure 'people's rule'; (2) satisfying rival interests of various social groups in each country by peaceful political methods with regard for the specific features of Africa; (3) achieving sustainable economic development in order to improve life standards and quality of popular masses' life; (4) combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and (5) rediscovering the 'creative past of Africa', restoring its culture, encouraging artistic creative activity, and expanding access to advanced science and technology.

The South African leader called Africans to develop the movement for 'African renaissance' with the participation of not only governments and political organizations but also masses and public organizations of all African countries.

RAINBOW OR BLACK COLOUR?

E. Maloka, who is close to the topmost leadership of the RSA, considers the discussion about 'African renaissance' as an important tool in building the nation and forming a national idea.

However, the domestic aspect of this idea is interpreted depending on the political orientation and sometimes racial or ethnic affiliation. These differences are strengthened by the vague and even contradictory character of the very conception of 'African renaissance'.

Some adherents of this idea in South Africa and elsewhere identify 'Africanness' with 'blackness', making T. Mbeki's conception a synonym of L. Senghor's 'negritude'.

The ANC leaders admit that this situation creates some difficulties. For instance, M. Serote wrote that the conception of 'African renaissance' evokes slight anxiety in white South Africans, Afro-Indians, and other people, who feel themselves neglected. He stressed that the government must help these communities feel themselves Africans and actively participate in building South Africa as a nation. Their experience must be applied in Africa as a whole [16].

To a large extent, the existing situation is a result of the whole history of the antiracist movement in the RSA. In the 1950s, the 'Africanists' advocated African exclusiveness, opposing 'charterists', the supporters of the Freedom Charter, which proclaimed the slogan of 'multiracialism' (this term has been replaced by 'nonracism' in the RSA). In 1959, the 'Africanists' split from the ANC and formed the Pan-African Congress (PAC).

After the political settlement in the RSA, the conception of 'rainbow nation' began to spread among Afro-Americans in the USA. One of its protagonists was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a Nobel peace prize winner. The emphasis laid on 'Africanness' by the topmost leaders of the RSA is inevitably interpreted by many people, especially the white population, as a deviation from the 'rainbow'.

Willem van Vuuren, professor of political science of West Cape University, raised a legitimate question about Africanist intellectuals' vision of the 'renaissant' nation as a 'monochrome' (black) or a 'rainbow' community. He asked if the official version of 'African renaissance' recognizes the progressive (charterist) 'rainbow' conception, considering 'Africanism' as a reactionary trend towards cultural homogenization and racial hegemony [17].

On the whole, we share van Vuuren's concern. However, he seems to identify the African majority with the ANC and non-Africans with the opposition, ignoring the fact that many nonblack people and even some whites vote for the ANC, while other parties enjoy the support of a part of Africans.

Speaking at the conference on Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism on the Eve of the 21st Century: African Studies in the Global Context, held in Moscow in September 1999, Neil Redelinheis, a South African scholar, questioned the very idea of 'African renaissance'.

She said that the realities of the continent are still very far from the renaissance ideals, believing that unity of Africans' purposes is impossible in a continent where people argue on who is an African and who is not. These ideals will remain an illusion until all citizens of South Africa are treated as Africans, she added. In her opinion, T. Mbeki's statement on independence of Africanness from race, skin colour, gender, or historical past sounds in-

spiringly and convincingly for Afrikaners, who consider South Africa as their only homeland. At the same time, she complained that many black citizens of the RSA do not share this 'global' viewpoint and deny the right to be called Africans to the white, especially Afrikaners. Determining Africanness, they take into account only the colour of a man's skin, and no historical events can change this status quo [18].

However, it must be borne in mind that white racists monopolized the right to be called Africans (Afrikaners) for decades, describing the majority first as 'indigenes', then as the Bantu, and since the late 1970s as blacks.

N. Redelinheis was right, stating that political democratization has not resolved the domestic political contradictions overnight and has not accelerated the economic development; life shows that economic difficulties are the main obstacle to realizing the renaissance ideas both in the RSA and in other African countries. In addition, she mentioned the specific South African problems, paying a special attention to the negative impact of the alliance of the ANC, South African Trade Union Congress, and South African Communist Party on economy of the country [19], ignoring the fact that trade unions and their communist allies safeguard working people's interests.

The scholar's position on economic problems is quite typical of the South African opposition who criticize the ANC 'from the right'. Its main mouthpiece is the Mail and Guardian, published from Johannesburg in cooperation with the British Guardian. At the same time, its political editor Howard Barrell evaluates T. Mbeki's economic policy as the most important potential contribution to renaissance at home and abroad, emphasizing that, unlike other African countries, the RSA adopted the structural adjustment programme voluntarily, without the IMF's pressure, and fulfilled it 'ruthlessly', in spite of trade unions' and communists' opposition. He admitted that the pace of economic growth and creation of new jobs was much slower than it was expected, although the RSA withstood the financial crisis of 1998-1999 better than other 'nascent' markets.

The government's attempts to create a strong class of black businessmen as a method of realizing the idea of 'African renaissance' also faced serious problems. The number of companies controlled by such businessmen in Johannesburg went down almost by a third in 1999 and continues decreasing thereafter.

Thabo Mbeki's 'all-embracing' interpretation of 'Africanness' is also sharply criticized by the African intellectuals who follow the traditions of the 'Africanists' of the 1950s. For instance, M.B. Ramose, a professor of University of South Africa, is quite sceptical about the idea of 'African ren-

aissance'. He believes that time is ripe to go beyond this conception, like the European Renaissance was followed by the Enlightenment epoch, the epoch of reason. If Africans stay too long at the renaissance stage, the 'North' will retain its leading role.

The conception of renaissance itself presupposes that at least some traditions of the pre-colonial period must be revived in the continent. However, one who claims a realistic approach must not overlook the fact that such aspects of the traditional African society as frequent famine, gender inequality, tribal conflicts, etc. do not deserve to be revived. Surely, this past also had positive aspects; the most important of it was collectivism, which persisted in colonies for decades and centuries though was weakened. The future will show how these positive aspects will manifest themselves in the epoch of market formation or, to put it plainly, privatization and individualism.

Neoliberalism, even in the form of self-imposed structural adjustment, is hardly compatible with genuine renaissance. Dr. B. Nzimande, a renowned sociologist and a member of the ANC National Executive, believes that any sincere attempt to revive Africa must be accompanied by a challenge to imperialism and its present neoliberal ideology, imposed by the IMF and WB [20]. This scholar headed the parliamentary committee for education before being elected the secretary general of the communist party.

Late Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere, who was ready to compromise concerning terms but not concerning the gist of the matter, called all Africans to cherish the values of socialism, which he strove to implant in his country [21]. In his opinion, these values include justice, respect for humans, and the development policy that presupposes care of the people. He emphasized ruthlessness of capitalism and asked who will help and support the poor in a country with 'heartless' market economy.

WILL SOUTH AFRICA BECOME THE LOCOMOTIVE OF AFRICAN RENAISSANCE?

The successful spread of the idea of 'African renaissance' will depend to a large extent on the improvement in the life of the ordinary people of the RSA, the standard-bearer of this idea.

Jacob Zuma, the South African deputy president, warned that the call for 'African renaissance' may become a fashionable conception, remaining an enigma to most of Africans [22]. This idea has become a kind of ideological substantiation of such actions as the South African navy's manoeuvres near the coasts of the neighbour countries or penetration of Sub-

Saharan countries by the Escom Enterprises, a South African power company [23].

An inalienable component of the conception of 'African renaissance' is strengthening the democratic principles of governance and respect for human rights in all African countries [24]. However, according to Thabo Mbeki, Africa faced the shameful situations when sergeants of small armies seized power, promoted themselves to generals, and then proclaimed themselves emperors [25].

Dozens of coups d'etat and civil wars took place in Africa after the 'democratization wave' of the early 1990s. The democratic systems established (at least, on paper) in most of African countries after they attained independence proved short-lived. This cannot be explained by sergeants' or even generals' evil intentions alone. The main problem was that the post-colonial constitutions did not reflect the real socio-political situation. It is still unclear how much the governance systems established after the collapse of one-party regimes correspond to the current African realities. They may reflect the striving for democracy within the African countries or be a result of external forces' pressure aimed at imposing alien political models on these countries. Thabo Mbeki stressed that new organizational forms must correspond to the specific situation in each country and create a basis for popular governance [26].

The question about the RSA's role in African renaissance and in 'pan-Africanization' of this conception is animatedly discussed in the country.

Prof. Peter Vale and Dr. Sipo Maseko (West Cape University) believe that the RSA cannot be the leading force of 'African renaissance', because its economic and military might weakens rather than strengthens the prospects of sustainable and even development in the South of Africa [27].

According to N. Redelinheis, South Africa is the starting point of 'African renaissance'. However, the destinies of African countries are, in the final score, in their peoples' hands, whose resolution will become the main factor of building a better future. The author considers that the RSA should lead this movement by examples rather than by orders. Before assuming this role, it has to solve the pressing domestic problems [28].

The scholar justly asks: how strong is the striving of diverse African countries to embrace such pan-African ideology as 'African renaissance'? Can it be shared simultaneously by, e.g., Egypt, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Tunisia, and Sierra Leone or any other six of 53 African states? Can it be claimed that there is a collective striving for renaissance in Africa? Is not it true that national and, which is even worse, parochial ethnic interests still are a priority in most of the countries?

The law on the Foundation for African Renaissance and International Cooperation, adopted by the South African parliament, testifies to the government's realism and practicalism. This law is aimed at strengthening cooperation with African and other countries by promoting democracy and good governance, preventing and settling conflicts, pursuing the policy of socio-economic development and integration, granting humanitarian aid, and developing human resources [29]. The foundation, formed in 2001, is controlled by the minister of foreign affairs and financed by the South African parliament.

Another example of Pretoria's keen attention to Africa was the increase in the ceiling of national companies' investments in African countries to 700 mln rands against 500 mln in other continents (a rand is ca. 10 U.S. cents) [30].

A serious step towards making the conception of 'African renaissance' economically effective was the formulation of the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP) by presidents Thabo Mbeki of the RSA, A. Bouteflika of Algeria, and O. Obasanjo of Nigeria.

Its history is as follows. The OAU summit of 1999 entrusted T. Mbeki as the chairperson of the Nonalignment Movement and A. Bouteflika, the then OAU chairperson, to make efforts for reducing Africa's debt burden. A year later, O. Obasanjo joined them according to the decision of G77 (the alliance of developing countries). They concluded that the foreign debt was not the only obstacle to African countries' development and the problem required a comprehensive approach, formulated in the aforesaid programme [31].

After Abdoulaye Wade, the president of Senegal, proposed his OMEGA Plan, both programmes were merged and approved by the OAU summit in Lusaka (Zambia) on July 11, 2001, as the New African Initiative, renamed thereafter as New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

'African renaissance' takes place almost simultaneously with the revival of the idea of African unity.

This idea was popular as early as the beginning of the 1960s, and its symbol was the name of Kwame Nkrumah. This old conception gained fresh impetus and was revived in 1999; unlike 'African renaissance', it is supported most actively not in the South but in the North of Africa. Muammar Qadhafi, the Libyan leader, became its main sponsor.

The OAU summit convened in Sirt (Libya) in September 1999 decided to form the African Union (AU). This reflected the leaders' striving to strengthen unity of the continent in comparison with the epoch of the OAU.

The next summit, held in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), approved the Constitutive Act of the AU, which came into effect on May 26, 2001. Amar Esse, the former minister of foreign affairs of Cote d'Ivoire, was elected the secretary general of this new organization with the mission of transforming the OAU agencies into those of the AU within a year.

Whatever schedules are prepared their implementation depends mostly on the socio-political situation in African countries. It was justly noted more than once that the colonial authorities encouraged division rather than integration of the new independent African states. But the decades of independence witnessed the development of the local elites, also disinterested in African integration. Only a broad movement for African unity can overcome their resistance.

RECOVERY OF AFRICA IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

The NEPAD programme is not confined to economy and coincides on the whole with the fundamental provisions of the conception of 'African renaissance'. Advocating cooperation with non-African entities, especially with industrial countries and international institutions, and emphasizing the hope of the authors of the programme for the Western political leaders' goodwill, Thabo Mbeki attached a special importance to expanding African states' potential [32].

It is widely recognized that Africa cannot hope for revival without aid. Some advocates of 'African renaissance' consider it as an international achievement of all people of African origin, especially the African diaspora.

E. Maloka believes that the conception of African renaissance is essentially internationalist. In his opinion, the supporters of this idea consider themselves as a part of the South and attach a great importance to the relations with non-African developing countries. Notably, Thabo Mbeki was an active participant in the Southern summit held in Havana in 1999.

However, Africa's cooperation with non-African countries needs a further expansion, because its destinies will heavily depend on the global situation and industrial countries' policy. Thabo Mbeki called all peoples of the world to support the movement for 'African renaissance', arguing that it is in the interests of whole mankind to eliminate global poverty and inequality.

Judging by the demonstrations in Seattle, Washington, Prague, and other places where conferences of international financial institutions were convened, a lot of people in the North, especially the youth, have already realized this. Although not all their methods are commendable, police ac-

tions alone cannot eliminate the factors that impel them to protest against the Western institutions' policy in a quite acute form.

Notably, the G8 summit held in Geneva in July 2001 approved the development plans prepared by the African leaders and adopted the Geneva Plan for Africa. This document evaluates peace, stability, and eradication of poverty in Africa as the most important challenges of the new millennium and emphasizes the participants' resolution to establish new partnership relations with African states in order to solve these problems of vital importance. It was decided that each participant in the summit would appoint a high-ranking representative, who would maintain contacts with African leaders and prepare an action plan to be approved by the next G8 summit. These representatives met African leaders in Addis Ababa in December 2001 and in Capetown in February 2002.

* * *

It may be assumed that the conception of 'African renaissance' as one of the tools of the policy aimed at forming a multipolar world was formulated by President Mbeki, first of all, to win broad support for his policy and achieve consolidation in the country, relying mainly on the African majority. At the same time, his actions testify to his deep concern about the situation in Africa on the whole.

Although this conception has not yet become an all-embracing 'national idea' and has few followers outside the RSA, it has an enormous potential.

The aforesaid law about the Foundation for African Renaissance and International Cooperation and preparation of the NEPAD programme may add to popularity of the 'African renaissance' conception.

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AT DIFFERENT PACE:
PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH
IN 2001-2002

Vladimir Vigand and Tatyana Deich***

Much hope is pinned now on the programme called New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), whose final version was approved by all African leaders at the OAU summit in Abuja (Nigeria) in October 2001 with regard for the Geneva Plan for Africa, adopted by the G8 in July 2001 [1]. The G8 summit held in Kananaskis (Canada) in June 2002 decided to write off African countries' debts to the amount of \$ 1 bln and allocate \$ 6 bln for supporting NEPAD.

The concrete purpose of the African countries' development is to achieve an annual increase in the GDP by 7% within next 15 years. Economists have calculated that this requires annual additional capital investment of \$ 64 bln (12% of the total GDP of Africa).

However, according to the Report about World Development of the World Bank, the inflow of investments that can make up for the investment deficit was just \$ 14.3 bln (2.7% of the African GDP) in 1999. Domestic savings amounted to 16 of 20% of all investments and even decreased in comparison with 1990. In addition, effectiveness of investments decreased from 25% in 1973 to 7% in 1997. This means that to increase the GDP by \$ 1, it is necessary to invest not \$ 4 but \$ 15. The real growth of the GDP was just 4.3% in 2001 [2].

The situation looks somewhat better when one analyzes every African country separately, since they differ very much in this respect.

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Both African and world international organizations and individual scholars paid a lot of attention to overcoming backwardness of former colonies, combating poverty, and creating prerequisites for economic growth and sustainable development. Most of their recommendations were prepared for whole continent or, at the best, for Sub-Saharan Africa. The effect of their implementation also was estimated at the regional level.

It was only gradually that each country began to be treated individually. As a result, notable differences among them were detected.

Some African countries managed to accelerate their economic growth and make production increase faster than the population, whose life standard improved. At the same time, such countries as Congo, Somalia, Liberia, etc. witnessed full collapse of statehood. Ethiopia lost its seaports as a result of the secession of Eritrea. All this resulted in a notable deceleration of economic growth.

It is noted in the report of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for 2002 that the trend towards polarization characterized almost all least developed countries (of 48 such countries, 33 are in Africa) [3].

According to the UNO, African economy grew faster than that of other regions (3.5% in 2000 and 4.3% in 2001). This happened due to establishment of good governance, an increase in agricultural output and export proceeds, and a decrease in the number or intensity of armed conflicts (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone). In addition, the forecasts about negative consequences of the terrorist acts committed in the U.S.A. on September 11, 2001, did not come true.

However, there is a reason to believe that economic growth will decelerate in Africa, returning to the level of 2000.

To evaluate the results of the development of an African country, one needs the data about agricultural output, which heavily depends on droughts and floods, and demand for African raw materials at the world market.

In 2001, weather was favourable in ca. 40 countries of 50 for which data are available. In addition, prices of the main raw materials increased by 2% in comparison with their average level in 1999-2000. The countries that import oil (their number is 42) benefited from the decrease in its world prices. Another permanent factor is the rich mineral wealth (90% of the world deposits of platinum, 80% of chromites, 76% of phosphates, 60% of cobalt and manganese, 40% of gold and diamonds) [4].

Being important by themselves, these general figures conceal serious differences in the economic situations in individual countries and thus in the

prospects of developing mutually advantageous trade and economic cooperation with them.

For instance, the RSA, whose contribution to the African GDP is above 20%, had, according to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the best Expanded Economic Policy Stance Index in the continent [5]. Its international credit rating belongs to the first category according to the data of Moody's Investors Service. In 2001, it increased again by several points. Its foreign indebtedness was stable (30% of the GDP), as well as its domestic debt (47%), which is considered as acceptable by the international standards. On this basis, it was expected that its GDP would increase in 2002 by 3.5% against 3% in 2001.

What is important, the government of T. Mbeki will manage, most probably, to avoid R. Mugabe's mistakes, such as expropriation of the minority's property. This step and the menace of its repetition in the neighbour countries decreased the inflow of foreign investments to the region; in 2001, the GDP of Zimbabwe went down by 7%.

Accelerated economic growth was noted in North Africa in 2001. The GDP of Tunisia increased by 6% (4.7% in 2000) and that of Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco by 4.3% (3.2 in 2000 and 2.7% in 1999). The reasons of this acceleration are stable oil prices, investment inflow to Morocco and Algeria as a result of partial privatization, an increase by 6% in Tunisian agricultural output, and growth of production in Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco by 3.2%. The increase in industrial output in the previous year (by 5% in Algeria and 5.7% in Tunisia) also accelerated economic growth in 2001. As the IMF noted, the Tunisian government began to pursue a sufficiently reasonable economic policy. This country and Morocco have signed agreements on cooperation with the European Union, which provide for the liberalization of trade by abolishing state subsidies and discontinuing support of the public sector.

According to ECOSOC forecasts, a further accelerated growth was expected in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia, which account for 25% of the African GDP. These forecasts were based on quite favourable macroeconomic indices in these countries: inflation remained slow, domestic reserves were sufficient, and the debt decreased to an acceptable level. In addition, these countries achieved a notable progress in structural reforms, in particular, in privatization and price control. Despite the events of September 11, 2001, North Africa did not lose its status of one of the main recipients of direct foreign investments.

The economic situation in Algeria will heavily depend on its domestic policy, including the authorities' ability to suppress Islamic extremism and effectiveness of the transition from planning to market relations.

At the same time, whereas the aid inflow to North Africa did not exceed 1% of its GDP, it was 4% of the GDP of Sub-Saharan Africa in 2001, reaching 15% in some its countries.

In 2001, the GDP of Nigeria, the largest Sub-Saharan country, increased by 4.3%, which was more than in two previous years. The main stimulus to this growth was oil proceeds, which reached almost \$ 14 bln. This enabled the country to keep the capital investment rate at the level of 18%. However, competition of Equatorial Guinea may upset Nigeria's position of the main oil supplier in West Africa. This country was first in Africa in the real growth of the GDP in 2001 (some 65%). The settlement of its territorial dispute with Nigeria further improved the prospects of its economic growth. Nigeria recognized Equatorial Guinea's rights to Zafiro, a deep seated oilfield between Bioko Island and the Niger delta.

Fair prospects of some other West African countries are related to the increase in cotton crop (2.1 mln tons in 2000/2001 against the average figure of 1.5 mln tons before this). We mean mainly Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, and Mali, which account for almost two thirds of the cotton crop in the region. For instance, Mali hoped to double its yield in 2002.

An important regional project was that of replacing the franc CFA, which circulated in the French-speaking ECOWAS countries, by a new currency, called afro. It is planned to begin with replacing local currencies by 'eco' in Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Gambia, and Sierra Leone. By 2004, all ECOWAS countries will use afro. These measures are aimed at putting an end to the dependence of the economies of the region on European currency (first franc and now euro), inherited from the colonial past, and drawing together the economies of French- and English-speaking countries of West Africa.

The countries of East Africa increased their GDP due to positive results of economic growth in 2000, when agricultural output in Malawi increased by 12.7% and industrial output in Tanzania by 5.7%. In Ethiopia, economic growth was 8.7%. At the same time, in Kenya, the most developed country of the sub region, the Expanded Economic Policy Stance Index deteriorated as a result of political instability.

On the whole, most of the African countries demonstrated a trend towards sustainable economic growth. However, its pace is insufficient to perform the tasks of the continent.

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THINGS HAVE GOT GOING?

*Alexander Tkachenko**

The experience of the recent decade testifies that Russian non-state-owned companies have become important participants in business relations with North Africa in almost all spheres of trade and economy. All aspects of Russia's relations with the countries of the region depend on their success in this sphere.

The condition and development of Russo-Arab trade and economic cooperation are determined to a large extent by the general economic situation, including the market reforms carried out in North Africa and Russia.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

The market reforms in Russia, especially the avalanche-like nature of mass privatization, have totally changed the make-up of the participants in foreign trade within a relatively short period. Since the mid-1990s, various forms of non-state-owned capital play the key role in Russia's economic relations with foreign countries.

In spite of crisis phenomena in various branches of economy, Russia has mostly retained its positions in world trade: its foreign trade turnover is \$ 125-130 bln; export is the main source of foreign currency and considerably exceeds import, which satisfies the country's vital needs in food, medicines, machines, and equipment.

However, this general evaluation conceals gross mistakes and inefficiency of many aspects of the policy pursued in the sphere of foreign trade, where private capital plays a major role.

In particular, this is characteristic of Russian businessmen's activity in North Africa, traditionally a major economic partner of Russia. The present

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condition of the Russo-Arab business partnership is anything but satisfactory, although an objective evaluation of the situation is impossible unless one avoids projecting the earlier scope of cooperation with artificial emphasis on its military component to the present. Naturally, the figures of out days look poor when compared with the past arithmetically.

In spite of some progress achieved in the late 1990s, the drastic recession of Russia's trade with Egypt, Algeria, and Libya, our priority partners in North Africa, has not been overcome. This is a major factor of weakness of our partnership with North Africa on the whole. In 1997-1999, our trade turnover with Egypt was \$ 470 mln, less than a half of the pre-crisis level of the late 1980s. The turnover of Russo-Algerian trade was just \$ 120 mln in 1998 (%% of the total Algerian foreign trade turnover). Before economic sanctions against Libya, once our major partner, were weakened in the late 1990s, our trade was next to nothing.

Russo-Arab cooperation was curtailed in such key branches of economy as oil and gas production, metallurgy, infrastructure, specialist training, etc.

PRIVATIZATION IS FASTER IN RUSSIA THAN IN NORTH AFRICA

The crisis in Russo-Arab trade and economic cooperation was caused by a variety of factors.

Large-scale privatization was started in North Africa later than in Russia, namely, in the mid-1990s. Both public sector companies and newly created private entities are in an unstable situation. Russian privatization also is incomplete and continues; various groups compete for the property redistribution; many public and private sector companies work ineffectively.

Such problems related to market reforms as ownership of land, guarantees for investors, stable currency and finances, decriminalisation of business, etc. remain unsolved both in Russia and in North Africa.

It took Russian and North African companies much time to adapt themselves to an extent to the new payment system, applied worldwide.

The collapse of the old foreign trade agencies, caused by the crisis of the bureaucratic economic system in Russia, was not followed by rapid maturation of new ones. In particular, effectiveness of the new participants in trade with North Africa is far from satisfactory.

A strong negative factor of the development of the Russo-Arab economic cooperation was the Soviet principle of ignoring mutual investments, which lend stability and dynamism to foreign trade and serve as a firm basis

for international business partnership. They were unacceptable to the Soviet officials for ideological reasons. Both Russia and Arab countries are still reaping the fruits of this, to put it mildly, short-sighted policy.

Crisis phenomena in Russian economy, the default of August 1998, and financial collapses in South-East Asia, Latin America, and other regions with developing market economy also adversely affected the scope and forms of the Russo-Arab cooperation.

The economic liberalization of the 1990s strengthened the orientation of Russian export-import companies towards industrial countries to the detriment of developing countries of North Africa and other regions. The markets of industrial countries attracted Russian businessmen by better organization, deal conditions, infrastructure, etc.

The intense penetration of North Africa by European and American companies after Russia withdrew therefrom in the 1990s enabled them to occupy Russia's niches in metallurgy, power engineering, infrastructure, etc. Their investments in various development projects, credits, and aid are much more than those received by the Arab countries from Russia. Fundamentally renovating the forms of partnership with these countries, capital from industrial countries dynamically stroke roots in North Africa. This has not eliminated Russian business from the region (this is impossible at all), but Western capital's activity is an additional obstacle to the development of our bilateral cooperation.

Russo-Arab business relations also were affected by the problem of North African countries' huge debt to the USSR, which remained unsolved for many years (and has not been solved in the cases of Libya and Algeria up to now). In addition, they are hampered by the international economic sanctions against Libya and prolonged recession at the world oil and gas market in the 1980s and 1990s, which reduced export proceeds of the OPEC countries.

One more negative factor is the relatively poor investment rating of both Russia and the countries of the region, which is a result of political instability, various domestic and international conflicts, excessive interference of the state in economic life, etc.

As a result, Russian capital is reluctant to develop stable and multifarious partnership and set such long-term tasks as expansion of investments through joint ventures. It prefers short-term deals and financial speculations, which enable them to make profit quickly. Notably, there were only five Russo-Moroccan joint ventures in 1998, although this country possesses a huge economic potential and fair experience of partnership with Russia. The

volume of their output was just \$ 1.5 mln. The fact that Russia is second to the European Union in importing Moroccan citrus fruits testifies to a considerable room for joint business activity, which is not used to capacity.

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS OVERCOMING THE CRISIS

In the second half of the 1990s, Russia and the countries of North Africa took some steps to overcome the crisis in their business relations.

The upturn that took place at the world fuel market in late 1999 and early 2000 enabled the countries of the region to recover economically and improve their solvency, overcoming the serious financial and economic difficulties of the previous decade. This increased their ability to repay debts and find resources for economic development and partnership with foreign countries.

Russia and the Arab countries were successful in renovating the legal basis for trade and economic cooperation in conformity with the reality of the 1990s. However, this process is still at its initial stage in the case of some countries of the region. For instance, the first meeting of the Russo-Algerian commission for trade and cooperation in economy, science, and technology was held as late as the beginning of 2000. The legal acts adopted by it, such as the convention on mutual legal assistance in solving economic and other disputes, agreement on encouragement and mutual protection of investments, avoidance of double taxation, etc. need practical testing and, perhaps, adjustment.

Russian private capital began to expand its activity in most of the North African countries, mainly in Egypt and Morocco, in the mid-1990s.

Cairo was first to solve the indebtedness problem. Visiting Moscow in September 1997, President H. Mubarak signed several documents on the expansion of bilateral partnership, including the agreements on cooperation in science and technology, mutual protection and encouragement of investments, avoidance of double taxation, legal aid in civil and commercial affairs, and reduction of custom duties. These documents became prerequisites for stirring up Russian private capital's activity in Egypt.

In the late 1990s, Russia and Egypt considered bilateral cooperation projects in power generation, chemical industry, mining, glass manufacturing, science, technology, and agriculture. Egypt is very interested in attracting Russian companies to the New Valley project, aimed at the reclamation of 900,000 hectares in the Western desert, which will require investment of

several billions dollars. Egyptian companies also are ready to invest in many branches of Russian industry.

One of the joint projects is the agreement between Russian Aviastart Co. and the Sirocco Aerospace International of Egypt on joint financing of the manufacture of TU-204 planes and founding a joint leasing company for their operation. This contract is among the most expensive joint projects with the participation of Russian and foreign private capital. Its scope demonstrates what Russian technology and industry can offer to the North African countries.

Tourism is one of the most important and dynamically developing avenues of Russo-Egyptian cooperation. Egypt, where tourism is among the main sources of hard currency, pins much hope on the Russian market. After the tragical event in Luxore in November 1997, when many Western tourists cancelled their travels to Egypt, Russians saved the Egyptian tourist business from a drastic recession. 400 to 500,000 Russians visited Egypt in 2000; their number increased by a quarter in 2001. Egypt has become Russian tourists' favourite country.

There were only three travel agencies in Egypt in the late 1980s that received Soviet tourists. At present, there are some 300 private travel companies that maintain business contacts with Russia. A new form of cooperation in this field is inviting Russians as guides and representatives of Russian travel agencies in Egypt.

The most promising spheres of bilateral cooperation in tourism may be development of tourist routes in such new localities as the seashore of Sinai, oases of the Western desert, and Aswan, Russian participation in building and operating hotels and other facilities for Russian tourists, development of business tourism, holding various business conferences and other meetings in Egypt, etc.

An important form of Russian private capital's activity in the region is interregional cooperation. Many Egyptian companies have direct business contacts with private firms of the Moscow region, Nizhni Novgorod, Tatarstan, etc., where they take part in the implementation of joint projects and market Egyptian goods with the local authorities' support.

Large Russian enterprises that produce goods mainly for export and regions of the Russian Federation open their missions in North African countries, which work in close contact with trade departments of Russian embassies. These missions function quite effectively, and their potential is far from being exhausted.

An important improvement in the Russo-Arab cooperation is accelerated formation of the agencies that maintain market partnership. An example

is specialization of the Russian Banks that work in the Middle East. For instance, Mezkhombank has established correspondence relations with seven Egyptian banks and signed agreements about mutual recognition of guarantees with them. This considerably facilitated trade financing and enabled Russian companies to take part in auctions and get guarantees of proper execution of contracts. However, the development of commercial financial support of economic cooperation between Russia and North Africa is just at its initial stage; this support is still unable to make up for obvious insufficiency of state support of credit accommodation and centralized supply of equipment.

Some progress may be noted in the formation of transport companies that take part in export and import operations. For instance, Russia and Egypt plan to open a direct shipping line for ships of the 'river-sea' type. It will connect Egyptian ports with Russian river ports in the Volga-Don and Caspian basins, which is very important for developing direct partnership between Egyptian regions and subjects of the Russian Federation.

Lastly, insurance companies are founded to eliminate commercial risks in foreign trade. Russian Ingosstrakh Company has started partnership with the Egyptian Export Credit Guarantee Co. Its experience may be useful in other countries of the region.

HOW CAN SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SCALE BUSINESS OVERCOME STAGNATION?

Russian small- and medium-scale business is still only trying to become a major participant in Russia's economic cooperation with North Africa, where it may play an important or even the key role. It can do a lot in stabilizing this partnership, lending dynamism to it, and promptly penetrating all niches available in economy of the region.

Small- and medium-scale business is quite flexible in establishing partnership with foreign companies as a basis for expanding bilateral cooperation and stabilizing the functioning of all related institutions. It is indispensable in gaining political, public, advertising, and other support of Russian businessmen's initiatives. This is particularly true for medium-scale business, which demonstrates fair stability and promptness in solving economic problems. Unlike most of the North African countries, Russian small- and medium-scale business still faces numerous difficulties and obstacles, created by the bulky and corrupt Russian bureaucratic machinery. It is almost completely deprived of state support; its currency and foreign trade opera-

tions are subject to rigid limitations; soft credits are seldom available to it; the taxation system applied to it is sophisticated and contradictory.

Lacking resources to open their offices abroad, small- and medium-scale businessmen have no direct access to the Middle Eastern partners. The agencies that can solve this problem either are ineffective or are at the initial stage of their development.

This is among the main reasons of Russian capital's inability to establish itself in North Africa as companies of industrial (mainly European) countries have done. Their interests are safeguarded by thousands of joint ventures, bank branches, etc.

Russian and Arab private businessmen cooperate by participating in traditional fairs, business seminars, exhibitions staged in capitals and provinces, and international tenders. However, their results leave much to be desired. New participants in business cooperation know little about the realities of economic life in the Arab East and Russia and often lack the necessary experience. This became quite clear from the results of the generally useful Russo-Arab seminars and business weeks held in Egypt, Algeria, and other countries. The volume of the contracts signed there were quite modest or even insignificant.

Russian businessmen often lose tenders. Notably, many Russian companies have to depend on agents from industrial countries, whose interests may differ from those of their Russian clients. Tenders are lost because of superficial discussion of the tender conditions and terms of possible contracts at the preliminary stage and underdevelopment of the mechanisms of getting skilled support for business relations, including consultations.

Russian and North African large-scale companies, directly interested in our stable and long-term presence in the region, fail to properly support, first of all, financially, the agencies in charge of research and coordination of business activity. Russian experts justly note that it will be difficult to Russian businessmen to establish themselves at North African markets without allowing for the features of economic life in the region, skilled coordination of advertisement and marketing, and reliable Arab partners and agents. This problem becomes particularly urgent in the setting of the competition of industrial countries, North African countries' preparation for entering the WTO, their growing integration with the EU, etc. The changes that may occur in trade and economy of these countries may influence their economic orientation very soon, weakening Russo-Arab partnership before its adaptation to the new conditions is completed.

To make Russo-Arab business partnership a success, Russian companies must acquire an attractive image and become familiar and authoritative in the Arab world. This is how Western companies penetrate the markets of developing countries.

WILL RUSSIA REMAIN A SUPPLIER OF RAW MATERIALS TO GLOBAL ECONOMY?

The main task of Russia's export policy in North Africa and other regions is to gradually change the structure of foreign trade by diversifying its export, increasing the share of machines and equipment in it, expanding export of new technologies, and resuming export of services.

In the Soviet period, the Achilles' heel of our foreign trade, dominated by export of raw materials and fuel, was the low share of manufactured goods in export.

However, this share in our trade with the Arab countries was and is higher than in trade with other regions. Nevertheless, the share of raw materials in our export to the Middle East and Maghreb remains too high, while export of machines and advanced technologies is much less than Russian industry can produce for the vast markets of North African countries. Convincing evidence is the traditional bilateral cooperation in power engineering. The Arab countries have invested about \$500 bln in this industry in the recent decade. Experts forecast a rapid growth of generative capacities in this region. However, Russia's participation in the development of this key industry, as well as of Arab economy on the whole, may remain limited less than modest unless we learn from the experience of the past.

Export of machines and other manufactured goods is the most important component of the mechanism of Russia's economic development, the locomotive of economy of the 21st century. Access to the world market is a must to Russian industry and economy on the whole.

The solution of the problem is not confined to an increase in export. It implies the creation of prerequisites and stimuli for improving competitiveness of Russian manufacturing industry. This is a question directly related to Russia's national security.

There is no reasonable alternative to export of manufactured goods. The North African market is among the most promising niches for our foreign trade.

AFRICAN HEPHAESTUS' WORKSHOP

*Natalia Ksenofontova**

Hephaestus was among the most revered Olympic gods of ancient Greece. He was glorified by great Homer as 'wise Hephaestus, lame in both legs', who 'astonishes people by wonderworks of art' (Odyssey, the fourth and fifth cantos). According to Greek myths, he was a son of the supreme gods Zeus and Hera and was a stepbrother of Athena, the goddess of war, sciences, wisdom, and fertility and the sovereign of the sky. Hephaestus and Athena taught people crafts and creative art in general; their cults were closely interconnected, and they were worshipped at same shrines and glorified on same festivals.

The classical image of Hephaestus is a blacksmith in his underground workshop, who forges thunders and lightnings, as well as works of art.

Being one of the 'great Olympians', he is, nonetheless, differs somewhat from them. Firstly, Hephaestus is the only Greek deity who is a worker. Secondly, whereas Zeus and his wives and children personified either the dark or the light vital force, the divine blacksmith concentrated whole diversity of the Universe in him. Good and evil, light and darkness, life and death, creation and destruction merged in his appearance, character, qualities, and functions. On the one hand, he is an artisan, master, artist, guardian of houses, towns, and peoples; on the other, he appears before people in the form of light, fire, ether, and luminaries. His appearance and way of life also are extremely contradictory. Being ugly and awkward, he possesses enchanting skills and impeccable taste. Being hideous, he marries Aphrodite, the most beautiful goddess.

Many ancient peoples, including Africans, believed in such deities, who also were patrons of earthly blacksmiths. These mythical personages, spirits,

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Natalya Ksenofontova. **African Hephaestus' Workshop**

and gods included Ogun (Gun) of the peoples who speak Kwa languages; Shango of the Yoruba; Teni of the Nuer; Shawe of the Shona, Suto, and Wenda; Ga of the Ewe, Gan of the Tofi; Ugo (Ogo) of the Ibo; and Boli of the Senegalese. They were from among the first dozen of the deities of the mythological pantheon and were usually begotten by demiurge gods, who created animals, the Earth, the sky, etc.

AFRICAN PEOPLES' ATTITUDE TO THE PERSONALITY OF A BLACKSMITH

Basil Davidson, a renowned expert in African ethnography and culture, noted that the ancient inhabitants of this continent were so much impressed by blacksmiths' trade and the secrets of metal processing that their beliefs and rituals identified metallurgy with an intrinsic spiritual cosmic force. They considered smelting as fertilization of matter by heavenly energy, and a melting furnace (if this industrial term may be applied to their stoves), made of earth, mud, or thermite, was like womb of a woman, wherein bellows tubes, compared with phallus, are inserted. The melting process, guided by head blacksmiths, who were believed to be protected by a deity, demonstrated man's domination of the nature and vice versa in a form that was quite in keeping with Africans' beliefs.

It was not only in the remote past but also in the more recent time that production of iron and other metals, such as copper, gold, tin, etc., was surrounded by a corona of mystery. Blacksmiths themselves were considered as not only skilled craftsmen but also magicians, sorcerers, healers, and mediators between the living and the dead, between men and gods. Blacksmiths occupy a special place in African religions, together with priests and shamans; they are believed to have divine and supernatural properties, which enable them to govern natural forces and such elements as thunder and lightning. This attitude to blacksmiths and their image of mysteriousness, created by themselves and the surrounding people, made blacksmiths' communities exclusive castes, which occupied a special and somewhat isolated position in the socius.

In a traditional society, dominated by collectivist moral and ethical standards and rules, blacksmiths stood out for being protected by the spirits that represented individual creative vital force, such as Shawe in Zambia and Zimbabwe. This means that these craftsmen were placed above the community due to both religious fear and the fact that their exclusive skills were incompatible with the centuries old way of life.

Blacksmiths and metallurgists always were characters of epos, legends, and fairy tales. Firstly, people could not till the land, protect themselves, and enjoy life without labour tools, weapons, and ornaments manufactured by them. Secondly, their skills were beyond the access of unskilled ordinary people. Thirdly, their tribe mates equalized their might and social status with those of priests, chiefs, or even gods themselves.

The methods and technology of metal melting and forging always were wrapped in mystery; work was accompanied by special sacred rituals, which were known only to group members and identified with supernatural forces. Craftsmen's labour tools and the articles they made also were considered sacral. According to popular beliefs, these articles might be both very useful and highly dangerous to the community, because some of them were used in peaceful life and some others in wars. A blacksmith even could inflict a magic harm on his enemy by his hammer, pliers, and other instruments, considered as sorcery tools. Nobody but their owner dared touch them. Slag clots (wastes of casting) were used for fortune telling on the basis of their shape, and iron articles often became charms.

CONTRADICTIONARY IMAGE OF AN ANCIENT CRAFTSMAN

Seclusion of blacksmith (usually, it was a hereditary trade), knowledge and skills of ancient metallurgists, which were inaccessible to other people, blacksmiths' isolated villages and quarters in towns, secluded life, and intracaste marriages gave rise to numerous superstitions and apprehensions. It was deemed fraught with troubles or even death to marry a blacksmith's. Naturally, a contradictory attitude to metal smelters and blacksmiths formed among their tribe mates. They were needed and feared of, respected and hated. True, in some languages of North-East Africa, 'blacksmith' and 'slave' are cognate or even synonymous words; the craftsmen who process metals form a low and scorned caste, but this is an exception from the general rule.

On the contrary, blacksmiths are regarded very highly in most of the regions of West, Central, East, and South Africa. Their social prestige and status are very high; they personify wisdom, strong will, unordinary physical strength, and high creative potential. D.A. Olderogge, a renowned Russian Africanist, noted that blacksmith were 'intellectuals' of that epoch; they were experts in and custodians of the history and traditions of the kin and tribe, upbringers and religious mentors of the new generation, artists and sculptors, mouthpieces of the cult of ancestors, this ancient ideology, per-

formers of agrarian rites, leaders of secret alliances, priests, rulers, and spiritual guides of their peoples.

People's memory still preserves tales about the time when a blacksmith was the most important man in his country; he forged the moon and stars and taught people farming and crafts. Ancient Arab authors and folklore testify that the trade of a metallurgist and blacksmith was nobility's rigidly observed privilege in the wooded regions of Africa, and kings' heirs often had to demonstrate their skills in metal processing. Blacksmiths were considered founders of states among the Luanda (Angola), in Congo, and the countries of West and East African in the Middle Ages. Among the Lemba and Bawenda (Transvaal), only chiefs were allowed to know the secrets of metallurgy. The hereditary title of the emperor of Monomotapa (Zimbabwe) was Mwene Mutapa (mine owner).

Thus, iron got involved in the social processes that went on in the ancient African society. The craftsmen who processed other metals, such as copper, tin, bronze, and gold, also were honoured. For instance, bronze casting was considered as a court craft in the states of the Guinean coast; unlike iron tools, bronze was not used in production and agriculture but performed the social function of a symbol of the supreme authorities' and aristocracy's dignity. Therefore, to signify his good graces, the king of Ife sent his bronze-smith Igwe-Ige to the ruler of Benin to organize bronze casting there.

The importance of a blacksmith's person in the historical past of African tribes becomes clear from African folklore. For instance, the hero of the Mandingo epos is Soundyata Keita, a mediaeval ruler of Mali (the 13th century), a kind and bright person, opposed by conqueror Soumaoro, the king of blacksmiths. Two equal vital forces, bright and dark, compete in this epos. Although Soumaoro is shown as an aggressor, he is mentioned with such epithets as 'invincible and unvanquished' and 'great magician'. He belonged to the kin of hereditary blacksmiths, 'who placed fire in their service and taught people to process iron'; vessels with various miraculous remedies are collected in his palace. Soumaoro was invulnerable to iron spears and arrows. He could disappear, assume sixty-nine different aspects, and immediately appear in another place. Being apparently an embodiment of evil and cruelty, he was not devoid of purely human and respectable features. At the end of the legend, Soundyata liberates his motherland from the enemy, but Soumaoro remains undefeated. He was vanquished only as a result of treason. He was not killed but became a rock, i.e., lived in the shadow. According to D.A. Olderogge, this legend reflects the competition between two

elements, i.e., ancient African culture with its centuries old traditions of tribal relations and new historical realities of the period of transition to a mediaeval state with its new social relations.

WHERE WAS ANCIENT HELWAN LOCATED?

Although gold, silver, and copper were found in most regions of Africa earlier than iron, the development of metallurgy proper began there from iron smelting. Unlike the Mediterranean, Asian, and American civilizations, where the Stone Age was followed first by the Bronze Age and then by the Iron Age, iron began to be used in Africa earlier than bronze, called 'yellow' or 'red iron' in local languages.

The beginning of the metal epoch after people mastered iron processing was of an immense importance in accelerating historical progress in Africa and all other continents. The technological revolution caused by the transition from stone to iron tools made a substantial impact on the economic, family, religious, and socio-political spheres of the society's life. First of all, ability to use iron led to the emergence of new agricultural technology, the possibility to process bone, wood, stone, and nonferrous metals by iron tools, development of crafts and construction, and improvement in the technology of hunting and fishery. This enabled people to increase food production, give up nomadism, and populate new territories. As a result, the population began to increase. Manufacturing of defensive and offensive weapons made of iron enabled rulers to develop and strengthen state formations. Detection of iron ore and development of ferrous metallurgy led to radical changes in social life, since the articles that could not be produced earlier, such as plough, sword, hauberk, cuirass, fences, durable fortress gates, gratings for shops and warehouses, etc., were made of iron.

The process of mastering iron production and application of iron, which began in Africa in a very ancient time, reached a high degree of development by the 1st century B.C. due to huge iron ore deposits in many parts of the continent and the properties of this metal, which is reduced from ore at a temperature of just 700-800 degrees, which may be reached by building usual bonfire. Then iron becomes a doughy spongy mass, mixed with slag, so-called bloom, from which any articles can be forged.

Archaeologists discovered several ancient metallurgical centres in Africa; the largest and most renowned of them were located in the southeast and west of the continent. The most ancient centres of iron smelting were located on a plateau between the Congo and Zambezi, between the Zambezi

and Limpopo (the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe), and North Nigeria between the Niger and Benue.

In Zambia and Zimbabwe alone, archaeologists found more than 70,000 neglected iron and copper mines, exploited as early as the first millennium A.D., hundreds of furnaces and nozzles, built of clay, iron blooms, and thousands of articles made of copper, iron, tin, gold, and silver. The first metallurgists and blacksmiths of that area were from among the tribes of an undersized Koisian race (ancestors of the Bushmen), who lived there one and a half or two thousands years ago.

Among the numerous settlements of craftsmen of that epoch, scholars pay a special attention to the site in Mumbwa cave (the Central province of Zambia), described by A. Guttie, R. Dart, and J.D. Clarke, renowned British archaeologists. Studying the sequence of beddings, they traced the evolution of population types with the transition from Neolithic stone tools immediately to those made of iron, dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. They also found one of the most ancient iron smelting furnaces in Africa.

The blacksmiths' settlement in Mumbwe is typical of Sub-Saharan Africa. What was an ancient African smithy like?

First of all, craftsmen carefully chose the place of metal smelting; it was afar from other houses and hidden from others' eyes. Smithies were located in the places whose relief minimized heat leakage, ensuring proper melting temperature and high quality of metal.

The design of furnaces is of an immense interest. It developed from primitive shapes to more perfect ones with a height of one to three meters and diameter of three meters. In forest areas of Guinea, metal was smelted in primitive pits, coated with clay; Ugandan blacksmiths used low and broad furnaces, which were similar to pans without handles; the furnaces used in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Katanga, and West Sudan were of a quite perfect design and had a conic shape. Usually, digging a deep pit for bonfire, ancient metallurgists connected it with bellows by hollow tuyeres, made of clay. Then, furnace walls were built of clay above the pit. The bonfire built in the pit dried clay from the inside and the sun from the outside. When the furnace dried, smelting itself began. Charcoal and ore were loaded into the furnace in alternating layers until it was filled. Two to twenty double bellows were placed around the furnace, and each of them was inflated by a craftsman. Air was 'pumped' through the tuyeres into the furnace until coal became red-hot. The temperature on the bottom of the furnace, where ore lay, might reach 800 degrees or more.

The duration of continuous smelting was 12 to 24 hours, depending on coal quality, variety of ore, and design of the furnace. By the end of the

process, the furnace was broken; getting cold, large pieces of metal formed 'pigs' with a weight of up to 50 kg. Then, slag was removed from them; the next day, a new furnace was built and filled with the 'pigs', and smelting repeated, following same technology. This was done several times until iron became pure enough to be processed further by a blacksmith, who made metal articles of it.

To improve the quality of these articles, a blacksmith performed various magic rites before the work and consecrated his tools, i.e., the anvil, made of a big boulder, iron tongs and hooks, hammer, casting moulds, clamps for wire drawing, etc. The workshop was 'guarded' by figures of birds (hawk, trumpeter, eagle, etc.), carved of stone, bone, or wood or shaped of clay; they were identified with thunder, lightning, and other powerful elements. Usually, they were installed on the smithy roof or high pillars in the yard.

WHAT DID AFRICAN CRAFTSMEN MANUFACTURE?

In addition to usual labour tools, such as knives, mattocks, axes, fish hooks, sewing needles, instruments for craftsmen, as well as weapons, such as fighting axes and forged arrowheads and spearheads, African blacksmiths manufactured such fine and sophisticated articles as decorations for women, symbols of supreme power (sceptres and thrones), totemic figures, amulets, etc. They produced such masterpieces as articles for religious worship (ritual bells and figures of deities, humans, animals, and birds) and 'doll', which pregnant women carry with them; it is believed that this is a guarantee of delivering a beautiful child.

African metallurgists learned to manufacture iron wire earlier than those of other continents. Coline M. Turnbull, a renowned American ethnographer, observed and described this process. To make two or three reels of wire, twelve people must work a week or two. First, a round iron rod with a diameter of 1 cm and length of 60-90 cm is forged. Then, it is made red-hot, and ten people draw it through bulbous drawplates. After each drawing, new narrower holes are drilled; this is repeated several times, and the blank becomes thinner each time. The last drawings are made by the blacksmith himself. The final result is a 50 m long wire, which is as thin as a thread.

Such articles were highly appreciated and often played the role of equivalent in inter tribe trade. In addition, blacksmiths forged genuine money of iron, copper, and tin. It was not always that these pieces of metal were coins. They might be strips, bars, screw-shaped sticks, or double or

oblique crosses, similar to that called St. Andrew's cross in Russia in the 18th century.

Various furnaces, workshops, instruments, and articles made of iron and other metals were also found in North Nigeria, at the aforesaid ancient metallurgical centre. The world-famous NOK culture (the 5th century B.C. to the 3rd century A.D.) was discovered there; it reflected the transitional period between the Neolithic period and the age of ferrous metallurgy, which was typical of the inner parts of Africa.

The ancient metallurgical traditions developed further in the Middle Ages at the Guinean coast, near the territory where the NOK culture developed. Using iron tools, African craftsmen also achieved high skills in processing copper and other metals. Connoisseurs of antiquity highly appreciate copper weights, used by the Ashanti to weigh gold. The variety of their shapes and kinds seems inexhaustible. Simple weights had a square or rectangular shape; more sophisticated ones were figures of humans, animals, fish, insects, swastika, masks, pendants, etc. This diversity was not an obstacle in measuring the standard weight of a figure. In addition to their utilitarian role, copper weights were sacred articles. Pictures and geometric patterns drawn on the weights are deciphered as proverbs or philosophical aphorisms, which are very useful in understanding Africans' beliefs and cosmology.

The method of manufacturing such weights is quite notable. In the 12th century A.D., long before the masters of Italian Renaissance, African blacksmiths invented an exquisitely precise method of casting copper articles; it is called 'the technology of the lost form'. First, a model of weight with a thickness of a little more than half a centimeter was made of wax, and wax tubes were attached to its upper part. The model was coated with a thin layer of fireproof clay. When it dried, it was heated, the wax 'puppet' melted; wax flew out, leaving an empty space, filled with melted metal. When metal got cold, the clay mold was broken, and people saw a dainty sculpture.

This technology also was used to cast larger articles, such as life-size heads, busts, statues, bas-reliefs, doors and thrones for palaces, etc. Notably, representation of human face in metal is an important artistic achievement. It is very symbolical that this achievement is a fact of African art.

Large collections of such masterpieces were found in the territories of Ife (Nigeria, the 12th and 13th centuries A.D.) and Benin (the 13th to 18th centuries). They include several thousands of bronze articles, such as portraits of rulers, their mothers and wives, grandees, and European conquerors, ritual statuettes and masks, figures of animals, and pictures showing court

ceremonies, hunting, and sacrifices. Seeing samples of Benin plastics, Europeans were astonished: the world culture never had seen anything like this.

The skills of African metallurgists, who created articles of unsurpassed artistic value, were perfected for centuries and reached a very high level. Really, Africa is a continent where metallurgy was highly developed, and Africans' contribution to metallurgical technology is still to be evaluated by the grateful mankind.

**METIS CHILDREN'S ADVENTURES
IN THE SPHERE OF CIVIL LAW**

*Natalia Krylova**

When the problems of the metis children who live in Russia are discussed, the first question that arises is as follows. What is the numerical strength of this demographic group, which appeared in our country quite recently? Many people, especially philistines, consider metises' features and skin colour as purely African. Actually, they are not Africans, unlike black students of Russian universities and other higher education institutions, refugees and migrants from African areas of environmental catastrophes, and African diplomats. It might be considered ethically improper to raise the question of quantification and legal status of the children begotten by people of the black and white races, Africa and Russia. However, this is inevitable due to a number of problems that have emerged in the recent years, including that of their citizenship.

Both in Russia and many African countries, the legal status of metises is vague and, therefore, gives rise to many collisions. At the same time, this very aspect of a young metis's life is a major factor that determines his present and future, his self-confidence, and his civil and social position. Relying on the results of our many years long study of the problems of metis children in Russia and Africa, we tried to clarify the quite intricate scheme of the formal registration of such children. Official statistical agencies are mostly helpless in this sphere, and the procedures of their statistical recording are contradictory and knotty.

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THERE WERE MANY RATIONAL AND USEFUL ELEMENTS
IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST

The experience of the state agencies of the USSR, accumulated within five decades, was rich enough. There was a smoothly functioning system of registering children from marriages of this type at the federal and republican levels. Statistical data and materials of archives show that there were almost no problems in this field: all inhabitants were citizens of the USSR (Constitution of the USSR, Article 33) and of a union or autonomous republic of the USSR. Citizenship of a republic ensued from permanent inhabitation in its territory. When a citizen shifted to another republic, his republican citizenship changed automatically. Soviet passports, issued to the citizens of the USSR at age of 16, included a paragraph about nationality (in the USSR, this term meant ethnic affiliation rather than citizenship); when the recipient's father and mother belonged to different nationalities, he chose one of them.

The problem of the registration of the children born from racially mixed marriages between Russians and Africans was somewhat more complicated, although such marriages began to be concluded as early as fifty years ago. The most accurate data are those of the consular service of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because Russian citizens are recorded on the spot; most of the Afro-Russian families registered in Russia go to Africa after the husband (on rare occasions, the wife) completes his (her) education and are subject to consular registration by the nearest Russian consulate. Before the 1990s, this procedure was obligatory.

After the USSR disintegrated and the number of Russian embassies and consulates was curtailed, this rigid procedure was cancelled. The negative results of this manifested themselves very soon in emergency situations. For instance, when Russian citizens were evacuated from the zones seized by armed conflicts (Congo, Rwanda, etc.), numerous women and their children who were not covered by current consular statistics rushed the planes of the Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations.

CHILDREN OF 'GEORGIANS OF ARAB ORIGIN'

The registration of children from mixed marriages at Russian domestic state agencies is an even more acute problem, because the data about the origin of one consort (mainly in the case of Africans) may be inaccurate. This issue is especially tangible at maternity homes. The mother is entitled

to indicate or not indicate the father's national and racial affiliation. Many women use this right when they do not know who the child's father is or want to conceal all traces of the unsuccessful affair. Two examples are quite informative in this respect. The African father of a metis child was recorded at a maternity home as a 'Georgian of Arab origin'. Another mother said about the Nigerian father of her three-year-old daughter: 'What is the difference? Nigerian, Somalian... All these men are black!'

In addition, a new trend has been noted in the recent years. Metis children are born in Russia from unregistered marriages between African citizens and Russian-speaking women from CIS countries who live temporarily in Russia (education, labour migration, refugees, prostitutes, etc.). Since this situation is not covered by the legislation of most of the CIS countries and there are no detailed provisions about it in the Russian Family Code and legislation related to citizenship, such children can have no citizenship at all for a period, when they are not recorded by statistics, although Article 17 of the Russian law On Citizenship of the RF reads: '1. A child born in the territory of the RF shall be a citizen of the RF if its parents had citizenship of other republics of the USSR on September 1, 1991, or that of foreign states and if the said republics and states do not grant their citizenship to the child; 2. A child born in the territory of the RF from apatrides shall be a citizen of the RF.'

A separate issue are the problems of children from mixed alliances who are adopted to infant asylums. Officially, these asylums (they number 20 in Moscow alone) are managed by the Public Health Department of the Government of Moscow; their mission is to bring up and treat the children brought there directly from maternity homes or from families of concern and kept there at the state's expense until they reach the age of four. They may be adopted by foster parents. In this situation, a child who has an 'official' father is happy. According to the Family Code of the RF, 'the foster parents with Russian citizenship who adopt a child with foreign citizenship in the territory of the Russian Federation shall receive the consent of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) and the competent agency of the state whose citizen the child is, as well as, if this is required by the legislation of the said state, the child's consent for adoption' (Article 165, paragraph 1). In other cases, the legal problem of citizenship and national affiliation of adopted children is not dealt with by the Russian legislation in detail, 'because the fosters' rights and duties as parents appear as a result of adoption rather than of origin of the children from them' (paragraph 19 of the Ruling of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the RF, dated July 4, 1997, No 9, On Application of Legislation by the Courts That Consider Cases Related to Paternity Proof).

MANY LAWS AND NO CLARITY

True, one can find several solutions of this problem in the Russian law On Citizenship of the RF, namely in its Chapter 4, which deals with Citizenship of Children and Citizenship of Parents, Tutors, and Trustees. Its Article 26 reads: 'Should both parents or the only parent acquire the citizenship of the RF, the citizenship of the children shall change respectively.' (paragraph 1); 'Should both parents or the only parent of a child who lives in the territory of the RF and is under tutorship or trusteeship of the citizens of the RF refuse from Russian citizenship and not take part in bringing up the child, the latter shall retain Russian citizenship if the parents, tutor or trustee apply for this' (paragraph 2). Article 28 of same law reads: 'Should one of the parents cease to be a Russian citizen and the second parent remain a Russian citizen, the child shall retain Russian citizenship. This citizenship may cease if the parent whose Russian citizenship ceases applies for this and the parent who remains a Russian citizen agrees for this in writing, provided that the child is granted citizenship of another state.' Lastly, Article 29 reads: 'A child with Russian citizenship adopted by non-Russian citizens shall retain Russian citizenship. Should the fosters or one of them have non-Russian citizenship, they may apply for ceasing the child's Russian citizenship, provided it is granted citizenship of another state' (paragraph 1); 'A child without Russian citizenship adopted by a Russian citizen or consorts with Russian citizenship shall become a Russian citizen' (paragraph 2). Before this happens, a child lives with its fosterers, often being ignorant of its origin and knowing about only its general racial features inherited from its biological father.

Yet, naturally, the child will think about its origin earlier or later, and it is difficult to reproach it for the desire to obtain reliable information about its national roots. The question about origin of a metis child is not pointless to its African fosterers: they consider the ethno-national affiliation of the adopted child as an inalienable element of African mentality, formed by the stable historical and cultural tradition. Nonetheless, according to the new Russian constitution, a child's ethnic affiliation shall not be mentioned in its documents. Therefore, its fosterers have to be satisfied with the limited and vague information obtained from witnesses.

When the destiny of a metis child is bitter, it is transferred at age of four from an infant asylum to an orphan asylum, managed by the Russian ministry of education. It is maintained and taught there. Its status is again determined on the basis of the data obtained from the maternity home, i.e., it may differ from that determined by its father's origin.

According to the Russian legislation, a child maintained by the state until it comes of age shall be free in choosing citizenship and ethnic affiliation. This may result in an unpredictable situation.

There are people in Russia who spent most of their childhood in Africa but have Russian citizenship after their Russian mothers and are covered by the statistical record of metis children. They should not be ignored when information is collected on the national scale.

The problem of citizenship of metis children is further complicated by the legislation of African countries, influenced by the phenomenon of 'customary law', based on ancient legislative traditions. Since the current legislation of many African countries does not differ much from that of the pre-independence period (i.e., is a replica of the legislative systems of the parent states), non-codified Anglo-Saxon 'customary law' coexists with Roman-German 'contemporary law' since the colonial epoch. Naturally, this legal 'polyphony' does not simplify the problem of the legal status of foreigners and their children who live permanently in Africa.

DUAL CITIZENSHIP MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE

When Russian legislation made dual citizenship possible, the situation seemed to simplify: 'A citizen (...) may be allowed, if he applies for this, to have simultaneously the citizenship of another state, if the latter has a respective treaty with the RF' (paragraph 2, Article 3 of the law On Citizenship of the RF). In other words, a child born from an Afro-Russian marriage, who has been registered as a Russian citizen, is entitled (as a rule, after coming of age) to acquire citizenship of another country (e.g., that of its father) without violating the legislation of its mother's country. And vice versa, the Russo-African children born in their fathers' countries may retain the citizenship they acquired after their birth, combining it with that of their Russian mothers, acquired after coming at age.

This is the formulation of the Russian law. However, the real situation is much more complicated. A boy or girl born in a Russo-African family can enjoy the privileges of dual citizenship only if the legislation of the African state in question (usually, the historical homeland of their fathers) also permits dual citizenship. Moreover, this state must have an agreement on dual citizenship with Russia. It is only in this case that dual citizenship can have a social and legal effect.

Few African countries permit dual citizenship, and none of them has concluded an agreement to this effect with Russia. The metis children who

travel with their mothers from Africa to Russia and back become citizens of either the African country where their fathers were born or Russia as their mothers' historical homeland. For instance, a Muscovite woman, who spent more than 20 years in Congo with her two metis children and retained Russian citizenship stated: 'In fact, all of us have dual citizenship, which is not recognized in Russia. I asked a consultant of the Legal Collegium for Foreign Law about my and my children's rights and learned that, being a Russian citizen, I have no rights in Russia.' This is not the only statement of this kind.

Lastly, there are many underage Russo-African vagabonds, who live under the poverty line and sometimes are subject to the state's social supervision. There are no reliable statistical data about them, since same children are treated several times by different state agencies; the data about them may be based on their or their friends' statements. A serious study cannot be based on the data like these.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DELIVER A BLACK-SKINNED CHILD TO A WOMAN FROM A RUSSIAN PROVINCE?

What is the situation with metis children in Russian provinces? In addition to inaccurate statistics, this situation is complicated by the ethical factor, based on a stable historical and cultural stereotype, described by scholars as an 'archaic syndrome': a child begotten by a black-skinned man is a disgrace to the girl and her family. Public opinion perceives her as a woman who has no chance to find a husband on the spot, or as a girl of easy virtue, or as an adventurer. It is no wonder that the women who have affairs with African boys without marrying them do their best to get all possible legislative privileges for their children when they are registered by state agencies. This is why the number of Russo-African children is, most probably, understated many times in official data.

These data differ very much in various parts of Russia. Why?

There were more than 60 towns in the USSR where citizens of developing countries got vocational training and higher and secondary special education. Their distribution was very uneven: more than 60% of African students were trained in Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, Leningrad, Odessa, Minsk, and Donetsk; in other towns, they usually numbered one to three. The African students in the USSR and then Russia always were quite mobile; they went to other localities for practical training or as tourists and worked in building teams during their vacations. This mobility was conducive to uncontrolled romances.

* * *

Despite a general decrease in the number of students from Africa in Russia, the number of Russo-African mixed marriages and extramarital alliances is unlikely to go down considerably. The expansion of migration, which ensues from the law On the Procedure of Exit from the RF and Entrance to the RF for the Citizens of the RF, adopted in 1993, development of business relations between African countries and regions of Russia, the problems of refugees, and many other issues faced by our country will cause a new wave of nationally and racially mixed marriages. This will be accompanied by intense international migration in frequently changing directions.

CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIUMS, ROUND TABLES

AFRICA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

*Lyubov Prokopenko**

The 9th conference of Africanists on Africa in the Context of the North-South Relations was held at the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences on May 21-23, 2002. This academic forum was organized by the Academic Council for the Problems of Africa (Russian Academy of Sciences) and Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. More than 150 Russian and 30 foreign scholars took part in the conference. In addition to Muscovite scholars, Africanists from St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Kazan, Saratov, and Chelyabinsk delivered their reports. The foreign participants represented Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Britain, France, Germany, India, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, the U.S.A, Angola, Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, the RSA, Swaziland, and Chad.

The chief guests of the inauguration meeting were A.V. Saltanov, deputy minister of foreign affairs of Russia; B. Lenyongo-Ndoumba, the ambassador of Gabon to Russia and doyen of the African diplomatic corps in Moscow; Raugatienne Biaou (Benin), the advisor of the WHO for desertification; ambassadors of African states to Russia, officials of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and media correspondents.

The participants paid homage to the Africanists who passed away after the 8th conference.

Inaugurating the conference, *A.M. Vassiliev*, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and director of the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, emphasized that the African

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continent is an inalienable part of the contemporary interconnected and interdependent world. Profound study of the problems of Africa, frank and interested exchange of opinions among scholars about the situation in Africa and the paths of solving its acute problems, and preparation of academically verified recommendations are becoming more and more urgent issues.

A.V. Saltanov, the deputy minister of foreign affairs of Russia, read out the greeting message sent by *I.S. Ivanov*, the minister of foreign affairs of Russia, to the participants in the conference with emphasis on the role and importance of academic contacts concerning the problems of Africa. *B. Lenyongo-Ndoumba* noted that Russia demonstrates an immense interest in the African problems and welcomes African states' advance towards economic and political transformations and regional and sub-regional integration.

Reports were delivered at the plenary meeting by *A.M. Vassiliev* and *E. Maloka*, executive director of the Africa Institute (RSA). Speaking about Africa and the Challenges of the 21st Century, A.M. Vassiliev noted that the Russo-African relations are not yet characterized by sufficient dynamism; their level lags behind that of Russia's global interests and the available scope for cooperation. Analyzing the conception of New Partnership with Africa, stated in the document headed New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), he stressed that this conception agrees with Russia's strategy of reacting to the challenges of the 21st century and corresponds to the strategy of building a multipolar model of international relations. The speaker dealt with the important aspects of the NEPAD programme related to the dynamics of direct investments in African economy, expansion of financing sources, and effectiveness of foreign financial contributions to the economic development of African countries. Evaluating the general situation in Africa as tragic (the population's poverty, debt problem, armed conflicts and wars, corruption, AIDS pandemic, etc.), he suggested a new approach to the arguments advanced both by 'catastrophists' and by their opponents. In his opinion, it is very difficult to break the vicious circle of African states' poverty and underdevelopment for both objective and subjective reasons. A.M. Vassiliev enumerated the conditions whose observation will make African development programmes effective.

Speaking on 'Towards African Renaissance: the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development', *E. Maloka* gave all details of the history of the African renaissance conception, the problem of the African Union (AU), and NEPAD. He mentioned that the international community may play an important role in supporting the attempts to solve Africa's problems. The 'African renaissance' conception emerged as Africa's reac-

tion to the issues of the 21st century, including the challenges of globalization. Among other prerequisites, the attainment of the goals of 'African renaissance' will require African leaders' political will and mobilization of the civil society. These are the main purposes of the AU and NEPAD. The speaker emphasized the role of the UNO's efforts aimed at concentrating the world community's attention at the dire straits of Africa, mentioning some shortcomings in this organization's activity.

The participants of the conference worked at ten sections and the round table on Informational Community and Africa.

The section International Relations and Russo-African Contacts discussed the general condition and prospects of the relations between Russia and Africa. *T.L. Deich* (Institute for African Studies) noted that the beginning of the new millennium witnessed new factors of these relations, including the strengthening of the economic component and intensification and diversification of political contacts. It is in Russia's and African countries' interests to step up these contacts. A complex of measures aimed at supporting Russian businessmen's activity in Africa is more necessary now than ever before. *E.N. Korendyasov* (Institute for African Studies) advocated preparation of a federal programme of such support.

A.A. Gromyko, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Institute for African Studies), spoke about the need to expand the interaction between Russia and African states in order to preserve and strengthen the UNO and its Charter as a sine qua non condition of maintaining international security, preventing hegemonic aspirations of a single state or a group of states, and forming a democratic world order that corresponds to the interests of all countries.

The section paid much attention to the problems of security and conflict prevention and settlement. Prof. *A. Biswas*, the head of the Centre for African Studies of the Mumbai University (India), Prof. *V. Sheth* (India), *P.-A. Bischoff* (RSA), and *D.V. Polikanov* (Institute for African Studies) noted that the African security problems have become quite pressing after the Cold War, when new challenges emerged in the world and political instability strengthened. The African sub-regional organizations must be more active in conflict settlement. The participation of African countries in the political guidance of the conflict settlement operations by the UNO must be expanded. *V. Sheth* also emphasized that unipolarity not only has not reduced the conflict potential in Africa but even aggravated the situation: Africans have been left to the mercy of fate; the world community takes almost no interest in their destiny. *N.B. Lebedeva* (Institute for Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of

Sciences) considered the problems of the countries of the Indian Ocean basin and noted that the countries of ASEAN and Australia deliberately 'canalize' India's policy from East Asia and the Pacific to poor South Asian and Sub-Saharan countries. She was quite pessimistic about the prospects of cooperation in this region in the current situation.

G. Obiozor (Nigeria) analyzed the development of the integration processes in connection with the transformation of the OAU into the African Union. His evaluation of the integration processes was optimistic. At the same time, he believed that real integration is a matter of a remote future. Similarly, *C.L. Petku* (RSA) noted that the differentiation among the African states and social stratification within them may become serious obstacles to their integration. At the same time, he admitted that integration is the most important method of solving the pressing political and economic problems of Africa.

The participants of the section differed about the NEPAD programme. *I.V. Cherkasova* (Institute for African Studies) characterized NEPAD as a real programme of accelerating Africa's economic development. On the contrary, *T. Kofi* (U.S.A.) did not conceal his scepticism about this programme. Almost all speakers noted that the implementation of NEPAD in its present form will require African leaders' immense efforts, courage, and persistence.

The reports delivered at the section Economy of Africa in the Age of Globalization dealt with a wide circle of problems related to the domestic and external factors of the socioeconomic development of individual countries and Africa on the whole and their economic relations with the West and Russia.

The participants discussed such issues as the influence of globalization on the economic development of Africa, the role of NEPAD as a development strategy, problems of national economy and integration in the context of the North-South relations, possibility of economic development modelling in Africa, methods of overcoming poverty, the role of financial stabilization, and the problem of debt settlement. They considered the new trends in the economic development of African countries (agriculture, industry, transport, services, and trade). A special attention was paid to the role of the informal sector in economic relations and GDP formation. The speakers dealt with the influence of the environmental factor on African economy and prospects of Russo-African cooperation in this sphere.

The section discussed the factors of instability of the world economic development that emerged in the early 1990s and their impact on the situation in African countries, their economic growth, and their role in the inter-

national division of labour. *V.P. Morozov* (Institute for African Studies) mentioned that three regions with developing markets have emerged in Africa, ensuring the relatively sustainable economic development (the south of Africa, including the RSA; North Africa; and the currency and economic alliances in West and Central Africa); as it is clear from the expansion of stock markets and inflow of direct foreign investments.

Globalization may help improving the condition of Africa's trade with the West if local export becomes competitive, African exporters strengthen their position at the world market of raw materials, and oil prices in Europe are favourable to African petroleum exporting countries. One more condition is the firm position of Russia as an independent oil exporter. The speakers noted uneven dynamics and distribution of the resource inflow to Africa, variety of the channels and forms of this inflow and capital application spheres, and strengthening competition among the investment recipients. They paid much attention to the indebtedness problem, noting the necessity to perfect the relations between creditors and debtors and revise their international legal basis.

Using the modelling method, *E.V. Morozenskaya* (Institute for African Studies) substantiated the necessity of a differentiated approach to the so-called real and shadow sectors of economy (including the informal sector) with their different economic content and importance. *E.A. Bragina* (Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences) considered consequences of the expansion of the informal sector.

The participants also discussed the problems of strengthening the inter-African cooperation in the form of various international actions, first of all, taken under the NEPAD programme. This problem was dealt with in *T. Kofi's* polemical report. His critical analysis of the programme was based on the statement that it reflects mostly the interests of several large African countries, which strive to lead revival of the continent. In his opinion, NEPAD is not an 'African initiative' and is unlikely to be effective, because it does not solve the main problems but is aimed at implanting capitalist relations in Africa, which will not accelerate economic growth. *T. Kofi* suggested an alternative strategy, which takes into account the agrarian character of African economy and brings the human factor to the forefront.

A.S. Muktar, the ambassador of Nigeria to Russia, *Prof. P.-A. Bischoff* (C. Rhodes University, RSA), and *Y.V. Korablev* (Institute for African Studies) disagreed with the speaker. They noted that NEPAD is necessary to cooperate with developed countries in the sphere of technology, implement social development programmes, including curtailment of unemployment,

and reduce migration flows from poor countries by solving their social and economic problems. They emphasized the necessity of combining macro-economic issues with the solution of current economic problems.

The section Problems of Political Modernization and Evolution of Social Structures concentrated on the problems of power and power relations, civil society, and democratic transformations in Africa.

N.D. Kosukhin (Institute for African Studies) emphasized that power is less conditioned socially in Africa than elsewhere and is determined to a large extent by traditional, ethnic, class, and religious relations. The political changes that began in the 1990s are accompanied by not so much expansion of the social basis of power as strengthening of the patronage-clientele relations and ethno-regional movements and emergence of 'ethnic democracy'.

V.I. Komar (Institute for African Studies) and *Y.G. Sumbatyan* (Russian University of Friendship of Peoples) considered the problem of the emergence of civil society in Africa. The conception of civil society, based on Western values, cannot be projected mechanically to Africa. Its political space is multidimensional and multivariant and is characterized by numerous specific features, which influence the democratization process, civil self-consciousness, and civil behaviour. The decade-long period after the start of democratization in Africa created many problems and yielded few positive results, and civil culture has not yet struck roots in the African soil. *N.Z. Fakhruddinova* (Institute for African Studies) questioned the possibility of forming civil society in a Muslim state due to the obvious contradiction between the fundamental principles and criteria of civil society and the doctrine of Islam.

L.M. Sadovskaya (Institute for African Studies) noted that the present political and legal practice, the very structure of state agencies in African countries, and the forms of interaction among them prevent legislative authority from occupying the leading positions and determining the content of state policy. *M.M. Djibrine* (Chad) characterized the activity of government agencies in ensuring effective development, stressing that authorities must guarantee expanded political participation of the poor. One can speak about the strengthening of the role of representative bodies of African countries only with a great deal of caution. In most of them, parliaments have become their presidents' real political support.

One of the considered problems was the trend towards the emergence of transnational criminal communities. *L.V. Geveling* (Institute of Asian and African Countries, Moscow State University) believed that the current methods, instruments, and even some principles of combating global forms

of corruption and organized crime had better left in the previous century and replaced by a new international system of struggle against the world criminal socius.

N.I. Vysotskaya (Institute for African Studies) considered the evolution of nationalism in Sub-Saharan Africa and noted that ethnic problems have grown grave under conditions of de-etatization as a consequence of the structural adjustment programmes and political reforms, which gave rise to multiparty systems. Competing for power and resources, elites began to play the ethnic card, which led to frequent interethnic clashes. Ethno-nationalism became a serious factor of the division of Africa and an obstacle to performing the tasks set by the advocates of the African Union.

The section paid a lot of attention to the AIDS problem. *S. Marshall* (RSA) considered the cultural aspects (taboos, stereotypes, and myths) of the coverage of this problem in fiction and media.

The discussion at the section demonstrated that political changes in African countries do not invariably yield positive results. Such democratic changes as emergence of civil society are a quite remote prospect there. The speakers underlined the necessity of expanding Africanists' studies in political science.

The participants in the section History concentrated on all-African (*M.Y. Frenkel, V.V. Gribanova*, Institute for African Studies) and regional (*E.S. Lvova*, Institute of Asian and African Countries, Moscow State University; *V.L. Kerov*, Russian University of Friendship of Peoples) topics, history of colonialism (*V.A. Subbotin, G.M. Sidorova*, Institute for African Studies; *M.D. Nikitin*, Saratov State University; *V.A. Arsenyev*, Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology), and Russo-African relations since the 18th century.

Studying plots of feature films, *A. Winchank* (RSA) found interesting data about Senegalese soldiers' mutiny (1944). *M. Matusevich* (U.S.A.) traced the involvement of Africa in the Cold War with postcolonial Nigeria as an example. He analyzed the Biafra war (1967-1970) and the purely pragmatic Soviet-Nigerian alliance of that period. *D.M. Bondarenko* (Centre for Civilizational and Regional Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences) evoked the audience's interest by his non-standard approach to the criteria of early statehood in Benin (the 13th to the 19th centuries).

E.A. Glushchenko (Institute for African Studies) noted enormous duration of the decolonization process, which is often treated in an oversimplified manner. *M. Mokanduola* (Nigeria) demonstrated an original approach to colonialism and postcolonial reality, analyzing the gender aspects of coloni-

alism and anti-colonialism. *A.M. Khazanov* (Institute for Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences) presented a new interpretation of some episodes of the Portuguese expansion in Africa on the basis of documents preserved at the National Archives of Portugal. *A.A. Zhukov* (St. Petersburg) told about the diary of an expedition to Kenya and Uganda (1914), led by *I.I. Sokolov*, a renowned Russian zoologist. This diary is among the most important documents about the history of the exploration of East Africa by Russian scholars.

The section paid much attention to Russo-African relations, including the history of Russian émigrés in Africa (*N.A. Zherlitsyna, V.P. Khokhlova, Y.M. Ilyin, T.S. Maksimova, A.B. Letnev* - Institute for African Studies). It was emphasized during the discussion that the history of the Russian diaspora in Africa has become a priority topic in Russian Africanists' historical studies. This does not apply, unfortunately, to the topic of Africans in Russia. The only report on this issue was presented by *L.V. Ivanova* (Institute of Asian and African Countries, Moscow State University), who noted that this problem has become a monopoly of the media. Meanwhile, this extremely important issue must attract scholars' attention, at least, because it is directly related to preventing interracial conflicts.

The section North Africa and the Horn analyzed the content and results of the socio-cultural, political, and economic modernization, economic liberalization, and political reforms carried out in most of the countries of the region in the recent decade, as well as the transformation of the content, forms, and scope of integration, especially with the European Union, civil wars and paths towards their prevention, and the ethno-social, ethno-political, and confessionl processes that determine the future of the region to a large extent.

The section participants noted that, in spite of considerable civilizational differences between the countries of the region and Western industrial democracies, a common feature of their development began to form in the late 20th and early 21st centuries: the South tends towards stronger integration in world economy and strengthening of the fundamentals of liberal economy and elements and institutions of civil society. The speakers noted decelerated evolution of 'southern' societies as a result of the features of the Islamic and African civilizations, their strong 'resistance' to socio-cultural and economic modernization, especially at its initial stage, and other factors.

The analysis of the reasons for civil wars in some countries of North Africa and the Horn reveals their close relationship with the features of the formation of statehood, the character and role of the state bureaucracy, the

rigid authoritarian governance system, which formed in the second half of the 20th century, and etatist model of economy. These factors caused a systemic crisis at various stages of the development of these countries. Putting an end to civil wars and overcoming the crisis of statehood and dangerous ethno-confessional frictions of the late 20th century directly depend on the success of the reforms, social modernization, and renovation of the course of supporting development by industrial countries, as well as on overcoming resistance of the well-organized, consolidated, and corrupt military-bureaucratic stratum.

The section South of Africa considered the historical, socio-political, and economic problems of the region and the internal and external factors of its development.

The reports of *I.V. Gerasimchuk* (Institute for African Studies) on the Sense of the Conception of Sustainable Development in the South of Africa and *H. Ndlowu* (Swaziland) on Necessity of Traditional Political Institutions in the Contemporary Political Systems of Africa: the Example of the 'Holy Swazi Monarchy' were followed by an animated discussion.

The section also considered the problems of the former Portuguese colonies. It was for the first time that Russian scholars discussed the history of the military and political cooperation between the USSR/Russia and former Portuguese colonies (the 1960s to the early 2000s) together with Portuguese historians.

The participants drew some preliminary conclusions: the initiatives concerning the socioeconomic development of the countries of the region, including the RSA, are related to solving the problems of sustainable development and control of resources under democratic regimes; the new facts detected by historians require them to rethink the past and study its little known aspects, such as armed struggle; the problems of international relations, including the relations between the RSA and Russia, may be solved not only by developing trade and economic cooperation but also by rethinking geopolitical realities, such as those of the basin of the Indian Ocean.

The recent decade witnessed women's increasing economic, social, and political activity in Sub-Saharan and South Africa and the Muslim regions of the North. One of the main topics discussed at the section Gender Problems of Transitional Society was men's and women's role in the political structures (*N.A. Ksenofontova*, *N.V. Grishina*, Institute for African Studies; *N.G. Romanova*, Institute for Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences; *V.A. Popov*, Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology; *D. Piry*, Zambia; *Moji Makanjuola*, Nigeria; *Santari Aminata Traore*, Mali; *R. Ekeoma*,

Nigeria). The speakers discussed the problem of changes in the system of values and status-gender functions of men and women at the transitional stages of history in the societies influenced by globalization. They noted that the gender approach in scholarly research and governance agencies' activity makes it possible to see important social problems in a new light. The constructivist understanding of the gender problems, based not on the biological and physiological differences between men and women but on their socio-cultural features, presupposes elimination of hierarchical stereotypes and gender discrimination and a basically new and modern approach to social and personal problems.

The section Global World Order and Cultural and Civilizational Originality considered the interaction between the global socio-cultural factors of the development of African countries; the features of the contemporary world development; and specific features of various regions of Africa as cultural-historical types. There was a discussion about the content of the modern civilizational context of the world development and Africa's place in this context. *A.I. Neklessa* (Institute for African Studies) determined this context as a transition to the 'post-modern civilization'. It is treated as a specific condition of the society that is going to replace the earlier development stages (savagery-barbarism-civilization) and Christian civilization (the Greater Modern culture) as the most complete embodiment of the modern cultural-historical type. The spectrum of the opportunities available in this New World depends, first of all, on financial resources and financial success; the global precast structure of worldly hierarchies is the model of the politically appropriate North (the world city), surrounded by the damned countries of the South (the world countryside) with their not fully legitimate political regimes. To Africa, this model promises, most probably, a new set and new forms of conflicts, imposition of international muscular control, and further limitation of internal development.

A.N. Moseiko (Centre for Civilizational and Regional Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences) believed that the situation of global transformation includes a cultural component, i.e., formation of a transitional (borderline) culture at the global level. The 'borderline mentality', which is characteristic of the whole world but has epicentres (Russia is one of them), is isomorphic to this culture. According to *V.K. Vigand* (Institute for African Studies), the world order model with a system of coordinates 'the East vs. the West' is still a reality. He emphasized the importance of dividing the mankind into 'the East', based on the distribution of the national income by hierarchical authorities (despots), and 'the West', based on equivalent exchange of the

social product (democracy), as well as the necessity of applying different characteristics to the study of Islamic and Western states. On the whole, Africa remains between the East and the West, and its place will be determined by progressive westernization or inhibitory orientalization.

According to *I.V. Sledzevskii*, the director of the Centre for Civilizational and Regional Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, the context of the civilizational development is still determined by two fundamental aspects (trends) of the world order of the New time: on the one hand, by diversity of traditional civilizations, each of which gravitates towards a definite cultural region; on the other, by the development of the so-called world culture as a special cultural and historical type, which strives for boundless expansion in time and space and directly addresses man's world. At the same time, the world culture as a specific product of the neo-European civilization and a more general type of the contemporary inter-civilizational interaction, which includes, on the one hand, centralization, unification, and globalization of the global cultural space and, on the other, isolation of its main parts (the North vs. the South) or their mutually complementary nature (the East vs. the West). Africa is an inalienable and, at the same time, specific part of the world culture, which cannot be described adequately in the terms of either system of relations.

The speakers discussed the acute problem of the interrelation among various levels and components of socio-cultural identity (ethnic, national, sub-regional, and civilizational) and their role in Africa's response to the challenges of globalization. According to *E.E. Lebedeva* (Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences), it is of a great interest to trace African intellectuals' and politicians' attempts to find a state model that is acceptable to polyethnic societies, such as projects of forming federal and confederative states based on the principles of national-territorial self-determination (Ethiopia and RSA), as well as their search for civilizational identity as a factor of overcoming the systemic crisis of African societies in the setting of globalization.

I.T. Katagoshchina (Centre for Civilizational and Regional Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences) noted the contradictory nature and incomplete formation of African identity. On the one hand, since the very start of the colonization of Africa by European powers, the reaction of Africans with European education to the Europeans' policy manifested itself in a civilizational discourse, i.e., attempts to find Africa's place in the civilizational conflict and in the world on the whole. On the other hand, this problem has no adequate solution even at present; Africans face the dilemma of recon-

ciliation their cultural 'originality' with inevitable external impacts in order to develop the continent socially and culturally. The phenomenon of dual identity of young descendants of Maghrebine immigrants was mentioned by *E.B. Demintseva* (Centre for Civilizational and Regional Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences). A peculiar subculture forms among them, being a synthesis of Oriental traditions, the laws of 'genuine' Muslim family, and influence of French culture.

The participants paid a special attention to the phenomenon of the rapid spread of Islam in Tropical Africa. This process was evaluated in different ways by *A.D. Savateev* (Centre for Civilizational and Regional Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences), *Y.M. Kobishchanov*, and *V.K. Vigand* (Institute for African Studies). *A.D. Savateev* believes that, in spite of the Christians' decades long colonial domination, Islam is the most essential civilizational project in the region: a centuries old religious idea is striking roots in the African soil. Strengthening civilizational unity with the Islamic world provokes many African Muslims to contact with religious fundamentalists. *Y.M. Kobishchanov* mentioned that rivalry between the Muslims and Christians strengthened after African countries attained independence: whereas North Africa becomes increasingly homogenous ethno-confessionally, some states of Tropical Africa have become a zone of permanent or latent ethno-confessional conflicts. *V.K. Vigand* considered the expansion of Islam as a factor that undermines ethno-confessional stability in many countries of the sub-region.

The participants in the section Literature concentrated on the formation of new African culture and its importance in the relations between the North and the South. *I.D. Nikiforova* (Institute of World Literature) emphasized that most of African writers perceive themselves and the peoples of Africa as a part of the world community and do not share the idea of irreconcilable confrontation between Africa and the so-called North. They are inclined to consider political problems only as an inalienable part of such global processes as the menace of terrorism and implantation of democratic values, these universals of the political reality of the early third millennium. Several speakers dealt with the integration of the local and western literary traditions as an important factor of the development of modern African literatures.

The participants in the discussion agreed that the main component of the development of African literature in the late 20th century and thereafter is its increasing importance in the capacity of an inalienable part of world literature, which testifies to African writers' striving to draw the cultures of 'the South' and 'the North' together and bring about their mutual understanding and mutual penetration.

Following the traditions, the section Linguistics paid attention to comprehensive sociolinguocultural studies and structural description of African languages. Some speakers dealt with analysis of the classical and traditional examples of verbal culture (kinship term systems and folklore, including paraemias, fairy tales, etc.). Some other reports reflected the renovation and enrichment of the lexicon, which are characteristic of many African languages. They studied both such widespread languages as Swahili, Somali, Hausa, Bamana, etc. and little known languages, some of which were detected by field researches just recently.

It was for the first time in the history of Africanists' conferences that the data on African languages were widely discussed in the general typological context. Some reports on typological linguistics were presented by experts in general linguistics, interested in data on African languages. Both experienced Africanists and younger researchers took part in the fruitful academic discussion. The section held a special meeting where the participants presented reports about the performance of descriptive tasks based on the data of a single African language (Lingala, Laadi, Yoruba, Kirfi, etc.). Most of the reports dealt with morphology and syntax; lexical and phonetic problems received less attention.

Today, when the conceptions of the post-industrial world and informational society are becoming a reality, it is very important to analyze the results of the impetuous and often uncontrolled progress of informational technologies. The 9th conference of Africanists was the first one where these problems were considered independently by the round table on the Informational Community and Africa. Six reports were presented at it, dealing with the problems of internet development in Africa (*B.B. Runov*, Institute for African Studies; *I.Y. Nechaeva*, Moscow State University), the experience of using informational technologies in Egypt (*I.O. Abramova*, Institute for African Studies; *B.G. Fatkulin*, Chelyabinsk State University), use of telemedicine in Africa (*S. Winchank*, RSA), and political web-sites in Africa, Russia, and Britain (*D.V. Polikanov*, Institute for African Studies).

The problem of developing or rejecting internet technologies is of a special importance in the countries of the periphery of world economy, which experience socio-political upheavals and have to determine the priorities of the strategy of their development very rigidly. The experience of Africa in this field may be used in other transitional societies, including Russia.

The UN programme of developing internet technologies in Africa, the project of creating the Regional African System of Satellite Communications (RASCOS), and the creation of Africa One network (an underwater

optic fibre cable that will connect African countries with the world) will be very useful in developing informational technologies in Africa.

African countries have to connect themselves to the cyberspace both as recipients of data and as generators of ideas. This alone can make mutually advantageous electronic business, notable improvement in the educational level, and adequate cultural development of Africa a reality. The only alternative is a new form of dependence and a peculiar form of 'informational neo-colonialism', and the internet technologies will aggravate the peripheral position of the region.

The participants in the conference held round tables on (1) Problems and Prospects of Russian Businessmen's Activity in Africa; (2) African Economy under Conditions of Economic Recession; (3) Socio-political Problems of Nigeria during the Transition to Civil Rule; (4) Prospects of Cooperation of the Countries of the Indian Ocean Basin; and (5) Mixed Marriages as an Experience of Inter-civilizational Relations.

A component of the conference was a meeting of Russian Africanists. Speaking at it, *G.B. Starushenko*, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, told about the main spheres of activity of the Association of Soviet Africanists, which ceased to function in the early 1990s. *A.M. Vassiliev*, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the director of the Institute for African Studies, and chairman of the Academic Council for the Problems of Africa, reported about the results of the activity of these organizations aimed at coordinating African studies in the academic and higher education institutions of Russia and Russian diplomats', journalists', and businessmen's activity. He noted the necessity of integrating the efforts of the scholars and experts in African affairs. Other speakers supported the idea of restoring the association of Russian Africanists.

A.B. Davidson, director of the Centre for African History of the Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences, noted that the association must define the spheres of its activity without duplicating those of the Institute for African Studies. One of these spheres may be the traditions and trends of the development of African studies in Russia. Unlike Orientalists, Africanists mostly neglect the history of their researches. The study of this past, of Africanists' successes, achievements, errors, and miscalculations is of a special importance at present. The speaker mentioned the forthcoming anniversaries of the birth of A.Z. Zusmanovich, D.A. Olderogge, and I.I. Potekhin, eminent Russian Africanists. Agreeing with A.M. Vassiliev, he deemed it necessary to expand the researches concerning the history and present state of the racial problem in Africa and among the African Diaspo-

ras in other continents, including that in Russia. The meeting elected the organizing committee of the constitutive conference of the Association of Russian Africanists, chaired by V.G. Solodovnikov, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The conference was scheduled for October-November 2002.

Summing up the results of the 9th conference of Africanists, A.M. Vasiliev emphasized the old and deep traditions of African studies in Russia. Russian and foreign scholars justly consider the regular conferences held by the Institute for African Studies as authoritative international academic forums. He evaluated the discussions that took place at the conference in the atmosphere of mutual understanding as constructive and useful. He also appreciated the contribution of young scholars to the success of the conference. Their non-standard thinking, striving to work in a new manner without subverting their predecessors, and ability to employ inexhaustible informational resources left a notable imprint on the deliberations of Africanists, he said.

The participants in the conference considered it as a notable step towards developing African studies in Russia and the Russo-African cooperation.

AFRICAN STUDIES OF THE 20TH CENTURY:
EPOCH, PERSONS, VIEWS

*Alexander Balezin**

The international academic conference on African Studies of the 20th Century: Epoch, Persons, Views was held in Moscow at the Institute of World History, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Institute of Asian and African Countries, Moscow State University, on September 13-14, 2001. Traditionally, the Centre for African Studies of the Institute of World History holds international conferences once in two years. The last of them coincided with the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Centre [1]. It was inaugurated by Academician A.O. Chubaryan, director of the Institute, and Prof. M.S. Meyer, director of the Institute of Asian and African Countries.

The conference was held immediately after the tragic events of September 11 in the U.S.A., which left their imprint on its deliberations. Some foreign scholars failed to reach Moscow, and (this was most important) the participants felt strongly what unites them and what the most pressing tasks of their studies are. Almost all speakers touched this issue.

Several sets of topics were covered in the reports presented at the conference. Most of attention was paid to the general and specific problems of the history of African studies in Russia. Side by side with critical remarks, the speakers analyzed the undeniable achievements of these studies and discussed their priorities and approaches to African history.

Prof A.B. Davidson, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), from the Institute of World History presented a report on African Studies in Russia from Comintern to Perestroika and the Present, suggesting the periodization of the history of African studies in Russia in that period as follows: the 1920s and 1930s; the late 1930s to the 1950s; the late 1950s to the late 1980s; and the late 1980s to the present.

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Prof. M.A. Tolmacheva (U.S.A.) reported about the Africanists' Round Table, telling about the activities of Leningrad Africanists, led by D.A. Olderogge, in the 1960s and 1970s. Prof. I.I. Filatova (RSA) covered anti-colonialism, one of the most important topics of African studies of the 1930s to the 1950s in the USSR, whereas V.P. Gorodnov, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), from the Institute of World History held that, paradoxically enough, this topic was neglected by and large by Soviet Africanists.

S.V. Mazov, Cand. Sci. (Hist.), from the Institute of World History presented a report on the USSR's Post-war African Policy in the Context of Historiography of the Cold War (Former Italian Colonies and Liberia). He considered earlier unknown expansionist plans of the USSR in Africa. G.V. Tsyarkin, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), from the Institute of World History described the Ethiopian studies of the 20th century in Russia, one of the oldest branches of our African studies. Prof. A.S. Balezin, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), from the Institute of World History dealt with the evolution of the rules of access to Russian and foreign archives for Africanists in the second half of the 20th century.

There were foreign participants in the conference. Prof. Irma Taddia (Italy) reported on an unpublished manuscript, headed *My 50 Years with Ethiopia*, by Mariya Rait, a patriarch of Ethiopian studies in Russia. Prof. F. Eudelberg (RSA) spoke about the peaceful settlement of 1988 in Namibia and Angola, paying much attention to Russian Africanists' studies and comparing them with the researches carried out in Western countries and the RSA.

The conference also considered foreign studies in African history. Prof. A. Jones (FRG) told about German ethnographers' contribution to these studies paid in the 20th century. French Africanists also studied African history initially within the framework of other academic disciplines, as it follows from Prof. S. Duluque's (France) report on *History of Africa, a New Subject in the Complex of African Studies in France (1900-1970): Approaches, Discussions, Persons*. African studies in Eastern Europe were represented by the report made by Prof. O. Hulec (Czechia) on *African Studies in Czechia in the Recent Four Decades: Successes, Problems, and Prospects*. The organizing committee of the conference, chaired by A.S. Balezin, received texts of two reports: *Emergence and Evolution of African Studies in the United Kingdom* by Prof. C. Fife (Britain) and *African Studies in France* by Prof. C. Kokri-Vidrovic (France).

Some reports dealt with the development of historiography in the RSA, which is a subject of many researches carried out at the Centre for African

Studies, including those by its head A.S. Davidson. Prof. P. Meilam (RSA) spoke about the historiography of the racial legislation in South Africa, and V.G. Shubin, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), from the Institute for African Studies considered the trends of the historiography of the national liberation movement in the RSA.

The reports on the development of historiography in Tropical Africa covered the heritage of some eminent thinkers. M.D. Nikitin, Cand. Sci. (Hist.), from Saratov spoke on *Orientalism of E. Said, the Theory of Colonial Discourse, and New Horizons of the Study of Colonialism in Africa*. E.S. Lvova, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), from the Institute of Asian and African Countries threw light on Theophile Obenga's contribution to the development of African studies. V.I. Evseenko, Cand. Sci. (Hist.), from Vyatka considered the problem of ecotourism in francophone historiography, including the works by authors from French-speaking African countries. The title of the report presented by A.G. Pondopoulo (France) was *Why the Fulbe Remain 'White'*. The author dealt with the reasons for stability of the categories of race and people in African studies.

Some studies were beyond the framework of historiography. They dealt with the general problems of the present, such as Afrocentrism and Pan-Africanism by Prof. Lilie Golden (U.S.A.) and *Africa in Russian Media* by A.V. Brazhkina from Moscow. Some speakers covered the history, present situation, and trends of the development of the RSA, such as Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki: *Their Comparative Importance in the Consolidation of Democracy in the RSA* by Prof. W. Breutenbach (RSA), *Conceptual Approaches of African Public and Political Figures to the Socioeconomic Development of the Continent in the Setting of Globalization with Thabo Mbeki, the President of the RSA, as an Example* by Y.V. Korablev, Cand. Sci. (Hist.), from Moscow, *I Saw New Jerusalem: Gumede's Recollections about His Visit to Russia in 1927* by Prof. R. van Dimel from the RSA. The report on *African Linguistics: the South African Perspective*, presented by Prof. J. van Nickern from the RSA, evoked an unexpectedly animated discussion.

Similarly to the earlier forums, the conference was characterized by a creative atmosphere, friendly discussions, and sincere interest in the colleagues' studies. The work of the conference was facilitated by the students of the African department of the Institute of Asian and African Countries, who did their best to translate Russian reports and speeches into English, French, Italian, and Afrikaans.

The Centre for African Studies is going to publish, as it was done earlier, the reports presented at the conference in Russian and English, the working languages of the conference.

**PUBLICATIONS ON AFRICA: REVIEWS,
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

BOOK REVIEW

Intellectuals, Power and Society in Black Africa, by V.S. Mirzekhanov, Moscow: Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2001. 246 pp. [Мирзеханов В.С. Интеллектуалы, власть и общество в Чёрной Африке. М.: Ин-т всеобщей истории РАН, 2001. 246 с.]

The topic of the monograph by V.S. Mirzekhanov, a teacher of Saratov State University, is among the most vital issues of modern history of the former colonial and dependent countries. Their "new elites", who combine European education with the striving to preserve their original traditions, reflect intensely upon the relations between power and culture, between state and nation, between history and religion, between morality and politics, between destiny and mission.

Most of the earlier works by Russian Africanists about the problems of social thinking dealt with the situation in former British colonies. Those related to French-speaking countries were written almost two decades ago (e.g., *Social Thinking in West Africa in 1918-1939* by A.B. Letnev, published in 1983).

The monograph by V.S. Mirzekhanov is a comprehensive study of recent history of social thinking in the French-speaking African countries and interaction between the character of the state power and intellectuals' attitudes. This is the first detailed study of the interrelated phenomena of religious and cultural consciousness, theory and programme of the ethno-national development, and creation of "new" political models of the Sovereign National Conference, aimed at democratizing the African societies. Their essence is the "manifestation of the suppressed components of self-consciousness, revenge of "unrecognized authorities", renaissance of the authority of custom" (p. 95).

The study is based on numerous sources: secular and religious official documents, programmes and speeches of politicians and public figures,

works by African scholars and writers, press, archive data, collected in France, and unique publications of original materials. In my opinion, the use of fiction in the monograph was interesting and quite effective. Such materials not only demonstrate the changes in the elites' and masses' social consciousness in a concentrated form but also enable readers to learn the ideas of the writers themselves, who belong to the topmost stratum of intellectuals.

The monograph deals with the complex of philosophical (history of social thinking in the continent), historical (evolution of the educated elite's views and life experience), and purely practical (the role and place of this social group in the development of postcolonial African states and forecasts about the relations among them) problems. The book consists of seven chapters: (1) Intellectuals and Power in Black Africa; (2) Intellectuals and "Development Ideology" in Africa; (3) Conceptions of Power and Governance in Independent Countries of Tropical Africa; (4) National Conferences in Africa: the Sense and Boundaries of the Model; (5) The Power Odyssey: Power vs. "Reasonable Governance" in Black Africa; (6) Statehood in Poly-ethnic African Countries (with the subchapters (a) Ethno-national Development Models in Africans' Intellectual Seekings and Strivings in the Independence Period and (b) Ethnicity and Politics in Black Africa); and (7) Insubmissive Africa: Theological Thinking in Search of a Religious Substantiation of the Rearrangement of the Continent (with subchapters (a) "Theology under a Tree: Succession and Novations and (b) Theology of the Renovation of Africa: Religions, Cults, and Politics in the Postcolonial Society).

The author gives a considerable study to the analysis and definition of the very notion of intellectuals, a quite controversial, vague, and indefinite term. Belonging to intellectuals depends in Africa either on the occupation (state employees), or on the education level (university graduates), or on the involvement in political life (members of public organizations). This writer is inclined to agree with V.S. Mirzekhanov, who writes: "It is more acceptable to support the idea of a broad interpretation of the social group of intellectuals and include both the people of "liberal professions" (teachers, physicians, writers, etc.) and state employees, students, and the military" in it (p. 11). Analyzing this large social group, the author distinguishes intellectuals proper as its elite, "the people who do mental work, occupy the privileged position in the system of the generation and propagation of ideas, possess knowledge, create historical consciousness, impart sense to social facts, and influence political and cultural processes" (p. 18).

It is because intellectual elite is identified, as a rule, with political elite and, therefore, is able to govern the political development of their countries

through government agencies that its study is of both purely academic and practical interest.

The author traces the changes in the African intellectuals' social role since the emergence of this stratum, describes its development at various stages of history of African societies in the 20th century, particularly in the 1960s to the mid-1990s, and considers "the historical sense of the phenomenon of the development ideology in Africa" and its place in the global process. He also analyzes the difficulties of studying consciousness of peoples with an alien culture with the use of the methodological principles of historical phenomenology, interdisciplinary approach, and the conceptions of systemic and diverse "cultural worlds".

The status of the social group of intellectuals manifests itself at three levels: "at the level of connection with knowledge as a kind of capital, at the level of connection with one's own society..., and at the level of relations with political power" (p. 36). Each of them has difficulties of its own. In particular, they include excessive self-evaluation, loss of contacts both with the society that brought them up and with modern government agencies. None of three models developed by the African intellectual elite (modernization, renaissance, and specific "African" brands of Marxism) has justified the hopes pinned on them. Inevitable disappointment prompted African intellectuals to look for new paths and theories, which led either to tacit compromises or to emigration and emergence of a special stratum of African intellectuals, so-called "world citizens" (mainly in Britain and the U.S.A.). Losing faith in their own role in political life of their countries and getting rid of the euphoria of the first years of independence, many of them abandoned the sphere of public affairs and dedicated themselves to academic and literary activities. However, the author notes justly, the recent years have witnessed the development of new trends towards "eliminating the logic of seclusion" and putting an end to isolation. As a result, a new intellectual elite form in Africa, and the current stage is that of "slow maturation of new categories of social agents and new types of leaders" (p. 141).

The author scrupulously considers the conceptions of power and democracy and their evolution after the attainment of independence in the light of African intellectuals' views. He studied the contradictory interactions between the traditional legal structures and those imposed by colonialists, considering the concrete difficulties of the functioning of one-party systems, the thorny path of democratization, its adaptation to the African realities, and the reasons of instability, which is fraught with violence.

Two chapters deal with the ethnic and confessional problems, mentioned in passing or even totally ignored in the general works concerning the current stage of the development of African countries, although these problems always play an important or even decisive role in multiethnic and multiconfessional societies. The principle "one country, one nation" remains just a motto in all African countries. Predominance of certain ethnoses or confessions in the state machinery often gave rise to instability, domestic and international conflicts, and even bloody clashes. The author shows that "the state machinery and ethnic movements develop in parallel; their sophisticated mutual influence hampers the formation of state-political unity and nationalities" (p. 182). Being aware of this fact, African thinkers advance the ideas of "ethnic pluralism", "multiethnic society", and theological approach to the development of government agencies. This forms a new "cult space" (p. 226), where religion becomes a factor, means, and tool of politics. In spite of being secondary, it always is present in this sphere. Neglect of the role of the ethnic and confessional situation in modern African societies and scholars' trend towards a Euro-centrist approach to them, which is not rare even among Russian Africanists, lead to errors in forecasting the political development of African countries. This conclusion, drawn at the end of the monograph, is absolutely right.

Much attention is paid in the monograph to the sophisticated and indefinite conception of "cultural identity", which is difficult to understand and interpret. Its various versions have become the basis for many philosophical and political trends of African social thinking. The author justly believes that the reason of popularity of this idea and of emphasizing its value is the opposition to the modern standardized post-industrial world, which makes people feel themselves unprotected and long for the habitual socius (p. 229) as the guarantee of reliability and stability.

Completing his multifarious analysis, the author concludes that the intellectuals of Tropical Africa form a new and peculiar cultural stratum, "which belongs to its socius and at the same time is secluded from it". This is the factor of their contradictory position. Getting disappointed with their illusions, they overcome the "ethics of infantilism", which prevails at present, and marches towards the "ethics of responsibility" (p. 231).

The basic idea of the monograph by V.S. Mirzekhanov is the necessity to understand Africa and stop judging it. It is not enough to describe facts and developments; one should understand the regularities that govern them. The very fact of analyzing the realities of French-speaking Africa is an important contribution to African studies. Moreover, the methodology of the

study and the conclusions drawn in it may be applied to all African countries and even to many former colonies in Asia.

Reviewed by *Eleonora Lvova**

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