Pilot Issue No.1 DM 5,00
West-Berlin, February 1990

ISIVIVANE

JOURNAL OF LETTERS AND ARTS IN AFRICA AND THE DIASPORA

Cover photo: George Hallett

IMPRESSUM

Verleger: Vusi D. Mchunu
Redaktion: Vusi D. Mchunu
Grafik: Christine Voigts
Satz: Elke Paul
Adresse: Hochkirch
1000 Berl
Druck: Systemdruc
Hardenber
1000 Berl

ISSN 0936-0923

Vusi D. Mchunu Spar
Kontonr.: 240 13 98 10

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EDITORIAL

Isivivane is a Zulu word that means a pyramid-shaped heap of rough stones and earth set up as a landmark or memorial in a traditional setting amongst the Sotho-Tswana and Nguni cultures of Southern Africa. Each passerby along the footpath throws a stone to add on the growing heap as a way of registering respect.

Isivivane is a monument collectively built by all members of the cultural group irrespective of age, sex or difference in dialect.

This pilot issue is a boulder we are anchoring at the basement of the monument of progressive publications of Africa and the Diaspora. Here we refer to the pioneering journals publishing on the ancient African civilisation, the slave trade, colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, racism, apartheid, lynching, civil and human rights, ethnic minority rights, the national democratic revolution, liberation and workers democracy. From West Berlin we are sending out signals to consolidate this important network.

Isivivane, un palabra Zulu, es un amontonamiento de piedras y tierra en forma piramidal que surge como un monumento en la vida tradicional de las culturas Sotho-Tswana y Nguni en el sur de Africa. Quien transita este camino, echa una piedra al montón para que la colina crezca, mostrando de este modo su respeto. Jovenes y viejos, mujeres y hombres, de un grupo cultural contribuyen, colectivamente, en la construcción Isivivane.

Esta primera edición quiere ser un fundamento de este monumento de publicaciones progresistas sobre Africa y la Diáspora.

Esta es publicación entre otras, que trata temas como las antiguas civilizaciónes africanas, el tráfico de esclavos, el colonialismo, neo-colonialismo, el imperialismo, el racismo, el apartheid, la justicia por linchamiento, los derechos civiles y humanos, los derechos de minorias étnicas, la revolucion democrática y nacional, la cultura de la liberación, la cultura obrera. Queremos apelar de Berlin Occidental a que contribuya a consolidar esta red de comunicación.

Las retrasadas elecciones en Namibia, con el triunfo de la SWAPO con Sam Nujoma como presidente, es para nosotros, uno de los acontecimientos históricos mas importantes de 1989. Admiramo y apoyamos es espiritu de lucha de los sindicatos y del "Mass Democratic Movement" de Sudáfrica que finalmente hicieron posible la liberacion de los siete lideres del ANC y un lider del "Pan Africanist Congress".

Las resoluciones de la "Conference for a Democratic Future" van a abrir el camino para una verdadera democracia.

Africa y la Diáspora deben mantenerse alertas cuando en Europa Oriental y Occidental se habla de democracia y cambios. Qual es niestra posición frente a la politica de Glasnost y Perestroika de Gorbatchow? En que medida nuestra reivindicación por un nuevo orden económico van a ser perjudicadas con la consolidación de la comunidad Europa en 1992? Que hacemos ahora sin la solidaridad de Europa Oriental? Estes son las preguntas importantes de los anos 90.

Isivivane no va a eludir esta discusión. Esperamos contribuciones en inglés, portugués, castellano y francés, de poesias, ensayos, resenas de libros, criticas de arte, entrvistas, analises e informaciones. Estamos insertos al pie de este creciente monumento de literatura y arte progresistas africanos y de la Diáspora.

Isivivane, ein Zulu Wort, ist eine pyramidenförmige Anhäufung aus Steinen und Erde, gewachsen als ein Markstein oder ein Denkmal in der traditionellen Lebensweise der Sotho-Tswana und Nguni Kulturen im südlichen Africa. Jeder der des Weges kommt, wirft einen Stein dazu, um den Hügel wachsen zu lassen und bekundet damit seinen Respekt. Isivivane ist ein Monument zu dem alle Menschen einer kulturellen Gruppe, jung und alt, Frauen und Männer kollektiv beitragen.

Diese erste Ausgabe soll ein Eckstein dieses Monuments progressiver Publikationen über Africa und die Diapora sein. Wir sind ein Teil der Veröffentlichungen über antike und alte afrikanische Zivilisationen, den Sklavenhandel, Kolonialismus, Neo-Kolonialismus, Imperialismus, Rassismus, Apartheid, Lynchjustiz, Bürger- und Menschenrechte, die nationale, demokratische Revolution, die Befreiung und die Arbeiterkultur. Wir wollen von West-Berlin aus dieses Kommunikationsnetz fördern und festigen.

Für uns ist die verspätete Wahl in Namibia mit dem Sieg der South West African Peoples Organisation unter Präsident Nujoma eines der wichtigsten, historischen Ereignisse im Jahr 1989. Wir unterstützen und bewundern den kämpferischen Geist der Gewerkschaften und der "Mass Democratic Movement" in Südafrica, welche letztlich die Freilassung der sieben African National Congress Führer und eines Pan Africanist Congress Führers erreicht haben. Die Resolutionen der gigantischen "Conference for a Democratic Future in South Africa" werden den Weg für eine wirkliche Demokratie bereiten.

Die Menschen in Afrika und der Diaspora müssen wachsam bleiben, wenn West- und Osteuropa über Veränderung und Demokratie reden. Wie stehen wir zu Gorbatschows Glasnost und Perestroika? Wie wird die Konsolidierung der Europäischen Gemeinschaft 1992 unsere Forderung nach einer neuen internationalen Wirtschaftsordnung beeinträchtigen? Wie sieht unser Weg jetzt aus ohne die Solidarität der osteuropäischen Länder? Dies sind wichtige Fragen der 90er Jahre.

Isivivane wird diese aktuellen Diskussionen nicht scheuen. Als Beiträge heißen wir Gedichte, Kurzgeschichten, Essays, Buch-, Fotografie- und Kunstrezensionen, Interviews, Analysen und Berichte in Deutsch, Englisch, Französisch, Spanisch und Portugiesisch willkommen. Wir sind am Fuße dieses wachsenden Monuments progressiver Literatur und Kunst in Afrika und der Diaspora verankert.

Canto Six

The Terrorists

The policeman, who shot Hector Petersen in 1976
said:
he threatened me
with his bare fist.
I was afraid he would hit me.

Violence is relative:
there is one who is violent
and one who suffers violence.
As we all know
it is easy to confuse
the one who shoots with the one who is
shot.

At the inquest of seventeen year old Big Boy Mgwinya
the policeman who shot him dead
said:
what else could I do
when the mourners were singing in their own language
and that - we all know it - causes unrest.

Violence is relative:
there is one who is violent
and one who suffers violence.
As we all know
it is easy to confuse singing with shooting,
and so the magistrate set the policeman
free.

The Koevoet commando
which roasted the feet of three peasants
in the war zone near the river Kavango
said:
they intimidated us
with their menacing silence
about the hiding SWAPO insurgents.

Everybody can see
that the peaceful Kavango peasants
must be frightening terrorists:
as we all know
it is easy to confuse
the one who roasts a foot
with the one whose foot is roasted.

The interrogator
whose fists pounded Steve Biko's skull
until he lay unconscious on the floor
said:
I was frightened by his stubborn refusal
to divulge the names of his comrades.

Everybody can see
that Steve Biko was a terrorist:
as we all know
it is easy to confuse
the one who breaks a skull
with the one whose skull is broken.

Because we can all understand
the difference between
the terrorist and the terrorized,
we can all understand the need
to fight the terrorists
until our land is peaceful
and free.

Peter Horn

Catena

Dennis Brutus

(commemorating the victims of Soweto)

Pray you, remember them.

The alleys reeking with the acrid stench
of gunfire, teargas and arrogant hate

Pray you, remember them
(We remember them)

The pungent odor of anger,
of death and dying, and decay

I pray you, do remember them
(We remember them)

Anger drifting through smoke-filled lanes
in sudden erratic gusts

Pray and remember
(We remember them)

Torn bodies half-glimpsed
Through standing rolling smoke

Pray, remember them

The ghettos reeking
Fathers grieving
Mothers weeping
Bodies of children torn and bleeding

Pray, remember them: we remember them.

New Accents of Narrative Techniques in the Francophone African Novel

An Introduction

by Dr. G. A. Gundu

INTRODUCTION

Until recently, the Francophone African novelist has been observed to be shy in experimenting with narrative techniques. Rather, he has mostly been contented with articulating themes and maintaining the tradition of linear narrative form of the realist or naturalist fiction (Blair, 1976: 181 - 316). Infact one of the very prolific and great African novelists of French expression, Mongo Beti, once revealed in an interview with Anthony Biakolo that questions of narrative techniques are not of primary consideration in his fiction creation because , according to him, his major preoccupation is with "realist fidelity" (Biakolo, 1979: 101a. 103). A close look at his novels and those of other equally famous novelists like Sembene Ousmane, Ferdinand Oyono etc. shows that the novelists have mostly been concerned with giving a realist picture of colonial and post-independence injustice and respecting the linear narrative techniques.

But about a decade ago, there appears to have been a significant shift of emphasis from "realist fidelity" and linear narrative to adventures into what may be called sophisticated narrative techniques. This is seen particularly in the novels of a new breed of writers like Sony Labou Tansi, Jean-Marie Adiaffe, Werewere Liking, just to mention a few of the significant novelists who started publishing about a decade ago. Werewere Liking in particular has disclosed almost repeatedly that she gives primacy to narrative form over thematic realism in her fiction creation (Magnier, 1985: 20). Her stand appears not only to echo but also to translate the views and practice of a host of her generation of novelists.

Since this shift of emphasis appears to be a departure from what has hitherto been known of the Francophone African novel and consequently marks a significant milestone in the evolution of the novel, this paper proposes to present its major aspects; an exercise which it is hoped will permit us to comprehend the problems of the current state of the evolution of the novel.

The period of our study commences in 1979, when the first significant novel of the new generation of writing was published: *La Vie et Demie*. However ,we have had cause to go back to the mid-60's in order to explain, in passing, how the new accents have largely been inspired by the earlier attempts of Charles Nokan and Ahmadou Kourouma.

AREAS OF THE NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES

In 1979, when a young Congolese writer, Sony Labou Tansi, published his maiden novel, *La Vie et Demie* (1) and a year later when an Ivorian, Jean-Marie Adiaffi, also published his first novel, *La Carte d'Identité*, it became almost evident that the search for new

accents of narrative techniques, inaugurated earlier but rather in a shy manner by the authors of *Violent était le Vent* (1966) and *Les Soleils des Indépendances* (1968) was crystallizing into a reasonable literary force. Since then many more novels that venture into the new techniques have been published (2)

A common trait that betrays these novels is perhaps their gradual departure from the traditional genre of realist or ethnographic African novel towards a novel of fantasy and abstraction that shocks. This technique may not be new to the novel in general but it is definitely a novelty in the experience of the Francophone African novel. One may add that by this innovation, the new breed of novelists in implicitly redefining the African novel from the point of view of 'fiction'; a notion that makes the novel appear more as a work of "imagination" than as a "recreation" or "reflection" of reality. This may explain why, as we shall see presently in the analysis, the characters are purposely abstracted; the genres are deliberately fusioned and used without due respect to their rigid traditional separation; the language consciously deviated from the norm; and the fictional space and time purposely organised to create a cosmos of marvels.

PRESENTATION OF CHARACTERS

An attentative stock of the portrait of many a character reveals that the novelists are very much preoccupied with surprising by creating unusual characters. Unlike the close-to-life characters that we have hitherto known in the realist novel, those of the now novel are grotesques or wanderers without a clearly distinguishable social identification.

The portrait of the grotesque characters appears to have something in common with a similar literary culture in Latin America at the beginning of the 20th century("el grotesco criollo"), but the Francophone African buffoon is definitely something more than that .Instead of provoking a spontaneous laughter in us because of an infantile naivity, he shocks us with his inordinate taste for bloodshed. The very names with which they are baptised appear to be deliberately invented to instil some shock in the reader: "Sa Matrak" in *Les Crapauds Brousse* or "Guide Providentiel" in *La Vie et Demie*. A cursory look at the significance of some of the names and some of the actions of the characters shall be illustrative.

"Matrak" is evidently a deformation of a French word "matraque", pronounced "matrak" and meaning "bludgeon"; a heavy stick used as a weapon. To bludgeon someone would mean to hit him repeatedly with the bludgeon until he loses his senses or he dies. The novelist deliberately coins this word and sarcastically adds a deformed English nobility title "Sa" (Sir) to it, in order to underscore the bloody dictatorship of the bearer, who is ruling over a fictional Republic. He bludgeons his citizens not only psychologically with his political demagogy but also with weapons of political intolerance that have sent many to the grave, like the uprightly intransigent old Alkale (Monenembo, 1979: 1.2-105).

The "Guide Providentiel", which in English means a "Godsent Leader" is the name that Sony Labou Tansi gives to the dictator ruling over the imaginary Republic of Katamalanasie, a name that irresistibly echoes the Gargantua of Rabelais for example, but whose bearer is marked by a certain cruelty that shocks; makes nonsense to the godly connotation of the name and transcends Rabelais' buffoon. For instance he

arrests Martial (an upright man strongly opposed to the dictator's reign of terror), and sadistically tortures him to death by pounding his flesh to paste.

Other characters are portrayed with ambiguous social identification and are often seen wandering about, perhaps in search of their proper identity of a certain truth as is the case of Kiouldé in *Les Crapauds - Brousse* or Mélédouma in *La Carte d'Identité*. The case of Mélédouma is interesting and merits a comment. The ambiguity of his social background. Even his enigmatic name on his identity card is no longer legible as if he is being gradually erased from the face of social existence.

This abstract portrait of the character is significant in the sense that it indicates a new notion of characterisation coming up in the Francophone African novel. The hazy social silhouette of the character forms a seamless fabric with the narrative web of the story which is built around an enigmatic investigation, a technique that irresistibly drags us into a labyrinth of fantasy created by the novelist as if to remind us that his work is after all fiction, that is to say an "illusion of reality". Furthermore, in the manner of the characterisation in the French "nouveau roman", the character ceases to be a social type representing a clan, a class or a race as has been the case with the realist African novel of French expression.

FUSION OF GENRES

Hitherto, many African writers have tried as much as possible, to respect the seperation of the three major genres: poetry, drama and novel; a tradition that is often said to have been inherited from the literary culture of the West. However, when Charles Nokan published his novel, *Violent était le Vent* (1972), he deliberately disregarded the practice because according to him:

"La vie est semblable á un fleuve qui travers la foret, la savane, le sable fin at la boue. L'art doit saisir tous ces visages en meme temps. Il ne s'agit plus d'écrire un roman artificiellement très unifié et monotone (...). Il faut dépeindre toute l'existence qui est à la fois poétique, romanesque, théatrale et picturale, vulgaire, noble, mesquine et généreuse." (Nokan, 1972: 8).

("Life is similar to a river that crosses the forest, savanna, fine sand and mud. Art must capture all these faces at the same time. It is no longer a question of writing an artificially very unified and monotonous novel. We must portray every existence which is at the same time poetic, dictional, dramatic and pictorial, vulgar, noble, mean and generous.")

Infact his novel commences with a prologue in verse and the rest of the narrative is wittingly interwoven with poetry, prose, music and drama. The closing part of the novel is structured like a piece to be performed. It is divided into thirty three tableaux that are closed with an epilogue in verse.

Charles Nokan might not have been aware that by this act, he was inaugurating an innovation in the narrative techniques but many of the succeeding novelists appear to have been inspired by him or to follow his footsteps. Jean-Marie Adiaffe's *La Carte d'Identité* or Werewere Liking's *Elle sera de Jaspe et de Corail* are more or less portraits of human existence that are at the same time poetic, dramatic, pictorial, fictional, erotic, vulgar or noble etc., in order to employ the terminologies of Charles Nokan: the first is a mixture of colours of fable, philosophical essay, legend, poetry and prose; the second has incorporated elements of journalism in

addition to the fusion of the above elements (Magnier,1985: 18). some novelists of the elder generation like the Congolese, Henri Lopes, are fascinated by the new techniques upon which Lopes in particular has attempted recently to experiment. His recent novel *Le Pleurer - Rire* (1982) appears to be a dense mixture of genres of social fiction, epistle and confession. As we shall see shortly, it also attempts to break away from the traditional organisation of the fictional time and space,

This fusion of genres that can be said to be inspired mostly by the African oral literature, permits the novelists to attain different levels of language in the same text he interchangeably employs the language levels of poetry, drama and prose that could be sublime, colloquial are just coarse; and at the same time creates his characters, and universe by borrowing simultaneously from epic, legend, tragedy, comedy or history.

LANGUAGE USE

According to his mood and objectives, each of the novelists employs those registers that he pleases or that are convenient to communicate his objectives. As we have earlier pointed out, the underlying common objective is that of creating a fantasy that shocks; a shock that is borne out of something that the African novel is not yet very much used to. The first stroke of the shock comes from the abstract neologisms in the titles of the novel. unlike the titles of most of the novels we are accustomed to: Adventure Ambique (Ambigues Adventure) or Crepuscule des Temps Anciens (The Dusk of Ancient Times) etc.; titles that echo directly the contents and tones of the novels, the designation of the new novels is deliberately abstract: *La Vie et Demie* (The Life and Half) or enigmatic *Les Crapauds Brousse* (Bush Toads) and *L'Errance* (Wandering) etc. They are gradually ceasing to refer directly to the contents and tones of the novel.

Besides, the text itself is couched in a plurality of registers ranging from the sublime to the downright coarse tones. By and large, this mixture of registers is, in a way, a reflection of fusion of genres since each genre exacts the use of a particular register. But more importantly, it is reminescent of the so-called automatic writing of the surrealist authors. In fact, one of the exponents of the newbreed of writing, Sony Labou Tansi, gives credence to the latter observation when he describes the language in his novel, *La Vie et Demie*, in these terms; "Ca s'appelle écrire par étouderie" (Magnier, 1985:9) (That is called writing without organised thought.)

This may partially explain why some of the characters, from whom one would normally expect to hear a decent language because of their high status in society, shock us when we hear them employ vulgar language. Tonton, who rules over a fictional vast Republic in *Le Pleurer - Rire* and from whom one would expect sublime expressions that befit his status, surprises us when his creator endows him with an incongrously vulgar language that marks him from his very appearance in the novel.

The argument of the merits or demerits of this narrative technique may carry us to a different dimension of our analysis, but what is important here is that the method is a novelty in the Francophone African novel.

ORGANISATION OF TIME AND SPACE

In this area, the striking innovations that have taken place appear to affect mostly

the chronology of events and the manner of articulation of the contours of space.

The order of time in which events take place is often purposely made ambiguous without a defined beginning and end. The author of *La Vie et Demie* spans the events of his novel over an interminable duration of time, as an unbroken chain of generations of the providential leaders pass by, a duration whose inception is equally blurred in the fog of memory in a manner that leaves us wondering with the narrator whether "C'était l'année où Chaidana avait quinze ans"(Labou Tansi, 1979. 11) (It was the year when Chaidana was fifteen years old) that all the atrocities began. But he quickly turns round to reveal to us philosohically that this beginning of the event is an illusion and that the beginning has no temporal definition because: "Le temps est par terre. Le ciel, la terre les choses tout. Complétement par terre. C'était le temps où la terre était encore ronde ou la mer était la mer" (Labou Tansi, 1979: 11) (Time is on the ground. Sky, ground, things, all. Completely on the ground. It was the time when the earth was still round when the sea was the sea.) One may wonder whether we have not virtually entered the temporal universe of the fables where there is no dated commencement of events and where the notion of eternal time permeates every aspect of existence.

Elsewhere in Le Pleurer - Rire, Henri Lopes changes from his linear time notion that characterizes his collection of short stories, *Tribaliques* (1971) - to an experiment similar to Labou Tansi's. He creates a narrator who evokes time in such a fluid manner that makes one wonder whether the narrator is dreaming or whether he has just come out of a slumber. "C'était à Génève, je crois. Peu importe la date, il s'y rendait si souvent. Chaque année, pour un oui pou un non. Le détail chronologique,

Ethnologie

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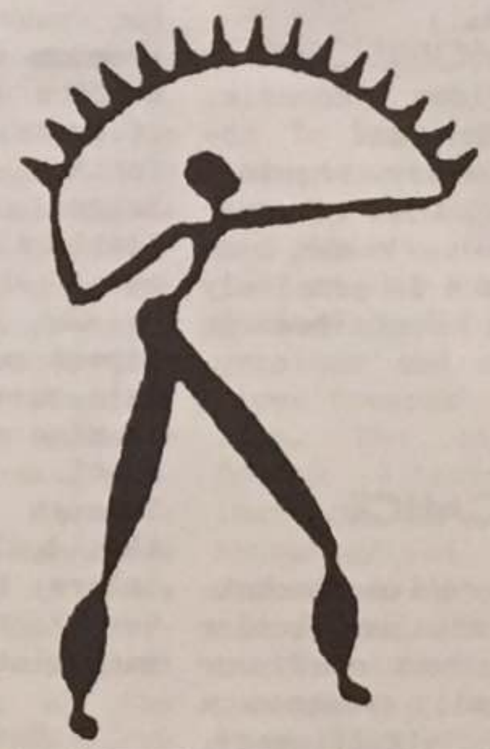

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comme on va le voir ne change rien au récit" (Lopes 1982: 281). (It was Geneva, I think. Date is not important, he went there so often. Every year, for a yes for a no. Chronological details, as we shall see do not alter anything in the story.) This is because it is believed, as one of the characters points out, that the story is only "une insipide rhapsodie de faits (...) distribuée sans ordre" (Lopes, 1982: 254) (an insipid rhapsody of facts (...) distributed disorderly). In spite of the frequent allusions to *L'Empereur d'Ethiopie* (The Emperor of Ethiopia) or *La Fin de Notre Siècle* (The End of Our Century), we are deliberately deprived of the precise era in question. The rest of the story is told to us through dreams and interior monologues that themselves defy temporal definition.

Besides, the contours of the space in which the characters live are purposely disarticulated. Sometimes the milieu evoked refers to an abstract environment as is the case with the imaginary Republic of Katamalanaise and its notorious hotel, "La Vie et Demie", in which the events of the novel *La Vie et Demie* are set; other times, even if an impression is initially created that a factual environment is being portrayed, the narrator impatiently dispels the illusion soon thereafter and we are left in the middle of nowhere. This is the method with which Henri Lopes describes the country over which Tonton rules. After glossing over the topographical profile of the country, which he probably suspects might betray a real society that he is indicting, he quickly adds that the country is found: "quelque part au nord ou au sud de l'equateur (...) Semble-t-il en Afrique, mais pas forcément. Pourquoi pas en autre continent de la planète, de nos reves ou de nos cauchemars" (Lopes 1982: 290). (somewhere in the north or south of the Equator (...) Maybe in Africa but not forcibly. Why not in another continent of the planet, of our dreams or for our nightmares.)

Besides Moundie, the shanty ward of the capital whose physical features are moreover evoked in haste, no other place is precisely named or described in detail.

SIGNIFICANCE

Narrative techniques in fiction, whether employed conciously or not, usually connote a certain significance. Afterall, they are the flesh with which the fiction writers clothe their skeleton of ideas and they often enjoy a complementary relationship with the ideas. Since the newbreed of Francophone African novelists is deliberately experimenting with these techniques, it is defensible to assume that they are being used to convey a certain meaning.

The obvious significance that one can deduce from the analysis is that these new narrative accents indicate a modest revolt of the new generation of writers against the traditional linear narrative technique of the realist novelist; a technique that has been the bane of the 19th century French novel and its Francophone African couterpart since the 1950's.

Besides, it gives the novelist an ample freedom of inviting his readers into the depths of dream, nightmares and fantasy; a method that helps to underscore the fictional aspect of the novel while relegating to the background, its aspect of being society's mirror. The reader is also encouraged to be alert, and active through the surprises that both entertain and inform him of another way of understanding human existence.

But there is another very important significance. These new accents which are still groping for maturity also reflect the current phase of uncertainties through which the Francophone African novel itself is passing. Like the wandering characters in search of an identity, the new generation of fiction appears to be similarly wandering in search of a new identity. At the thematic level, if we are to share the views of Labou Tansi, the new novel is abandoning the echoes of anticolonialism; is refusing to parade and parody sadistically the post-independence injustice; and is rejecting to sing the vain glories of a national literature (Magnier, 1985: 6). The general desire is to move towards a yet-to-be-defined universal humanism; a humanism that Labou Tansi tentatively qualifies as "Negro humain" (Black human) and which, it is hoped, will transcend black or any other given culture. The first manifestations of this humanism are seen in the deliberate abstraction of the fictional characters and universe so as, perhaps, to erase any traces of a culture's particularities. As if to emphasis the drive towards a universal reach, elements of the new narrative accents appear to have been borrowed indiscriminately from several major cultures of the globe: Latin-American fiction as per the revelation in the comments of two of the newbreed of writers, Sony Labou Tansi and Werewere Liking (Magnier, 1985: 5-8 and 17-21); from the African oral narrative techniques, and from the French surrealist fiction and the "nouveau roman" (Chevrier, 1985: 44-45).

However, would this primacy given to narrative techniques, apparently at the expense of the development of realist themes, not signify a prudent autocensorship that the novelists are individually imposing on themselves lest they offend the contemporary authorities of their respective countries? Such an interpretation is possible but at the same time controversial and would require a separate attentive investigation.

CONCLUSION

Experience has shown the evolution of almost all literatures and their various genres is usually marked by passages of doubts, gropings and reorientations towards new direction. The history of French literature for instance is similarly characterised by such milestones of evolution: classicism, romanticism, realism / naturalism, surrealism, existentialism etc. The Francophone African novel may not rigidly follow the pattern of the evolution of French literature but its present self-interrogation is definitely a search for a new narrative orientation. Since it is not yet mature, one cannot appreciate its full significance. But it is happily compelling the African novel to break away from its linear narrative tradition and accomodate new narrative realities that shall permit it to respond to the rendezvous of the World literatures. This is perhaps what the Latin-American novelist, Garcia Marquez and the Nigerian fiction writer, Wole Soyinka, have respectively done with their works of fiction in order to merit world literacy acclamation.

Jean-Marie Adiaffi

NOTES

1. English translation of the French titles of the novels is given in

the list of bibliographical references.
2.See Notre Librairie, no. 64, 1982

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IZWE LETHU
live

IZWELETHU LIVE
Poems, Percussion and Song

IZWELETHU (Unser Land)
Live im Flöz / West-Berlin am 14.10.89

Russell Nashibo Lynch – congas, vocal, kalimba
Tshamano Sebe – lead vocal, flute, conga, maracas
Copa Kamara – djembe, vocal
Vusi Mchunu – bell, shakers, vocal
Mark Asamoah – gomene drum, djembe, congas, vocal

produced by Izwelethu
directed by Mark Asamoah
mixed by Franz de Byl

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IZWE LETHU

1
Owura
Shosholoza
Freedom for Namibia
Jibaro
Awura

2
Monsuru
The Face (V.February)
Water and Fire
Bature

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Hero of Heroes

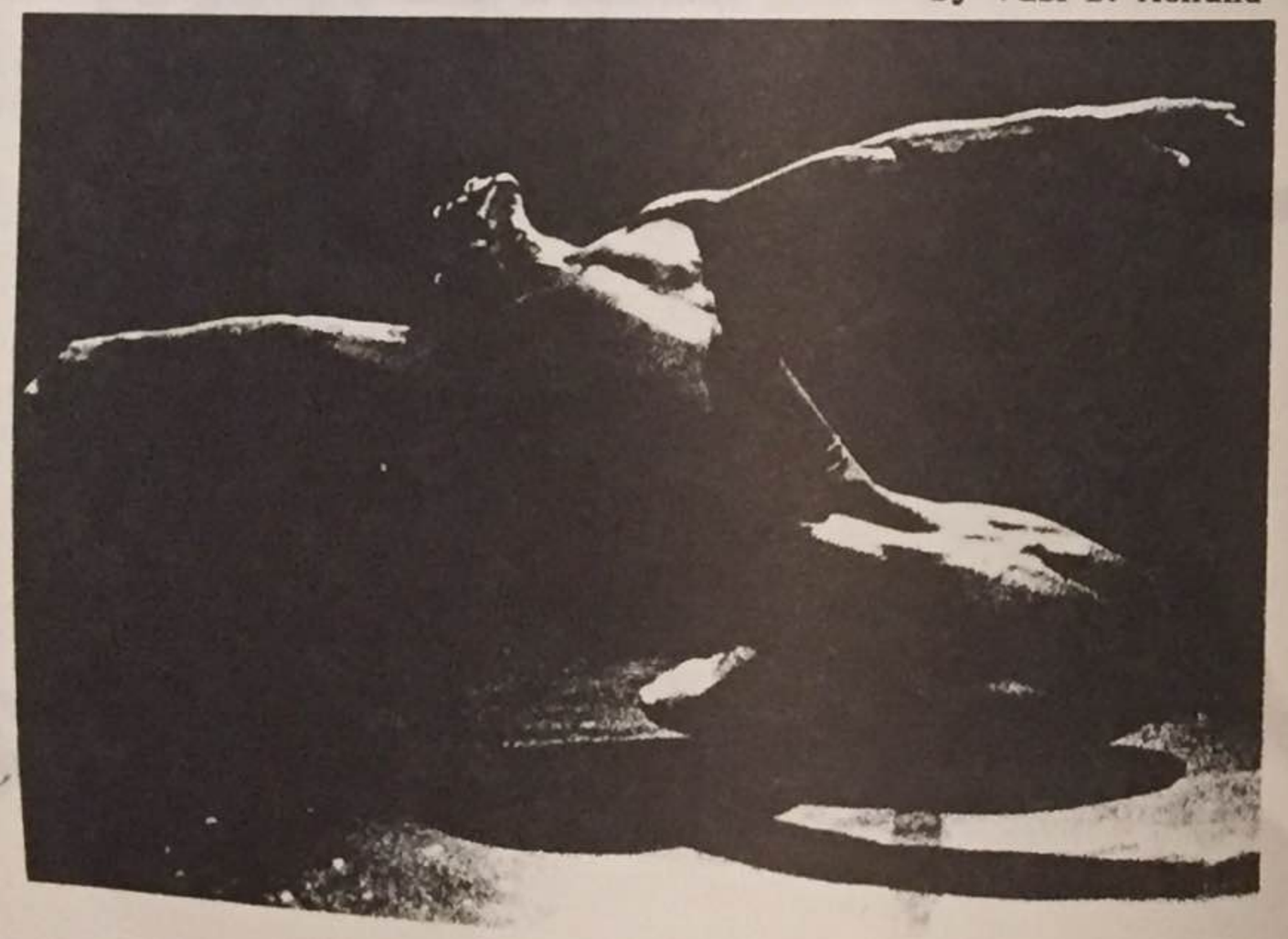
Another dead body in the streets
'Imigqakhwana Yeetishala'
- Bastards -
I cursed
as I struggled through the printed word.
They've turned this land
into a graveyard
Where one day there won't be
marble enough
to honour all these youngsters
Cut down so cruelly
on their prime;
'Iqhawe Lama Qhawe'
- Hero of the Heroes -
Who left us offspring
to swell the ranks
of the ancestral gods;
'Iqhawe Lama Qhawe'
Monuments of Marble
in the South...

by Vernon February
Amsterdam 9.7.86

Brother and comrade
Ambassador of Pan-African Dance
Great black bird from the heights
Whirlwind that flings slavers' boats
Fresh spin, proud strut of the peacock
Pounding, roaring hooves of the rhino
Eyes that know no grimace from fright
Madman's hands no shackles can bind
Soaring wings, blood-soiled feathers
Shoe shine boy
Window cleaner
In Sao Paolo
In Pretoria
Remember Zumbi*
Free Mandela
Great black bird from the heights
Line us on your wings
Lend us your deep sight
Guide us to the realms of the Phoenix!
to the horizons of the free!

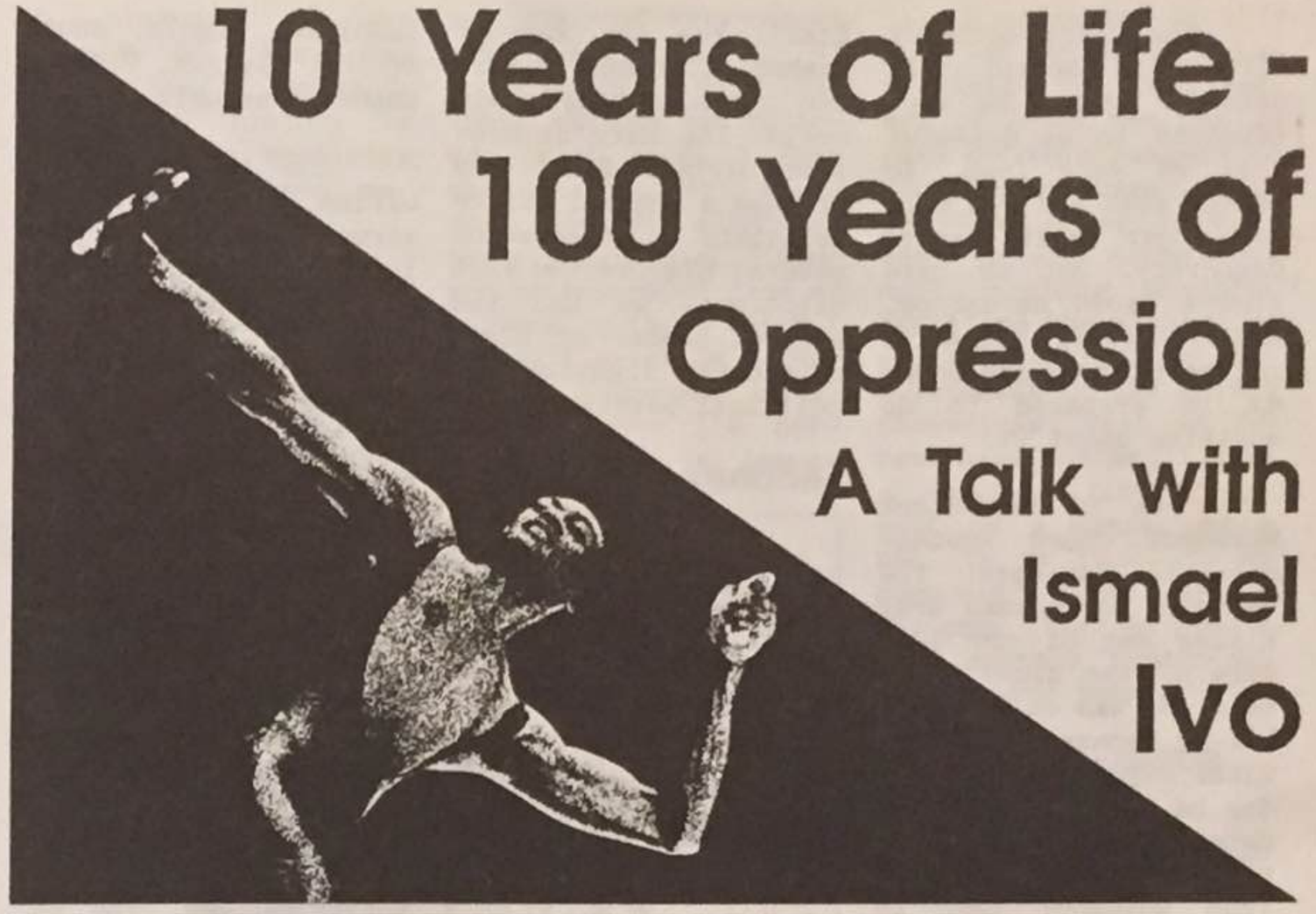
* Military chief of 17th century Afro-Brazilian state of Palmares

(dedicated to Ismael Ivo, Afro-Brazilian Dancer 22.11.88)
by Vusi D. Mchunu



10 Years of Life - 100 Years of Oppression

A Talk with Ismael Ivo



This interview with the Afro-Brazilian dancer was conducted end of 1988, but is being published for the first time. Due to the relevance of the discussion to activities of the black diaspora, we are sure that this article can never be belated.

Let me start by introducing you to the various associations and activities of the Black Movement in Brazil. There is now a publishing house and bookshop in Sao Paulo called *Eboh*. The people behind it are a poet, a sociologist, a physicist and a lawyer. They are dealing with black themes and sell books on religion, art, anthropology, sports, culinary , music, theatre, cinema, children's literature, magazines and newspapers. The name *Eboh* comes from the Yoruba culture in Nigeria. Similar to Cuba, the Afro-Brazilian mythology is close to the Yoruba constellation of gods and rituals. To us *Eboh* is the preparation of an offspring, food or a libation to the gods.

Let me introduce this book, a novel *Blacks in the Night* (Negros na Noite) by H. Cunha Jr. from Sao Paulo. Here is also a collection of prose and poetry written by Afro-Brazilians since the time of Abolition up to today. The book is called *O Negro Escrito* and compiled by Oswaldo de Camargo.

Date of Tears

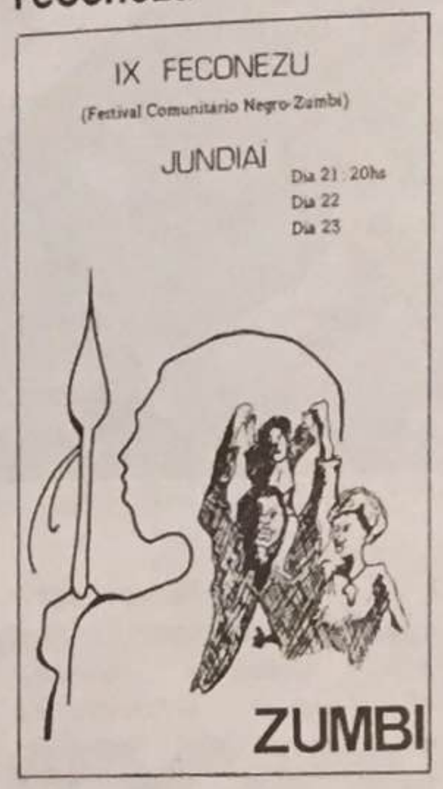
You are aware that this year 1988 marks 100 years since the abolition of slavery in Brazil. The official date is 13th May 1888 when the Portuguese Queen Isabel signed the document freeing the slaves. This was no act of charity. Portugal was pressurised by England, which as a dominant trade power of the time was seeking markets in much more open political and economic systems in Latin America.

The Black Movement refused to accept this date of tears. We were supposed to be grateful that we were free. To accept that all was well with our multi-racial democracy. But we have always faced hardships. And officially this is not recognised and nobody is prepared to do anything about it.

We in the Black Movement chose another date in November. The day the Portuguese army killed one of our leaders of the slave's revolt. He was called Zumbi. He became a mythological figure for us. The day he died is the real date of abolition. Our celebration stretches from November 1987 to November 1988. Now the government has also adopted our dates. But they are not providing enough funds for the celebration. The month of November 1987 was declared by the Black Movement as the month of Black Consciousness and a programme with many activities was organised.

Since the last elections the politicians started including the Afro-Brazilian issue in their campaign speeches. Before that they only talked of "We Brazilians..." and this pushed aside the real problems facing Afro-Brazilians. And we form 70% of the population of Brazil. You might know that apart from Nigeria, Brazil has the largest number of blacks within one state in the whole world. The city government of Sao Paulo has created a special office to attend to celebration events. Also in the last elections, we had the biggest number of black candidates fighting for political positions.

Feconezu



I would also introduce a tradition of black arts festival in Sao Paulo called FECONEZU (Festival of the Black Community of Zumbi) which became 10 years old last year. This festival includes all art forms and moves each year to another district of Sao Paulo. the city government sponsored in November 1987 The *Second Profile of Black Literature* also incorporating the international view of writing by blacks. They invited black writers from Mozambique, Angola, South Africa, Nigeria, U.S.A., Ghana, Venezuela, Cuba.

The Afro-Brazilian office in the city government has also published a diary *Agenda Cultural Afro- Braziliara 1888 - 1988* and the preface reads: "This publication demonstrates the respect of the city government of Sao Paulo through the secretary of culture to the biggest part of the population which even 100 years after the Abolition are still not a visible part of the Brazilian society." Apart from addresses of all Afro-Brazilian activist groups in the country, this diary reminds us of the history. On the 14th December 1890, Rui Barbosa, a famous white Brazilian writer and later politician, burned all the important papers related to the Slavery past of his wife and children. At that time there developed a movement to discover the African origins of the slaves. And the ruling classes were afraid that this could become mass fever. So they burned all these important documents.

Samba Schools

One of the main targets of the Black Movement is our educational system. To bring a total reform of our school syllabus. I remember that at school whenever we came to the history of slavery, I was ashamed. As a black boy I was really ashamed. The school history is one of slave passivity and not of slave revolts.

At one point the escaped slaves were so strong that they formed their own state called Palmares. More former slaves joined and they were soon respected as an independent black state. After many attempts, the Portuguese army finally crushed this state. This is the true history that should be taught in the schools. But the process is slow.

I was educated on this true history as an adolescent. Parallel to the activities of the Samba Schools which is purely for the carneval, there are also black teams which develop the music. the costumes, the history. The participants are informally educated. People became aware that they had a dignified, well-organised past. That we were not always working for other people. Inside these cultural activities one recieves social and political instructions.

When I was a boy, I was inspired by the old people who were mediums of the African spirits who led religious ceremonies. Not inspiration as a vague memory. No. Something connected with my point of view about life, art, dance. My roots are my window that looks at the world today. With which I face the contemprary world and answer all the questions. I simply cannot be separated from my culture, without which I wouldn't exist as a character, a person, a total. Whenever I'm performing this is important to me.

Zumbi the King of Palmares

I was recently dancing in Brighton, England. One day I was walking at the beach, looking at the seaside. I remembered that at secondary school, we had a good teacher in literature. One day she invited me to perform in a poetry recitation. When it came to the history of slavery, she made me leave the chorus, go front stage and recite. A poem I did not know:

I, Zumbi
King of Palmares
In the moment of my agony
I tell you history
That my grandchildren will tell to their grandchildren
And their grandchildren will tell
To the rest of humanity
I write this history
This history of blood
This history of pain
Even if one black in Brazil will bleed
Even if the blood will dry on the trees
It does not matter.

I reflected on this poem at Brighton and I realised that the grandson of Zumbi who has to pass on this message to the rest of humanity is me. Now. Here! This is what we are doing. Not only telling history. Educating the blacks. We are also curing the consciousness of the whites themselves. This is the real base for me. I have a responsibility to myself as a black, as a man. To my race. To my community. The people who come after me should find certain traces of what I have done.

Pan African Dance Theatre

To return to my work as a dancer, I'm presently promoting the Pan-African Dance Theatre. What they call today multi-media performance, singing, dance, acting, we always had in our traditions. It was never seperated. I think sometimes that we do very little to challenge the image of exoticism. In as far as exoticism is something unusual it is okay. But it is not okay to sell this exoticism out of the real base. Our roots. That is producing something from the outside.

Folklore is very important because our roots is inside there. In our African tradition, our history was transmitted from mouth to mouth. This is all in folklore. But to sell

this folklore and expose our ways cheaply is not good. To sell our cultural treasure like a cup of tea. Without any meaning, any base, any consciousness. For the people to look at, consume and then push aside. This is not good.

My preoccupation is to call together people who are doing things today. Exchange different artistic possibilities. I believe I find my contemporary self when I go deep into my primitivism. Here I find the essential me. I asked myself in Brighton as well: "If after death you were to come back into this world, would you like to come back as black?" And my answer is "Yes".I'm like this. I'm full of this blackness. This is something so rich I have inside. It's so beautiful.

Foto: V. Mchunu

Through the Pan-African Dance Theatre, we want to demonstrate the roots, the growth and the new vision in our culture. A vision in our culture. A vision of the world which is fresh, rich and young. There is this tendency in the West to rely on ancient culture for inspiration. This you find with Phillip Glass and Peter Brook. But we have a kind of advantage. We have already the primitive basis. Our way is in the opposite direction. We have to be contemporary.

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Interview with Ngugi Wa Thiong'o

This interview was conducted in America (March 23, 1985) during the Conference of African Literature Association in Evanston, Illinois, USA by Pierette Herzberger-Fonfana

P: *Could you first talk about the genesis of "Ngaahika Ndeenda" (I'll marry when I want), the play you wrote in your mother tongue?*

N: This book must be considered as part of a community project which was held in Kamiriithu, a village about 30 km from Nairobi. Some peasants and workers of that village came together in 1976 and they wanted to create a Cultural Center for Adult Literacy which would develop our literature through theatre. Thus originated Kamiriithu Community Education and Culture Center. First of all they built an open-air theatre which could hold more than a thousand people and then they asked me and Ngugi wa Mirii, the director of the center, to script a play that was to be known as "Ngaahika Ndeenda" (I'll marry when I want). The actors were peasants and factory workers from the area.

When the play was finally performed in 1977, it was very successfull: peasants and workers living many miles away would come to see it.

"Ngaahika Ndeenda" was first published in Gikuyu in 1980.

P: *Was that the first time you ever wrote in your language?*

N: Yes. This was a very important event in my life because thereafter I wrote another novel in Gikuyu language, "Caitaani Mutharabainu" or "Devil on the Cross" in English translation. I have also written a musical drama called "Maitu njugira" which was again stopped by the Kenyan government in 1982.

P: *Why did the Kenyan government prohibit your play?*

N: Well, cultural repression in Kenya intensified since 1977 and has affected all areas of intellectual life in the country. Now, one of the victims of this repression was our theatre at Kamiriithu Community Educational and Cultural Centre.

This musical drama was forbidden. The theatre itself in the entire surroundings of Kamiriithu and Limuru was banned.

Later on, the government brought three truckloads of policemen to our village and they razed the open-air-theatre to the ground. I myself was later arrested and detained in a Maximum Security Prison for the whole of 1978.

P: *In my country, Sene-*

gal, most of the writers want to promote African languages but they hesitate to publish novels in the national language. Do you think it is important for the people to write in their own languages?

N: There are three traditions in African literature. One is orature, which is in African languages.

The second tradition came with imperialism: the tradition of African writers using European languages. What they have produced I call Afro-European literature. By this I mean literature written by Africans in European languages.

The third tradition is the literature written by Africans in African languages. This is what I call African literature. I think it is important that African writers define themselves in their own languages as is the practice all over the world. Writers should be aware of the audience for whom they are writing and it seems to me that when African writers use English, French or Portuguese they cannot possibly be having the majority of African people in mind, because most of them have their own languages.

We, African writers, should increasingly exploit the resources of our own languages.

P: *Some African writers say if you write in your own language you don't have a lot of people who are going to read you. Is that argument valid?*

N: Every group of people have a right to having its own culture, irrespective of the number of people in that community. Even if they are just three and they have seperate language, they have a right to a culture in that idiom.

But in the case of Africa, it is not even true to say if you write in an African language you would have no audience.

Let me give my own example. The play "Nhaahika Ndeenda" (I'll marry when I want) came out in Gikuyu in 1980. The publishers tentatively printed the first edition of about 5.000 copies, hoping that within five years they would have disposed of them. In fact, within a month all those copies were sold out. They had to make another reprint of 5.000 copies. So within a year they had sold all the 10.000 copies. They had to print another 5.000 copies. It was a record! It means that 15.000 copies have been published. They had never been able to sell the same number of copies of a play written in English.

That proves that there is in fact an audience for a literature written in an African language. May I add that the novel "Caitaani Mutharabainu" (Devil on the Cross) was similarly well received. It went into three printings of 5.000 copies each within the year of publishing.

P: *Are the children taught in African languages in your own country at school or at university?*

N: No, unfortunately this is not the case. One of the most horrifying things in Kenya is the official attitude to Kenyan national languages. They are not given the "pride of place" in our society. They are just taught for the first three years at infant school. Thereafter the children never learn those languages again. It is a very great deficiency in our education system that we have relegated our national languages to that very lowly position.

P: *How is it with Swahili?*

N: Swahili is the all-Kenya national language and the lingua franca. It is understood by nearly all the Kenyans. Nevertheless Kiswahili is not the official language. English is the official and prestige language. Swahili is of course taught in many Kenyan schools, but it is often offered as an alternative to German or French. In other words despite the fact that it is a national language it is taught as a foreign tongue. In Tanzania Swahili is both, the official and the national language.

P: *What is the reaction of the people? Do they want to learn their own language or are they more interested to learn English?*

N: Obviously since English is the language of status, of administration, of getting jobs, it is very prestigious and many people want to learn it. They want to have a chance in life. But if Kenyan languages were given prominence and status, people would of course want to learn their own language, and use them.

P: *Ngugi, why did your change your name?*

N: I didn't really change my name. The name my mother gave me was Ngugi Wa Thiong'o ; it means son of Thiong'o. Later I joined a Christian class and I was baptised and called James. Now for a long time I used to call myself James Ngugi. Later on, I came to realize that tis was in fact part of the slave tradition. In slavery African people who were captured and sold by the Europeans were given the name of their master. So when you are called James, it means you are the slave of James.

This continued in the colonial aera when African people were forced to abandon their names an to acquire European names.

To me it is part and parcel of the slave tradition. African people who continue to use European names are in fact accepting to define themselves within that slave tradition. Now the name is the symbol of identity. So by accepting European names, they are saying they can only be defined in European terms. So my rejection of the christian or European name James and returning to my African Kenyan name, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, was my own personal contribution towards self liberation.

P: *It means that all Africans should take African names?*

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N: Yes, we should use our African names. It is only in Africa your get this ridiculous situation where people reject their own names and acquire foreign names. It does not make any sense to me.

P: *Have you noticed a reation in your country after changing your name? Isn't it a kind of flashback upon the past, an authenticity problem?*

N: Yes, of course. There are quite a number of people who are now rejecting the slave tradition and who are now proudly calling themselves by their Kenyan names. But the change has not gone far enough.

P: *How did you happen to write "Detained, a writer's prison diary"?*

N: In 1978 I had to stay in prison for the whole year until Kenyatta died and all political prisoners were given amnesty.

The book "Detained" was written by that time from bits of the notes that I outlined when I was in detention. The book is a series of reflexions of the whole practice of detaining progressive intellectuals under neo-colonialism like that of Kenya. It's good that people read the book and really understand what detention means.

I think it's very undemocratic to imprison somebody because of his intellectual views.

P: *You now live in London. Is it possible for your to do anything for Kenyans?*

N: I'm a writer and I should continue to write where I live: England, Kenya, anywhere, but I hope that one day I could go back home to Kenya. But I'll continue writing from the standpoint of the struggles of the people.

P: *Ngugi, you are best known as an author for adults, but you also write children's books. How can children contribute to the development of our countries?*

N: The childrens books I have written are all in Gikuyu.

"Njamba Nene na Mbaa-thi I mathagu" (Njamba Nene and the flying bus) 1982 is the first book in a series of adventures of a boy called Njamba Nene. The hero symbolizes the very opposition and the fight against the education system. In this story we show how he came to be dismissed from his school because he would not conform to the pressures of a colonial education. The school which is supposed to develop a subservient mentality trains the youth to know everything about Europe, but Njamba Nene likes his language, his history and his geography. It's only when the school children are stranded in a forest and all by themselves, that they all come to realize that true knowledge begins at home. But Njamba Nene is expelled from the school precisely because of making the children realize their abilities.

"Bathitoora ya Njamba Nene" (Njamba Nene's gun) 1983, in this adventure story Njamba Nene is sent on a mission to take bread to where the Mau Mau guerillas fight. But not until he is on his way does he realize that he's being made to carry a gun. The story shows how Njamba Nene is transformed into a patriotic fighter for freedom.

"Njamba Nene na Cebu King'ange" (Njamba Nene and the Chief) has not come out. It is still in the manuscript stage.

Through the children books I write, I am trying to develop the critical sense of the young readers towards the ruling system. The hero urges the children to revolt. This is political children's literature. I believe that if you want to know the future of a nation, you have to look at the youth. The images of the world that people acquire as children influences the way they look at the world today when they become adults. The education of children is therefore very vital for our continent tomorrow.

A Guide to the Future

Shall the sifting sand
of todays political morass
be our anchorage?
Shall the coloured shun
excitement when looked
by the man of no colour
shall he remain quiet
when anxiety engulfs
from within
because the man of no colour
wants quiet!
A peace of mind!
The rainbows of our pigments
fall on ideological prisms
and we move beyond the beyonder,
beyonder as pain takes
command of the veins
shall that be understood?
The logic of our struggle
is found in the scarlet (the blood stained)
books of our past
As if when we are sick,
then we are lazy to work
as if we don't understand
the path of the rainbow
as if we are born of steel.
Those malconceptions that are
stainglass windows that have
always blurred our tomorrow
are now under the scourge
of our bunsen will
as we forge a brand new
guide book for the future.
Takaa - Takaa!!
this future...
The alluvial path
to greener pastures.

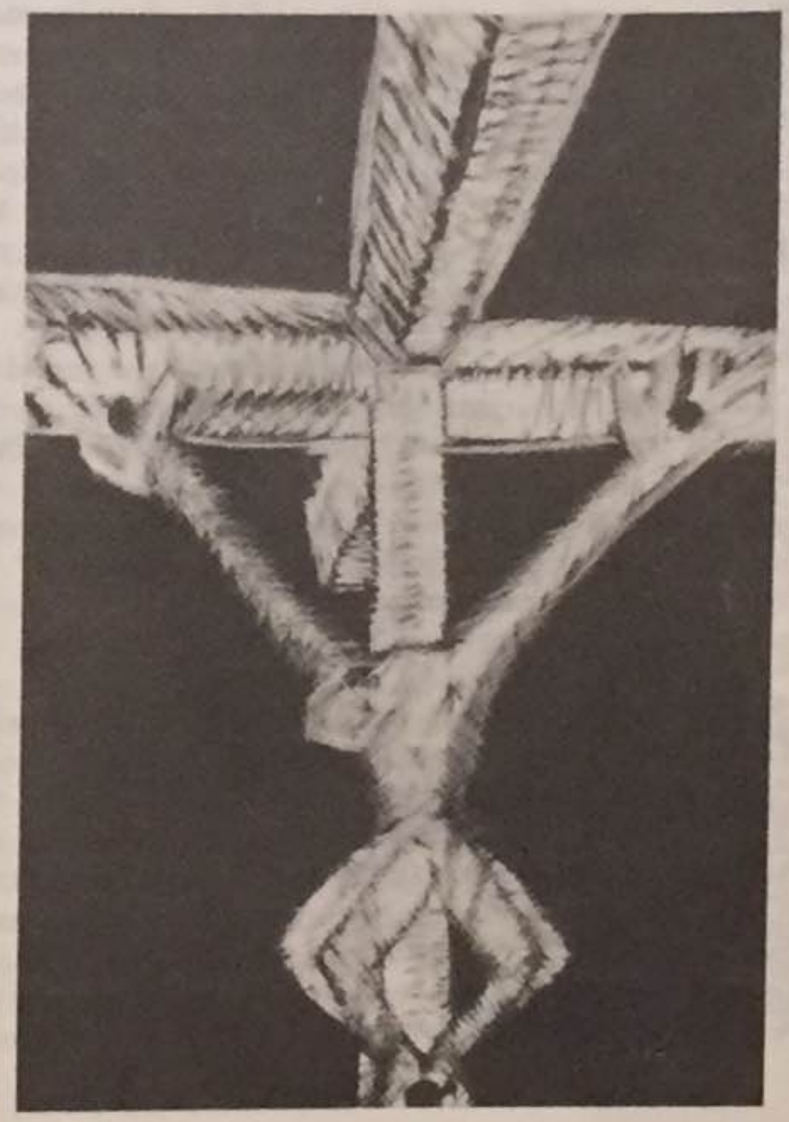
Halt!
As we forge a brand new
guide book for the future
have in your marrow
ISIZWE the NATION
shall be born...
out of the womb of
MODIMO O LLE - our god nation smiles
as we converge and be one with light
shades of truth blend
Zulu, Shangane, Tswana, Mohurutsi, Morolong,
Mokgatla, Mongwato, Pondo, Venda, Baca,
Xhosa etc. etc. etc. beyond eternity
we build and grow
as freedom butterflies
reincarnate the world
with new perceptions of love
as peace
"Ukuthula'bandleni"
They said: "Praise the Lord!"
Mother Africa said "Amen"...
In the beginning 'He'
was alone
and 'He' created the Universe
out of that MAN
out of MAN M M M m m m m
Peace be with you
for the Elephant
is on it's way
the way of NO RETURN
the way of RIGHTEOUSNESS
the way of LIFE, our way.
It starts at uMgunguNdlovu...
We are uMgunguNdlovu
for real this time.

by Lefifi Tladi and Itumeleng Wa-Thusi
Hamburg 16.12.87

Messiah in our Time

LORD
CASTRATE THEM FOR THEY KNOW WHAT THEY DO
AND WE SHALL BE DELIVERED AMEN

LEFIFI TLADI



LEFIFI TLADI

MAKING THEATRE WITH A RURAL COMMUNITY

A report of a workshop conducted in Driefontein from the 5th of June to the 31st of July 1985 by Ali Khangela Hlongwane

PHASE I

The Project

In persuance to the objective of establishing a theatre culture in the rural areas, Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre sent out all full-time Diploma Students to run theatre workshops in the rural areas. I was one of those students.

First Week

I arrived in Driefontein on the 5th of June. Vusi Mbuli took me around the area where we spoke to different people about the project. By the end of the day, six people had agreed to take part, one girl and five boys. We agreed to commence on the 10th June. In the first week, I acquainted myself with the place and people of the area.

Friday

Whilst we were playing cards on Friday the 7th, one of the guys who had agreed to take part in the project asked me to explain this thing called "drama". I asked everyone to narrate a real life story or a fable. As they were narrating, I could see them changing their voices and facial expressions to show the change of character as the story unfolded. I recalled what Credo Mutwa calls "Umlinganiso" where the storyteller will give characters to the people who have gathered to listen to his story to portray. I said to myself "this is our starting point". Out of curiosity, they said we should start working on the spot.

The Second Week

Day One

We began by doing preliminary exercises, played theatre games. I would ask them to play name games so that we get to know each other. We would mimic animals, music instruments and create machines using our bodies and voices. For voice exercises, we would ask them to lie down, relax every part of the body and say out vowels using the tounge in different ways. The spirit was high. There was enthusiasm. I gave them a playscript I had written in Zulu. Suddenly the room was filled with tension, no one was talking. One came out and said: "Ali, we have never been to school". I took back all the scripts and gave them a verbal synopsis of the play.

Day Two

We continued with voice and warm-up exercises. They came with their ideas for the play. The language was not a problem, the only problem was to teach them how to act.

We did characteri-

THEATERSPIELEN MIT EINER LÄNDLICHEN GEMEINDE

Bericht über ein Workshop in Driefontein vom 5.6. bis zum 31.7.85 von Ali Khangela Hlongwane

ERSTE PHASE

Das Projekt

In der Absicht, auch in ländlichen Gegenden eine Theaterkultur zu etablieren, sandte das "Soyikwa Institute for African Theatre" alle seine Vollzeit-Diplomstudenten aus, um in diesen Gegenden Theater-Workshops einzurichten. Ich gehörte mit zu diesen Studenten.

Mittwoch

Ich kam am 5. Juni in Driefontein an. Vusi Mbuli zeigte mir die Gegend, und wir sprachen mit verschiedenen Leuten über das Projekt. Am Abend desselben Tages hatten wir sechs Leute gefunden, die mitmachen wollten, fünf Jungen und ein Mädchen. Wir vereinbarten, am 10. Juni zu beginnen. In der ersten Woche machte ich mich mit dem Ort und seinen Bewohnern vertraut.

Freitag

Als wir am Freitag, den 7.Juni, beim Kartenspielen zusammensaßen, fragte mich einer der Jungen, die beim Theater mitmachen wollten, ob ich dieses Ding, genannt "Drama" erklären könne. Ich bat daraufhin jeden der Anwesenden, eine reale Geschichte aus seinem Leben oder eine Fabel zu erzählen. Als sie beim Erzählen waren, konnte ich beobachten, wie sie ihre Stimme und ihren Gesichtsausdruck veränderten, um den Wechsel der Charaktere im Verlauf ihrer Geschichte anzuzeigen. Ich erinnerte mich dessen, was Credo Mutwa einmal "Umlinganiso" nannte, nämlich die Verwandlung der anwesenden Zuhörer in Charaktere durch den Geschichtenerzähler selbst. Ich sagte mir: "Dies ist der Ansatzpunkt". Neugierig geworden, wollten die Anwesenden auf der Stelle mit der Arbeit beginnen.

Die zweite Woche

Erster Tag

Wir begannen, indem wir Übungen unternahmen, die in spielerischer Form auf das Theater hinführen sollten. So forderte ich sie beispielsweise auf, sogenannte Namensspiele zu betreiben, damit wir uns auf diesem Wege besser kennenlernen würden. Oder wir imitierten Tiere, auch Musikinstrumente, und stellten mit Hilfe unserer Körper und Stimmen Maschinen dar. Für die Stimmübungen lockerten wir zunächst unsere Körper, dann bat ich sie, sich hinzulegen, sich ganz zu entspannen und die Vokale so zu sprechen, daß sie ihre Zungen in unterschiedlicher Weise bewegten. Die Atmosphäre war ausgezeichnet. Ein großer Enthusiasmus lag in der Luft. Schließlich gab ich ihnen das Manuskript eines Theaterstückes, welches ich in der Sprache der Zulu verfaßt hatte. Es

zation and discussed the plot. I gave them homework to look critically at the characters they portray in relation to the story line of the play. They had to think of those characters as people in real life, people they can identify with.

Day Three

We began to create the play. We discussed the scene and characters, especially the conflict in the play. By now, they had an idea what drama was all about.

As we were creating the play, the other members would say: "I'll do that part". I discouraged that, but they were still free to voice their views in the creation of the play.

Day Four

On the fourth day when we were about to begin working, few people were standing outside. They wanted to see what we were doing. Later I learned that one of them had told the people that he was working for S.A. T.V. ".

Back to the scenes we did what we had to do the previous day. I would suggest, "can you do that part standing instead of sitting down?". A reply would come, "that will mean I don't respect my child... Ancestral spirits do not talk to people when they are standing on their feet". I realised too that I was learning from these people. I appreciated and accepted their corrections. I realised that one's knowledge is limited to the environment one lives in. To broaden my knowledge I had to move from one environment to the other.

Day Five

Our workshop continued. Derek Bowskill's book "Acting and Stagecraft" was of great help to me, especially the chapter on "Acting and Living", where he talks of experience, expression and communication. He says: "If an actor is to succed, the form of his work must be imaginative and its content significant. To achieve this, the actor must have mastered the tools and understood the techniques involved in the journey from inner, personal experience, through its externalization into dramatic self-expression to its organisation into group communication and the act of theatre".

The Last Week of June

In the evening, when we were about to begin our session, it was reported that the only actress in the group was pulling out. The reason was that she had a lot of work to do at home. I learned later that her boyfriend told her to stop attending, because he feared that someone else in the group might take her away from him.

We continued with the workshop. We also played cards and listened to the radio plays. One of the members of the group told me about his financial problems, and that he was leaving for Egoli to seek work. They told me that when they joined the project, they thought that they were going to earn some money. I explained the project again and reassured them about the need and importance of the project.

Phase II

July

Bambatha - The Play

The characters we had in the play were:
Bambatha (Chief of Richmond Farm)
Chakijane
Colonel Mansel
and a fictitious character who is working in the Kimberly diamond diggings.

Format

Another task that faced us was the format of the play. We looked critically at how the storyteller used to narrate his story to young ones. In the end, our play became a story-telling drama integrating songs and dances.

entstand plötzlich eine Spannung, und keiner sprach mehr. Einer trat vor und sagte: "Ali, wir waren nie in der Schule." Ich sammelte die Manuskripte wieder ein und gab ihnen eine mündliche Zusammenfassung des Stückes.

Zweiter Tag

Wir setzten unsere stimmlichen und sonstigen Eingewöhnungsübungen fort. Die Spieler brachten ihre eigenen Ideen zum Stück ein. Es gab kein sprachliches Problem; das einzige Problem, das sich stellte, war, ihnen das Schauspielen beizubringen.
Wir übten die Charakterdarstellungen und besprachen die Handlung. Als Hausaufgabe sollten sie sich mit den von ihnen dargestellten Charakteren im Hinblick auf den Handlungsverlauf des Stückes kritisch auseinandersetzen. Sie sollten diese Figuren als dem wirklichen Leben zugehörige Charaktere begreifen, mit denen sie sich identifizieren könnten.

Dritter Tag

Wir begannen mit der Produktion des Stückes. Wir besprachen die Szenen und Charaktere, besonders den Konflikt im Stück. Inzwischen hatten sie auch von dem, was ein Drama in seinem Kern ist, ihre eigene Vorstellung entwickelt.
Während der Produktion des Stückes kam es häufiger dazu, daß andere Mitspieler sagten: "Ich werde diese Rolle übernehmen." Ich brachte sie davon ab, sie konnten jedoch auch weiterhin ihre Ansichten zur Aufführung des Stückes frei zum Ausdruck bringen.

Vierter Tag

Am vierten Tag, als wir mit der Arbeit beginnen wollten, standen einige Leute um uns herum. Sie wollten sehen, was wir taten. Ich erfuhr später, daß einer von ihnen erzählt hatte , er arbeitete für den südafrikanischen Sender T.V. 2. Wieder auf der Bühne, wiederholten wir Szenen vom Vortage. Ich schlug vor: "Kannst du den Part nicht im Stehen statt im Sitzen spielen?" Die Antwort lautete: "Das würde bedeuten, daß ich mein Kind nicht respektiere... Die Geister der Vorfahren sprechen nicht zu Leuten, die auf ihren Füßen aufrecht stehen." Ich merkte, daß ich von diesen Leuten lernen konnte. Ich akzeptierte es nicht nur, sondern schätzte es sehr, wenn sie mich korrigierten. Es wurde mir bewußt, daß die Kenntnisse, die man besitzt, auf die Umgebung beschränkt sind, in der man lebt. Will ich meine Kenntnisse erweitern, muß ich mich in eine andere Umgebung hinein begeben.

Fünfter Tag

Unser Workshop ging weiter. Das Buch über Schauspielkunst und Dramaturgie von Derek Bowskill "Acting and Stagecraft" leistete mir wertvolle Dienste, insbesondere das Kapitel "Acting and Living", in dem er sich zu Erfahrungen, Ausdrucksformen und Kommunikation äußert. Er schreibt:

"Um als Schauspieler erfolgreich zu sein, muß die Arbeit sowohl phantasievoll in der Form als auch bedeutsam im Inhalt sein. Um dies zu erreichen, muß der Schauspieler Werkzeuge gemeistert und Techniken verstanden haben, die im Zusammenhang mit dem Weg von der inneren, persönlichen Erfahrung, über seine Externalisation im dramatischen Selbstausdruck, bis zu seiner Organisation in der Gruppenkommunikation und dem Theaterakt selbst, von Bedeutung sind."

Die letzte Juniwoche

Am Abend, als wir unsere Besprechung beginnen wollten, wurde uns berichtet, daß das einzige weibliche Mitglied der Gruppe ihre Arbeit einstellen würde. Als Grund wurde die häusliche Belastung genannt. Später erfuhr ich, daß der Freund des Mädchens sie zum Ausstieg bewogen hatte, da er befürchtete, daß sie ihm von einem männlichen Mitglied der Gruppe fortgenommen werden könnte.
Wir fuhren mit dem Workshop fort. Wir spielten zuweilen auch Karten

Performance

The play was supposed to be performed at Cabangani Secondary School, but pupils went on strike. We performed some extracts of the play for four people at the place where we always held our rehearsels.

PHASE III

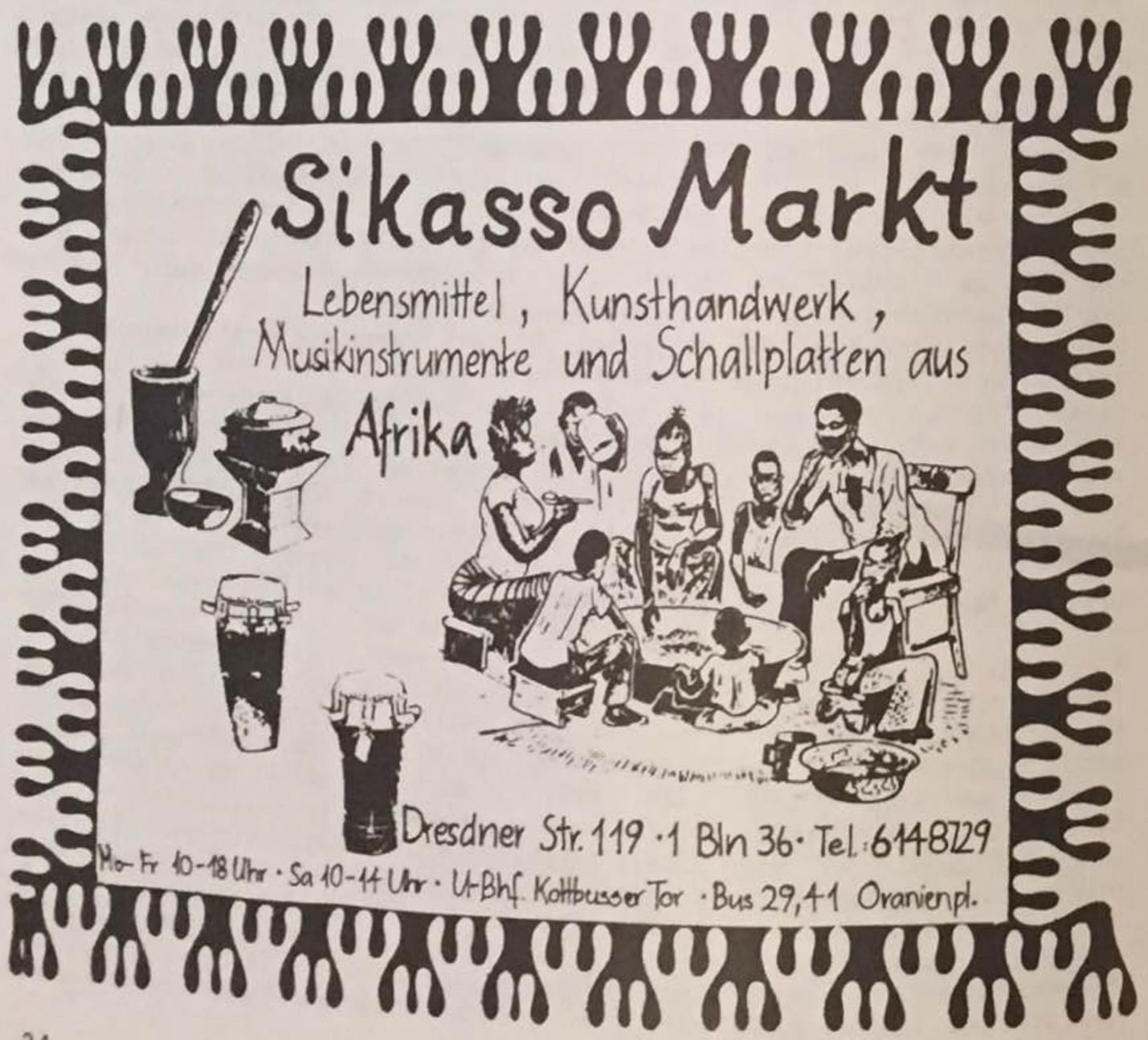
Adaptation

On August 22nd, the group came to Soweto to present the play during the "Soyikwa African Theatre Festival" at Funda Arts Centre. With the help of Matsemela Manaka the Playwright and Ray Hlongwane the Director, we adapted the play for the experimental space at Funda Centre.

Whilst we were working on the play, the actors could not keep to memory the lines they had improvised. Every performance had different lines, whilst the plot and the storyline was maintained.

Conclusion

To me, the play disapproved the myth that one cannot present a play in any African language because places like Soweto are cosmopolitan. People who saw the play said they understood and followed the story. In my ears James Mthoba's words echoed: "If I do my play in Zulu for instance, will some black South Africans not scream 'Bantu Education' or 'Tribalism'? It is not a healthy state of affairs but how about opening up?"



oder lauschten Hörspielen. Einer der Mitglieder der Gruppe erzählte mir von seinen finanziellen Problemen und daß er im Begriff stand, nach Egoli zu gehen, um dort Arbeit zu suchen. Ich erfuhr auch, daß die meisten geglaubt hatten, mit diesem Theaterprojekt etwas Geld zu verdienen, und deswegen eingewilligt hatten. Ich erklärte ihnen das Projekt von neuem und versicherte ihnen, wie wichtig es sei und warum es gebraucht werde.

ZWEITE PHASE

Juli

Bhambatha - das Stück

Wir hatten folgende Charaktere in unserem Stück:
Bambatha (Chef der Richmond Farm),
Chakijane,
Colonel Mansel
sowie eine fiktive Figur, einen Mann, der in den Diamant-Bergwerken arbeitete.

Die Aufmachung - Das Format

Eine weitere Aufgabe, die wir zu bewältigen hatten, war die Bestimmung des richtigen Formats für unser Stück. Wir schauten kritisch zu, wie üblicherweise der Erzähler seine Geschichte den Jüngeren erzählte. Am Ende wurde aus unserem Stück ein erzählendes Schauspiel, welches Gesang und Tanz miteinbezog.

Die Aufführung

Wir beabsichtigten, das Stück an der Cabangani Secondary School aufzuführen, die Schüler waren jedoch im Streik. So zeigten wir nur einige Ausschnitte des Stückes vor vier Leuten an dem Ort, an dem wir auch immer geprobt hatten.

PHASE III

Die Bearbeitung

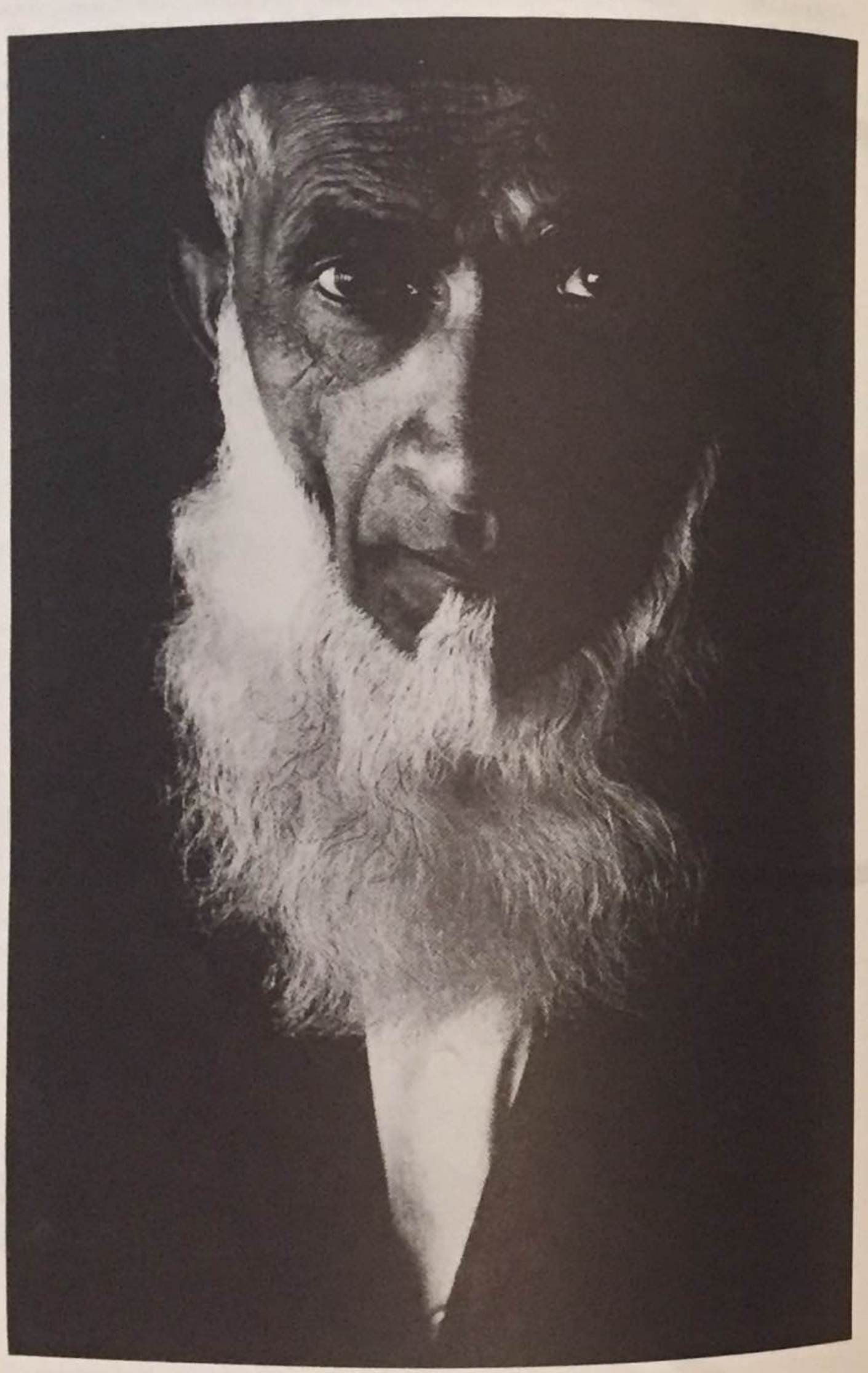
Am 22. August kam die Gruppe nach Soweto, um das Stück im Rahmen eines afrikanischen Theaterfestivals, des "Soyikwa African Theatre Festival" im Funda Center aufzuführen. Mit Hilfe des Dramatikers Matsemela Manaka sowie des Regisseurs Ray Hlongwane konnte das Stück so umgearbeitet werden, daß es sich dem experimentellen Raum des Funda Centers anpaßte.

Während wir an dem Stück arbeiteten, stellte sich heraus, daß die Schauspieler sich die Zeilen, die sie improvisiert hatten, nicht merken konnten. So hatte jede Aufführung einen leicht unterschiedlichen Text, jedoch wurde der Plot sowie der Handlungsverlauf im wesentlichen beibehalten.

Schluß

Für mich hat das Stück den Mythos widerlegt, wonach man in Soweto kein Theaterstück in einer afrikanischen Sprache aufführen kann, da dort kosmopolitische Bedingungen vorherrschen. Die Leute, die das Stück gesehen haben, sagten, daß sie der Handlung folgen konnten und die Geschichte verstanden. Mir klingen noch die Worte von James Mthoba in den Ohren, der sagte: "Wenn ich ein Stück in der Zulu-Sprache verfaßte, würde dann nicht irgendein schwarzer Südafrikaner erbost aufschreien 'Bantubildung' oder 'Stammeschauvi'? Es ist kein gesunder Zustand, aber wie wäre es, wenn wir ihn aufbrechen würden und einen neuen Anfang wagten?"

GEORGE HALLETT'S PHOTOS: THE HUMANITARIAN TRUTH



Dear A. W....

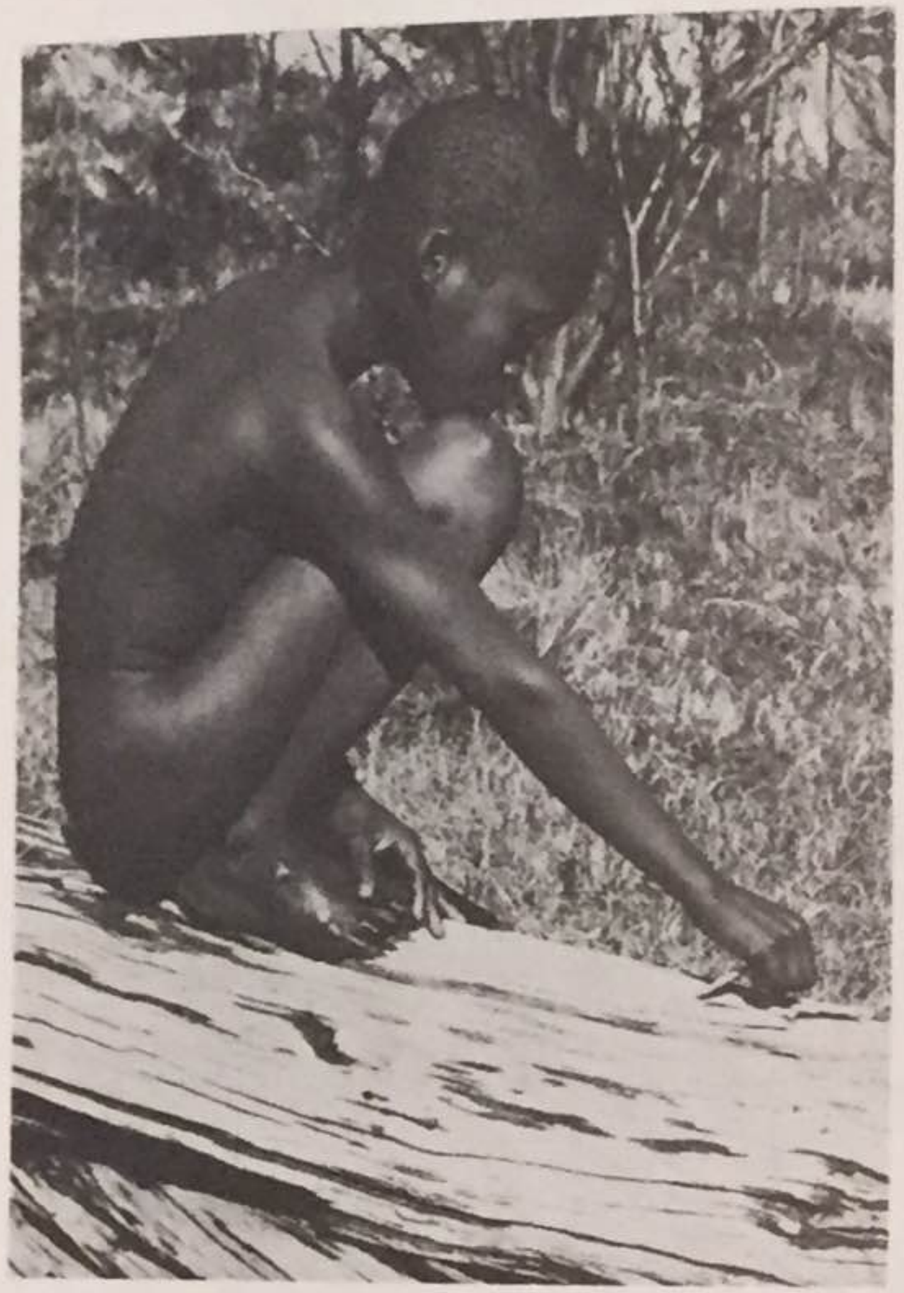
Do you believe as I do that the term 'Black and White photography' honestly describes a particular artistic practise: that photographers trap, within the spectrum of grades, tones from deep velvet black to silver white, the elements of light, texture, shape, time and moments of consciousness and affix these in a picture plain on photographic paper infusing them with the power of expression? If you agree, then you will be delighted with these photographs.

George Hallett is a South African and in that context the words 'black' and 'white' are potent. Their vowels and consonants shape two seperate worlds whose political conflicts and social contrasts manifest the contemporary state of that nation. It also contextualises for some his deep felt concern for people, while to others it becomes the springboard for presumptions allowing them to cast a framework around his creativity before it is allowed to speak and claim the terrain upon which it captivates its audience. The framework is cast from a two-part mould. One part aligns with the history and its flawed belief that photographers who happen to be black somehow lacked the creative vision required to depict their world. The other part aligns to the glut of photographic images being poured into the insatieable mouths of the news media to satisfy its greed for the sensational. (1)

Hallett does not work to satisfy the media's greed. If there is sensation in his vision it is his steadfast belief that the foundations of human relations will emerge from deep within the bromide and that such images when they are true will transcend time. His work is a search for a visual and humanitarian truth, without the frills of sensationalism, exoticism and political rhetoric. The disarming simplicity of this approach is its strength and many people experience a sense of shock of recognition and I can only explain to you what I mean through the example of Jean Paul Sartre who wrote in his preface to Fratz Fanon's 'The Wretched of the Earth' that the author wrote not for him, but for his subject, and that through this discourse of author with subject he, Sartre, recognized himself and his relation to mankind - the whole of it, including those his subconscious had placed on the periphery of humanity.(2)

Hallett gives importance to the narrative rather than to photography for its own sake or that of art. His images are descriptive yet he is not a documentary photographer in the strict sense. More a metaphorical and allegorical teller of tales in the tradition of the African griot. He loves a good story and believes that good dialogue makes good reading. But his dialogue is demanding on the viewer. One has to follow it like the deaf, for it is spoken in language we are familiar with yet its syntax evades immediate comprehension. We have to lip-read, decipher with the aid of hand-signs, facial expression and through body language. We are transformed into interested / participating listeners who eavesdrop on a conversation between Hallett and his subject. We listen to discover what they think about themselves, the world and of course us! His camera functions like a radio, allowing us to tune in on the unseen radio waves which carry messages between communicators.

I say listen, but you know I mean look, for Hallett's vision finds form within the realm of an optical technology. One can



like your novels and poems, possess a specific kind of vision: one which generates a pull on the sensory capacities and engages the emotions. They are artistic achievements with a magnetism energized by the image of man, making us discover anew things as old as history itself. Here is a vision focused on humanity's universal core, revealing a chord which binds us all to one another. To some this cord is a usable thread with which to trace connections and perhaps like Theseus, find the way out of the maze of human conflicts. The cultural and political depth of the photographs emerge as one peels off its multi-layered complexity. Hallett has lived and worked in six countries. He has remained steadfast to his beliefs as a photographer and I can say to you, dear Alice, for I know you won't find it sentimental that his work is a love affair from start to finish.

Enjoy it.
Yours

Gavin Jantjes
London, February 11th, 1988

(1) To date 90% of the published pictures on South Africa are by non-South Africans who are mostly male and white.

(2) Frantz Fanon: 'The Wretched of the Earth' Penguin Books 1971

study it like a science. He never had that luxury. In South Africa one learns by trial and error, a method which suited Hallett's hands-on relationship with the world particularly well. He taught himself the optimum use of his resources: to choose carefully, to time his moment of action precisely, to be patient and susceptible to every change in the environment and every new environ. The giants of free jazz call it 'knowing when to make the changes'. He uses technology to facilitate creativity, thereby evading the gadgetry which gags innovative vision. These photographs are technologically straightforward but their intellectual complexity makes them multi-layered poetic metaphors of his life's philosophy.

I've never known him to shun philosophy. What he enjoys is to make it emerge through a process of engagement with the things he loves, be that people, plants or technology. His photographs,

The Lessons of the History of the Cinema - An African Perspective

The development of the cinematic art form in an European context from its inception with Lu-miere and Melies in France has revealed two interrelated problems in its founding and in its subsequent maturation: cinema as an industrial and artistic process emerges within and in relation to economic, social and cultural structures and syntax systems. Thus film as an artistic product within cultural systems, expresses and signifies itself as an economic product and artistic form. What distinguishes film from other artistic forms of expression is this combinatory process which determines its structure and its location within society. (In contrast to other artistic forms in which its use-value is largely determinant, film is typified by its exchange-value over its use-value within the structures of capitalism.) One other observation is that it emerged simultaneously as a fiction form and as a documentry form.

The development of film for approximately the last hundred years and its structure as an artistic form reveal it to be a synthesis of theatrical forms , music hall traditions, literary expressions and the spacial structures of painting. Hence film can be characterised as *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total art work), rather than music as Richard Wagner had theorized. It coalesces within itself the histories of various forms of artistic expression. Some like music, painting and theatre were influenced in their further development by the fact that they had participated in the development of the cinema.

Only music hall terminates its historical development in the emerging structure of film form. The proof of this influence is the fact that the theatre of Bertold Brecht employed the montage system of film which he called alienation effect; the spacial form of Picasso's paintings in their abstraction and distortion pay hommage to the plasticity of film form; the music of Stravinsky in its constant references to the traditional forms is similar to the fact that the true origins of film culture are popular and plebeian.

Film as an art form has a post-history from the moment of its emergence in the late nineteenth-century France. But much more crucial is that film has a pre-history traceable from the Renaissance, through the Enlightenment and Romantic eras to the Symbolist era when it emerged.

Film emerged in Europe during the high point of the capitalist system as a world system in absolute dominance. During this period of the emergence of film, capitalism had already achieved the industrialization process and established the patterns of technological development. The European countries on the whole

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had achieved total national unification with all the nationalities within a particular country accepting in large measure the legitimacy of the State. The European nations had, with a few exceptions, established a national language acceptable to the majority of the people. In many of these countries there was no fragmentation of national culture and national consciousness, however much from time to time the nature of this cultural unification may have been challenged.

In short, film arose at the moment when there was an abundance of what the French philosopher and sociologist Pierre Bourdide calls cultural capital, which made possible the existence of cinematic structures in Europe.

Their imperial domination of other countries was still to be seriously challenged. Now this situation which obtained in Europe, and in many ways exists presently, is practically the opposite of what is obtainable in the Third World countries, specifically in Africa. Consequently, the lag between for example the European cinema and the African cinema is a historical problem, and not a question of the superior cinematic intelligence of other above another.

Technical Origins

The pre-history of the cinema begins approximately in the Renaissance, when Europe was rediscovering its ancestry in Greek and Latin antiquity.

The film camera, technologically speaking, is a synthesis of the *camera obscura*, one of its forgers was Leonardo da Vinci himself, the projection instrument *Laterna Magica* and the various perspectives of perception. It is these three processes which eventually in the late nineteenth century Paris eventuated in the production of film (including of course the development of raw-stock).

Though these processes emerged and developed in different European national cultures over a period of about four hundred years, it was in Paris that they collocated together to bring about the production of film culture, for then Paris was the centre of European bourgeois culture.

Impressionism in painting was at its height, the novel was being re-formulated by Flaubert before the Russians produced their literary masterpieces, and most of the European intellectuals from all corners of Europe were gravitating towards Paris.

All of this of course is a direct consequence of the French Revolution of 1789 in which the bourgeois class totally and uncompromisingly had defeated the aristocratic class. The European imagination was opened to bourgeois domination.

It is not for nothing that the great German Marxist critic and Jewish mystic Walter Benjamin called one of his essays "Paris the Capital of the Nineteenth Century".

Dziga-Vertov versus Eisenstein

However, the struggle as to the usefullness of film and its possible language structures were fought out in Moscow of the 1920's following the 1917 socialist revolution in Russia. This battle was fought out between the documentary film-maker Dzigy-Vertov and feature film-maker Sergei Eisenstein.

It is perhaps important to note that whereas the former wanted film to be part of the struggle of the present, the latter wanted film to be used as an instrument in celebration of the past.

Dziga-Vertov called his film language Kino-Eye and retrospectively traced its development from the writings and paintings of Leonardo da Vinci.

Sergei Eisenstein on the other hand called his language the montage system and located its development in the later novels of Charles Dickens and in the films of the American film-maker D. W. Griffith.

That this intellectual and artistic battle is still having repercussions in our present context is evident in the fact that after the student uprising and the workers support of them in May 1968 in Paris, it was felt that to re-define anew the central problematics of the cinema it was necessary to go back to the battle between these two giant Russian film-makers.

The French magazine Cahiers du Cinema, without doubt the best film magazine in the world, felt compelled to take the side of Sergei Eisenstein. In opposition to this ,Jean-Luc Godard and Susan Sontag, the American cultural critic, thought Dziga-Vertov to have been of more value.

From the perspective of the Third World, it is Dziga-Vertov who has more significance for us. It ought to be noted that the exchanges between Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga-Vertov in the Soviet Union of the 1920's was in the context of the intellectual battle between the Formalism of Viktor Shklovsky and the Marxism of Mikhail Bakhtin,between the pull of the Futurism of Mayakovsky and the Constructivism of Malevich. In short, cinema developed in relation to the wider coordinates of particular national cultures and intellectual structures.

At the same time that film was developing its language structures in the Soviet Union and in other parts of Europe, there emerged film theory in an attempt to formalize and theorize the structure of film and its accompanying cinematic processes.

One of the central figures in this movement was the Hungarian Marxist film theoretician Bela Balazs. his central aim was to indicate that although film developed out of artistic forms shaped in large measure

by other arts, like theatre , music hall, painting and literature, it should develop its own distinct language.

His books attempted to articulate the formal structures of filmic processes. He was attempting to establish the historicization of linguistic structures in film, which is very different and distinct from what was to happen with Christian Metz, who after the May 1968 French crisis sought to construct the unity and formalization of this linguistic structures.

The film theory of the Frenchman Andre Bazin was more inclined towards establishing the fundamental elements of film aesthetics.

Influence of Jean-Luc Godard

It was in the context of these complex confluences that the Third Cinema, the Third World Cinema began establishing its structural coordinates and intellectual justification. The central figure who facilitated this transition towards the Third World cinema was Jean-Luc Godard, the very great Swiss-French film-maker. The position of Jean-Luc Godard within the history of the cinema is comparable to that of Picasso within the history of art, and of James Joyce in the history of the novel.

It was while Godard politically was moving between Maoism and Anarchism and back to Maoism, that he transformed completely our understanding of the history of the cinema and re-formulated the language of the film.

First, his films made just before the Paris May events of 1968, in fact in many ways anticipating those historic events, combine both, the documentary film form and feature film form, into a synthesis without parallel in the history of the cinema.

Secondly, Godard influenced a whole generation of film-makers stretching from the Japanise film-maker Nagisa Oshima, through the Italian Bernardo Bertolucci and the German Rainer Werner Fassbinder to the Brazillian Glauber Rocha, the founder of Third World cinema.

Thirdly, Godard in films such as *Le Gai Savoir, Weekend, Eastwind* and *La Chinoise*, and also in *Two or Three Things I Know about Her*, made between 1967 and 1970, interrogated filmic language which had been in existence since the inception of the cinema, and attempted to replace it with a new language.

Anarchically Godard attempted to destroy the whole structure of film. That Godard's cinema of these years eventually collapsed, is not of central importance, that is for posterity to evaluate. What is of fundamental importance, that is Godard's cinema showed beyond dispute that European filmic language was a historical construct which reflected the development of film within European history and cultural systems, rather than being immanent in film as a technological and cultural product. That is, Godard was not arguing this theoretically, but indicating and showing it in the constructional form of these films, some of which are great monuments of our time.

It was this which facilitated the opening of the cinema historically to the Third World. It is not accidental that Glauber Rocha in East Wind is interrogated by Godard as to the possibilities of a politically informed film culture in the Third World. The Brazilian attempted to answer Godard in a film called, *The Lion Has Seven Heads*, a film Glauber Rocha made in Congo-Brazzaville concerning the imposition of imperial European histories on national African histories.

It was out of this intellectual dialogue between the 'Cinema Novo' films of Glauber Rocha and the 'New Wave' films of Jean-Luc Godard that a part of Third World film culture emerged. A part, because another part of Third World cinema traces its ancestry through the films of the Indian Satyajit Ray, who traces his formation through the American John Ford, the Frenchman Jean Renoir and the Japanese Kurosawa.

Concerning Godard, it is not accidental that after the Mozambiquan Revolution in 1974 he assisted in the establishing of a Film Institute in Maputo.

Many of the Third World countries have not sufficiently developed economic structures to produce cultural capital to facilitate the growth of cinematic economic structures. Hence the differential process in the development of Third World cinema in many of the industrializing countries.

Within the African context. Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Mali are in the forefront of developing an African cinema, but it must be observed, on very fragile economic structures and with very low level of cultural capital.

Ousmane Sembene, the founder of African cinema, has attempted to establish the sociological coordinates of this cinema. Consequently, he has found it necessary to combine both the perspectives of Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga-Vertov.

His cinema is first and foremost a search for the unity of African History as exemplified in such films as *Emitai* and *Ceddo*. These films are the first serious implantations within our African cultural texture of this art form to develop in full gestation within our cultural systems.

The one country in Africa which has the necessary economic structures to support an authentic African cinema is South Africa. It has sufficient cultural capital, theoretically, to be in the forefront of world cinema. It is the retrograde political structures which hinder this historical development. Hence the necessity to destroy these political structures of Apartheid, too numerous to name, which hinder the emergence of an authentic South African cinema, which would totalize the cultural and historical experiences of its many peoples.

The present culturally debilitated South African cinema represented by Jamie Uys, Dirk de Villiers, Elmo de Witt scream for this authentic South African cinema.

What is required of us is to connect this cinematic art form to other already existing African art forms like praise poetry and oral narrative structures. But it should also establish connections with modern forms of cultural expression.

An exemplary Third World film, *Yol* by Yilmaz Güney, which has deepened its connections to Turkish cultural traditions. In short, as Perry Anderson, the English Marxist historian, has written in an essay, *Modernity and Revolution:* "Art in the modern era must seek... an openess of horizon... in order to appropriate... an appropriable past, or imaginable future..." This also should be the task of African Cinema.

(Presented in West Berlin in December 1986 to a small circle of African students studying Film Directing in Lodz, Prague and Moscow)
by Ntongela Masilela

Third World Voice

Popular movements in the Third World play a major role in the development process towards greater political, economic, social and cultural independence of countries in the Third World.

Whether peasant cooperatives, organizations for oppressed minorities, trade unions, women organizations or regular liberation movements they represent resistance against oppression, poverty and exploitation. At the same time popular movements constitute the highest form of creativity, strength and political far-sightedness you can find in the world today.

In Europe and the U.S. a one-sided picture of the Third World has been established. A picture of passiveness, helplessness, primitivity and thankfulness towards the rich world that doesn't correspond to reality. The media play an important role in creating this wrong picture, and even when popular movements in some cases get space in the news, it is nearly always through the eyes of a Western journalist. And the more politically important a movement is, the more likely it is that it will be described as - terrorist, separatist etc. In this way an element of war, fanatism and anarchy is added to the general picture of the Third World.

A New World Information Order

The popular movements are seldom heard on their own terms. They have no access to an information world, which is dominated by Western interests. In recent years, the attempts to break this monopoly have not been very fruitful despite growing consciousness of the problem especially in the Third World.

THIRD WORLD VOICE will work for a new international information order well aware that it is a long and tough struggle, because it is directed against big political and economic interests. But also having in mind that the world does not change without being forced to change by people who take independent action. This is exactly what the popular movements teach us.

THIRD WORLD VOICE will undertake the following activities:

- to supply Western media with features, photos and in special cases also news from popular movements we have contact with.

- to supply Third World media, organizations etc. with material obtained from other Third World sources.

-to build up a facts collection, which can be used by the media, organizations and political parties.

-to help establish contacts between popular movements and interested Danish groups and to help arrange public meetings in Denmark related to our aims.

-to take part in and to initiate discussions around media and power and especially work for the Third World and its popular movements to be known as they are.

THIRD WORLD VOICE will thus be a service organ for popular movements in their efforts to be known and getting a fair treatment in international media, and also a service organ for editors, journalists, solidarity organizations, political parties and individuals in the West as well as in other parts of the Third World.

Payment accruing from sales of photos, features etc. will be reforwarded to the sources in the Third World according to agreements. Members of THIRD WORLD VOICE in Denmark will work voluntarily and normally not receive any fees for lectures, features or other things for themselves - these will go to THIRD WORLD VOICE.

THIRD WORLD VOICE will closely follow the political developments in the Third World. And it is politics in broad sense, because popular movements are characterized by their cultural and social activities, by the struggle for democracy and human rights as well as economic struggle for survival.

THIRD WORLD VOICE is open to everyone who agrees with the above platform and who is ready to work actively. It will naturally be people with experience in solidarity work, travels or stay in Third World countries, and not least foreigners in Denmark who are themselves "Third World Voices".

THIRD WORLD VOICE
Hf Kalvebod 16
2450 Copenhagen
Denmark

FILM AND ALLIED WORKERS ORGANISATION

The Film and Allied Workers Organisation (FAWO) was launched in Johannesburg, RSA in August 1988, in recognition of:

The critical role of film and video in the struggle for democracy.
The need to encourage the development of a progressive film culture in South Africa.

FAWO is committed to:

Uniting progressive film and video workers to work with other progressive cultural and political organisations in pursuit of a just society.
Resisting censorship and other forms of cultural oppression.
Encouraging debate on crucial issues facing South African film workers.

Education and Training

In addition to running its own education and training programmes, FAWO assists and co-ordinates existing progressive projects sharing its aims.

Production and Resources

Progressive filmmakers face many problems in financing, producing and distributing their films. FAWO provides access to information and resources for progressive filmmakers and trainees.

FAWO has a Community Film Working Group which has established a film education and production project in the township of Alexandra.
The project is training filmmakers to make film about their own communities and is the first of many similar projects which the organisation hopes to develop.

Distribution and Exhibition

FAWO is developing local and international distribution and exhibition networks, for local filmmakers opposed to apartheid.
FAWO is making available films of historical and contemporary interest to promote a new film culture.

Information and Research

Local film workers are isolated from developments in the international film community. We also have to negotiate a plethora of media restrictions, tax and funding legislation, censorship and lack of information.
FAWO is collecting information for a resource centre and is undertaking research into issues affecting filmmakers.
FAWO organises debates, forums, film screenings and workshops to bring anti-apartheid film and allied workers together.

Remember Malcolm X.

A Proposal for Action

Submitted by
The Malcolm X Work Group
The Cooperative Research Network in Black Studies
Sponsored by
Africana Studies, Queens College
Chancellors Office, CUNY

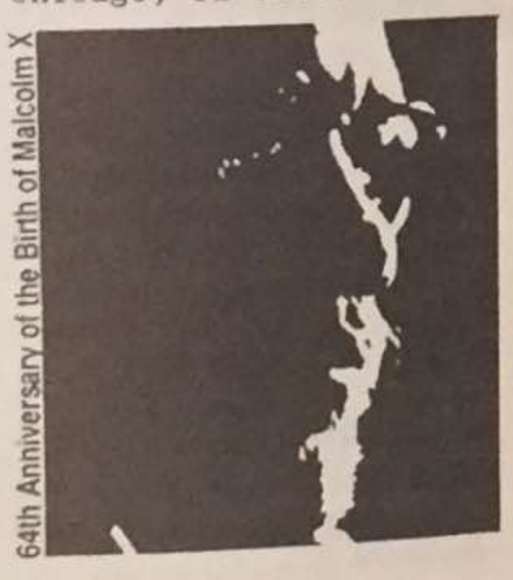
Historical experience is the source of all knowledge, theoretical and practical. Often it is possible to finding the life of a leader a prism through which to evaluate the historical experiences of a generation and a movement. This is a proposal to dedicate 1990 to the study and celebration of Malcolm X. Our main purpose is to reevaluate the fight for Black liberation, and to place proper emphasis on the importance of Malcolm X as a historical catalyst who sparked a fundamental ideological shift in the Black liberation movement.

The 1960s was a dynamic decade of struggle during which the radical tendencies of the civil rights movement and the Black nationalist movement converged into a Black liberation movement. This Black liberation movement began to call into question the fundamental postulates and practices of the politics and culture of the USA. Black liberation consciousness sparked a paradigm shift through Black studies, Black liberation theology, Black art, and deeply mass based Black is beautiful movement.

Malcolm X was a mass leader who maintained his integrity though his leadership in the Nation of Islam, upholding Black nationalism and Islam, as well as through his transformation into a panafrican internationalist and a Sunni Imam. 25 years ago in 1965, Malcolm was assassinated. Shortly thereafter his major works were published: The Autobiography of Malcolm X, and Malcolm X Speaks. There has been a consistent focus on Malcolm X, to discuss his impact and to celebrate his greatness, but not nearly as much as there should be.

This is a proposal to stimulate groups and institutions of all kinds to focus on Malcolm X in 1990.

A special issue is being planned on the theme of Malcolm X and the cannons of African-American Literature by the Black American Literature Forum. The International Review of African-American Art is also planning a special issue in 1990 on the theme "The Making of a 20th Century African-American Icon: The Images of Malcolm X/ Malik Shabazz".
Manuscripts and copies or slides of images of Malcolm X / Malik Shabazz should be submitted to the Guest Editor of both issues:
Abdul Alkalimat
21st Century Books
P.O. Box 80 33 51
Chicago, IL 60680 USA



Talking with the Leaders of UMOJA Africa-Centre

Mr. Mwaungulu Mahoma, Chairman, and Mr. Abdi Gulaid, Secretary-General

Vusi: *When looking at your programme for October 1989, I realise that most of the events listed in it did take place. I would like to know the experience you had with carrying out this work.*

Mahoma: The idea of forming Umoja came about when we saw that Africans are becoming many in Berlin and we need a well-coordinated organisation. We needed a center to meet and exchange experiences. Secondly the question of unity is no new thing for Africans, that's why we have the OAU in Africa. Through unity in Berlin we can solve our problems. Also to inform the general public here about ourselves. Many people are helping a lot to spread information about Africa, without the Africans taking part.

People talk about hunger in Africa, but they don't know the causes. We Africans know the causes. There are so many problems we are confronted with, like the desertification of Africa. We wanted also to tell the people what is going on with us here in Berlin where we live. Some of the problems go as far as racial discrimination. Also to advise fellow Africans here on the nature of all the problems on the way to integration, e.g. the language problem, their historical past. These are all motivations that led us to forming Umoja Center.

Abdi: We have also organised a joint Africa Week Programme with other African organisations here in Berlin. there were national organisations. Euro-Afri which is equivalent to Umoja. But their objective includes also the Europeans, whereas Umoja Center says we should do our own things within the African community here in Berlin and cooperate with the Germans. Here we differ with Euro-Afri. The occasion was not that great or befitting the 30 year OAU celebration, but it was a symbolic ceremony.

The experience made us realise that we can mobilise a whole group of Africans within the community. It was successful, even though the time was short and the financial resources very limited. The national organisations took it upon themselves to collect money from members so as to prefinance the occasion. Unfortunately the German authorities we approached were not co-operative, except the Haus der Kulturen der Welt.

What we learned from the Africa Week is the the African community needs a united Africa center in this town. We need one organisation with a genuine, enlightened, honest leadership.

Mahoma: Some of our German friends do not understand our Panafricanism. By this we mean a unified outlook of Africans here in Berlin based on common interests. We are attending to the socio-cultural problems of Africans here. And to enlighten our people about what's going on in our continent Africa. That 's why it is important for us to work together with others, but not be absorbed by other organisations.

Vusi: *In the background of the new liberal coalition government of SPD-AL in Berlin and the growth of rightwing sentiments amongst the youth, this suggestion seems very timely.*

Abdi: I think unless you organise yourself, nobody will tell you to do

it. We are in a lucky situation because of the positive change of government in Berlin especially the issue of foreigners. But unless you organise, you stand up and press for your rights, there will be no change. It is therefore high time that a federal body is set up where all African groups are represented. There should be regional, national, student and worker representation. This is an important aspect.

Vusi: *I read in your broschure that you intend using cultural activities as vehicles of informing the public here of our realities. How do you intend doing this?*

Mahoma: As from 1990, our new programme includes working with cultural organisation. Culture in Africa is very diverse and we intend to display it in terms of traditional music, literature, poetry. It's a continuation of what we have done already. Culture to me is supposed to show how African people are here in Berlin.

We are eager to find out about the education of Africans here in Berlin. We have started to teach German for beginners every Friday and Saturday free of charge. Secondly, we feel that the Africans learned too much the history of Europe. We want them to know about the African past, their present so as to contribute in shaping the future.

Vusi: *I hear that you were recently attacked by skinhead youth and this disturbed all African and black people here in Berlin. You lost some teeth and had to be hospitalised. Could you tell us of your ordeal?*

Mahoma: It is a complex issue because you cannot be beaten without any reason. This is mostly political and racist. And in my case I'm sure it was a racist attack. But we should not generalise such issues, not be emotional about them. There are some people here who do not like us to be here. But we should try to co-operate with other groups and communities against this growing racism.

Umoja has not made any decision as to what step should be taken in my case. We have only to make other Africans aware how serious the situation is. Telling everybody. I'm looking forward towards a discussion of Umoja and other groups on this worsening situation. We could bring the matter to the press in a proper way so as to broaden the discussion to German and other foreign groups. It is only when we unite together that better results can come.

Vusi: *To round off, could you tell us something about your future work and your projection for 1990?*

Abdi: Our activities are determined by our limited financial resources. We still have to work on a honorary basis and things take longer. To avoid suspicion on corruption and handling of funds, it was better to start from the basis. We are looking for certain partners to support us to launch certain projects. But we don't want to sell our freedom for financial support.

We have approached the Berlin Senat but their assistance is attached a string of conditions. Their way is that of dividing Africa. Most Berlin authorities don't want to see an African group doing its own thing alone. If you are linked as a junior partner, just like in a neo-colonial set up, to a German organisation, then there are chances of being financed. But if you are interested in self-reliance and self-confidence, no support will be forthcoming.

To come to the end, I would like to thank all the people who have showed confidence in Umoja. Those who supported us morally, financially and actively to make some of our plans a reality.

Vusi: *Thanks as lot, Mr. M. Mahoma and Mr. Abdi Gulaid.*

UWAP - Union of Writers of African People

The Union is being reactivated. After discussions and a preliminary meeting as part of the Sharpeville Day Memorial Poetry Reading in Dakar, Senegal, efforts are being made to revive the Union, which was first launched in Dakar in 1975. Thus far the response has been extremely encouraging.

Goals

To promote the development of African writing in Africa and the Diaspora.
To support the work of the Union of Writers of the African Peoples (UWAP).

Means

Creation of a Database on African Writers and Writers of African Descent in the Diaspora, which will be accessible to all interested persons, particularly writers and researchers.
Creation of a Database of publications and especially dissertations.
Database with information on publishers, prizes, and opportunities for publication.
Creation of an Archive of original material.
Creation of a Manuscript Collection of Materials of African Writers and Writers of African descent which will be of national and international significance.
Preparation of a regular Newsletter to serve as a means of communication between the members of the Union of Writers of the African Peoples (UWAP).
Possibly to sponsor conferences of UWAP and other organizations related to African Writers.

Resources and Staff

Program Director who will be a Member of the Faculty of the Department of Black Community Education Research and Development.
Graduate Research-Assistant who will work with the Program.
A Computer and Software with a Mainframe access.
Departmental support.

Additional Resources

The resources of the journal Researches in African Literatures will be available in conjunction with the Program.
The Database of the African Literature Association, currently in Canada, is without a home, (Cornell is a possibility).
We may be able to share this.
The Program would also serve as a Resource and Information Center, with its emphasis on literature.
No other program of this nature exists elsewhere. We are likely to draw broad support.
It is probable that original material and resources will be donated to the Program and the Center.

Funding

Annual Grant for five years.
Funding for renumeration to Graduate Research Assistant.
Support monies for Newsletter, Publications etc.
Funding for foreign travel where necessary from budget.

Structure

Program Staff consisting of Program Director, Graduate Research Assistant and Support Staff.
Advisory Committee drawn from the Department of Black Community Education Research and Development and other University Departments.
Advisory Council with membership both national and international, but particularly African and African-American.
Departmental members who have agreed to serve on the Advisory Committee include Ladun Arise, Brenda Berrian and Rob Peary.
University members include Jakes Kelly, John Singleton and Arthur Tulen, Chinua Achebe, Chinwezu and Njabulo Ndebele.

Co-Initiators

Chinua Achebe, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria.
Dennis Brutus, University of Pittsburgh, PA 15260 USA.
H. Louis Gates, Cornell University, Ithaka, NY 14850, USA.

Students host South African Musical "Township Boy" at the University of Frankfurt/ Main, Nov 1989

Vusi: *Thomas Kimmig, a sociology student and member of the Linke Liste, a leftist students group) with whom did you collaborate to bring the Mamu Players to Frankfurt?*

Thomas: I saw "Township Boy" an a visit to West Berlin in May 1989. I was deeply impressed by their political play and took up contact with an aim to invite them to our university. It was a bit late to arrange with their tour manager in Holland, but we never gave up.

The students' union financed the whole project. About five volunteers from the Linke Liste and the Internationalist Section, another group in students parlement,took up the responsibility. Firstly, it was difficult to find a proper and known venue at the university. Secondly the Dutch tour manager did not furnish us with the technical details. This led to last minute frantic attempts to prepare the set and the lights. We did a lot of work under intense pressure.

Though we advertised well, with posters at the university and in the city, only about 70 people showed up for the first night. The next day more than double this number came. The audience was very impressed by the music and the story line of the play. Certainly, had they performed longer, they would have filled the house.

For three evenings after this performance, we organised a series of political presentations and discussions on South Africa. We hosted the South African Prof. Dr. Francis Lee, presently teaching at the University de los Andes, Merida, Venezuela. The Linke Liste published an interview with Dr. Lee and the Internationalist Section published an interview with the director of "Township Boy" Mr. Christo Leach. To me it seems important to show the connection between culture, political theory and historical discussion. There is no way to separate this in our work.

Vusi: *Keep up the good work, Thomas.*

West Berlin School Honours Symbol of 1976 Soweto Uprising: Hector Zolile Peterson

The 20th December 1989 will go down amongst West Berlin schools and black South African schools as a historic day. On this day the 2nd Oberschule Kreuzberg was officially renamed the Hector Peterson Schule in memory of 11 year old Hector Zolile Peterson who became the first child to be shot down by South African Police in Soweto, June 16, 1976.

The Hector Peterson School is a special integrationist school with about 450 students applying the latest progressive pedagogic methods for German and foreign children. It is situated in the district of Kreuzberg where there is a large concentration of Turkish, Yugoslavian and other ethnic minorities. The school policy is decidedly against the rising racism and social marginalisation and for cultural understanding.

Small wonder that after months of consultations and information projects, the students decided unanimously to adopt the name Hector Peterson for their school. This was a hard slap in the face of the architects of Bantu Education and at the same time acknowledgement of the international reputation of the fight by black South African shoolchildren against racial discrimination in education. Indeed, the call for students representative councils, for people's education, for parent-teacher forums in South Africa has become a model for the students of the Hector Peterson School in Kreuzberg.

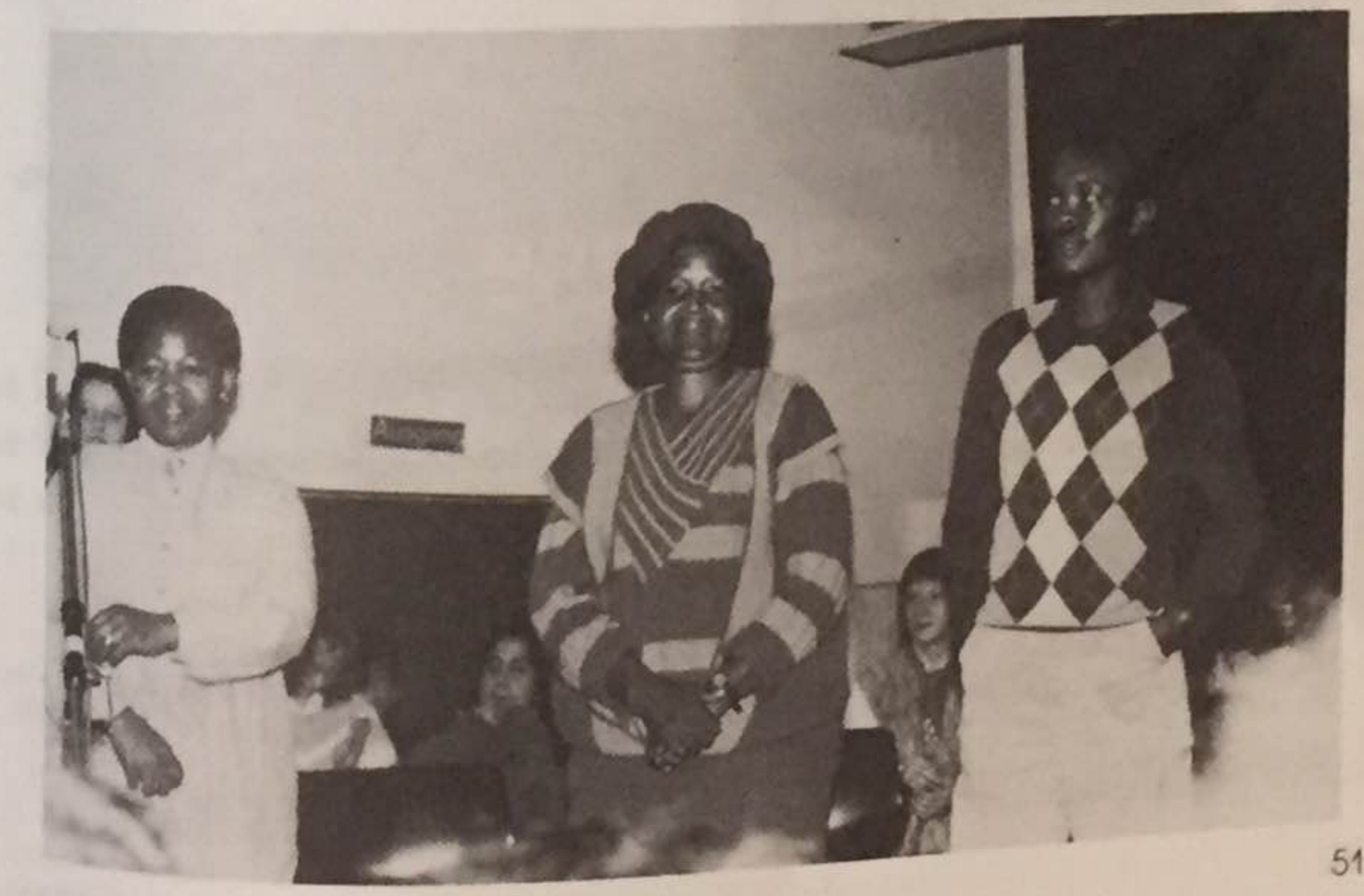
The naming ceremony was opened by the school principal Mr. Dietmar Pagel who introduced the honourable guests Mrs Mantwa Molefi, the mother of Hector Peterson, Mrs Antoinette Sithole, the sister and Mr Amos Twala, a schoolfriend of Hector. All three came all the way 'rom Soweto for the big day. Mr Dirk Jordan from the City Council Office for Education and Vocational Training mentioned that Kreuzberg is a sister district to a Nicaraguan town. The keynote address was by South African Peggy Luswazi who reminded all present that German colonialists usurped African villages and named them after Berlin, Hannover, Heidelberg in the spirit of conquest. West Berlin has a quarter with the streets named after African countries all within the self-same context of colonial domination. But naming of the Hector Peterson School is different. It is inspired by political solidarity, mutual respect and cultural understanding. It is aimed at undermining past and present European domination over education and dissemination of information in Africa and the Third World generally.

The Senator for Education in West Berlin, Mrs Sybille Volkholz also expressed her support to the project. The mother and the sister of Hector Peterson expressed their gratitude for the honour bestowed upon their son and brother. About 200 guests were entertained by dancing and singing students. The choir of the trade union IG Metall moved all present with their rendition of South African freedom songs. Then followed the poetry, percussion and dance of the group Izwelethu as the guest were helping themselves to refreshments and drinks.

It was a dignified ceremony and a memorable day.

by Vusi D. Mchu

Mrs. Antoinette Sithole Mrs. Mantwa Molefi Mr. Amos Twala



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ANC Cultural Office
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London N1 9PR

"This Is My Land"
South African Theatre
Thabo Pholoane
Bei den Höfen 32
2000 Hamburg 70
West Germany

Letters

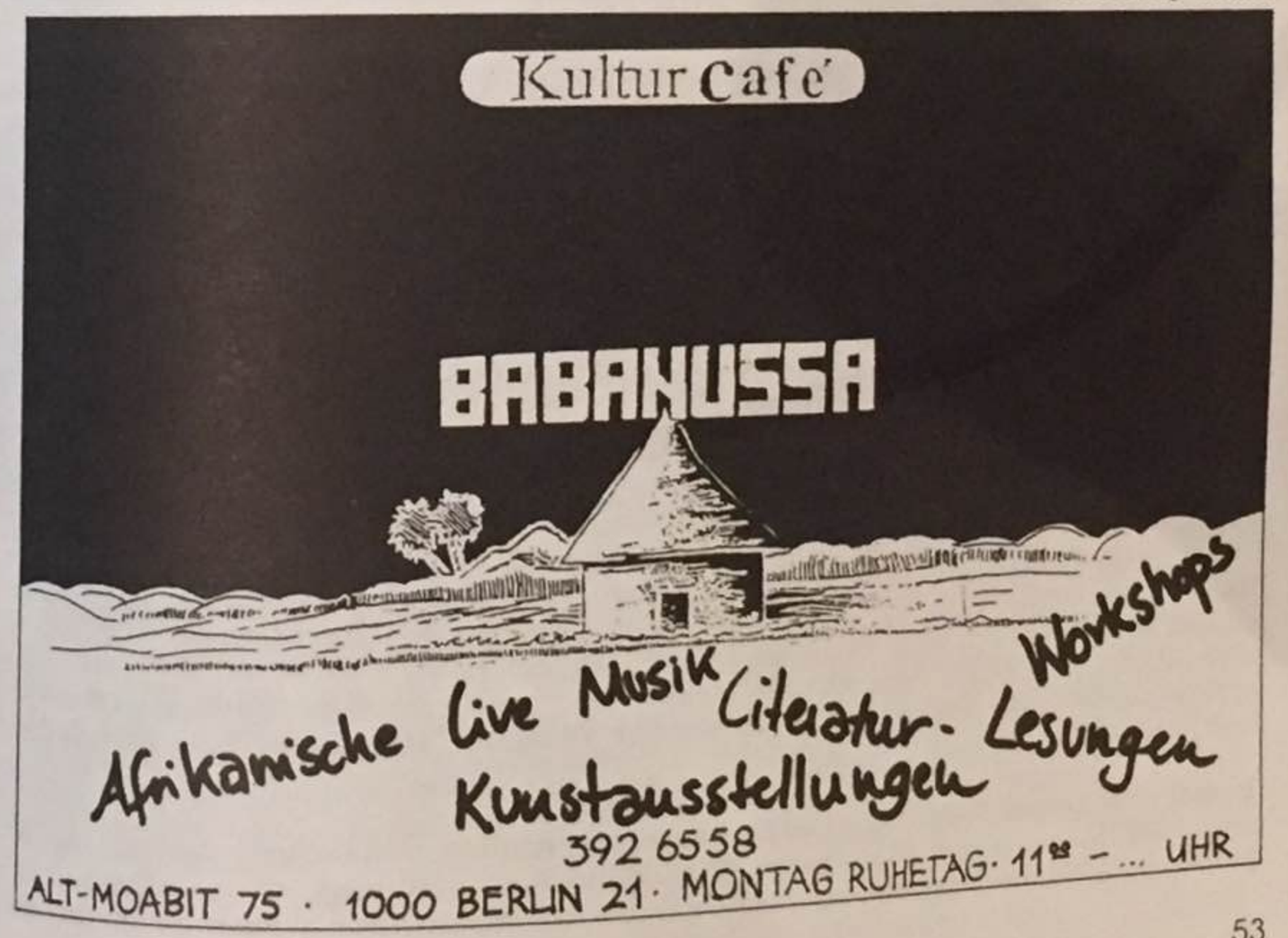
Paris, September 28,1989

ISIVIVANE

Dear Isivivane ,

Thank you for your letter informing us of the creation of your new review entitled ISIVIVANE. We congratulate your initiative and wish you every success.
We are most willing to exchange Présence Africaine with your review and our respective Contents Lists. Would you please therefore send me your copy when it is ready and I shall send you ours at a later date.

Yours sincerely,
Geoffrey Jones



Contributors

Peter Horn, born 7.12.1934, in Teplitz-Schönau (CSSR), educated in Donauwoerth and Freiburg i. Brsg. in Germany, came to South Africa in 1955, studied English and German, Ph.D. 1971. Worked as packer, builder, lab assistant, photographer, insurance agent, teacher. Taught at University of Witwatersrand, UNISA, Zululand. Professor of German and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Cape Town (since 1974).
DAAD-Exchange-Scholarship 1970; Pringle Prize (English Academy of Southern Africa in 1974); DAAD-Visiting-Professorship 1981/1982.
Congress of the South African Writers (Executive 1988/89).

Prof. Dr Dennis Brutus is a famous South African poet, former track star and founder of the South African Nonracial Olympic Committee (SANROC) which champions the sports's boycott of South Africa. Currently, he is chairman of the Department of Black Community Education Research and Development at the Univerity of Pittsburgh. He is the Programme Director for the Union of Writers of the African Peoples.

Dr. Vernon February studied at the University of Cape Town and after his exile in 1963, continued and obtained his doctorate at the University of Leiden, Holland. He has taught African, Afro-American and Afro-Carribean Literature in Europe, Sierra Leone, Surinam and was Visiting Professor at the University of Wisconsin, U.S.A. He is author of poetry in English, Dutch and Afrikaans.

Itumeleng Wathusi is a poet and cultural activist from South Africa and lives in Hamburg.

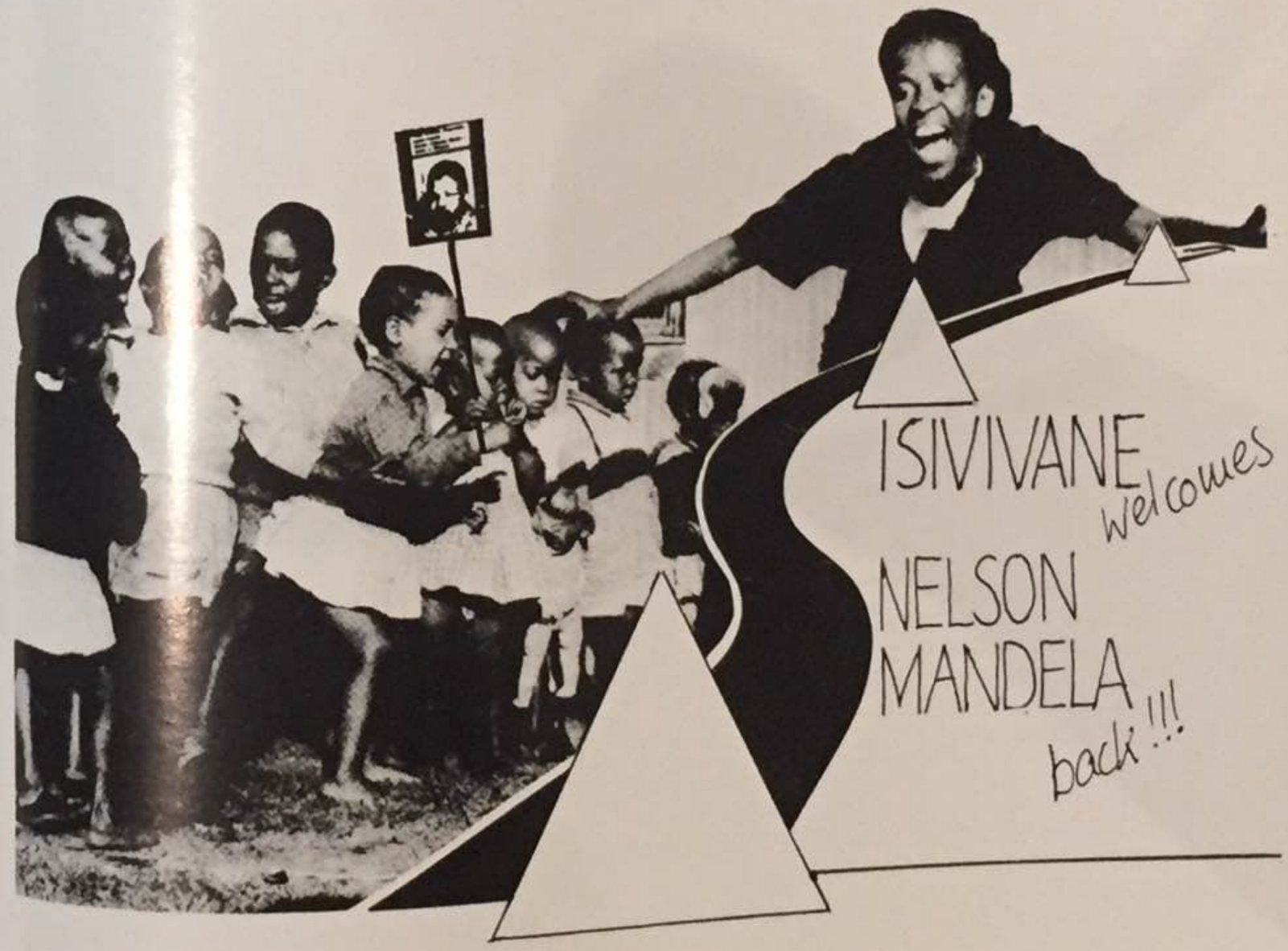
Lefifi Tladi is a South African poet, musician and visual artist. His works from the last six years have been exhibited in Norway, Sweden ,Holland, England, France and West Germany. He has done extensive research and documentation of black South African jazz music and on the biographies and works of all black South African visual artists. At present he is based in Stockholm, Sweden.

Pierette Herzberger-Fonfana, a Senegalese, teaches literature at the University of Erlangen, West-Germany. She is the Western Europe Co-ordinator for the Union of Writers of African Peoples.

Dr. A. Gundu lectures in French language and Francophone African literature in the Department of Languages and Linguistics at the University of Maiduguru, Borno State, Nigeria. He has co-authored a book with Heinz Jochers - *Tiv Bibliography* - and has published several articles on language and literature in journals. The *Tiv Language and Culture in Education in Nigeria* he edited with Nyakura and Jenklue as well as his collection of poems in French - *Coup de Tam-Tam* - are still in press. He is currently preparing an Introduction to Tiv Literature and is a member of many literary societies including LAN and ANA.

Ismael Ivo comes from Sao Paulo where he studied drama and dance. In 1981 and 1982 he recieved the Trafeu Pirandello Prize as best solo dancer in Sao Paulo. In 1983 he was invited to New York by Alvin Ailey where he could also perform in the New York City Centre. In the same year he won international recognition in West Berlin with his solo performances of *Rituals of the Body in Moon*. Soon followed two solo performances *Phoenix* and *Under Skin* which took him and his troupe as far as Tokyo, Japan. He is the current artistic director of the Vienna International Dance Week. He lives and operates from West Berlin.

George Hallett, a South African, is well-known for his book cover photography and portraits for the Heinemann African Writers Series. He is widely travelled and has worked in London, Amsterdam, Paris and West-Germany. His moving photos can be seen in a 1988 calender designed by fellow visual artist Gavin Jantjes and distributed by the Dutch Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Dr. Ntongela Masilela, a South African, is former Assistant Professor at Nairobi University, Kenya and the University of Lodz, Poland. A sociologist, he has been with das Ökumenische Studentenwerk Bochum and was attached to Technische Universität Berlin.

Ali Khangela Hlongwane is a South African actor and active member of the Soyikwa Institute of African Theatre based in Soweto. He also teaches drama at the Funda Arts Centre in Soweto.