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Current Revolution
and Future Prospects

I. INTRODUCTION.

In any consideration of the function and the significance of Negro-African art in the life of the people and on behalf of the people, time cannot be ignored if objective evaluation is to be attained. In considering Negro-African art in relation to the current on-going social and cultural confrontation with modern life in Africa, it is imperative that « modern life » be clearly defined, otherwise the perspective of such a consideration will be distorted. What do we mean by modern life ? What are the essential ingredients of modernity ? The questions must be answered first and, on the basis of answers posited, consideration of the confrontation is likely to be undertaken with some degree of objectivity. Negro-African art already enjoys world-wide recognition with respect to its distinctive personality. However, this international recognition has up to now been founded on a comparative evaluation of this art in contradistinction to the arts of other lands and other times. This perspective of approach to Negro-African art is, in essence, external. There remains to be considered in specific terms

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what (internally) are the precise ingredients of Negro-African art over and above evident difference when this art is seen against the backdrop of other arts and other times. We must internalise this questioning in order to find out what aspects of both the form and the content of this art are innate to African identity. Form-content interpretations in any art are both a by-product of individual artists' projections of personality consciousness as a statement regarding the social, cultural, economic and political circumstances of the people to which the artists belong at any given time. Both the personality and the circumstances of the people are reconciled in the artist who, in turn, projects the former in personal terms. This happens regardless of whether or not the artist is conscious or unconscious of his involvement in this respect. The artist is the people, whether he or the people know it or not. Artists are irrevocably linked with the total personality and the total circumstances of the people to which they belong. Artists are never apart or divorced from people, They may not consciously be for the people. They none the less are always with the people. Meaning is realised and resolved. in varying degrees of identity linking the individual with the collectivity.

The production and the patronage of art are not myste-

rious. As phenomena, they are capable of objectification and amenable to objective evaluation. All art is predicated in the creative will of people. Creativity and the exercise of creativity cannot be ignored in any consideration of art produced by a people at any time. Creativity is innate to man, Its exercise is constant but it is not consistent. Production of art by a people is accordingly constant but not consistent. There are no people who are not artistic. The inconsistency of the exercise of creativity by a people in relation to the production and the appreciation of art in turn relates to the non-simultaneous way in which they exercise creativity. All people have, at one time or another, had a "golden age" of artistic production. However, no one people exist today whose art output has remained constant and consistent in both quality and quantity throughout the history of their existence.

The production of art and the celebration of the art produced are two distinct social phenomena, The celebration . of art by a people needs to be recognised in its own right. The exercise of creativity by a people with respect to producing and appreciating art is a complex and compound

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phenomenon. Art does not by itself compel appreciation of fully and in a forthright
itself. Its presence will occasion appreciation. It will not sumptive about our rom tht
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compel it. Art produced by ourselves and which is present Art is structured meaning and
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in Africa has, over the past century, been unappreciated by bolised understanding. As s
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us. Accordingly, it was bought outside of Africa and only Approach to the study of art
requires . comprehensive,
now do we realise the national losses we have incurred. very nature of art, It is requi
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From this fact alone it is clear that the celebration of art objective. This requiremen
t does not, ho s Z y that it be
is independent of production and presence. subjective experience must be transformed an
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II. THE DIVERSITY OF THE ONENESS OF ART. from a matter-oriented science. As such, the a
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of this objectivity to extra-material]
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riably to involve materialisation of such phenomena. In ths

Hitherto, on-going interpretations of Negro-African arts process, their extra-materj li
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have suffered from the tendency to approach them from a Extra-material] phenomena ame be
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whole array of perspectives. While it is recognised that this very state of their being
Pproached from the
tendency is warranted by the very breadth of the field, the European writin on the t i
fact is that the perspectives chosen for their study were been matter-of-fact in charac
ter. It har weg Py a ree,
not stated openly and categorically and led to anerroneous ff facts and not to interpre
t meanings and significances This
evaluation. . mainly sociological, anthropological and psychologic .

Inquiry into the current confrontation between Negro- This is no accident. steal.

African arts and modernity must clearly be undertaken ra ieee Europe n schol,
from multiple perspectives, Inquiry has to be both historic
and contemporary ; it has to be specific and comprehen-
sive ; it has to be internal and external to art production
and art appreciation in Africa. The artist as an individual
and a personality must be defined. His ever-changing

pattern of relatedness to society must be recognised. So-

ciety's own ever-changing attitudes to art and to artists must be acknowledged. The whole phenomenon of change now equally generally recognised it is must be considered in relation to creativity predicated on art capacity of African scholarship to exist = within the production and art appreciation. dictive colonial scholasticism : present and negative. In

Recognition of motivation propelling inquiry in the very happening first instance is of fundamental importance in determining artistic

perspectives from which to undertake consideration of any aspect of art. That which we seek to elucidate is sought on the basis of exercise of choice, This exercise of choice before the fact of inquiry cannot be divorced from the evaluations we arrive at after the fact of inquiry. What is the interest we have in the clarification of particular aspects of Negro-African arts ? Why do we now see it to be important to inquire into the nature and character of Negro-African arts ? We must answer these questions truth-

ward, we must understand

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11. THE « COLONIAL FACT » AND THE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM.

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alism is an industrial phenomenon. Failure to appreciate this point has led to sentimental postulation regarding the « colonial fact ». It is not colonisation which is misunderstood ; what is not fully understood is the industrial system. Industrialization is not only an unprecedented phenomenon in all human history ; it is a phenomenon so all-encompassing that we have come to identify this age with the industrial system. Although Europe mothered industrialization, her reaction to the new industrial system was initially historical in character. Reference for meaning and significance was sought in the past in spite of the fact there was no precedent in, and outside, Europe. In order to understand this ambivalence in attitude we do not so much need to go back into the history of Europe as to move forward with the evolving industrial system.

Presaging the development of the industrial system in Europe was a change in the attitude of man toward matter. Men had for centuries looked at matter without necessarily looking into matter. Man's whole attitude to matter was predicated on this external view. This is not to say that men had not, before then, analysed matter but that all previous analyses were incidental to an otherwise external view expressing itself in the then all-pervading transcendentalism. This external view limited man's insight into the nature and character of matter and their attitude and reaction were limited to that needed to impinge itself on to sense before they could feel themselves challenged and obliged to react. Clearly, this meant that matter existing within the range of sense-perception was unwittingly separated from matter existing beyond the range of sense native to man. The limits of sense-perception were those in which man perceived and interpreted matter.

Matter is energy in mass. Energy is neither lost nor created. Materials in their diversity are matter and therefore energy. Materials lost to one mass-state are, in fact, « lost into » another energy state. Materials undergo transformation from one state to another endlessly. Physi-

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cally, man is part and parcel of this over-all energy-presence. As surely as man breathes in and out, he is a factor in the circulation and re-circulation of matter. It is interesting to note that African and oriental religions had long ago postulated and contended that life is re-circulated, substantiating itself in differing states of being. This view was transcendentially derived. This derivation limited all effort towards resolving and realising this fact materially. Similarly, Europe was not to realise her own change of orientation from transcendentalism towards materialism. This failure resulted because Europe herself had to await her own development of instruments wherewith to resolve

and realise the implications of her new attitude. She had, after all, effected a change in attitude through the agency of institutions like the Church whose very structural organization was transcendental. It did not take long, however, before Europe sensed that change was underway. The Church was the first to feel the impact of change precisely because it harboured contradiction by being a transcendental institution championing materialism. Small wonder therefore that the Church was of little or no spiritual value . to Europe, as Europe groped and clutched at every straw in an effort to realise the worth of her own re-orientation.° In self-defence, the Church legitimated each and every deed of Europe without scruple or question.

The indifferent mechanistic character of Europe's enslavement of Africa will be seen in far greater depth when viewed against this backdrop of contradiction. It will be seen more precisely if looked at in the light of the nature and character of the orientation then new and not understood in Europe and elsewhere. The bewilderment of Africa and the consequent immobilisation of her own will can in turn be understood with greater meaning and significance when seen from this remove. .

Physically speaking, man is a mechanism. He is a machine. This machine works from energy resources generated within. It is fuelled with food, water and air and kept in working order through the provision of a garage and maintenance facilities such as shelter, clothing and medical care. Population increase accompanying the evolution of the industrial system is a natural consequence of attention being given to the functioning and servicing of the human body in strict mechanical terms. Within the framework of the earlier transcendental world, this machine was viewed metaphysically, even with respect to its

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physical functioning. Naturally, this precluded the possibility of focusing attention on to the physical details of the machine's functioning. Death was mysterious. This meta-physical view did, however, generally ensure the humanity of people in spite of the misconception relating to the physical existence of man. Therefore, on looking at slavery within this earlier world, we note that the humanity of the slave's extra-physical being was not erased from the conscience of the slaver. Indeed, it was relegated to lower status and worth. This does not mean that slavers were humane : it only means that the necessities of slavers then were different from the necessities of oppression within the materialist world-view framework, It is the necessities of the slaver, not the suffering of the enslaved, that reveal the nature and character of enslavement and oppression. The necessities of the slaver may not necessarily be clear to the slaver himself ; he may also be a slave to his own enslavement of other people. This fact must be kept in mind in any consideration of the enslavement of Africa by Europe.

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Slavery, throughout human history, validated itself in respect of the very limits of man's inborn capacity to work. Whenever and wherever the work-designs of some men have exceeded the capacity to fulfil these designs, they have had to « employ » the work capacities of others. Where these capacities have not been negotiated in cash or in kind, they have been coerced. It is this coercion in the interest of work-designs that constitutes the substance (though not the essence) of slavery. In this respect, slavery differs from imprisonment. Imprisonment is the suspension of the exercise of work-capacity by an individual seeking to meet his own designs. Clearly, slavery relating to work-performance was not to erase itself prior to the instrumental development of work-capacity. Even when men have employed animal work-capacity, animals in turn have required employment of human work-capacity for maintenance purposes. Employment of the work-capacities of people, however indirect, has remained necessary. The issue remained the same, whether the employed work-capacity was voluntary or not, so long as the necessities concerned some of the people but not all the people. In some instances, the necessities were in the interest of all the people

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put, in many of these instances, this interest was known only to a few which meant that coercion of the rest became necessary in the interest of all. Such have been the paternalistic benevolent dictatorships. In so far as coercion was predicated collective interest, coercion was not that of slavery. Voluntary employment is of little value if the employed are ignorant of the ends to which their work are aimed ; for work to have meaning, the worker must

identify with these ends. Socialism today is founded on the material development of communication techniques ; awareness is broadcast far and wide, deposited in the consciousness of many people, thereby persuading their will. People are encouraged to participate in the determination, development and realisation of consensus and persuaded to work concertedly and co-operatively in their collective interest. But in so far as capacities for « coming-into-awareness » vary, a mean level of awareness is stipulated and adherence to norms relative to this level is enforced which means that a degree of coercion remains necessary. People must be coerced to develop the faculties that will enable them to be aware. Education is compulsory. People with highly developed faculties are in turn reminded and reconciled « back » to the mean level of society. This means that the relativity of the freedom to be aware and to develop instruments of awareness is specified. Freedom does not presuppose equality of awareness but the equality of men whatever the disparities in awareness may be. This is the « unfreedom » of freedom.

The birth and development of industrialization in Europe was characterised by the rise of a wave of optimism. Industrialization presented itself as man's saviour from drudgery and the instrumentation of work-capacity was seen to bring a whole host of mechanical slaves through which men could extend their work-designs limitlessly. Ambitions were fired. This reaction was natural as there were no references inside and outside Europe and no precedent in all human history. The promise of industrialization to bring to the service of men a whole host of mechanical slaves was conceived correctly : what was not realised was the manner in which industrialization was to bring this about. The scholarship then available to Europe was that of Greece and the medieval Church. Both scholarships were only documented, they were not instrumented. It was realised that great technical development awaited men as soon as they decided to instrument this intellect but this Euro-

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aw materials for industrial roduction were see
produced Â« raw Â» by nature. Industry had to follow hiewe
Natureâ\200\231s Â« raw material factories Â» were dispersed across
the face of the earth. The acceleration of production
demanded an acceleration of materia] inpu ich-in~turn
compelled wholesale exploration and rospÃ©ction.
This in turn required development of Yo

forced into servile positions in relation to the ever-growi

demands of the machine. This wholesale co-ordination af
production and supply channels paid well : the machines
produced more and more, faster and faster. All was well
for the owners and operators of these machines : accele-
rating production guaranteed them wealth and power
which they in turn used to bring pressure on the far-flung

med without parallel programming of consumption. Euro-
pean men came, once again, face to face with the logic of
the industrial system. Having not thought it necessary at
he beginning to call into question the native capacity to

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consume the goods that would soon flood the market, the
owners and operators of the machines belatedly realised
that the whole system would come to a stop unless goods
were cleared as fast as they were produced. Market satu-
ration threatened the whole system with collapse.

There was only one answer to this problem and this was
to free some of the work-capacity employed in production
and transfer it to the consumption sector. As charity
begins at home, the European was given first choice and
he very gratefully took up his new role while the < outer >
people continued to produce raw materials. This distinc-
tion required a legitimation of the European conscience.
Europe was not ignorant of the millions Â« out there Â» under
the blazing tropical sun and torrential rain who kept up the
schedule of supply. She knew suffering too well to be indif-
ferent as the very industrial system had meted out suffi-
cient suffering and had divided her against herself. The
possible emergence of a Â« brotherhood of suffering Â» was
a threat to the whole system Gf production and consump-

tion and therefore, in order to let the European to consume in the interests of the machine, it became necessary to secure Europe against guilt. Facism had to be propagated :
« the cannibal » was born. The last vestiges of personality were erased by Europe and the Church was called into the direct service of the machine. All forms of racist propaganda were not only legitimated, but resolutely encouraged. The European found it necessary to prescribe himself to be « white » and he « blackened » all men outside Europe, particularly the men of Africa.
It is a larger truth that his own involvement in the industrial system. iately made it clear to those at the top that: there was more room at the top than conceded. « Worker philosophies » and « worker movements » came into being at the time when colonialism, now married to racism, was at its height. In order to contain the European consumer-worker, it became necessary to extend the consumption area outwards and include sections of the production-workers in the colonies. The « divide-and-rule » policy of the colonial administration was fundamentally economic. The initial divorce of production capacity from need was presumed to have been one of choice but is now seen to have been a consequence of the very nature and character of the industrial system.

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The colonial consumer-worker in turn came gradually to realise the wider truths concerning his involvement, and the divide-and-rule strategy could not contain him for long. Furthermore, there remained the possibility of his joining forces with the European consumer-worker against the established power, order. Racism had to be used to prevent this possibility from being realised but particular sections of the latter group were prepared to fight against racism in order to secure the support of the former. It was then clear that the whole consumer sector had to be overhauled. Exclusive human consumption of products of industry was both precarious and expensive ; consumption was then abstracted and the war-economy phenomenon came into being. The two World Wars and the Cold War have provided unprecedented consumption capacity which has accelerated production capacity to such an extent that we are now clearly at the over-production stage. Accordingly, people are no longer prepared to countenance sectionalised involvement in the industrial system and all colonialist and racist barriers are crumbling fast. Industrialization internationalised itself when Europe could no longer consume her products ; her power, in essence, was the ignorance that prevailed around the world concerning industrial processes and the industrial system.

Realisation of this fact has led to many significant adjustments of attitude. Liberalism gained public approval and social conscience was activated. Patent laws came into being and technical know-how became the significant high priority issue in industrial programming. The power-struggle which had the colonies as its focus now transferred itself back to the metropolitan seats of industrial production. It was realised that the development of technology was leading to the development of a wide range of « extra-natural » material. Technical instruments have revealed the fact that materials are not half as diverse as they appear externally but are particular configurations of matter. These configurations can be altered, given the right instruments and technical knowledge. Socially, it was realised that products were not passively consumed by people and therefore it was not necessary to have a physically captive consumer-market area. The technological lead enjoyed by the industrialized countries was sufficient to keep the colonies « captive » without it being necessary to expend vast amounts of money on political domination. Colonial investment was diverted to perfecting instruments,

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industrial, social and psychological understanding. The colonies became laboratories for the study of human society ; anthropology and sociology were required studies married to general market research. At long last, consumption was Standardized as yet another integral aspect of the industrial system. The whole phenomenon of human sense-perception was now seen to be of paramount importance in determining and developing consumption patterns and the industrial product was seen to be capable of selling itself depending on just how well it was aligned to sense responses. Consumption now became active and the whole scheme of social relations had to be changed. In the interests of the circulatory acceleration of consumption, class distinction was a block that had to be removed : middle class ethics became the standard norm and the Americanization of European attitudes began to establish itself.

IV. INDUSTRIAL PROCESS AND SOCIAL BEING.

A very important feature of the evolution of the industrial system is that the instrumentation of work-capacity and the consequent acceleration of production-capacity is not paralleled by an acceleration of quantitative consumption of raw materials. Increased production is a result of a better understanding of raw materials and tools and techniques. We are producing more and more from less and less. This phenomenon is totally new to human experience.

Although this is happening, many peopleâ\200\230not only find it-

difficult to believe but they also find it highly exasperating. This phenomenon is raising many unprecedented contradictions and calling in question many basic assumptions and evaluations relating to work itself. The most obvious cause of present concern is that the number of workers (in the traditional sense) is to diminish. The traditional worker is being made obsolete by the the developing capacity of instrumentation. At the same time, however, this accelerates both production and consumption. Just how is a man to earn the money to buy the goods produced through these highly developed industrial processes ? Clearly this calls for a far-reaching redefinition of the whole framework of social being. Now that man is no

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longer called upon to live by the sweat of his brow, hoy
else is he to live ? ;

These phenomena have not, as yet, fully surfaced in
Africa and in many of the so-called underdeveloped coun-
tries. The pressure is, however, already being felt. This
pressure is in respect of the difficulties now being experien-
ced by these countries in seeking the international stan-
dardization of pricing raw materials which are mainly
mineral and agricultural. As far as vegetal materials are
concerned (especially fibres), laboratory-developed counter-
parts are proving much more efficient and economical. As a
result, synthetic fibres are fast taking over the market and
the development of « stereo-specific » synthetic material:
(materials with regular molecular configurations which
are reproducible) has made it possible to produce coun-
terparts which are far more appropriately structured in
relation to their use in industrial processes. In the rubber
industry, synthetic rubber is made from petroleum waste:
and its production is now part of integrated refinery
operations. The homogeneity of its properties gives this
rubber processing advantages over natural rubber and its
supply is free and secure. Production has developed at
such a phenomenal pace that, since 1961, capacity in the
western world alone increased from 650,000 tons a year
to 2.7 billion tons in 1965 and is increasing at an even

faster rate. What, then, happens to the producers of natu-
ral rubber and to the labour force on the plantations?

Admittedly, there remains a number of natural raw
materials (mainly minerals) which are not value-eroded in
these terms at least for the time being. One such
material is copper. Copper is the most efficient conductor
of electricity. As a material, it is basic to the functioning
of industrial processes. Electricity is industrial energy and
we cannot conceive industrialization without electric
power. The industrial age is the electrical age. However.

despite all this, copper production is not today half as

secure as one would naturally assume. The First and the
Second World Wars led to the mass acquisition of copper
needed for war machinery. At the end of these wars, copper
was melted out of defunct military hardware and placed
at the disposal of industry. In the meantime, technology
had continued to become more and more advanced which
made it possible to conduct more electrical energy by
using less copper. It made it possible to re-circulate copper
from function to function, endlessly. Available stocks of

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copper were, therefore, more than sufficient to meet the
requirements of expanding industrialization. The conti-
nuing use of copper in industrial processes does not in any
way insure underdeveloped copper-producing countries
against bankruptcy. . ;

it is a more important revaluation in Africa and throughout the
underdeveloped world marks yet another stage in the evo-
lution of the industrial system. People in these countries
are not unaware of the existence of instruments capable of
salvaging them from poverty, disease and want ; they are

not unaware of their role in the creation of these instruments ; they cannot therefore be expected to content themselves with, marginal existence. Poverty legitimates itself to sense only when people are not aware of the existence of means with which to free themselves from poverty. Sense is not illiterate. So long as people can see, they are learning and there is no way of concealing from them the fact of the power of these new instruments. Now that they are required to consume more and more products, the products themselves teach them about industrial processes. In the light of awarenesses abstracted from things, poverty is intolerable. To tolerate poverty is today absurd : co-existence with poverty strikes the people as a positive indictment of their will and they see poverty as belittling their sense of person. It is not surprising therefore that people now seem to prefer death itself to living a negation of their sense of person. This is the confrontation with « modern life » in Africa and throughout that world whose circumstances are similar to hers. Fundamentally, the issue is not ideological : it is industrial. It is not an issue pertaining to belief : it is an issue deriving from improper practice.

V. MAN IS MORE THAN MATTER.

Presence is continuity. Presence is activity. Presence is resolution of presence itself. Presence is with time. There is no presence without time. There is no presence outside time. Man of Africa is man in continuity of the presence of men in Africa. The industrial fact is related to presence because the industrial fact is a system fact on which modernity is founded. Modernity is time realization now. As such,

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modernity is determined, resolved and realised in varying degrees on a cause and effect continuum centred on the industrial system. Modernity itself, however, is not the industrial system. It is personality determination and realization effected by men through industrial processes, Industrialization is the system-co-ordination of matter processes in their relation to, and with, man ; in the interest of the welfare of man. rf

Industrialization and modernity are interdependent but not necessarily identical. Indeed, man is matter. But to himself, man is more than matter. The cow to man is for the milking, but to itself ? Life is not just existence. Life is the living it is. Energy interactivity, predicating all life, must be recognised and an effort must be made to understand it because man is of this energy interaction. Man is self-extensive of the matter he is : he effects this extension of himself because of, and in respect of, this matter substance. His self-extension in respect of meaning and significance particular to himself extra-materialises man in his own eyes as man. This is so regardless of the fact that energy is neither created nor lost. Energy is by definition syn-energetic ; it is self-consolidative. Therefore self-extension of man is qualitative not quantitative. Spiritism, relating to man's own self-extension, is not divorced from the matter from which this extension is effected. There are no two independent and exclusive states of being. There is no man of « spirit » standing apart and divorced from the man of « physics ». This does not mean that the two states of being are synonymous. It only means that being itself is not simultaneous. Man's physical substantiation does not materialise man. Metaphysical considerations by man regarding his very existence as man are not irrelevant or of no consequence. Such considerations in no way stand opposed to physical existence so long as they are clearly undertaken in respect of man himself and not matter in general. Man's self-extension is as unlimited as is the extensiveness of matter itself. Matter is varied and diversified. The energy it is substantiates itself. Matter is varied and diversified. The energy it is substantiates itself variously, diversely and limitlessly. On the basis of that matter man is, and in turn is capable of self-determination and self-realization variously, diversely and limitlessly.

VI. PRESENCE IN AFRICA AND THE COLOUR PROBLEM.

African man is African both because he is physically man of Africa and because he wishes to be man in Africa. His physical presence is physical, geographical presence ; it is environmental presence. The intensity of radiation from the sun varies from place to place on the face of the earth. The sun's radiant heat is transmitted by electromagnetic waves capable of passing through a vacuum and, accordingly, through and across the empty space beyond the earth's atmosphere. The earth and objects on earth partly absorb, deflect or reflect these waves. Radiant heat absorbed by the earth and objects on earth is converted into heat. Heat is a manifestation of energy. Heat intensifies and transforms. Variations of colour intensity are accordingly variations of the intensity of heat. There are, of course, other socio-cultural factors accounting for colour differences between people. There is the genetic factor leading to hybridism, The earlier relative immobility of people allowed for « incestuous » propagation and the con-

sequent entrenchment of colour difference.

The identification of presence in Africa with skin colour is, in physical terms, the particularization of environment, common to all local phenomena. Environment, although particularized in different ways, is whole and total. When the identity of men in Africa was unassailed and unchallenged by identity assertions of other peoples, this identity was not coloured. Their physically derived colour was not in any way viewed as a distinctive norm. Identity actualized itself in respect of Â« person Â» and Â« personality Â» concepts. The Bantu peoples posited Ntu as the norm of identity. Ntu was Man ; Niu was Being ; Ntu was Humanity ; Ntu was inclusive and expansive of personality. This norm of identity stood in the face of all differences of colour, culture, religion and social practice and was not held because of any ignorance of the existence of peoples different in these respects. The translation of difference in skin tone into a norm distinctive of African identity only occurred when the identity was challenged. Assertion of identity in visually distinctive terms became necessary in

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so far as it was then necessary to distinguish between the
 "ins" and the "outs". In other words, colour difference,
 had to be noted because of the necessity to defend the
 personality of Africans when this personality (not the
 colour) was assailed.

European man had coloured himself "white" not to
 defend himself against any outside aggressor but in order
 to answer to pressures from within. This pressure was that
 of the evolving industrial system. The impersonality of
 the compulsion in Europe was to be the impersonality of
 the compulsion in Africa. Therefore, even when "black-
 ness" was being asserted by African men it was a means
 whereby people differing in social and cultural practices
 could, as it were, rally round for the prolonged fight against
 the aggressor. Colour in Africa became an instrument of
 war as surely as it was an instrument of industrial expan-
 sion in Europe. This instrument could not, however, be
 effectively used, firstly because it was "alien" to African
 sensibility and had been forced on to African identity ;
 secondly, as far as Europe was concerned, it was a front
 covering other interests and motivations. The African was
 not unaware of the pressures behind European man. He
 was not unaware that the European was propelled by forces
 of far deeper consequence than his personality. This fact
 would have escaped Africa but for the personality identity
 resources within African man himself. This internal con-
 sciousness of the presence of something weightier than was
 evident, even to European men themselves, stayed the hand
 of Africa and allowed Europe to make far greater inroads
 into the continent than would otherwise have been the case.
 The European, observing this, thought the African to be a
 child, a simpleton and a near-idiot. He took full advan-
 tage of this ambivalence in attitude ; his ego was inflated

and his arrogance entrenched. Small wonder therefore that
 thoughtful scholars in Europe today observe that no greater &

tragedy could have happened than when Europe decided
 to use race differences to solve a problem then of relatively
 short-term consequence. The problem has vanished but
 entrenched prejudices remain ; the very permanence of
 colour difference now haunts Europe.

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The struggle in Africa today is not a struggle to be freed
 from, and be rid of, the rest of the world. It is a struggle

to be free to relate with (not just to) the rest of the world.
\part from the fact that this is now required by the present stage of development in industrial processes and the system as a whole, it is required by Africa's own personality and identity orientation, we

African social and cultural practice is, in essence, inclusive and expansive. It presupposes total man and total humanity. To Africans themselves, however, this feature is not a system feature ; it is the very life of the people. To isolate it and set it apart as something in need of focus and self-conscious cultivation would be to lose and distort the whole sense of values of the African personality, It would be to require the African to step out himself so that he may see and develop himself better. Personality is comprehensive. People outside Africa see particular features of African identity in action and attribute to them significances of one kind or another. They see these features either because they are pronounced within the African personality configuration or because they represent differences in personality orientation between themselves and the African. The African in turn views the world of other people in these terms. A people will see themselves through the eyes of other people or through the results of their own actions. Because their eyes are not independent of particular interest, what they see is, to a large measure, what they want to see. When we say that people see themselves through the eyes of other people, we mean that they will see themselves as qualified by the will of the others. The image will accordingly be a very relative image. Equally, the results accruing from the action of a people are themselves relative. Action is not independent of time and circumstance ; time is particular to a people only in so far as they wish to realise time. Time, realised or not, is whole and total ; it totalises people and phenomena generally, We shall therefore conclude that African personality 'o African man is what he wills personality to be to himself in the face of the awareness of personality formulations as variously established by people specifying time to themselves. This awareness is the need to be with personality, not the fact of being with personality which is, in essence, the substance of personality. Africa must beware of those carrying gifts in praise of her personality because they are the mortal enemies of the latter.

In our contemporary world, relativity is entrenched. We now regard available knowledge as mandating confronta-

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tion with the unknown rather than providing stcurtty and defence against the unknown. We regard knowledge as active presence, not as passive existence. Knowledge is seen to be actively present to sense, therefore activating man, We live in anticipation of knowing more. We are not inti. midated by error or chance. We admit the random element. We know what we do not know with as much clarity as we know that which we do know. This fact alone compels co-operation. No one people knows the whole truth concer. ning people as a whole. So long as the unknown is known, there can be no absoluteness regarding that which is known. There never was an absoluteness regarding personality in Africa : mystery was fact. This factâ\200\224the fact of the un. knownâ\200\224is today known without mystery. Magic is obsolete. The role of Negro-African art today in the life of the people and on behalf of the people is to support growth of understanding. Negro-African artists will not achieve this end unless and until they realise that there exist parti- cular prerequisites to efficient action in this regard. Zeal is not enough. Taking account of these prerequisites will ensure that they do not expend vast amounts of energy asking questions that no longer need to be asked and sol- ving problems that no longer exist. A prerequisite to effi- cient functioning is the proper appropriation of problems and methods. This appropriation is not governed by will only, it is governed by time.

Industrialization, at its earlier stages of development, was nourished by rugged self-assertion and self-interest, Developing industrialization was married to individual accumulation of wealth deriving from the evolving indus- trial system. Scarcity was its counterpart. As the system evolved, people brought themselves round to believing that it was in the very nature of wealth that some had to be rich while others remained poor. There was no room whatsoever for believing that it was possible for all the people to be rich at the same time. It was not conceived that plenty could become universalised. This remained so despite the fact that evolving industrialization was seen to extend pro- duction and consumption limitlessly. Industrialization was therefore alien to the nature and character of African social and cultural practice. Africaâ\200\231s passive attitude to the sys- tem at this stage was understandable as there was no social and cultural mandate for involvement. Precisely because of this opposition in essences, she lay open to exploitation by European industrial interests. Industriali-

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zation has evolved since then and now demands that a collective, co-ordinated social system be evolved for its effi- cient functioning. African social and cultural practice, by virtue of its being collective and non-exclusive, is appro- priately suited to meeting this as it discounts the necessity of having to Â« collectivise Â» people, through coercion or otherwise, in the interests of industrial efficiency. Collec- tivism is the conscious collectivisation of people. Collec-

tivisation in these terms is at present underway in Europe and elsewhere ; bringing it into being is accompanied by traumatic reactions and tension and its enforcement is running against the will and personality orientation of

the people. While they recognize the need for collective co-

ordination of social practice in the interests of industrial efficiency, they none the less are unable to will their collectivisation ; they are being collectivised. The African advantage here is obvious. The pressures of the industrial system which, earlier, were shouldered by Africa and the colonies in general have now been transferred to where they are breeding dissension and negativism. Developing

Left and Right extremism in Europe is a direct consequence

of these pressures.

Africa, however, cannot afford to rest on her laurels.

She is inextricably linked with Europe and the rest of the

world. This is not a matter of choice, it is a matter of time.

: Conservative extremists in Europe still hold a substantial

stake in Africa deriving from colonial entrenchment.

Rightism is an outcome of the defensive posture forced on to conservatism by the progressive elements and their extre-

misism is itself an outcome of earlier entrenchments in the

economic, political and cultural fields. In a similar way, European industrial interest in Africa forces her to go left as a counterbalance and an instrument with which to win back independence. How can Africa counterbalance European Rightism without becoming Left ? The question is open to debate. It should, first of all, be realised that it is in the interests of the former elements to push her as far as possible to the Left because, by colouring her, they can legitimate their aggression, otherwise they would provoke strong reaction against themselves at home. The Left in turn is interested, because it does not need to infiltrate frontally into Africa and realises that her social practice is collective. The Leftists are, however, aware of the fact that this practice is not founded on materialism. This being the case, a materialist collectivism is not likely to impress the

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African readily and to coerce him in this direction would involve identification with the actions of the Right. It is therefore in the interests of the Left to let the contradictions of capitalism persuade Africa ; however, this is not happening as scheduled.

Leftism emerged in Europe approximately when colonialism was at its height. It represented widely-felt indignation and reaction against accumulated capital which was employed unscrupulously in developing industrial capacity. Leftism is an industrial phenomenon. Of importance, for our purposes, is the fact that it came from the same social and cultural framework which, in the very first instance, countenanced capital accumulation in a capitalistic way. Capitalism is not the only way open to accumulating capital and must not be confused with the social and cultural accumulation of capital. The end does not justify the means and we must inquire into the means used by the Europeans and ask whether those actually selected were, in fact, properly used. We know that they were selected in answer to the demands of an evolving industrial system and that the understanding of this system was extremely limited.

We are now aware of alternatives and cannot assert that the earlier practices relating to industrialization are now warranted by present industrial development. We must, in the interests of future development, abstract the lack of alignment between European concept and methods and do so independently of Europe (Right or Left). Capitalism and Communism are European ; the struggle between the two is European. The fact that the whole world now constitutes the terrain on which the battle is fought does not imply that the issue is universal. Its effects are universal but industrialization remains yet to universalise itself. There is one important lesson to be drawn from all this : concepts relating to the social existence of men within the framework of an industrial system cannot be sectional or partisan because sectionalism alienates totally and brings about triviality and absurdity. This absurdity is explicit when an otherwise united personality divides itself against itself. Even outside the industrial system, sectionalism is absurd and we were not to realise this prior to industrial development. We had to await the universalisation and totalisation of all earlier wars into the First World War before we could realise the full absurdity of war. Time now discounts all forms of sectionally based self-assertion.

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VII. THE CONTINUITY OF PRESENCE.

It is time, not a system, which is the pulsing heart of presence. Over and above programmes and problems of social action, stands time. All programmes and problems are time-determined and time-realised. Although today we are variously concerned with modernity which presupposes time, we interpret this concern as signifying concern with system and programming. Socialism and modernity, as descriptive terms relating to social action now, are interchangeably used yet one relates to social system and the other to time. This describes people's attitude to time generally. Many people fear identifying themselves with time because they imagine all sorts and forms of insecurity and flux. This fear is not innate to man, but is bred into him.

To the mind of many, security and stability are opposed to motion, Time is motion. People derive their symbolic understanding of security and stability from things static. Stability is seen to involve permanence ; permanence Is seen to be closely related to substantively static phenomena. These equations are consequential upon viewing phenomena externally. People saw mountains as solid, static and permanent, unaffected by flux and shift. Men lived and died, they migrated and warred, but mountains stood there unaffected. They were the lasting things in the midst of change. People went to the tops of mountains and prayed for rain, When this external view of phenomena was supplemented with internal inquiry, mountains ceased to be static and immobile and people planted trees and built dams on them. Their rain-making role was clarified and intensified. Today, men are lifting mountains and placing them in positions where their functioning is appropriately ordered to coincide with the functioning of other phenomena, the better to Â« make Â» rain in the interests of general welfare.

We have come to realise that phenomena are not related just in terms of their particularization within the general scheme of things but that they are interrelated in terms of their respective activities. The interactivity of phenomena is now recognised and their whole existence is an Â« activity existence Â». Nothing is static and nothing is

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unaffected by the activity common to all phenomena. Clearly, therefore, this external static view is misconceived and socially traumatic. No static presence can today survive the impress of the industrial system.

Matter is energy. Matter is total. Intellect, as mind, is matter ; it is energy and is neither created nor lost. The exercise of intellect cannot be sectionalist. Mind is one as surely as knowledge, its product, is one. Mind, however, is people variously particularized and grouped diversely around entrenched interests. We cannot, in all seriousness and objectivity, ask people to abandon individual and group interests simply because mind is one. Apart from the fact that abandonment of interest is not easy, interest is required by life. No man is more dangerous to himself and to others than the man without interest. Interest and involvement with presence particular and specific to Africa today may not itself be questioned but what remains and needs to be questioned is the nature and character of this interest.

As Africans, we must avoid making an issue of our assertion of presence. This is our right. It is above question, The issue is not the fact of asserting presence but to what ends and through what means is presence to be asserted ? Our presence does not stand apart, divorced from our person. Our personality is the content of this presence, Its form, however, is determined and realised in time and through time and therefore we must seek this form within time. We cannot afford a « Renaissance indulgence » after the pattern of Europe. Europe's mistake, in this respect, is with us. Nothing whatsoever is to be gained from any flight back into the past save the sowing of confusion into current concerns and efforts. We are not seeking a personality lost through time. It is in our interest to activate our present personality, therefore our concern is with method, tools and techniques. Method is twofold in character : there is method in stating problems and method in solving them. Method

first question, therefore, is : « What is the time now ? » It is not : « What is the African to be at this time ? » Answering the first will, ipso facto, involve answering all ques-

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tions relating to tools and techniques. This being done, the second question will in turn be objectively tackled because it will be approached through awareness of what is possible, thereby discounting indulgence in probabilities. The truth about what we believe ourselves to be cannot be detailed as long as this belief is divorced from current knowledge and practice. i

in the challenge: that faces us, and the obligation that we must meet, is to realise and determine the specific meaning and significance indigenous to African personality in order to grow outwards in the world of men and onwards in time. Internationalism presupposes nationalism- Both nationalism and internationalism presuppose consciously realised time. Time is whole and time is total : therefore, in so far as time predicates both nationalism and internationalism, the latter cannot be exclusive ; they cannot be sectional ; they are but the particular and the general of the very consciousness of man. Particularity and generality are not exclusive of each other : on the contrary, they have meanings and significances common to both, The role of Negro-

African artists, and of Art as a whole, in the interests of the people and on behalf of the people, is to elucidate and realise this truth. Generalisation which does not involve particularization invariably defines escape from commitment. Particularization divorced from generalisation bespeaks avoidance of commitment. Africa Tejects both indifferent individualism and vague, generalised collectivism. To be with individuality without being individualistic; to be with community without becoming communistic ; these are the prime and essential attributes of African personality. While living to a full and vital sense-response from these attributes, Africa needs, none the less, to guard them well.

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