The Groundings with my Brothers

Walter Rodney was banned from re-entering Jamaica on October 15, 1968, after attending a Black Writers Conference in Montreal, Canada. As a consequence, his post as lecturer in History at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona campus was revoked.

The essays in this book are solid, potent and very relevant today. They contain the essence of brother Walter's rootical grounding with the plight of Jamaica society, moreso, the Rastafarian community, who he encouraged and taught the importance of knowing African History as a foundation so as to be more knowledgeable of their African roots.

It was a close collaboration of Dr. Rodney and Rasta, Africa's brightest sons with Rasta, the so-called drugs, as a mask to the oppressed and downtrodden of Jamaica society at that time. The Jamaica Government, under Prime Minister Hugh Shearer to this day, fight against him.

Dr. Walter Rodney was assassinated on June 13, 1980, in his birth place, among the remnants of the ruthless dictator Forbes Burnham who disguised himself under a cloak of socialism.

Dr. Walter Rodney was the author of many papers and articles published in magazines and journals throughout the world, his most well-known works include "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa" (Bogle L’Ouverture Publications, 1972), "A History of the Upper Guinea Coast 1545-1880" (Monthly Review Press, 1981), "A History of the Working People of Guyana" (Heinemann 1981).

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This book was first published by Bogle L’Ouverture, in 1969.

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there was more to it than that. The Black Brothers in Kingston,
Jamaica moved against the Government of Jamaica. That is
the point that must come home. Let us stop calling it student
riots. What has happened in Jamaica is that the black people
of the city of Kingston have seized upon this opportunity to
begin their indictment against the Government of Jamaica.

Now, let us see what happened. As far as I can gather 50
buses were overturned and burnt. Fourteen major fires were
started in different parts of the city; certain known enemies
of the people were spat upon, dragged out of their cars and
beaten, shop windows were wrecked. I gather that downtown
Kingston looks as if Hurricane Flora has just passed through.
Now let us get this abundantly clear — this did not happen
as an isolated incident, that is part of a whole social malaise,
that is revolutionary activity. It has only marginal significance
as far as my ban is concerned. The significance is that the
brothers see that I am a spokesman for their cause and the
Jamaica Government is so brazen as to stop me from returning.
That is the incident that triggered it off, but beneath that,
there is a whole range of short-term and long-term considera-
tions which we must take into mind. Take for instance
the fact that those 50 buses were burned; that is not just
coincidental for those who know Jamaican society. The J.O.S.,
which is the private company running transport in Kingston,
is one of the most notorious companies in Jamaica. There is a
strike there every other day. It is notorious from the point of
view of its relationships with the workers and just recently it
decided to hike the fares as far as the people were concerned.
Now, imagine the poor people of Jamaica standing in the hot
sun, waiting on the bus, having to pay increased fares and
while they are struggling to find the 4d, for that is what the
fares have gone up to, here is a whole set of guys flashing by
in some cars longer than you can see out here in Montreal.
You have to go to Jamaica to see long cars, you know. That
little middle-class there, they love to show off. The bigger the
car the better. A little petty city and they fill it up with
American cars, and they jump around and they feel so pleased
with themselves. And the black man is there and he has not
got 4d for a bus fare. So when those 50 buses were burnt, it
was that type of issue that was involved. The brothers who
were in that struggle, unemployed, they have no housing, they
have no education, they have no prospects in the society, have
to go to what the Brothers call 'Must Pen'. — May Pen Burial
However, they moved, and there in itself is a good thing, but
issue a letter to the Jamaica Government, you know, on that
between and a few other Africans, you know, without
any further, you know, without, without, without, without,
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is one of the elements, a sitting down together to reason, to 'ground' as the Brothers say. We have to 'ground together'. There was all this furor about whites being present in the Black Writers Congress which most whites did not understand. They do not understand that our historical experience has been speaking to white people, whether it be begging white people, justifying ourselves against white people or even vilifying white people. Our whole context has been, 'that is the man to talk to'.

Now the new understanding is that Black Mothers must talk to each other. That is a very simple understanding which any reasonable person outside of a particular 'in-group' would understand. That is why we talk about our 'family discussions'. Now when I went out, as I said, I would go to the radio if they wanted me, I would speak on television if they allowed me. I spoke at the Extra-Mural Centre. Now these are all highly respectable and I would go further down into West Kingston and I would speak wherever there was a possibility of our getting together. It might be in a sports club, it might be in a schoolroom, it might be in a church, it might be in a gully. (Those of you who come from Jamaica know those gully corners.) They are dark, dismal places with a black population who have had to seek refuge there. You will have to go there if you want to talk to them. I have spoken in what people call 'dungle', rubbish dumps, for that is where people live in Jamaica. People live in rubbish dumps. That is where the Government puts people to live. Indeed, the Government does not even want them to live in rubbish dumps. I do not know where they want them to go because they bulldoze them off the rubbish dumps and send them God knows where. I have sat on a little oil drum, rusty and in the midst of garbage, and some Black Brothers and I have grounded together. Now obviously, this, first of all, must have puzzled the Jamaican Government. I must be mad, surely, a man we are giving a job, we are giving status, what is he doing with these guys. Shearer calls them all manner of names there in this paper, you know: 'criminals and hooligans'. What is he doing with them? So they are puzzled and then obviously after that suspicion, he must be up to something, as the paper will try to imply. But we spoke, we spoke about a lot of things and it was just the talking that was important, the meeting of black people. I was trying to contribute something. I was trying to contribute my experience in travelling, in reading, my analysis, and I was also gaining as I will indicate.

64
Although these ideas and theories are not new, they are not as well known as they should be. The importance of these ideas cannot be overstated. They provide a framework for understanding the dynamic nature of cultural and social change. The concepts presented in this paper are intended to provide a foundation for further exploration and discussion in the field of cultural studies.

The first concept discussed is the idea of the "black power" movement. This movement emerged in the 1960s as a response to the civil rights movement and was characterized by a strong emphasis on black pride and self-determination. The movement was driven by a desire to challenge the dominant power structures and to create a more just society. The movement was not without its critics, however, and the debate continues to this day.

The second concept is the idea of "black identity". This concept is closely related to the idea of "black power" and is concerned with the construction and representation of black identity. The idea is that black identity is not something that is given, but rather something that is constructed through a process of negotiation and struggle. The idea of black identity is not without its challenges, however, and there are many debates about what it means to be black in today's society.

The third concept discussed is the idea of "black consciousness". This concept is closely related to the idea of "black power" and is concerned with the development of a collective consciousness among black people. The idea is that black consciousness is not something that is given, but rather something that is constructed through a process of education and struggle. The idea of black consciousness is not without its challenges, however, and there are many debates about what it means to be black in today's society.

The final concept discussed is the idea of "black excellence". This concept is closely related to the idea of "black power" and is concerned with the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of life. The idea is that black excellence is not something that is given, but rather something that is constructed through a process of education and struggle. The idea of black excellence is not without its challenges, however, and there are many debates about what it means to be black in today's society.

In conclusion, the ideas presented in this paper are not new, but they are not as well known as they should be. The ideas provide a framework for understanding the dynamic nature of cultural and social change. The ideas are not without their challenges, however, and there are many debates about what they mean to be black in today's society. The ideas are not without their challenges, however, and there are many debates about what they mean to be black in today's society.
Communist, he wants to take your goats and chickens", and do those Jamaican peasants want you to take their goats? No man! And they are very right too, so what government men are afraid of is the question of colour. They are afraid of that tremendous historical experience of the degradation of the black man being brought to the fore. They do not want anybody to challenge their myth about 'Out of Many, One People' and a harmonious multi-racial society, and they show it in various ways. They will ban people from coming to the country like James Forman, Stokely Carmichael. They will ban the literature of Malcolm X, Elijah Mohammed, Stokely Carmichael. The black Jamaican Government, in case you do not know it, have banned all publications by Stokely Carmichael, publications by Elijah Mohammed, all publications by Malcolm X. I hope Stokely does not go and write a book on Cookery or some such thing. It would be banned in Jamaica.

In my own case, to give you a small example, I went to the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation. I pre-recorded a programme on Black Power and the white power system said that they are not using that programme, when they saw what came out of it. A small example but a token of things to come, no doubt. Because the system does not want you to open the issues, they do not want anybody to articulate those grievances which the masses are talking about all the time.

Now, what is my position? What is the position of all of us because we fall in the category of the black West Indian intellectual, a privilege in our society? What do we do with that privilege? The traditional pattern is that we join the Establishment, the black educated man in the West Indies is as much a part of the system of oppression as the bank managers and the plantation overseers.

The system will give you a nice house, a front lawn, a car, a reasonable bank balance. They will say, 'Sell your black soul'. That is the condition upon which you exist as a so-called intellectual in the society. How do we break out of this Babylonian Captivity? I suggest three ways. I suggest first that the intellectual, the academic, within his own discipline, has to attack those distortions which a white imperialism, white cultural imperialism have produced in all branches of scholarship. In fact what I was attempting to do in the Congress of Black Writers earlier was to talk about that sort of thing and its relationship to African History. Of course, the white press of Canada did not see fit to talk about those points. I think I

By 1971, when Rodney's major work *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* was completed in manuscript, a black independent publishing house, though in its infancy, already existed and it was to us Walter turned, in conjunction with Tanzania Publishing House.

Three years later, Walter's decision to return home again called for political mobilization, when the government of Guyana recinded the decision of the University to offer him a Professorship. We convened and helped in organising meetings and pickets of protest against the ban.

Over the years we were not only involved in building an exciting new Publishing House but we were also participating in wider activities involving the black community when we helped in the formation of the Black Parents Movement in 1974.

We later became part of a broader alliance of the Black Parents Movement, Black Youth Movement and the Race Today collective. It was this alliance which helped form the Committee Against Repression in Guyana and forged the struggles in London and other parts of Europe during 1979/1980, when the working people of Guyana stood firm against the repression of the Burnham Government, eventually leading to, first the arrest, Court trial, and later murder of Walter Rodney on 13th June 1980.

Our relationship with Walter Rodney who we regard to have died in active combat could be seen to have continued through four reprints of *The Grounding with my Brothers*, four reprints of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, as well as during the most active and formative of his political life covering a period 1964-1980.

At each crucial juncture we were expected and did in fact rally much needed, personal and political support. With his assassination we not only mourn the passing of an author, but also a friend and comrade.

Jessica Huntley

Eric L. Huntley

Communion, so that they could tell country people. He is a
person of some note, and would much rather you talk about
him than me. He is a man of some note in the country,
and I sometimes find him in the middle of the street
deriving some excitement and passion.

excitement, and when they go to church the next morning, they
are seen in the streets with the church-going people who are
talking about the Communion, and no one pays much attention to
these people who are not interested in the church. It is a

A quick glance at the page reveals that it contains text that is difficult to read due to the quality of the image. The text appears to be discussing the Communion and other religious matters, possibly in a setting where people are engaged in conversation about religious events or figures. The language suggests a focus on community and the expression of religious devotion. However, due to the quality of the image, the specific details of the text are not clearly discernible.
CHAPTER 6

THE GROUNDINGS WITH MY BROTHERS

The Government of Jamaica, which is Garvey’s homeland, has seen it fit to ban me, a Guyanese, a black man, and an African. But this is not very surprising because though the composition of that Government — of its Prime Minister, the Head of State and several leading personalities — though that composition happens to be predominantly black, as the Brothers at home say, they are all white-hearted.

These men serve the interests of a foreign, white capitalist system and at home they uphold a social structure which ensures that the black man resides at the bottom of the social ladder. He is economically oppressed and culturally he has no opportunity to express himself. That is the situation from which we move.

There has recently, just tonight in fact, come to my attention a statement which is entitled ‘Text of Statement’ by the Honourable H. L. Shearer, Prime Minister of Jamaica, made in the House of Representatives on October 17, regarding the exclusion of Dr Walter Rodney. I, up till now, have not got reasons for the ban imposed on me and probably I shall make some reference to this document as I go along.

But first, let me indicate this, that the Government of Jamaica, in so far as it has attempted to stifle the aspirations of the masses and in so far as it believed that my removal from the scene is going to aid in stifling the masses, are making a serious mistake. This act in itself will not delay their day of judgement. Indeed, these fellows know this, they know the present state of affairs cannot go on forever, and this is what creates the atmosphere of fear, this is what allows them to take such stupid and panic-stricken measures.

First and foremost for the benefit of some West Indians who still refuse to appreciate that our society is racist, I would like to give a slight historical analysis of the problem. West Indian society is a veritable laboratory of racialism. We virtually invented racialism. Because it was in the slave system on the slave plantation that the fantastic gap between master and slave was translated into a feeling on the part of the white slavemaster that he had inherently to be superior to that black man who

NEW INTRODUCTION

Most of the voluminous political literature, published daily, has an apparently natural tendency to age with time; subsequent events seem to overtake their positions and statements. It is therefore heartening and instructive that Walter Rodney’s The Groundings with my Brothers represents an outstanding exception to this general trend. The six years, since its first printing, have, as it were, vindicated the book’s earlier political statements. As a consequence the Black revolution, and through it the world mass revolution, has been taken a step closer to realisation. But this is no mere accident, because The Groundings with my Brothers was analytical. Since it was based on objective considerations of historical facts, time and subsequent events could only provide supporting evidence for the political theories developed from such an analysis.

Today, some people suggest the Black Power movement has lost importance as a slogan in Caribbean society. If this is true, the reason can be found in its entrenchment as a concept in the political culture of the region. Of course, these values have, in part, been adopted by the political leadership, but they really arise from the consciousness and action of the masses. Walter Rodney was correct in attributing to this mass consciousness, the politicians’ new found respect for Paul Bogle and Marcus Garvey. In the same way, we can understand their recent adoption of shirt-jackets, non-alignment and support for African freedom fighters. In reality, their involvement with those symbols and struggles is as skin-deep, opportunistic and contradictory as the belated support for Paul Bogle and Marcus Garvey. Therefore when Rodney traces bourgeois oppression of the Blacks and the poor from post-emancipation vagrancy laws to the ganja ‘suspicion’ law (p. 13) he was also anticipating the Gun Court law.

Shortly after the events of October 1968 in Jamaica, Black Power, at Sir George Williams University in Montreal, was to confront Canadian racism in full dress. The myth of the tolerant neighbour of racist U.S.A. was once and for all shattered; so too was the computer that the property-loving state apparatus sacrificed in order to brutalise the Black students who were in occupation. More important was the blatant and unashamed connection between the racist Canadian imperialists and their political deputies in the Caribbean. One after another, most of the West Indian governments persuaded their nationals, who were involved, to plead guilty; in return, they paid the fines and saw the students deported in disgrace. The master’s interests had been served.

In Britain, the situation is remarkably similar. There, Black people are engaged in a colonial war for freedom, like that
The concept of "freedom" has never been more pertinent than in today's world. It is a fundamental principle that underpins the modern democratic order. Freedom is not just the absence of constraints or oppression; it is the realization of the potential of individuals and societies. It is the ability to make choices and pursue goals without hindrance. Freedom is a dynamic concept, evolving with societal changes and technological advancements.

In the context of the United States, the concept of freedom has been particularly influential. The American Revolution, fought in the late 18th century, was a struggle for independence from British rule. This struggle was not just a fight against external oppression; it was also a quest for self-determination and the right to govern oneself. The U.S. Constitution, adopted in 1789, formalized these ideals, establishing a framework for a government that would promote individual rights and protect against tyranny.

The post-war era saw a significant expansion of freedom and civil rights, particularly with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. This movement fought against racial segregation and discrimination, leading to landmark legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These laws expanded the definition of freedom to include equality and access to participation in the democratic process.

Today, the challenges to freedom are more complex. In the digital age, questions arise about privacy, surveillance, and the balance between security and liberty. The rise of social media and the internet has transformed communication, amplifying voices and amplifying disagreement. The concept of freedom must adapt to these new contexts, ensuring that it remains a living, breathing principle that guides society towards a more open, just, and equitable future.
sense, for they were able to establish hegemony, due to the technology and class dynamic of capitalism. The consequences for Africa were disastrous. Economies were disjointed and oriented externally; anarchy, injustice in the realm of the law, internal slavery and exploitation replaced public security, the human operation of the law and the solidarity of the family. But, apart from the measurable negative effects, one must also consider that a fantastic amount of physical and social energy went into the defensive task of sheer survival. We did survive not only in Africa, but on this side of the Atlantic—the greatest miracle of all time! And every day black people in the Americas perform the miracle anew.

Needless to say we do more than just survive. Anguished New World blacks, in the search for dignity, usually ask for elements of unquestioned grandeur in their African past. These can be perceived in the Ife/Benin sculptures, the pilgrimage of Mansa Musa, the carved rock churches of Lalibela, and in a great deal more. But, after all that, we would still lack the understanding that ordinary African life had meaning and value. That is one of the weakest aspects of our perception of the African past; and it is that which allows the white propaganda machine to suggest that contemporary distortions in African society represent pure atavism. Congolese and Nigerian problems in particular have been successfully projected among black people as the breaking out of the ancestral savagery of tribalism, once the restraining hand of white civilisation was removed. Of course, in reality these tragic contemporary situations are consequences of neo-colonial forces impinging on African colonial society, just as colonialism in its mercantilist and imperialist phases had earlier deformed traditional Africa.

The foregoing remarks should be sufficient to substantiate the proposition that an overall view of ancient African civilisations and ancient African cultures is required to expunge the myths about the African past, which linger in the minds of black people everywhere. This is the main revolutionary function of African history in our hemisphere. Some individuals envisage that this knowledge is a stepping-stone to the active regeneration of an African way of life, but this is far-fetched, except in the case of the African continent itself. For instance, President Nyerere, in his policy document, *Socialism and Rural Development* defined a new Socialist agrarian formation, the Ujamaa village, after reflecting on the nature of African China, Socialist Europe and Cuba, hoping to confuse the masses back home. The tactics are new but the strategies are old. In Guyana and Trinidad, for example, the old racial divisions were strategically maintained (when not actively promoted) by the leading political parties, in and out of office. As a result, the membership of each consisted of a virtual racial monolith of widely differing class interests. But the contradictions of classes are antagonistic and cannot be accommodated. Those contradictions that led to racial divisions were essentially non-antagonistic and are being resolved in the course of the class struggle. In Guyana, the land movement of 1973 attested to this. In Trinidad the synchronised strikes of Indian sugar workers, along with African electricity and oil workers, are also a strong testimony. In 1970, Eric Williams declared the state of emergency, when Indian sugar workers agreed to join Black Power marches on Port of Spain. The march to unity and liberty is expressing itself in political and industrial action. In Guyana, Bookers-McConnell hastily handed over land to the Burnham Government in the face of mass unity, at the time of the Afro-Indian Land Movement. There, too, simultaneous action from African and Indian workers (mainly in sugar and bauxite) and the emergence of a multi-racial Working People's Alliance are indications of things to come: Black Power in the Caribbean.

With the elimination of direct white domination, the anti-imperialist nature of the Black Power philosophy emerges in full bloom. It is the only way we can understand the posturings of the Black bourgeoisie establishment.

The Sixth Pan African Congress in Tanzania was a forceful reminder of this treachery. The active revolutionary, anti-imperialist political workers of the Caribbean were excluded from the Sixth Pan African Conference at the request of the regional governments. This alone was an indication as to which side the leaders were on and how dirty was the linen they had to keep from international laundering. Characteristically, Julius Nyerere made a strong opening speech defending the rights of these groups to be included. But we must remember that the Congress was held in his country and organised under the supervision of his Foreign Affairs Minister. It was gratifying, however, to find the revolutionary Black representatives from the U.S.A., Canada and Britain speaking out at the Sixth Pan African Congress against these contradictions. Their standing ovation for Owusu Sadoukai recorded their appreciation of the inevitability and dimensions of anti-imperialist struggles at home; they applauded the references to Marx, Lenin, Mao Tse Tung, Ho Chi Minh, Fanon and Cabral as being appropriate sources of revolutionary theory for the Pan African Struggles. They agreed that the best support for Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia and
The difference between African and European history lies in the concept of property. While African property is based on the community, European property is based on the individual. This distinction is reflected in the way land is owned and accessed. In African societies, land is owned by the community and is accessed by individuals through custom and tradition. In European societies, land is owned by individuals and is accessed through legal title. This difference in the concept of property has significant implications for the way in which societies are organized and function.

In African societies, the community is the unit of social organization and the focus of economic activity. The community is responsible for the distribution of resources and the maintenance of social order. In European societies, the individual is the unit of social organization and the focus of economic activity. The individual is responsible for the accumulation of wealth and the pursuit of personal goals.

These differences in the concept of property have a profound impact on the way in which societies are organized and function. They influence the distribution of power, the structure of government, and the relationships between individuals. The concept of property is therefore a central component of any analysis of African and European history.
living in large territorial states, other Africans were not steeped in darkness.

That, after all, is the great myth which we are still struggling to discard from the minds of our own brothers and sisters here in the Americas. Their fear is that the Africa which they left is one of primordial savagery; they visualise ape-like blacks swinging from tree to tree; and hear the licking of cannibal chops. To dispel this myth it is invariably necessary to begin by pointing out that Africa, too, had great buildings and great states similar to those which emerged in the history of those countries where our white oppressors and denigrators reside. Both to complement and to transcend that type of instruction, we have also to base ourselves solidly within the culture of Africa.

It is possible to compare the Western Sudan between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries with Europe in the Dark and Middle Ages, and the comparison is advantageous to Africa on many points. But from there it is possible to fall into the trap of believing that the political state is the only meaningful form of social development and to feel bemused as a black man because Europe pursued that form to the full in succeeding centuries, while Africa did not. Quite apart from the fact that stagnation in the 'Third World' was causally related to advance in Western Europe, the argument about civilisations leads into a cul-de-sac when we do not reject European cultural egocentricity. In this instance, the whites have merely selected a facet of their own culture which is outstanding—namely, the ability to bring together millions in a single political unit—and they have then used this as a universal yardstick for measuring the inherent worth of cultures and races. (The classic example of this cultural egocentricity is the statement that 'the black man never invented the wheel'.)

What is most fundamental is an attempt to evaluate the African contribution to the solution of the problems posed by man's existence in society; and hence the stress placed in this paper on matters pertaining to social relations: codes of hospitality, processes of the law, public order and social and religious tolerance. In each of those areas of human social activity, African norms and practices were given a high value by Europeans themselves. They often reflected that the hospitality they saw in an African village was lacking in their communities; that the security of goods and persons in Africa stood in marked contrast to brigandage and depredations in Europe; and that

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The present human condition of black people relative to that of white people is appalling. We, black people, having realised this, demand from the white people economic and political power commensurate with our numbers. The achievement of these legitimate demands is requiring a struggle both at the national and at the international level. This struggle is reinforcing the polarisation of the world into the two camps, black and white, and, therefore, it is imperative that every black man become aware of this split and recognise his beloningsness to the black camp.

Many black people have already reached this position, but all of us have not. Although the validity of our position has been established (by black men such as Paul Bogle, Marcus Garvey, or Eldridge Cleaver), its acceptance by all black people will not be immediate, for the process of awakening from unawareness to awareness is a psychological one, not a logical one.

We need not be detained at the outset by what is meant by 'black' and 'white', because it should be sufficient to say that these words are abstractions of the colour names. 'Black' refers to those people in the world who lack economic power and who do not control their own destinies, i.e. the oppressed; and 'white' refers to the oppressors. Within this category of 'black' people there is a sub-category of people whose skin colour is 'black', who are visibly African and who are easily identifiable (by the oppressors!). It is to these people that these lectures are dedicated in the first place.

Therefore, our starting point is the realisation that it is necessary 'to uproot numerous historical myths which have been implanted in the minds of black people, since they can act as a drag on revolutionary action in the present epoch'. This leads us to study, on the one hand, ancient African history and culture, and, on the other, the history and social effects of slavery. Such historical activity 'must be directed solely towards freeing and mobilising black minds, though it is to be seen as secondary to the concrete tactics and strategy necessary for our liberation'.

During the process of awakening it is important to distinguish
If the doctrine of the atonement is to be understood, it must be

understood that, while God is holy and righteous, and above all, con

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sciences that stand cl
that Europeans worshipped strange gods called Money and Profit. African society did not prove immune to those gods, but right up to the present one finds comments on the warmth of African hospitality, emerging from the whole social conscience and not just from unusually well-disposed members of the community.

Because of the extended-family system and the universal hospitality, the aged were fortunately free of the problems of sustenance. They played self-fulfilling and socially satisfying roles within their communities. While old age was a liability in a New World plantation and throughout the capitalist world, in Africa advanced age brought honour, increased respect and authority. The gerontocratic bias of African society meant that a great deal of power and authority was based on seniority in age. An elder was learned and wise because he had had maximum exposure to life in that society, as well as to all of the formal education which was available. As a young man he had spent several months in the ‘Bush School’, where he had received instructions prior to initiation; later he had graduated from successive age-groups or through several levels of a fraternity, where secret knowledge was revealed at each stage; and finally an elder would himself be a teacher. In a state system, elders tutored the prospective ruler and advised the ruling king; while in ‘stateless societies’ they were the sole repositories of historical, spiritual and legal knowledge. In both sets of situations they had to be informed and alert because of their responsibilities.

In the great empires of the Western Sudan, Berber and Arab visitors from North Africa never failed to be impressed by the security afforded to goods and persons, even when movement over long distances was involved. The movement of traders along the ‘paths’ in Akan country was equally safe, and these conditions existed in much more humble African societies. The Senegalese Djola, long resident in lineage groups in the Casamance region, were described by Mungo Park as ‘barbarous’, but he found that he could leave his personal possessions among the Djola for months on end without suffering any losses. This public order was maintained not by an extensive police force, but by the constraint of the community as a whole. Of course, crime did exist in the society, and it was dealt with by a complex code of customary laws, which in recent years have become the subject of scientific enquiry and scholarly treatises. The basic principle of justice was resti-

INTRODUCTION

Walter Rodney is 27, of average height, articulate, gentle, quiet at times but with strongly held views, and has an unassuming presence. He is Guyanese, and went to the U.W.I. campus in Mona, Jamaica whence he graduated in 1963 with first-class Honours in History. He then came to Britain and after researching in London and Portugal he wrote his thesis on 'A history of the upper Guinea coast, 1545-1800'; and was awarded the Ph.D. degree in 1966.

He quite naturally went to Africa, to Tanzania's University College where he lectured in History, and then he was invited to return to the Mona campus in Jamaica. There, from January, 1968, he taught in the History Department and at the beginning of the academic year 1968-1969 he launched a new course in African History. On October 15, 1968, he was banned from re-entering Jamaica after attending the Congress of Black Writers in Montreal.

Very soon after returning to U.W.I. he started giving open lectures on African History on the University campus and was soon asked to go and to talk to various ‘respectable’ clubs and groupings of people on this subject.

Jamaica is a society of predominantly black people, but slavery and the present social structure have meant that the consciousness of being black and a knowledge of, or even an interest in, African History has been actively discouraged or, alternatively, only lip-service has been paid to its desirability. On the other hand, Jamaica became independent in 1962; it got a flag, a national motto, a national anthem, flower, fruit, and even a national bird. But what has been most lacking has been a national consciousness, a sense of where Jamaicans came from, what we have done, and to what we should look forward. To examine these questions could be subversive of 400 years of the colonial viewpoint and the colonial relationships on which the present society is based. And this can be seen in the story of Walter Rodney.

Now all along in Jamaica, in spite of official hostility to the consciousness of being black, there have been from the earliest days of slavery a powerful undercurrent towards an identity of blackness. Every incident of rebellion has carried with it
the measure.

The message.

The message.

The message.

The message.

The message.

The message.

The message.

The message.

The message.
language in the schools was turned down by the ‘black’ Prime
Minister. The conclusion is clear — Jamaican freedom fighters
will read some African history in the course of preparing for
an engaging in hostilities; but the struggle will not wait until
the re-education of the mass of the black people reaches an
advanced stage.

In response to the demand for more black culture and history,
the national bourgeoisie of the U.S.A. has adopted a technique
different from that of their neo-colonialist puppets in the West
Indies. Having that security which comes from the possession
of capital, they feel confident in making certain concessions
to black culture in their educational institutions and media of
public communications. As always, they concede the lesser
demand to maintain the total structure of white capitalist
domination, hoping to siphon off young blacks into a preoccupation
with African history and culture divorced from the raw
reality of the American system as it operates on both the
domestic and international front. That gambit must not work.
Imagine the juicy contradictions — Rockefeller finances chair
on African history from the profits of exploiting South African
blacks and upholding apartheid! Black revolutionaries study
African culture alongside of researchers into germ warfare
against the Vietnamese people!

We blacks in the Americas have missed the opportunity when
a more leisurely appraisal of our past might have been possible.
It is nearly half a century since Garvey remarked that
‘the white world has always tried to rob and discredit us of
our history’, and in that period far too few blacks made the
effort to enrich themselves and brothers by acquiring a knowl-
edge of African history. In 1929, Norman E. Cameron, a
black man from Guyana, wrote the first volume of THE EVO-
LUTION OF THE NEGRO, in which he sought to revive the
pride and confidence of Africans in the New World by pointing
to the achievements of African States in the period prior to
the European advent; and the work of Richard Moore has
been similar in content and purpose. Now the work of self-
revaluation in terms of our African past is taking place within
a milieu of social upheaval, and the mechanics of upheaval
have first priority on the energy of black people.

African Civilisations

Only after the above preliminary remarks is it possible to
engage in discussion on African history as such. It is the purpose
of this paper to suggest that emphasis on the highlights of

ends — those, who had condemned, now praise. They invited
the Emperor and the population literally took over the wel-
coming ceremony. They wanted to make the Mulatto, William
Gordon, a National Hero and then they had to give in to the
demand that it was the Black Paul Bogle who was the real
hero of the 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion. So, they tried to use
the honouring of Bogle, like that of Garvey, to their own cause.
All government officials in their speeches insisted that what
Bogle did he had to do, but what he did no longer must be
done because everything he fought for had already been won.

In their feverish attempts to discover their true national
identity they find that they have to follow paths already traced.
They are caught in a bind. Conceptions that they have had to
move towards they find are highly subversive of the life
they have lived. This happened in a vivid way with the Walter
Rodney episode. He went to the middle class clubs (groups of
people, each searching for an identity) and he spoke about
Africa. Within a few weeks the news of a man who knew
about Africa, who would talk to anybody who wanted to hear
him, spread. He spoke to the ‘less respectable groupings’ all
over the urban area, in the villages and towns outside Kingston.
In his message from Canada Rodney himself describes his
experiences and what they meant to him. This response to the
history of Africa and the achievement of the black people
throughout the world was not born from an academic curiosity.
It sprang from a people who used it for themselves.

This question of Blackness comes to the fore every time we
attempt to come to terms with our condition, and sometimes
it takes strange forms. It may be the pining for the Africa
that our forefathers actually knew; the slave uprisings deter-
mined to end the bondage and return; the call of Bogle to
‘join your colour and cleave to the Blacks’; the international-
ising and organising of those sentiments by Garvey; the re-
ligious beliefs of the Rastafarians; the pride in a Black
Governor-General, or in its opposite, the contempt for self and
the catalogue of self-inflicting jokes.

But if these appear to be only cultural manifestations then
that is only the appearance. They are all that and something
else. Underlying all of it, and even more so today, are questions
of the greatest political and social significance. The vision of
the Rasta of yesterday is transformed to the realisation today
that Jamaica herself must become the Paradise that was sought
in Ethiopia. However powerful the desire for identification
The center was surrounded by a natural and military
Sudan, and on the opposite flank to protect the
Western Sudan. It was necessary to consider the effect on the Western
Western Sudan had no natural buffer zone.

On the right to the north of the Egyptian Community in the
river Nile, the Western Sudan enjoyed a defensive advantage due to
the river itself, which provided a natural barrier.

One of the key factors in the strategic location of the Western Sudan
was the presence of the Nile River, which formed a natural defense line.

Similarly, the Western Sudan had a defensive advantage on the
north, due to the desert and the difficulties of transiting through it.

The Western Sudan was not only a region of strategic importance,
but also a key area for the defense of the Nile Valley.

The strategic importance of the Western Sudan was not
only due to its natural defenses, but also to its strategic
position as a gateway to the desert and the Nile Valley.

The Western Sudan was a key area for the defense of the
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There is a deepening interest in things African. Of the greatest significance are the effects at self-expression among black people—pamphlets, newsheets, and the like. These independent efforts are essential because of the complete control which imperialism and its local puppets maintain over the various established news media.

Meanwhile, the two reactionary trade unions, which are the most important social bases of the two reactionary political parties, are also facing the challenge of the workers. Not only has there been a wave of strikes without the complicity of the unions, but there is emerging an independent worker movement concerned with the unity of workers in their place of work or within a given industry. The large unemployed sector lacks organisational forms, but there is a widespread reappraisal taking place among unemployed black youths, who have recognised the farcical nature of the present two-party operation, and self-defeating role which they themselves played so recently in 1967, when they gunned each other down on the orders of the political bandits of the two parties. Whether or not black youths have participated in violence on behalf of the oppressors, they have all suffered from police brutality, and they have seen recently the middle-class members of the ‘gun clubs’ coming forward to volunteer their services in suppressing the people while the police were on strike. Throughout the country, black youths are becoming aware of the possibilities of unleashing armed struggle in their own interests. For those who have eyes to see, there is already evidence of the beginnings of resistance to the violence of our oppressors.
The books in their workshops are considered to be a part of the "Israel of every Christian Church," and many of the scripts and commentaries have been widely used and are highly respected, even by the Bishops of other denominations. The same is true for the practice of the Orthodox Church, which is the common practice of the people of the church and is the official religion of the people. It is a church that is deeply rooted in the history and culture of the people. It is a church that has a rich history and a strong tradition.

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(6) The Orthodox Church is a church that is deeply rooted in the history and culture of the people. It is a church that has a rich history and a strong tradition.
important of these towns was *Axum* in the highlands of Tigrea, and Axum was the foundation upon which the Christian empire was later built. Axum (and its Red Sea port of Adulis) were centres of international trade, exporting perfumes, incense, ivory and gold to Egypt, Persia, Syria, India and throughout the Greek and later the Roman empire. As such Axum was also a centre of culture, and one of its early kings, Zoscales, spoke and wrote Greek perfectly.

Above all, Axum and similar centres created the first elements of a special Ethiopian culture. The Sabaens became Ethiopians. The relations between the newcomers and the previous inhabitants produced the Amharic language and produced a special form of architecture not found anywhere else outside of Ethiopia. A strong kingdom grew up which spread from Tigrea further into Ethiopia and also across the Red Sea into Yemen and Arabia. Less powerful rulers had to pay tribute to the king of Axum, so that even before the coming of Christianity the king of Ethiopia was a 'king of kings'.

VII

The Development of the Ethiopian Church and Amharic Culture

Just before the coming of Christianity to the empire of Axum there were three different forms of religion—(i) Animist (traditional) beliefs and reverence for ancestors, (ii) Belief in the Gods of Arabia, such as Mahrem, the God of War, (iii) The Jewish faith.

Conversion began in the province of Tigré which was the centre of the ancient empire of Axum. The Christian nature of the Ethiopian kingdom is traced back to the union of Solomon and Sheba, and is recorded in the *Kebran Ganzit* or 'the Glory of Kings'.

Many Europeans consider the *Kebran Ganzit* and the account of the union of Solomon and Sheba as nothing but a fable with no truth whatsoever. They claim that Sheba was in Arabia and not in Ethiopia, and that Christianity entered Ethiopia for the first time 350 years after the birth of Christ. There are Greek documents which say that about the year A.D. 330, Azana, the king of Axum, was converted to Christianity by Frumentius, a Syrian bishop sent by the Patriarch of Alexandria in Egypt.

On the question of the relations of Solomon with Sheba, it must be remembered that Ethiopia ruled large parts of further subdivision can be made with reference to all people of African descent whose position is clearly more acute than that of most non-white groups. It must be noted that once a person is said to be black by the white world, then that is usually the most important thing about him; fat or thin, intelligent or stupid, criminal or sportsman—these things pale into insignificance. Actually I’ve found out that a lot of whites literally cannot tell one black from another. Partly this may be due to the fact that they do not personally know many black people, but it reflects a psychological tendency to deny our individuality by refusing to consider us as individual human beings.

Having said a few things about black and white, I will try to point out the power relations between them. By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the capitalist division of the world was complete. It was a division which made capitalists dominant over workers and white people dominant over black. At that point, everywhere in the world white people held power in all its aspects—political, economic, military and even cultural. In Europe, the whites held power—this goes without saying. In the Americas the whites had committed mass murder as far as many 'Red Indian' tribes were concerned and they herded the rest into reservations like animals or forced them into the disadvantageous positions, geographically and economically, in Central and South America. In Australia and New Zealand, a similar thing had occurred on a much smaller scale. In Africa, European power reigned supreme except in a few isolated spots like Ethiopia; and where whites were actually settled the Africans were reduced to the status of second-class citizens in their own country. All this was following upon a historical experience of 400 years of slavery, which had transferred millions of Africans to work and die in the New World. In Asia, Europe's power was felt everywhere except in Japan and areas controlled by Japan. The essence of White Power is that it is exercised over black peoples—whether or not they are minority or majority, whether it was a country belonging originally to whites or to blacks. It is exercised in such a way that black people have no share in that power and are, therefore, denied any say in their own destinies.

Since 1911, White Power has been slowly reduced. The Russian Revolution put an end to Russian imperialism in the Far East, and the Chinese Revolution by 1949 had emancipated the world's largest single ethnic group from the white power
The Red Sea, and in the nearby mountains. By far the most
number of refugees and migrants come from these areas, and they
are at risk of being converted to Islam. Everywhere in Sudan, there
are reports of forced conversion, and many people fear for their
safety. This situation is particularly acute in Darfur, where groups
have successfully converted thousands of people to Islam, often
against their will.

The situation in Chad is also dire. Hundreds of thousands of
people have fled across the border from Darfur, and many are
suffering from hunger and disease. The Chad government has been
accused of complicity in these abuses, and there have been reports
of forced conversions and other human rights violations.

In Eritrea, the situation is also alarming. The government has
been identified as a top perpetrator of forced conversions, and
many refugees and migrants are at risk of being taken advantage of.

The United Nations has called for immediate action to address
these issues, and has urged countries to work together to ensure
the protection of refugees and migrants. The international community
must come together to address these crises and uphold the principles
of human rights and humanitarian assistance.
VI

The early history of Ethiopia (part 1)

The area of Ethiopia is 395,000 square miles, which is about ninety times the size of Jamaica. One-third of the area is high land, and it is in highland Ethiopia that most of the early historical developments took place. This highland was a natural defence against invasion and also a barrier to easy communications with the rest of Africa. In fact, within Ethiopia itself, steep valleys divide the mountains and make it difficult to get from one place to another. The Abai or Blue Nile separates the northern highlands of Amhara and Gojjam from those of Shoa to the south.

The isolated hilltops or ambas as they are called were often used as mountain fortresses or as monasteries, such as those of Debra Libanos and Debra Tabor.

Ethiopia is a land of diversity. Many different factors came together to form the Ethiopian empire and culture. There are several different peoples, with different languages, different ways of making a living and different religions. Among the principal

regaining political independence the Congolese people settled down to reorganise their lives, but white power intervened, set up the black stooge Tshombe, and murdered both Lumumba and the aspirations of the Congolese people. Since then, paid white mercenaries have harassed the Congo. Late last year, 130 of these hired white killers were chased out of the Congo and cornered in the neighbouring African State of Burundi. The white world intervened and they have all been set free. These are men who for months were murdering, raping, pillaging, disrupting economic production, and making a mockery of black life and black society. Yet white power said not a hair on their heads was to be touched. They did not even have to stand trial or reveal their names. Conscious blacks cannot possibly fail to realise that in our own homelands we have no power, abroad we are discriminated against, and everywhere the black masses suffer from poverty. You can put together in your own mind a picture of the whole world, with the white imperialist beast crouched over miserable blacks. And don't forget to label us poor. There is nothing with which poverty coincides so absolutely as with the colour black — small or large population, hot or cold climates, rich or poor in natural resources — poverty cuts across all of these factors in order to find black people.

That association of wealth with whites and poverty with blacks is not accidental. It is the nature of the imperialist relationship that enriches the metropolis at the expense of the colony, i.e. it makes the whites richer and the blacks poorer.

The Spaniards went to Central and South America, and robbed thousands of tons of silver and gold from Indians. The whole of Europe developed on the basis of that wealth, while millions of Indian lives were lost and the societies and cultures of Central and South America were seriously dislocated. Europeans used their guns in Asia to force Asians to trade at huge profits to Europe, and in India the British grew fat while at the same time destroying Indian irrigation. Africa and Africans suffered from the greatest crimes at the hands of Europeans through the Slave Trade and Slavery in the West Indies and the Americas. In all those centuries of exploitation, Europeans have climbed higher on our backs and pushed us down into the dirt. White power has, therefore, used black people to make whites stronger and richer and to make blacks relatively, and sometimes absolutely, weaker and poorer.

'Black Power' as a movement has been most clearly defined
30

The present black power movement in the United States...

The mainstay of the black movement is the United States, where the black community has long been a significant part of the nation's history. The movement is driven by a sense of injustice and the desire for equal rights and opportunities.

In the United States, there have been numerous efforts to address the issues faced by the black community. These efforts have included legal and political actions, as well as community-based initiatives. Despite these efforts, the black community continues to face many challenges, including economic inequality, discrimination, and social injustice.

The black movement in the United States has been a force for change, working to raise awareness about the issues facing the black community and advocating for policies that promote equality and justice. Through their efforts, the black community has been able to make significant progress in improving the lives of its members, but there is still much work to be done to achieve true equality and justice for all.

In the United States, the black community has a rich history, and the black movement is an important part of that history. The movement continues to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of the black community, and it remains a powerful force for change.
why our historical and cultural heritage is so important, and
that is why we must proceed to live our culture because culture
is a way of life. We must recover what was taken away from
us and we must adapt in order to survive and keep on growing
as a section of humanity.

Here it is very important to notice the question of technology.
Europeans accuse black people of not inventing the wheel.
They claim that our culture never included the construction
of machines which work on the principle of the wheel — e.g.
 mills and wheeled transport. This is partly true, but all that
can be said is that we never borrowed the principle of the
wheel, for it was invented in China and borrowed by Euro-
peans. Where our history and culture lack certain things there
is nothing wrong in borrowing. His Imperial Majesty, the
Emperor Haile Selassie, was the first African to realise the
importance of the European invention of aircraft, and sought
aeroplanes, not to be like Europeans but to protect Ethiopian
culture by strengthening it with something new. AFRICANS
(ESPECIALLY YOUTHS) MUST LEARN NEW SKILLS.

V

The Nile Civilisations. The Nile is one of the great rivers of
Africa and of the world. One branch, the Blue Nile, starts in
Ethiopia, while the White Nile starts in Uganda. They come
together in the Sudan and then flow through Egypt to the
sea. Few sights are more spectacular than the Murchison Falls
on the White Nile and the Tisissat Falls on the Blue Nile; but
the Nile is famous not just because of its length and great
beauty, but because it is the cradle of ancient civilisations.
The history of Egypt of the Pharaohs is well known, and it
should not be difficult to obtain a good book (with photographs).
White people are quick to deny that ancient Egyptians were
Africans, by which they mean that Egyptians were not black.
The ancient Egyptians usually portrayed themselves as ‘red’,
and their empire included black subjects from further up the
Nile. Red intermarried with black, and for many years a line
of black kings ruled Egypt. There is no evidence to show that
racial discrimination was part of their culture. Yet, according
to the white men’s way of seeing things, the red and the black
populations of Egypt would have been classed as ‘coloured’
or ‘Negro’. Christ was a member of the Essene group of Jews
from Egypt. Were he alive today he would suffer from racial
discrimination.

West Indies or North America, and he made blacks aware
of their strength when united. The U.S.A. was his main field
of operation, after he had been chased out of Jamaica by the
sort of people who today pretend to have made him a hero.
All of the black leaders who have advanced the cause in the
U.S.A. since Garvey’s time have recognised the international
nature of the struggle against White Power. Malcolm X, our
martyred brother, became the greatest threat to White Power
in the U.S.A. because he began to seek a broader basis for
his efforts in Africa and Asia, and he was probably the first
individual who was prepared to bring the race question in the
U.S. up before the U.N. as an issue of international importance.
S.N.C.C., the important Black power organisation, developed
along the same lines; and at about the same time that the
slogan Black Power came into existence a few years ago,
S.N.C.C. was setting up a foreign affairs department, headed
by James Foreman, who afterwards travelled widely in Africa.
Stokely Carmichael has held serious discussions in Vietnam,
Cuba and the progressive African countries, such as Tanzania
and Guinea. These are all steps to tap the vast potential of
power among the hundreds of millions of oppressed black
peoples.

Meanwhile, one significant change had occurred since Garvey.
The emphasis within the U.S. is that black people there have a
stake in that land, which they have watered with their sweat,
tears, and blood, and black leadership is aware of the necessity
and the desirability of fighting white power simultaneously at
home and abroad. Certain issues are not yet clear about the final
shape of society in America. Some form of co-existence with
whites is the desired goal of virtually all black leaders, but it must
be a society which blacks have a hand in shaping, and blacks
should have power commensurate with their numbers and con-
tribution to U.S. development. To get that, they have to fight.

Black Power as a slogan is new, but it is really an ideology
and a movement of historical depth. The one feature that is
new about it as it is currently exercised in the U.S. is the
advocacy of violence. Previously, black people prayed, we were
on our best behaviour, we asked the whites ‘please’, we smiled
so that our white teeth illuminated our black faces. Now it is
time to show our teeth in a snarl rather than a smile. The death
of Martin Luther King gave several hypocritical persons the
opportunity to make stupid remarks about the virtues of non-
violence. Some of the statements made in the Jamaica press
The transmission of human history is a complex and multifaceted process. While the above reality may be an abstraction or a simplification, it serves as a foundation for understanding and navigating the intricate tapestry of human experience.

In the context of our current understanding, the concept of relatedness and connection is crucial. It not only helps us make sense of the past but also guides us in shaping the future. By recognizing the interconnections between different aspects of our lives, we can foster a more holistic and integrated approach to problem-solving and decision-making.

As we continue to evolve, it is essential to keep an open mind and embrace the diversity that exists in our world. Through dialogue, collaboration, and mutual respect, we can work together to create a more equitable and sustainable future. Let us strive to build bridges across cultural, linguistic, and geographical divides, and in doing so, we will contribute to the broader goal of fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society.

The future is bright, and with determination and a willingness to learn from one another, we can create a world that is more just, equitable, and sustainable. Let us seize this opportunity to make a difference, one step at a time, and in the process, leave a legacy that will endure for generations to come.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the contributions of all those who have come before us, their experiences and challenges, and the lessons they have taught us. By honoring their legacies, we can build a stronger, more resilient, and compassionate future for ourselves and the generations to come.
tinent. This fact has been established by archaeologists (people who study the material evidence of past society, usually by digging into the ground), by paleontologists (people who study the ancient climate and structure of the earth), and by other scientists who can find out the age of bones and rocks that existed millions of years ago. What these scholars say is that nearly two million years ago, man evolved in Africa, long before he came into existence elsewhere. Numerous remains of early human types have been found in eastern Africa, and a place in Tanzania called Olduvai Gorge is especially famous.

Man in Africa (like man everywhere else) adjusted to his physical surroundings to produce human society and culture. The first form of society came about when individuals got together to hunt in groups.

Probably the most important development in human history was the invention of agriculture. Strange as this may seem today, there was a time when the idea of growing crops and rearing animals did not occur to man. When the idea came about, hundreds of years were spent in collecting wild grasses and roots, which were brought into the service of man. Wild animals such as the cow and the horse were also tamed and used by man. It was in the Middle East that agriculture started about 10,000 years before the birth of Christ, because that region was well supplied by nature with grasses such as wheat and barley. Agriculture spread rapidly into Africa by way of Egypt. In the grasslands of Ethiopia and West Africa, certain new grain species were first brought into human use from the wild variety. Those grains form the millet family. Africa was also the home of certain varieties of rice, yam, beans, fruit, etc. Agriculture meant food to support a growing population, and people settled down to build a stable society.

All over the world, the greatest challenge to man was his environment or physical surroundings. Man in Africa learnt to overcome the problems of his own environment. Advanced methods of agriculture developed in Africa many hundreds of years before Europeans went to that continent. Irrigation, terracing and crop rotation were all practised.

The other basic aspect of material culture is concerned with the working of metals and the making of metal tools. Here again, metal working spread into Africa from the Middle East, became widespread long before the European arrival, and in some cases the metal technology was highly developed. Africans in the Congo were famous for mining copper and those in the

self-defence and out of anger against brutality. When black Americans react to meet force with force this should surprise nobody, because even the most harmless animal will finally turn in desperation against its hunters. It is useful to know that this is the conclusion arrived at not only by Black Power leaders, but also by the official committee of the U.S. Senate which was appointed to investigate the racial situation.

Apart from local violent protest (riots), U.S. society faces the possibility of large-scale racial war. The book Black Power, written by Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton (and now banned by ‘White Power’ Jamaican government) stresses that its aim was to present an opportunity to work out the racial question without resort to force, but if that opportunity was missed the society was moving towards destructive racial war. In such a war, black people would undoubtedly suffer because of their minority position, but as an organised group they could wreck untold damage on the whites. The white racists and warmongers cannot drop their bombs on black people within the U.S.A., and whatever damage is done to property means damage to white property. We have nothing to lose for they are the capitalists. Black people could not hope to, nor do they want to, dominate the whites, but large sections of the black youth realise that they cannot shrink from fighting to demonstrate the hard way that a 10 per cent minority of 22 million cannot be treated as though they did not exist. Already the limited violence of the past few years has caused more notice to be taken of the legitimate social, economic, political and cultural demands of black people than has been the case for the previous 100 years. The goal is still a long way off, for it is not only in a crisis that the blacks must be considered. When decisions are taken in the normal day-to-day life of the U.S.A., the interests of the blacks must be taken into account out of respect for their power — power that can be used destructively if it is not allowed to express itself constructively. This is what Black Power means in the particular conditions of the U.S.A.
Homo sapiens first came into existence on the African con-

truction of the human species. The first traces of human presence on the African continent date back to around 200,000 years ago. The African continent was the birthplace of numerous civilizations, including the ancient Egyptians, Nubians, and Meroites. The African continent has a rich cultural heritage, with a variety of traditional practices and beliefs. The African continent is home to diverse ecosystems, ranging from deserts to rainforests, and is home to a variety of wildlife. The African continent is also home to a variety of languages, with over 2,000 spoken languages and dialects. The African continent is currently experiencing rapid growth, with a population of over 1.3 billion people. The African continent is home to a variety of political systems, including democratic and authoritarian regimes. The African continent is also home to a variety of economic systems, ranging from traditional agriculture to modern industries. The African continent is currently facing a variety of challenges, including poverty, conflict, and climate change. The African continent is also home to a variety of cultural traditions, including music, art, and dance. The African continent has a rich history of feminism, with a variety of women's movements and organizations working to promote gender equality. The African continent is also home to a variety of religions, including Islam, Christianity, and traditional African religions. The African continent is currently facing a variety of challenges, including poverty, conflict, and climate change. The African continent is also home to a variety of cultural traditions, including music, art, and dance. The African continent has a rich history of feminism, with a variety of women's movements and organizations working to promote gender equality. The African continent is also home to a variety of religions, including Islam, Christianity, and traditional African religions. The African continent is currently facing a variety of challenges, including poverty, conflict, and climate change. The African continent is also home to a variety of cultural traditions, including music, art, and dance. The African continent has a rich history of feminism, with a variety of women's movements and organizations working to promote gender equality. The African continent is also home to a variety of religions, including Islam, Christianity, and traditional African religions.
were dark-skinned.

(b) In ancient Ethiopia there was the kingdom of Axum, forerunner to the Ethiopian kingdom. The written language of Axum was called Ge’ez, and it is still used within the Ethiopian church today. Axum, along with other parts of ancient Ethiopia, is famous for its architecture, especially its tall and finely carved stone pillars and its churches carved out of solid rock.

(c) In West Africa, some of the most powerful political states in Africa began to develop some 1500 years ago and their period of greatness lasted for more than 1200 years. These kingdoms bore the names of Ghana, Mali, Songhai and Kanem; and they all arose near the great Niger River. They were noted for their agricultural production, their learning and their commerce, especially in gold. These states also encouraged the religion of Islam (while Ethiopia, of course, was the centre of Christianity).

II

Apart from the states of Egypt, Meroe, Axum, Ghana, Mali, Songhai and Kanem, which have already been mentioned, there were many others in different parts of Africa which achieved greatness before the arrival of the white man and before we were snatched away as slaves. On the West African coast, the states of Benin and Oyo were famous, in Central Africa we can take as examples Kongo and Monomatap (Zimbabwe), and in East Africa two of the oldest kingdoms were those of Bunyoro and Buganda. All of these are strange names because we have never been taught anything about them. If we want to call ourselves conscious Africans, then we must know the map of Africa, we must remember the names of these great African states, and we must find out as much as possible about them.

However, the majority of Africans lived in small societies and these must also be seriously studied. Sometimes, it is felt that only in large political states one can find civilisation and culture, but this is wrong, and in the great political states of Europe and America today many human values have been destroyed; while even the smallest African village was a place for the development and the protection of the individual.

Certain things were outstanding in the African way of life, whether in a small or large society. These distinctive things in the African way of life amount to African culture. Among minated millions of indigenous inhabitants in the Americas and Australia? Who enslaved countless millions of Africans? The white capitalist cannibal has always fed on the world's black peoples. White capitalist imperialist society is profoundly and unmistakably racist.

The West Indies have always been a part of white capitalist society. We have been the most oppressed section because we were a slave society and the legacy of slavery still rests heavily upon the West Indian black man. I will briefly point to five highlights of our social development: (1) the development of racialism under slavery; (2) emancipation; (3) Indian indentured labour; (4) the year 1865 in Jamaica; (5) the year 1938 in the West Indies.

Slavery. As C. L. R. James, Eric Williams and other W.I. scholars have pointed out, slavery in the West Indies started as an economic phenomenon rather than a racial one. But it rapidly became racist as all white labour was withdrawn from the fields, leaving black to be identified with slave labour and white to be linked with property and domination. Out of this situation where blacks had an inferior status in practice, there grew social and scientific theories relating to the supposed inherent inferiority of the black man, who was considered as having been created to bring water and hew wood for the white man. This theory then served to rationalise white exploitation of blacks all over Africa and Asia. The West Indies and the American South share the dubious distinction of being the breeding ground for world racialism. Naturally, our own society provided the highest expressions of racialism. Even the blacks became convinced of their own inferiority, though fortunately we are capable of the most intense expressions when we recognise that we have been duped by the white men. Black Power recognises both the reality of black oppression and self-negation as well as the potential for revolt.

Emancipation. By the end of the 18th century, Britain had got most of what it wanted from black labour in the West Indies. Slavery and the slave trade had made Britain strong and now stood in the way of new developments, so it was time to abandon those systems. The Slave Trade and Slavery were thus ended; but Britain had to consider how to squeeze what little remained in the territories and how to maintain the local whites in power. They therefore decided to give the planters £20 million compensation and to guarantee their black labour supplies for the next six years through a system called appren-
I

AFRICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

CHAPTER 4

...
from the whites the stereotype of the ‘lazy nigger’ to apply
to the African beside him. It is as though no black man can
see another black man except by looking through a white
person. It is time we started seeing through our own eyes.
The road to Black Power here in the West Indies and every-
where else must begin with a revaluation of ourselves as blacks
and with a redefinition of the world from our own standpoint.

Government took away the Constitution of Jamaica and placed
the island under the complete control of the Colonial Office,
a manoeuvre that was racially motivated. The Jamaican legis-
lature was then largely in the hands of the local whites with
a mulatto minority, but if the gradual changes continued the
mulattoes would have taken control — and the blacks were
next in line. Consequently, the British Government put a stop
to the process of the gradual takeover of political power by
blacks. When we look at the British Empire in the 19th
century, we see a clear difference between white colonies and
black colonies. In the white colonies like Canada and Aus-
tralia the British were giving white people their freedom and
self-rule. In the black colonies of the West Indies, Africa and
Asia the British were busy taking away the political freedom
of the inhabitants. Actually, on the constitutional level, Britain
had already displayed its racialism in the West Indies in the
early 19th century when it refused to give mulattoes the power
of Government in Trinidad, although they were the majority
of free citizens. In 1865 in Jamaica it was not the first nor
the last time on which Britain made it clear that its white
‘kith and kin’ would be supported to hold dominion over
blacks.

1938. Slavery ended in various islands of the West Indies
between 1834 and 1838. Exactly 100 years later (between
1934-38) the black people in the West Indies revolted against
the hypocritical freedom of the society. The British were very
surprised — they had long forgotten all about the blacks in
the British West Indies and they sent a Royal Commission to
find out what it was all about. The report of the conditions
was so shocking that the British government did not release it
until after the war, because they wanted black colonials to
fight the white man’s battles. By the time the war ended it
was clear in the West Indies and throughout Asia and Africa
that some concessions would have to be made to black peoples.
In general, the problem as seen by white imperialists was to
give enough power to certain groups in colonial society to
keep the whole society from exploding and to maintain the
essentials of the imperialist structure. In the British West
Indies, they had to take into account the question of military
strategy because we lie under the belly of the world’s imper-
ialist giant, the U.S.A. Besides, there was the new and vital
mineral bauxite, which had to be protected. The British solu-
tion was to pull out wherever possible and leave the imperial
The Chinese are the other hand, are a comer hunting people, who are occasionally living in China. To me, it is very interesting to learn about their culture and lifestyle. They are known for their rich history and traditions.

The Chinese culture is unique and has a lot to offer. They have a deep respect for their ancestors and their heritage. They believe in the importance of family and community, and this is reflected in their daily lives.

In China, the traditional clothing is very important. Women wear long, flowing robes and men wear formal suits. The food is also a highlight of Chinese culture, with many different dishes and flavors. The most famous Chinese dish is probably the Sichuan spicy hot pot.

The Chinese are also known for their hard work and dedication. They are very industrious and often work long hours to achieve their goals. They are also known for their creativity and innovation, which has contributed to many of their achievements.

In conclusion, the Chinese culture is a fascinating and diverse world that offers many opportunities for exploration and learning. It is a culture that has evolved over thousands of years and continues to thrive today.
people like us here at the university going to join the bacchanal?

Let us have a look at our present position. Most of us who have studied at the U.W.I. are discernibly black, and yet we are undeniably part of the white imperialist system. A few are actively pro-imperialist. They have no confidence in anything that is not white — they talk nonsense about black people being lazy — the same nonsense which was said about the Jamaican black man after emancipation, although he went to Panama and performed the giant task of building the Panama Canal — the same nonsense which is said about W.I. unemployed today, and yet they proceed to England to run the whole transport system. Most of us do not go to quite the same extremes in denigrating ourselves and our black brothers, but we say nothing against the system, and that means that we are acquiescing in the exploitation of our brethren. One of the ways that the situation has persisted especially in recent times is that it has given a few individuals like you and I a vision of personal progress measured in terms of front lawn and of the latest model of a huge American car. This has recruited us into their ranks and deprived the black masses of articulate leadership. That is why at the outset I stressed that our choice was to remain as part of the white system or to break with it. There is no other alternative.

Black Power in the W.I. must aim at transforming the Black intelligensia into the servants of the black masses. Black Power, within the university and without must aim at overcoming white cultural imperialism. Whites have dominated us both physically and mentally. This fact is brought out in virtually any serious sociological study of the region — the brainwashing process has been so stupendous that it has convinced so many black men of their inferiority. I will simply draw a few illustrations to remind you of this fact which blacks like us at Mona prefer to forget.

The adult black in our West Indian society is fully conditioned to thinking white, because that is the training we are given from childhood. The little black girl plays with a white doll, identifying with it as she combs its flaxen hair. Asked to sketch the figure of a man or woman, the black schoolboy instinctively produces a white man or a white woman. This is not surprising, since until recently the illustrations in our text books were all figures of Europeans. The few changes which have taken place have barely scratched the surface of the problem. West Indians of every colour still aspire to European

have long broken with and are fighting against white imperialism, but our Chinese have nothing to do with that movement. They are to be identified with Chiang-Kai-Shek, and not Chairman Mao Tse-tung. They are to be put in the same bracket as the lackeys of capitalism and imperialism who are to be found in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Whatever the circumstances in which the Chinese came to the West Indies, they soon became (as a group) members of the exploiting class. They will have either to relinquish or be deprived of that function before they can be re-integrated into a West Indian society where the black man walks in dignity.

The same applies to the mulattoes, another group about whom I have been questioned. The West Indian brown man is characterised by ambiguity and ambivalence. He has in the past identified with the black masses when it suited his interests, and at the present time some browns are in the forefront of the movement towards black consciousness; but the vast majority have fallen to the bribes of white imperialism, often outdoing the whites in their hatred and oppression of blacks. Garvey wrote of the Jamaican mulattoes — 'I was openly hated and persecuted by some of these coloured men of the island who did not want to be classified as Negroes but as white'. Naturally, conscious West Indian blacks like Garvey have in turn expressed their dislike for the browns, but there is nothing in the West Indian experience which suggests that browns are unacceptable when they choose to identify with blacks. The post-1938 developments in fact showed exactly the opposite. It seems to me, therefore, that it is not for the Black Power movement to determine the position of the browns, reds and so-called West Indian whites — the movement can only keep the door open and leave it to those groups to make their choice.

Black Power is not racially intolerant. It is the hope of the black man that he should have power over his own destinies. This is not incompatible with a multi-racial society where each individual counts equally. Because the moment that power is equitably distributed among several ethnic groups then the very relevance of making the distinction between groups will be lost. What we must object to is the current image of a multi-racial society living in harmony — that is a myth designed to justify the exploitation suffered by the blackest of our population, at the hands of the lighter-skinned groups.

Let us look at the figures for the racial composition of the
The problem of political freedom will not be solved by economic freedom. The problem of economic freedom is not simply a question of distribution, but also of the means by which the fruits of distribution are produced. It is not enough to say that everyone has the right to own property, for the right to own property is not the same as the right to use property. The right to use property is a right to control the means of production, which are necessary for the production of wealth. The problem of political freedom is therefore not simply a question of distribution, but also of the means by which the fruits of distribution are produced.