African Responses to Colonialism

Wallace G. Mills Hist. 317 8 Pan-Africanism

- colonialism was the result of European intrusion and conquest;

- the colonial theories and policies we have been discussing were the embodiment of European colonialists’ ideas about goals, objectives, future, desirable relationships, etc.

- but colonialism was never completely one-sided;

- relationships, however unequal, are nevertheless 2-sided; Europeans were never able to impose their will and view of things entirely.

- moreover, over time strengths and weaknesses of the sides alter, which means that relationships are rarely static and constantly need to be adjusted to accommodate changes.

N. B. Neither side was monolithic or completely united: anti-imperialists and critics existed in Europe; divisions existed on the African side also.

- also, imperialism happened at a high point in European power, confidence, arrogance, assertiveness and aggression.

- in the 20th C, Europe weakened and destroyed much of its power and wealth in 2 wars; the injuries were not only to economic and military power, but also to confidence, pride and the certainty of their own superiority. Therefore, the strength of the colonialists was steadily weakening.

- on the other hand, the responses and reactions of Africans were also changing the elements and strengths of the African side of the relationship.

- traditional society could never provide an effective answer.

- traditional society could create difficulties and teach the colonial authorities that it was costly and troublesome to ignore African realities.

- the problem was that colonialism was creating a completely different world economically, politically, and socially.

- Africans required new ideas, new cosmologies, new ideologies in order to understand and to function in the new environments; we shall examine the
sources of some of these ideas, cosmologies and ideologies and the ways that Africans adapted them.

Pan-Africanism

- this was a major source of influence on Africans, although it must be recognised and remembered that it meant different things.

- it was developed by members of the African diaspora, primarily from the western hemisphere; as a result, it was not African in its origins and leadership and ownership did not pass to Africans until 1945.

- the term ‘pan-African’ was a way of drawing the link between all people with an African ancestry; however, as we shall see, this is rather different from what the term came to mean by the 1960s.

- pan-Africanism was also a reaction to the fever of racism and intolerance which gripped most of Europe and the West in the late 19th and early 20th Cs; for black people who were increasingly excluded and discriminated against in the western hemisphere and Europe, who were looked down upon and denigrated, pan-Africanism was an attempt to find some alternative.

- much of the time over the past century, there have been two streams in Pan Africanism: the ‘Africanist’ stream and the ‘non-racialist’ or ‘equality’ stream

Dr. Edward Blyden

- Blyden is usually credited with being the first to articulate ideas that came to be denoted as pan-Africanism.

- he migrated (he would undoubtedly have said ‘returned’) to Africa (Liberia) in the 1880s from the West Indies, before the scramble was completed and while Africa might still be viewed as somewhere to be free of the repression and domination of whites and their far-reaching racism.

- Blyden emphasised the ‘Africanness’ and the uniqueness of ‘race’ of people originating from Africa.

- in 1881 at the opening of Liberia College, he warned against assimilation. “The African must advance by methods of his own. ... We must show that we are able to go alone, to carve our own way.”

- in 1888 he wrote, “I would rather be a member of the African race now than a Greek in the time of Alexander, a Roman in the Augustan period, or an Anglo-Saxon in the
nineteenth century.”

- in 1902, Edward Blyden (not sure if its the same person or a relative) was the first person to use the term ‘African personality’. “Every race has a soul, and the soul of a race finds expression in its institutions.”

- another important book in this tradition was published in 1911 by a West Indian, Casely Hayford, *Ethiopia Unbound: Studies in Race Emancipation*.

- some points to note:
  
  • the concept of ‘race’ was being accepted; this carried the idea that blacks as blacks shared a great deal in common (i.e., that many traits, even cultural ones, were genetic). Thus, it has been called a black racism. Frequently, they advocated separation from whites to maintain this uniqueness.

  • there was optimism about the future and an assertion of pride in being black. With the on-going denigration of black people, this has been a recurring necessity and a more recent expression of the same objective was the ‘Black is beautiful’ movement in the 1960s and 70s.

  • the Blydens and others in this diaspora tradition (including Marcus Garvey whom we shall discuss shortly) knew little of Africa and its culture. Most never went there. Blacks, like the Blydens, immigrating to Africa in Sierra Leone and Liberia, did not integrate very fully with the local indigenous population. These immigrants have always behaved more like creoles or mulattos. This split between the coastal cities where the immigrants settled and the inland where the indigenous people lived is still a prominent aspect of politics (including the civil war in Liberia) in spite of the fact that the migrations took place about 200 years ago in Sierra Leone and over a century ago in Liberia.

  • the influence of these early writings was primarily on diaspora blacks, not Africans.

  • diaspora blacks could and did sympathise with Africans as the scramble took place; Africans were being subjected to the racism and domination that diaspora blacks knew. Members of the diaspora criticised the conquest of Africa, but they had little political power; they did, however, try to assist Africans to make a claim for self-determination at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

**Pan-African Conferences and Congresses**

- the 1st conference was organised in 1900 in London by another West Indian, Sylvester Williams. Not many Africans were there; most were from the western
hemisphere, including the American, W.E.B. du Bois.

- Du Bois was the organiser of the next 4 congresses:
  - 1919 in Paris coinciding with the Peace Conference—57 delegates, English & French.
  - 1921 in two sessions—one in London and then switched to Brussels.
  - 1923 in two sessions—in London and then Lisbon.
  - 1927 in New York

- while there were Africans at these sessions (often they were students studying abroad), the majority were diaspora blacks and leadership was primarily by them.

- the onset of the depression may be the major reason for the lapse in meetings until the conference in Manchester in 1945, organised by the West Indian lawyer living in London, George Padmore. It was at this conference that Africans came to the fore and in a sense took control of pan-Africanism. Among the delegates were Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta, both of whom had been studying and living abroad for many years. Nkrumah would take control of the movement in the 1950s.

**Ideology of Pan-Africanism**

- early on the two streams emerged; we have already noted the beginnings of the ‘Africanist’ stream in Blyden.

**W.E.B. du Bois** (1868-1963)

- du Bois is probably the most notable representative of the alternate stream.

- he too had to confront the problem of white racism, writing early in the 20th C, “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour line—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.”

- however, he advocated seeking rights and equality wherever black people lived. He helped to found the NAACP and was one of its main leaders, especially in his voluminous writings giving inspiration and encouragement. The inter war period was when segregation and the activities of the KKK were at their worst in the US.

- he promoted the idea of non-racialism, equality and the elimination of skin colour as a significant factor in human relations and human rights. The civil rights campaigns in the post 1945 era were the direct and logical extension and outcome of his approach.

- Du Bois himself was hounded by the FBI under J. Edger Hoover and the red baiters in
the US, especially after the second world war; he lived the last years of his long life in exile. He went to live in Ghana at Nkrumah’s invitation in the late 1950s and died there.

**Marcus Garvey** (1887-1940)

- Garvey was a Jamaican who revived and extended the Africanist tradition with great flare; he was the great antagonist of du Bois. He founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914 in Jamaica, but moved to New York in 1916.

- he is credited with coining the phrase “Africa for the Africans” and he certainly made it famous.

- he rejected the idea of staying in the new world; he argued that whites would never accept the idea of equality or equal rights. Instead, he inaugurated the ‘Back to Africa’ movement and created a ‘Government in Exile’ of which he was ‘Provisional President of a Racial Empire in Africa’.

- the UNIA grew rapidly in cities along the US seaboard and into Nova Scotia as well, at least in Sydney where there was a community of West Indian immigrants.

- in order to take black people to Africa, Garvey collected substantial sums of money to found the Black Star Line of steamships (he never actually specified a location or talked to Africans about whether they wanted this to happen). In fact, I think he did purchase one rather old steamer, but no migrations were ever attempted. Garvey himself never visited Africa.

- in a number of ways, Garvey anticipated the ‘Black power’ movement of the 60s and perhaps even more the separatist proposals of Malcolm X; the latter, of course, thought of creating separate enclaves for black people in the US rather than a return to Africa, but there was the same absence of confidence that equality would be acceptable to whites whose racism was too deeply ingrained; the only option was in separation—an apartheid solution.

- Garvey had a meteoric rise and a similar fall as a result of financial mismanagement and US government harassment. (J. Edgar Hoover got his start in the group—before the creation of the FBI—attacking organised crime and communists.) He was charged and convicted of fraud and misappropriation of funds in 1925; his sentence was commuted by Pres. Coolidge in 1927 and Garvey was deported to Jamaica.

- nevertheless, Garvey’s ideas had continuing influence; some black churches with a Garveyite orientation had been formed and continued to exist. Later, some even sent missionaries to Africa and thus spread the ideas there (however, this influence was rather small as the numbers were not large; black churches were too poor to send large numbers of missionaries).
- of more significance were African students studying in the US. One of these was Kwame Nkrumah who later said that Garvey was a more important influence on him than was du Bois.

- this should not be too surprising. Outside South Africa (which we'll discuss in more detail later), the dilemmas facing diaspora blacks were not very relevant to Africans. Most diaspora blacks were part of multiracial societies and most were minorities dominated and discriminated against; although Africans were a majority in South Africa, their position was pretty much the same. In South Africa, the same split in objectives occurred. What should black people strive for in a multiracial society?

- du Bois and the ‘equality’ or non-racial tradition worked for an end to discrimination and for complete equality; they wanted to end ‘race’ as a factor in determining rights and status.

- Garvey and the Africanist tradition rejected the possibility of a society based on equality and non-racialism. The only alternatives, therefore, were to go back to Africa or to create some sort of separate state for black people.

- for most of Africa under colonial rule, this was not really the problem. There were not sufficient whites to create a multiracial society. Thus, the issue was simply whether Africans would control political decision-making. Garvey’s slogan “Africa for the Africans” was tailor-made for their aspirations.

- as noted, Garvey never visited Africa, knew little about it and certainly never consulted Africans about whether or not they wanted millions of assimilated black people of the diaspora to come back to Africa. Where would they go? What would their impact be on African culture? No migrations took place so these questions never had to be faced.

**George Padmore** ( -1958)

- he also had an important influence on pan-Africanism.

- Padmore was a Trinidadian who lived most of his life in Britain. He became a communist in the 1920s, but became disillusioned and rejected communism by 1933 because he argued that communists were only using Africans and black people for their own purposes.

- he wrote an influential book, *Pan-Africanism or Communism*, in which he argued that these were the choices facing Africans in their struggle to gain independence. However, as noted, he rejected communism and therefore, he advocated choosing pan-Africanism.
- he founded the Committee of the International Friends of Ethiopia, and he also organised the Pan-African Congress in Manchester in 1945. Until his death in 1958, he was a friend and advisor to Nkrumah.

**Kwame Nkrumah** (1901-1972)

- Nkrumah became the main exponent of pan-Africanism in the 1950s and 60s. He lived abroad for many years in the US and Britain as a student etc.

- in a new effort to secure a greater role and voice for Africans in the Gold Coast, he was invited by some of the older leaders to return and become the full-time general secretary of their organisation. He recognised the need to form a mass-based movement, and after disagreeing with the older leaders, he formed his own Gold Coast Convention People’s Party.

- in spite of his being in jail, his party won the election in 1951. Shortly after, he was released and became the first African prime minister and led the Gold Coast/Ghana to responsible government in 1956 and full independence in 1957.

- he was a great believer in unity and the need for cooperation among Africans, and he set out to build pan-Africanism in Africa.

  - in 1958, he organised and held the first conference of independent African states; representatives of 8, mostly from north Africa, attended.
  - in 1960, the second gathering was held in Addis Ababa with the number of states represented up to 15.
  - at the 3rd, also in Addis Ababa, the 28 states and governments represented formed the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

- in the early stages, the focus was on assisting all Africa to become independent; this was also the aspect which brought most unanimity. It also remained a focus until very recently with continuing examples of colonialism or white minority rule—Portuguese colonies, Rhodesia, South West Africa/Namibia and especially South Africa.

- however, Nkrumah’s ideal of pan-Africanism went much beyond this and included a big concern that Africans not repeat the mistakes of Europeans, especially that they not get carried away with extreme forms of exclusive nationalism such as had led to the terrible wars and atrocities as occurred in Europe in the 20th C.

- thus, Nkrumah was concerned to create supranational bodies and even governments. The OAU in his view was a way of doing this.

- he also tried to create larger federations (at one point he announced a federation with Guinea), but these, like similar attempts among Arab nations (e.g., United Arab
Republic and such), were on paper only and were short-lived.

- Nkrumah shows the difficulties and dilemmas. In Ghana, he felt the need to build a sense of national identity in a national state that had been created artificially by colonial conquest and which contained different ethnic and religious groups; some of the techniques he instituted were compared to educational programmes under fascist dictatorships in the 1930s. But at the same time, he tried very energetically to go beyond nationalism in pan-Africanism.

- the OAU includes Muslim and Arab peoples in north Africa so it is not narrowly racial in its definition of ‘African’.

- the OAU has not been notably different in the way it operates from many international organisations, nor has supra-nationalism been achieved.

- as long as they talked in general terms about colonialism and their dissatisfactions, then they had a good deal of unity; and they have often worked together at the UN where they have a significant number of votes. However, even on these issues (e.g., South Africa), they often had more unity of rhetoric than of action.

- African leaders have also tended to focus on the nation-state, and thus there have been boundary disputes and conflicts between African states. Even more, the OAU or African leaderships collectively have been able to do little about horrific problems of African regimes, such as Idi Amin in Uganda or the recurring slaughters in Rwanda and Burundi.

**Significance of the Pan-African movement**

1. It affirmed the worth of black people and therefore rejected the inferiority ascribed by racist thought in the late 19th and 20th Cs.

2. It helped to launch the struggle for rights and equality for black people in the diaspora; although there were advocates of a return migration to Africa, eventually and especially after 1945, black people in the diaspora focused on rights and justice where they lived.

3. In Africa, the movement asserted the right of independence for Africans—“Africa for the Africans.”

   - in addition to the slogan, Pan-Africanism contributed in at least 3 ways:

   - early in the century, for the newly emerging African elite, it was a source of ideas and contacts, especially for students studying abroad;
• it helped to provide an ideology of unity in the process of mass mobilisation of Africans for the independence struggle;
• it also helped to build a constituency in Europe and North America which was sympathetic to and supportive of independence for Africa and this came to form important ‘public opinion’ in the 1950s and 60s.

4. It held out a lofty ideal for the future of independent Africa. Through pan-Africanism, it was hoped that Africa could avoid the terrible mistakes of Europe.

- by emphasising the unity of all African peoples and shared goals and ideals, it was hoped that nationalism would be a positive influence while avoiding the negative features (xenophobia, narrow parochialism, aggressive expansionism, etc.) which have caused so much bloodshed and horror elsewhere.

Pan-Africanism in South Africa

- in many ways, the experience of Africans in South Africa is closer to that of black people in the diaspora—i.e., domination by racist whites who enforced a rigid subordination.

- at any rate, the divisions which opened in pan-Africanism among Diaspora black people occurred in South Africa too.

- the dominant approach, and this has always been the official position of the ANC, has been the non-racial position similar to Du Bois and the NAACP.

- this position arose in the late 19th C in the Cape Colony with its ‘liberal’ policies:
  • Ordinance 50 of 1828 and no differentiation
  • equality before the law
  • it was also rooted in policies of assimilation stemming from Sir George Grey’s policies in the 1850s.
  • even non-racial political rights; voting rights depended on property & income qualifications, not skin colour.

- however, voting rights provides a good example to measure what Cape ‘liberalism’ really meant. Although the law had no explicit differential racial features, it did have a differential impact; most (but not all) whites could qualify while only small numbers of non-whites could qualify.

- some labour legislation could also be used to regulate people classified as ‘non-white’ because there was a high degree of correlation between the division between employers and employees and the colour line.
- even if there were no racially differentiated features or references, the law could be applied in differential or discriminatory ways.

  - e.g., the Peace Preservation Act 1878 (also, known as the Disarmament Act); whites almost without exception were allowed to keep their weapons while non-whites almost without exception were not.
  - the class seating on railroads too; it was supposed to be that if you paid the money, you could occupy whatever class you wished; in practice, railroad employees prevented non-whites from occupying first and even second class seats. Africans did sue, even successfully, but in practice most accepted third class to avoid trouble (lack of money forced this for most Africans anyway).

- few whites accepted any idea, let alone any reality, of social equality:

  - there were no laws, but hotels (which also were the restaurants) were closed to non-whites (the Rev. Tiyo Soga sometimes stayed at hotels in the 1860s, but that became completely unknown later). Soga was even married to a Scottish woman which caused a bit of a sensation.
  - even many missionaries, as far as I can tell, did not like to eat at the same table with Africans in the late 19th C.
  - however, the Cape was different from elsewhere; e.g., in the Boer republics, Africans were not allowed to even walk on the sidewalks; visitors from the South African Republic (Transvaal) complained that not only did non-whites walk on the sidewalks in Cape Town, but they refused to get out the way of whites; they also complained of ‘cheeky’ cab drivers who not only talked back, but cussed white people! What was the world coming to? In the SAR, they knew how to handle “Kaffirs”.

- nevertheless, whites (even the most ‘liberal’) were determined not endanger white supremacy. When Africans began to gain access to the voters’ rolls in growing numbers in the 1880s, various changes were introduced to restrict their access, even though the numbers of non-white voters (Coloured and African) never exceeded 20%.

- the Cape (alone among the political entities controlled by white settlers in South Africa) did allow some Africans and Coloureds to obtain the vote and seemed to promise the possibility of more; the justification for restricting access to voting was that most were not ‘educated’ or were not sufficiently ‘civilised’ (i.e., as members of autocratic ‘tribal’ societies, they could not understand voting and other elements of ‘democratic’ institutions). However, the promise seemed to be that once those deficiencies had been eliminated, then any male would get the vote.

- this promise in Cape liberalism was rooted in 2 ideologies—Christianity and reform liberalism.
Christianity

- we shall discuss Christianity in considerable detail later and will leave most discussion until then.

- Christianity seemed to provide a vision of a society where race and skin colour would be irrelevant: St. Paul (Colossians 3, 11) “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all.”

- for the most part, they accepted the argument that Christianity and ‘civilisation’ were necessary prerequisites for being accepted as equals. They were aware that for many whites this argument was mostly a smokescreen; however, they thought that once they had acquired the qualifications, logic and justice would compel the extension of equal rights to them. Thus, they set out to acquire the qualifications.

Reform Liberalism

- not laisser-faire liberalism which emphasised freedom to get rich while not interfering with free markets (many whites paid lip service to this, but at the same time wanted to get government intervention to force Africans to work for them and to eliminate competition from non-whites).

- reform liberalism usually focused on political rights, legal and civil rights with an emphasis upon equal rights of all individuals.

- reform liberalism also focused on providing equality of opportunity which meant that not everything should be left to free markets; especially that society should provide education to enable individuals to compete on a more level playing field.

- beginning in the late 1870s, the generation of Africans emerging from the schools in the Cape began to participate in politics in an increasingly active way. In 1884, African voters created a sensation in a by-election by voting in a block to determine the election. In fact, they became so active that many whites became concerned, even though most African voters were clustered in 6 of 30 constituencies and had not yet reached a majority in any of them.

- the fear among whites led to changes in 1886 and 1892 that reduced and restricted the ability of Africans to get their names on the voters’ rolls. However, although many whites wanted to restrict the franchise on the basis of overt racial distinctions, the goal of limiting Africans was achieved by raising the qualifications. Thus, Africans continued to be able to get their names on the common rolls.
- until the 1898 election, Africans had a high degree of unity in their voting and political activity; however, with the political polarisation that took place in the Cape Colony following the Jameson Raid of 1895-6, Africans too became divided between the 2 parties. However, even this had some benefits, because in a situation where the 2 white political parties were relatively evenly matched, the African and Coloured voters (even though their numbers were limited and were in fact declining as a proportion of the total electorate) were important and could decide elections. Thus, both political parties competed for their support.

- the effect of this was that in the 1st decade of the 20th C when a union of the four south African states was being discussed, the politicians in the Cape Colony were unanimous that their system of non-racial voting rights had to be maintained or the Cape would not enter the Union. In the compromise of the Union of South Africa in 1910, the Cape retained its non-racial franchise while ‘whites only’ was the rule everywhere else. However, only whites could be elected to or sit in Parliament. Africans were removed from the common rolls in 1936 and Coloureds in the 1950s.

- this can be seen as the core of what African leaders were trying to achieve during most of the 1st half of the 20th C. It was the political philosophy of the ANC, which was formed as the South African Native National Congress in 1912 (the name was changed somewhere around 1920).

- the idea was that equality would be achieved on an individual basis; thus, they accepted the need for the qualifications of Christianity and ‘civilisation’. Most of their efforts were directed to ending discrimination for those Africans who met the qualifications.

- this has been claimed as being ‘elitist’ and the early leaders have been charged by some with being willing to ‘sell out’ their fellow Africans in order to gain privileges for themselves.

- this is unfair and untrue for 2 reasons:

  1. They believed that opening the door for a few would allow others, eventually most or even all, to follow and that equality could be achieved progressively over time.

  2. They often involved themselves in struggles to save the unassimilated Africans from harsh, discriminatory legislation and actions by government.

- there was a dispute in the late 19th and early 20th C over Booker T. Washington’s (1856-1915) approach. Washington had started the famous Tuskegee Institute in 1881.
Washington believed that black people needed to concentrate for the immediate future on educational and economic development and avoid politics; until they were equal in these areas, they would not get and probably should not expect to get, much from politics in competition with white people. In recent times, more militant blacks have regarded Washington as a bit of an Uncle Tom; that belittles his achievements and is usually rooted in a profound ignorance of the conditions and situation faced by blacks in Washington's time.

- when Washington's ideas were discussed in 1886-87 in the Xhosa-English newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, Africans in the Cape overwhelmingly rejected this.

- however, Rev. John Dube (1871-1946) was a great admirer of Washington and advocate of his ideas; Dube, who had spent time in the US being educated and I think visited Tuskegee, in fact founded Ohlange Institute modelled on Tuskegee. Nevertheless, Dube was 1st president of SANNC and served additional terms as president and on the ANC executive. During the 1930s when he served again as president, he was increasingly out of touch with younger leaders and what they wanted.

- the over-whelming majority of Africans have always been committed to political action and demanded political rights.

- during the 1st 3 decades of the ANC, they were also committed to limited political actions (petitions to parliament, delegations to ministers, etc.)—i.e., highly 'respectable' approaches.

- also, the ANC was not a mass-based organisation prior to the 1940s. It was founded by the educated elite and run by them; however, it did give a prominent place to traditional leaders (in the early constitution, there was an upper house of traditional chief as well as a lower house for others).

- one last point before discussing the 'Africanist' or pan-Africanist element is to note the communist element. This was never too prominent in the early period and has never dominated the ANC. There were a few communists in the inter-war period, but most had been driven out by strong anti-communists like Dube.

- there were certainly some communists in the post-1945 period (although more whites than Africans); the communists were strongly opposed by the Africanists and were one of the main reasons for the Africanists splitting from the ANC in 1958 to form the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

- a great deal of debate focused on the Freedom Charter of 1955 as that remained the official statement of beliefs and objectives of the ANC down to the present. All the anti-apartheid groups were brought together, including the Liberal Party of whites (Alan Paton was a leader), the Congress of Democrats (white marxists), Indian National
Congress and some Coloureds.

- some of the elements of the Charter do sound like and have a marxist or socialist approach—discussions of redistributing the land, nationalising banks and financial institutions, and so on.

- however, most of the programme falls within the realm of reform liberalism as well.

- while marxists have had, and continue to have, prominent roles in the ANC, they have never dominated or controlled. Nelson Mandela was never a marxist; that was a lie put out by the South African National Party Government and repeated by anti-communist fanatics in the US and Britain (even Margaret Thatcher I think).

- during the 1930s, the ANC became nearly moribund. There are a number of reasons:

  1. Lack of success; in the 1920s, segregation and the colour bar began to be implemented vigorously and protests and delegations were ignored by the white politicians, especially in the National Party (the Afrikaner nationalist party)

      - in 1936, after 10 years of campaigning, Africans were removed from the common rolls of voters in the Cape Province.

  2. There was a proliferation of alternatives.

      a. **Multi-racial Organisations**

      - e.g., Joint Council of Africans and Europeans (1921); Communist Party (1921); European-Bantu Conference (1923); South African Institute of Race Relations (late 1920s); Non-European Unity Conference (1930s to defend the African franchise in the Cape).

      - these tended to drain off time and energy from the ANC; many Africans thought that working with whites and people in other racial groups would likely have more chance of success when Africans had so little political influence on their own.

      - some of the more radical Africans were attracted to the Communist Party, but the latter initially tried to appeal to white blue collar workers who were generally concerned about competition from Africans and who therefore favoured the colour bar and segregation.

      b. **Trade unions and the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU)**
- under Clements Kadalie (c1894-1951—an African from Malawi originally), the ICU had a mushroom growth in the 1920s; many thought that industrial unity and action could be an effective means of improving the lot and position of Africans and non-whites in S. A.

- the ICU attempted to organise on a mass basis (i.e., industrial union rather than craft unions); unity and broad-based strikes (more like general strikes) would be used to win not only better pay and working conditions (bread & butter issues) but also more rights and freedoms generally.

- neither government nor employers would negotiate, and when forced or dragged into strikes, divisions quickly emerged because Africans could not or would not support them. The ICU had a fall that was almost as meteoric as its rise.

- communists had ridiculed its non-revolutionary stance, but later they tried to take it over. This merely added to the divisions and squabbles. In 1928, the Natal leader, Allison Champion (1893-1975), split from Kadalie; his ICU yase Natal continued for some years after the demise of the ICU in the Cape, which had been its major stronghold.

c. **Conflicts among the leaders**

- partly, these were ideological; many of the older leaders were strongly opposed to communists.

- however, the conflicts also became a generation struggle; younger leaders were becoming increasingly impatient with the conservative, deferential approach of the older leaders.

- nevertheless, some of it was apparently personal; e.g., Dube and Champion, both Zulu from Natal, were bitter rivals in Natal for most of the 1930s and 40s even though both came to be opposed by the younger leaders in the Youth League, but for different reasons. Champion was a strong Zulu nationalist and had close ties to the Zulu royal house, kind of a preview of Mangusuthu Buthelezi.

- however, under Dr. Alfred Xuma (1893-1962), president of the ANC 1939-1949, the ANC was rebuilt, bringing in the younger leaders of the Youth League in the 1940s, working with the Communist Party after 1944, and arranging cooperation with the South African Indian Congress late in the war as well.
Anton Lembede (1914-1947) and the ‘Africanist’ Tradition

- Lembede was a brilliant person who never stopped studying until his early death at 33 years. He accumulated B.A., LL.B. and M.A. degrees and was working on a doctorate when he died. He was said to be proficient in 6 or 7 languages. A teacher until 1943, he then moved from his native Natal to Johannesburg to article in law, for which he qualified in 1946.

- Lembede joined the ANC in 1943; with Jordan Ngubane and A. P. Mda, he founded the ANC Youth League in 1944 and became its first president.

- there have been no studies of Lembede, so most of what we know about his thinking comes from his followers, especially those who eventually withdrew from the ANC to form the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in 1958.

- Lembede studied nationalism and came to the conclusion that it was the force that could be used to mobilise Africans in the struggle to wrest control of South African society from the white minority. However, it could not be a narrow, exclusivist nationalism such as had developed among Afrikaners (he may have been the one to attach the term ‘herrenvolkism’ to Afrikaner nationalism); thus, his African nationalism had to transcend ethnic divisions and identities among Africans.

- Lembede also was strongly anti-communist. You can see the striking similarities between his ideas and those of George Padmore. Lembede almost certainly knew Padmore’s book, but probably came to many of the same conclusions on his own.

- Lembede called for massive struggle and confrontation with white racism and domination, but I don’t know how specific he was about the exact means. According to his PAC followers’ ideas, he may have perceived the problem much like marxists do—i.e., one of awareness. Africans had to recognise their common identity, their common oppression, and the need for common action and the battle was well on the way to being won.

- Lembede called for a mass organisation, and during this period, the ANC did become a mass mobilisation movement; the Youth League brought a new generation of leaders into the ANC, including a young Nelson Mandela.

- Lembede died before the triumph of the National Party in the 1948 election.

- the ANC was also broadening its contacts, as noted, under Xuma to include the Communist Party and S. A. Indian National Congress; as the National Party began to
implement its drastic apartheid policies, this continued and the ANC adopted the position that it should work with anyone who opposed apartheid.

- many younger leaders, like Nelson Mandela, dropped the anti-communism and the narrow focus on Africanist thinking.

- a minority of Youth League members, although they remained in the ANC, were becoming increasingly frustrated that not only was white domination not being overthrown, but it was becoming even more entrenched and oppressive.

- eventually, they came to the conclusion that the main reason for the failure was the cooperation with other racial groups, particularly whites, and with communists (many of the communists were white so this was a double damnation).

- after the Congress of the People, which drew up the Freedom Charter in 1955, the alienation grew worse. Finally, after growing hostilities in the ANC in the Transvaal particularly nearly led to physical fighting, the dissidents broke away and formed the PAC in 1958 with Robert Sobokwe as the 1st leader.

- after so much criticism of the ANC and promising so much more successful action in confronting and ending white domination, the PAC leadership was under growing pressure by 1960 to actually do something.

- the ANC was preparing another pass law protest for the end of March 1960. Suddenly, the PAC announced its own pass law protest to take place exactly one week before the ANC’s in spite of the fact that the PAC had criticized this kind of protest for being a cause of the failures of the ANC.

- it was at one of their pass burning protests in front of a police station in a place called Sharpeville (near Johannesburg) that the massacre of nearly 100 people took place.

- it was primarily the ANC that organised the massive protests which were staged over the following days. In just over a week, the government declared a state of emergency; thousands of people of all races were arrested (the government had obviously prepared lists of critics and opponents) and many organisations, including both the ANC and the PAC, were banned.

- like the ANC, the PAC tried to engage in guerrilla type action, but most of its leaders were arrested or driven into exile.

- in exile, but continuing competition with the ANC, much of its support came from the eastern block and much of its anti-communism disappeared;

- also, much of its narrow Africanist focus was reduced; thus, it did broaden its base a
bit to include persons from other racial groups (its chaplain in Canada for some years was a white Anglican priest). More recently after the end of white minority rule and during the transition, members of the PAC perpetrated a couple of notable terrorist attacks on whites leading up to the first election of the ‘new’ South Africa. However, most voters were turned off and its electoral support was very limited.