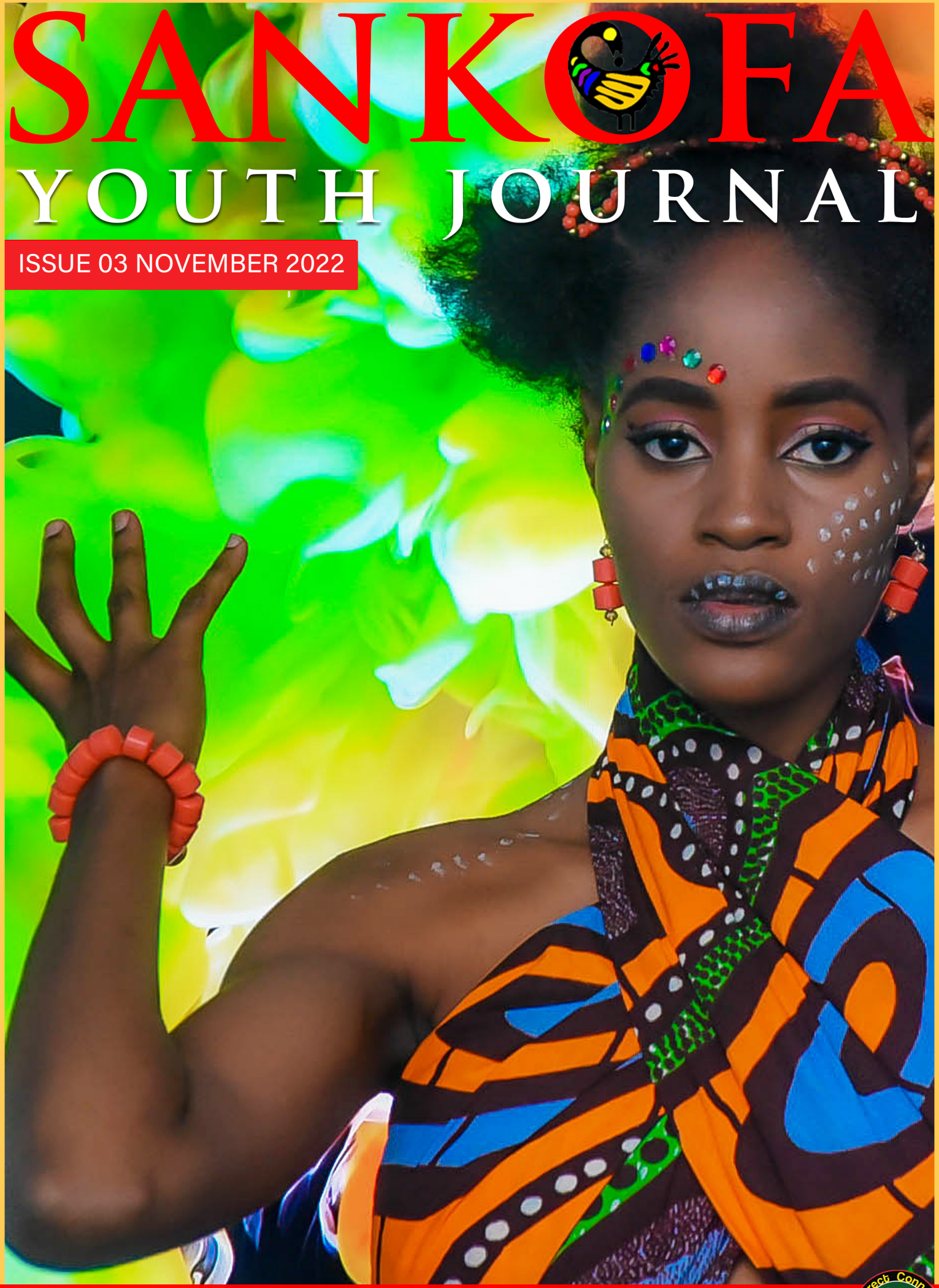
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EDITOR'S NOTE

The legendary Nigerian born reggae icon Majekodumi Fashek popularly known as Majek Fashek, in his track So-Long To-long, in the 1991 Album The Spirit of Love, reiterated the need for Africa to rise from its slumber.

"Arise from your sleep Africa .... there is work to be done ... we have been sitting down for so long and too long."

In the same line of thought, Marcus Mosiah Garvey, the Jamaican political activist, publisher, journaist and entrepreneur, held that: "We must give up the silly idea of folding our hands and waiting on God to do everything for us. If God had intended that, then he would not have given us a mind. Whatever you want in life, you must make up your mind to do it for yourself."

The call for the rise of Africa is a common theme among iconic African and Afro-descendant leaders, activists and individuals concerned about the political and economic emancipation of the people of Africa.

One thing is sure; there can be no political liberation or economic independence if the right mentality or perspective is not in place.

For us Africans, the way forward is, first and foremost, an education that makes Africa a priority, an education that reflects the historical and cultural givens of the Africans.

In other words, it is a system of education that mirrors the social, political and cultural domain where learning abides. Hence, the reflections of the African thinker or scholar must embrace the context and culture of the people those reflections seek to serve. By rational standing, this is the way we can find compatible answers to Africa's challenges.

The Sankofa Youth Journal is a wake-up call. It is a call to consciousness, an individual and shared consciousness for the development of the community. The community can grow through the maturation of the individual since the individual is from society. I am because we are, and we are because I am.



Aleakwe ODIOR

This fourth issue of the Sankofa Youth Journal (SYJ) is a concrete effort to register our commitment towards creating a new education for a new Africa and a new world. We congratulate the contributors of the articles; they are worthy instruments of enlightenment and action.

Happy reading!

Hotep.

BATTLE OF IMAGBON

THE BRITISH-IJEBU WAR OF 1892

OLUEBUBE MBAJI

In 1891, the Ijebu people dwelling between 50 and 60 miles north-east of Lagos on the Magbon river set a blockade and charged customs dues on the trade route to Lagos, which then was a crown colony.

The Awujale (traditional ruler of Ijebu) closed down the Ejirin market, cutting off Lagos from a source of up-country trade. The British government persuaded the Awujale several times to open the blockaded route, but the Ijebu ruler remained adamant. In May 1891, a British acting governor, Captain C.M Denton C.M.G, together with an army of Hausa men, (mostly slaves who fled the North to the South and were recruited by the British army) went to the Ijebu kingdom to convince the Awujale to open the blockaded route and allow the free passage of goods into Lagos. The Awujale refused at first, but after much persuasion and pressure, he agreed in January 1892. He accepted because he would receive £500 compensation annually for the loss of customs revenue.

Ijebu people were unhappy with this outcome as they did not wish to change their traditional methods and practices, particularly when threatened by foreigners.

This agreement did not last long. Denying access through the Ijebu kingdom to a white missionary initiated the war between Britain and the Ijebu people.

The action of the Ijebu people provoked the British government and then authorized the use of force on their kingdom. Britain gathered troops from Gold Coast (Ghana), Sierra Leone, Ibadan, and Lagos (the Hausa troops nearly 150). Colonel F.C. Scott C.B was the commander of the army of 450 men gathered by Britain.

On May 12th 1892, the captain and his men, including carriers, sailed up to Lagos Lagoon and landed at Epe. When they got to Lekki, they recruited another set of men (about 186). On the Ijebu side, 8000 men with old rifles would be fighting the British. The British underestimated the fighting prowess of the



https://www.globalsecurity. org/m

Ijebu warriors. It gave them a hard time penetrating the interiors of the Ijebu kingdom.

On the first day, the British army razed down four villages resulting in some of their men sustaining fatal injuries.

The next day, they proceeded to Atumba and gunned down the Ijebu warriors with machine guns. Britain lost 12 men, a Briton and 12 Africans, burning to the ground every Ijebu village they entered. The Ijebu warriors did not make it easy for the British, even in the face of an imminent defeat. They were determined to prevent the British army from crossing the Yemoji river. The goddess of the Yemoji river was said to have taken human sacrifice to prevent the intruders (British) from crossing. They excavated the river deeper to make it impenetrable by all means for the British army.



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However, the British army managed to cross the sacred Yemoji river and unleashed havoc on the Ijebu people. They proceeded to the village of Imagbon.

The Ijebu people had lost over 900 warriors, while Britain lost only 56 and about 30 were wounded. The Ijebu warriors were still determined to fight on.

However, shortly afterwards, the Awujale surrendered and conceded defeat. Then they saw the hoisting of the British Union flag above Ijebu Ode. Captain Scot warned his men against pillaging, which some didn't heed, particularly the Ibadan irregulars. Also, the British army destroyed the toll gates in Oru, built by the Ijebu people, not neglecting their shrines.

Historically, this war is known as the Battle of Imagbon, the British-Ijebu war and the 1892 Ijebu Expedition. The British troops were awarded the East & West Africa Medal with Clasp dated '1892'. Today we can find one of these medals in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. The Ijebu kingdom now became an annexe to the colony of southern Nigeria.

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IGBO LANDING

OLUEBUBE MBAJI

In May 1803, a small vessel was loaded with captives from West Africa to be auctioned off at one of the local slave markets in the United States. The slaves were bound in chains to each other and loaded below the deck of the vessel with the name The Schooner York (some say it is The Morovia). Amongst these slaves were about 75 - 100 Igbo people from Nigeria. The Igbos were known by slavers of the American South for being fiercely independent, hardworking, proud and resistant to chattel slavery. They also performed their duties with little or no supervision. As such, agents of John Couper and Thomas Spalding bought Igbo slaves to work on their plantations on St. Simons Island and sold them for rates as high as $100.

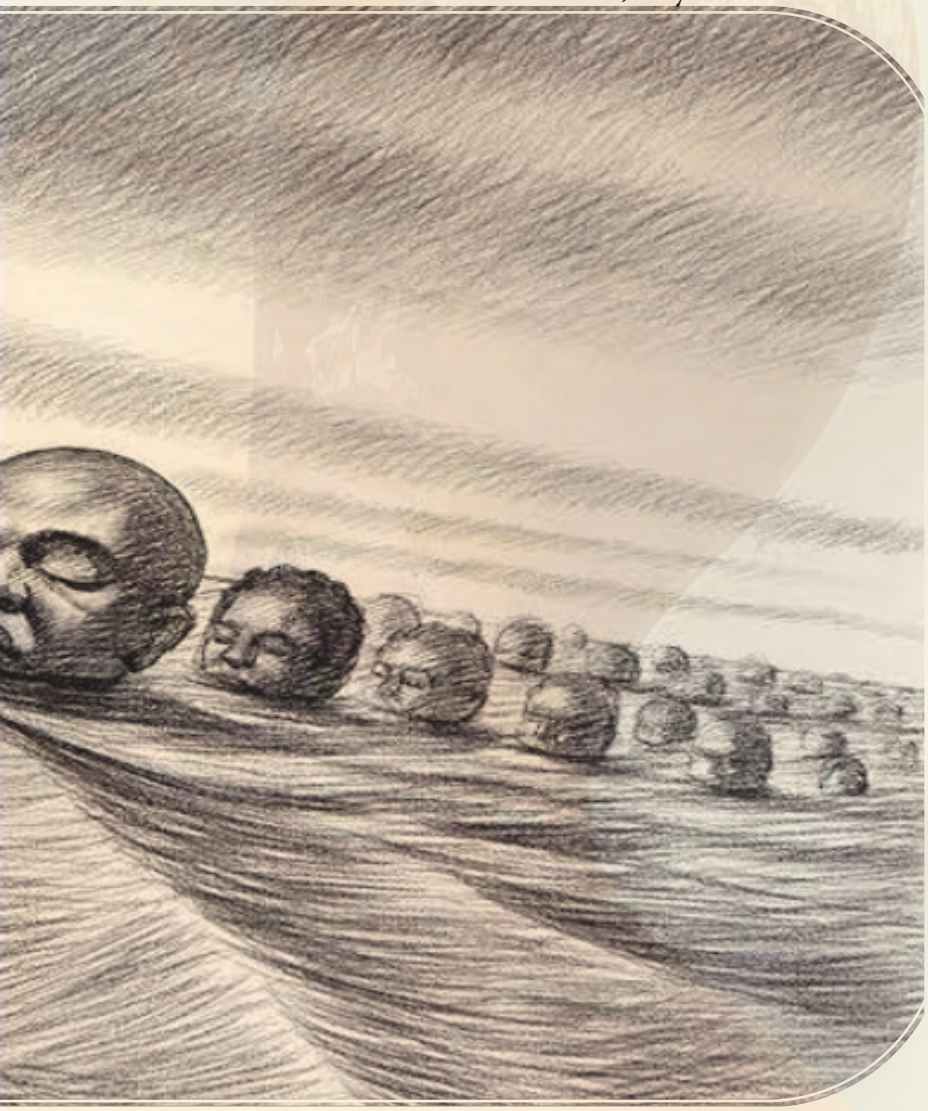
The following sequence of events is unclear, as there are several versions of the development of the revolt. Apparently, during the voyage, the Igbo slaves rose in rebellion, taking control of the ship. Rather than head to the arrival port, one of the Igbo chiefs taken captive gave a directive and suddenly, they turned back to the Dunbar creek on St. Simons Island, Glynn County, Georgia. Left with no clear direction of how to go back home, and refusing to proceed to the land of the enslavers, the slaves marched ashore and subsequently led by their high chief they all committed suicide and drowned their captors by walking in unison into the marshy waters of the Dunbar creek singing in the Igbo language "The Water Spirit brought us, the Water Spirit will take us home". They chose to die rather than be a slave in an unknown land.



An account of the event identified Captain Roswell King Patterson as the person who recovered the bod-

ies of those drowned, consisting of thirteen bodies of enslaved people and three white overseers. But the actual number of deaths is uncertain. The site at Dunbar creek is named Igbo Landing because of the mass suicide of Igbo people captured as slaves in 1803.

The historical event has inspired and influenced several works, recently and popularly; in 2006, Jason deCaires Taylor's sculptures in Grenada's underwater sculpture park made the global list as one of National Geographic's 25 Wonders of the World. In 2017, Beyoncé's visuals



of Love Drought from her Grammy-winning Lemonade Album. Also, in 2018, Erik Killmonger portrayed by Michael B. Jordan in Marvel's film Black Panther referenced the historical event during his death scene: "Bury me in the ocean with my ancestors who jumped from ships, 'cause they knew death was better than bondage."

May 1803 at Igbo Landing will forever be remembered in Black history as one that showed the courage and resistance of the African race in the face of subjection. Also, the mutiny by the Igbo people has been referred to as the first "freedom march" in the history of America.

Although earlier considered a folktale, the event has since 1980 been verified and the site is included as a historic resource. The site bears no official historical marker, and a sewage disposal plant was built beside the historical site in the 1940s despite opposition by the local African Americans. The site is still routinely visited by historians and tourists.

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THE AGOJIE OF DAHOMEY KINGDOM

EMMANUELLA OGUN-MODO

The Dahomey Amazons (also called Agojie, Agoji, Mino, or Minon) were an all-female military regiment of the Kingdom of Dahomey, which existed from the 1600s until the early 19th century, according to western accounts of the history. However, the occupants of Dahomey claim that the creation of Agojie was around the early 17th century during the brief reign of Queen Hangbe (1708 to 1711).

In 1864, Sir Richard F. Burton documented over two thousand Dahomean women serving as warriors in the Dahomey army and reported how two-thirds of them were maidens. The recruitment was voluntary. Some enrolled as young as eight years. Other historical accounts state that the Mino got recruited from among the ahosi (king's wives), of which there were often hundreds. Some women voluntarily join the army because of the honour and pride that comes with the role. There are also those forced into it by their parents and because of crimes committed.

The Agojie were not supposed to marry or have children because they considered themselves men: "we are men" they say, "not women." There was no separation in the army as Agojie and their male counterparts dressed and ate alike. Whatever the male did in battle or training, the females tried to surpass them. Their training harnessed all aggressive character traits for war.

Discipline was a core virtue in the training of an Agojie with intense physical exercises, learned survival skills and indifference to pain and death, stormed acacia-thorn defences in military exercises and executed prisoners.
For the Agojie, serving in the king's army was a great honour as it offered them the opportunity to rise to positions of command and influence. The Agojie were also wealthy women and attained high status in society.

According to tradition, the younger brother and successor of Queen Hangbe, King Agadja (1711-1740), successfully used them in the battle between Dahomey and the neighbouring kingdom of Savi in 1727.

Under the rule of king Ghezo (1818-1858), Dahomey became sophisticated militarily, placing great importance on the army by increasing their budget and formalising their structure from; performing ceremonial to serious military and putting them to good use. The Dahomey Amazon was said to be well structured





within the army. They fought on the centre wing with the king's guard flanked on both sides, each under separate commanders.

The Agojie were skilled as riflewomen, huntresses, reapers, archers, and gunners. Each regiment had its uniform, weapons and commander.

The Agojie fought in several neighbouring tribes and slave raids as they were often at war with their neighbours. They also fought against Abeokuta, where they suffered defeat.

Records show that the Agojie fought in the first Franco-Dahomean war in 1890 under the Kingship of Behanzin; in the battle of Cotonou when thousands of Dahomean soldiers, including amazons, faced defeat and a good number lost their lives.

Special units of Anojie were sent to target French officers during the second Franco-Dahomean war. Dahomey lost the second Franco-Dahomean war, which led to its subjection to French rule.

The fall of the Dahomey kingdom was also the fall of the military structure of the Amazon. Local history states that some amazons secretly stayed in Dahomey, where they killed several French soldiers over the years. Others stayed to guard the successor of King Behanzin: king Agoli-Agbo but disguised themselves as his wives.

EDUCATION

JOHNSON I. EKERE

Some people have defined education as a process of receiving or giving systematic instructions, especially at school. Others have described it as an enlightening experience that can take place anywhere. Education is also a purposeful activity that seeks to achieve specific aims, such as transmitting knowledge or fostering skills and character traits.

Education and indoctrination are closely related concepts, but one thing that separates them is critical thinking.

Historically, education is known to have started in Africa (Egypt) in ancient times, spread to other parts of the world, and returned to Africa from Europe in the form of "formal education" after many centuries of modification.

What we refer to as education today moved from being just a process of indoctrination to a process that includes critical thinking because of the need for modernization and the development of solutions to solve societal problems.

Interestingly, different societies live with unique challenges that do not require generalized solutions. Africa has continued to limit itself by failing to develop and move into an educational system that adopts critical thinking to find feasible solutions to African problems.

Africa should develop an educational system that evolves - the one that constantly seeks to educate Africans for the specific dynamic needs of Africa. The colonialists introduced formal education to Africans when all Africans needed was to be able to read, write and understand how to solve foundational socio-economic problems.

Moving forward, it became the responsibility of Africa to look at her history, culture, heritage, content, ideology, challenges, and need for growth and open herself to a constantly changing educational system that develops periodically to solve her specific needs. One urgent problem that needs to be solved is the language of instruction. Most schooling in Africa takes place in languages that are not native to teachers and pupils, and in some cases, they do not understand.

There is a need to address the issue because there is reasonable evidence that pupils schooled in a second language achieve poorer results than those schooled in their mother tongue, as lack of proficiency in the second language impairs understanding and encourages ineffective rote learning.

While it remains a fact that Africa's educational system has not evolved, it is worthy of note that some African institutions are beginning to move in the right direction to offer Africa the kind of leverage it needs to thrive in this contemporary world.

The Pan African University (PAU) is working on revitalizing higher education and research in Africa by focusing on technology, innovation, humanities, social sciences, governance, and regional integration.

The Pan African Institute for Education for Development (IPED) is responsible for functioning as Africa's Education Observatory unit. It promotes quality, responsive and inclusive education development in Africa by ensuring a robust and functional Education Management Information System (EMIS) and sound knowledge-based planning.

The International Centre for Girls and Women's Education in Africa (CIEFFA) coordinates the promotion of education for women and girls by focusing on four key policy advocacy priorities that include developing gender-responsive curricula in schools and universities.

Other educational institutions that are working to improve Africa's education sector include the Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC), African Scientific Research and Innovation Council (ASRIC), and African Observatory of Science, Technology, and Innovation (AOSTI) Etc.

Finally, Africa should understand that she is sitting on vast human and natural resources that the world needs to thrive and should therefore educate herself enough to present her finished products (human and material resources) to the world. To achieve this, Africa needs to address foundational literacy and numeracy at the elementary level of education with a renewed strategy that should focus on incorporating a good knowledge of African cultural heritage and history and critical thinking in the minds of every African child.



With this foundation in place, higher education should seek to extract the best solutions from the minds of Africans through a continually improving educational system that meets the scope of the newly emerging world.

AFROCENRIC EDUCATION

JOACHIM OKORO

Introduction

In 1933, a certain great African American had written what he titled The Mis-Education of the Negro. In that book, Carter G. Woodson sought to address the fact that the White mainstream educational curriculum was culturally and mentally toxic to the Black individual.

Woodson pontificates that the educational programme of the White institutions was designed to exalt and exult White supremacy and demean Black culture and history. Woodson narrated that certain black individuals who had gotten educated in those white institutions had returned to the Black ghettos and began to condemn the things that were most precious for the black people by calling them old, outdated and uncivil. For Woodson, the minds of these black students have been configured to consider themselves second to white mentality.

To remedy this, Woodson proffer that the problem was that these white schools and institutions do not teach and instruct anything concerning the black civilization, and if they did, it was only to degrade the black cultural and historical civilization and so he argues that the black community needed schools and institutions that are afro-centric and black-based and that black students should go to black schools. He believed that the right education includes both the right teaching and the right environment. To corroborate this claim, in his speech in the 1960s titled "The Ballot or the Bullet", Malcolm X alludes to the principle of Black Nationalism.

He emphasized that for the black community to grow and maintain its identity, there's a vital need for a paradigm move; this movement is both internal and external. It is an internal movement in the sense that there must be a conscious and deliberate decision to elevate and liberate the mind from the morass of White-centrism; this internal movement would now occasion the external motion.

The external motion is the crux of black nationalism because it stipulates that the black community needs social, political, economic and educational restructuring, a restructuring that maintains the black individual as being within the black environment, engaging and participating in the progression of their identity and by so doing, the rejection of the principle of assimilation into the white culture would be averted. In truth,



what Carter G. Woodson and the promoters of Black Nationalism were addressing was the importance of aneducation that is afro-centric. What then is this afro-centric education?

Afro-centric Education

In a globalized age like this and with the progression of mental maturity, one must begin to say what afro-centric education is not. Afro-centric education is not an education which embraces racism, that is, educating black students to hate white students or teaching that the white race is the evil race.

This would mean becoming what we have condemned to be wrong. Afrocentric education is not also an education which makes the black person feel he or she is alone in this world like he/she is a separatist because as long as the world goes, dependency and relationship is the hallmark of global progress. Afro-centric education, however, is an education which enlightens, illumines and teaches the African who he/she is, how he/she can relate to the world



and how to maintain his/her identity. According to Carter Woodson, Afrocentric education is a pedagogical system designed to empower peoples of the African diaspora with educational models in touch and line with the cultural ethos and assumptions common in their communities.

A central premise behind it is that many Africans have been subjugated by having the awareness of themselves limited and by being indoctrinated with ideas that work against them and their cultures. The subjugation still lingers today and that's why an afro-centric education stands relevant and paramount. What importance does this educational experience hold for our present

Importance

- *Historical Accuracy:* Patrice Emery Lumumba once said that he looked forward to the day when Africans will write their history. His assertion was born from the fact that African history has been written by foreigners and by so doing it has been tainted and abused so that world civilization will always tag it as an irrelevant civilization in the history of world progress. An African aphorism consolidates this when it says: "As long as the lions do not have their historian, the history of the jungle hunt will always exult the hunter". So, the afro-centric education brings to the African a sense of his past in an accurate and precise manner.

- *Afro-Identity:* Kenneth David Kaunda postulates that anyone who has lost his or her sense of identity cannot find his or her place in the world, cannot relate with others and cannot know him or herself. Identity means knowing who you are, not a double personality but a personality that is clear and simple. PLO Lumumba at one time had described many African individuals as suffering from a schizophrenic identity, people who do not know who they are, and who lack self-esteem. The afro-centric education brings to light the essence of having a profound African identity, of knowing

what it means to be African, of understanding the African culture and that will enable the African to relate with him/herself, with others and with the world.

• *Proffering African Solutions to African Problems*: Upon speaking to the Methodist Boys at the Methodist Boys High School in Lagos, Nnamdi Azikiwe posits that true scholarship is coterminous to social progress. Moving forward, he says that it is not enough to know the laws of physics or be able to recite the words of Chinua Achebe; but true scholarship entails using the laws of physics or the words of Achebe to transform one's society. In other words, one must be able to use one's knowledge to proffer solutions to problems. Of course, problems are sometimes universal by nature, but they have their local dimensions and therefore, there are problems we face as Africans which are particular to us and in many ways, we require solutions that are afro-centric for these problems. It's on this basis that afro-centric education stands important.

• *Enlightenment:* One of the essential aims of education, in general, is to provoke mental enlightenment, for one to be able to think for oneself. Thinking for oneself does not mean neglecting the thoughts of people, but to be able to discern correctly, with the right reason which thought or idea to buy into. For long as Africans, we have grown so much to collect any idea and thought we come across and we have taken them to be the truth especially if those ideas are from Europe. The afro-centric education helps one to be able to decipher and separate truth from falsehood. This enlightenment leads to mental freedom, and mental emancipation and like Bob Marley pontificates, "none but ourselves can free our minds". Enlightenment can be achieved by ourselves and not by others because the intervention of others only brings us deeper into their supremacy.

Conclusion

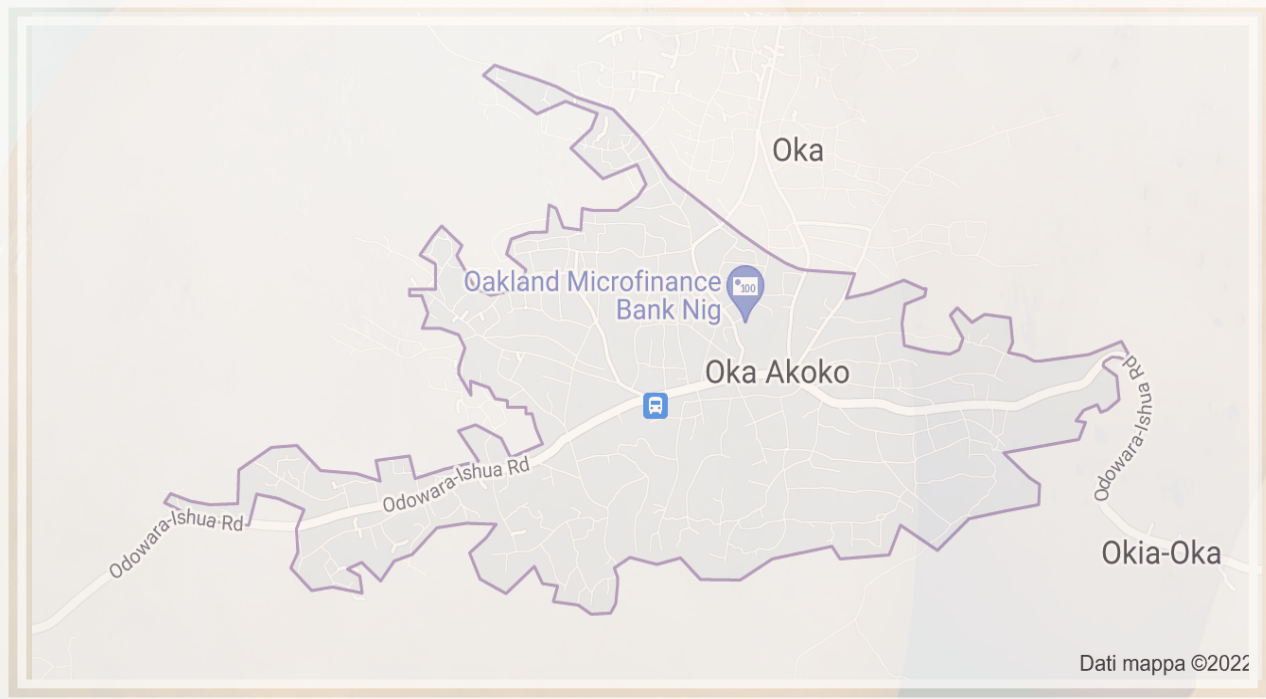
Education is no doubt the vehicle for progress whether it be political progress, socio-cultural strive, economic empowerment, mental agility and religious correctness. Many civilizations have weaponised education to fight against the problems they face in their society. Why not our society? Why can't we as Africans achieve this? The gospel is that we can achieve this and to achieve this, we require an education that is afro-centred, the kind which brings us back to our roots, and makes us African possible to proffer solutions to problems that are particular and endemic to our race.

BURIAL AND FUNERAL TRADITIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF OKA AKOKO

FEMI AFOLABI

Death is an inevitable end for all living things, especially humans. It is a certainty that all mortals must taste no matter their wealth, race, status, religion, age or education. Just as the process of birth kick-starts life here on earth; the phenomenon of death ends it all. Francis Bacon once declared that: "it is natural to die as to be born". Socrates took it further by declaring that "death may be the greatest of all human blessings".

Every tribe, tongue and religion have their traditions and practices when it comes to the burial and funeral of a dead person. In Tibet, especially amongst the Buddhists, Sky burial is a popular practice. Here, the corpse is left in the open where birds and other animals can devour it. The reasons behind this practice are to allow the soul to depart the world to heaven without encumbrances and to dispose of the now-useless carcass.



The Malagasy people of Madagascar practice a burial tradition called Famadihana. In this tradition, the tomb is opened every few years and the decomposing corpse or bone remains are rewrapped in new burial clothes. They dance near the tomb to a piece of special traditional music for hours celebrating what can be translated as the "turning of the bones". It is believed that this process aids the decomposition of the corpse which in turn helps in pushing the spirit of the dead towards the afterlife.

Here in Nigeria, the good people of Benin in Edo state drop different kinds of food in the grave of a corpse to serve as sources of energy and nutrition as he/she embarks on the long journey to the afterlife. No Benin woman

who married outside Benin can be buried outside Benin without some expensive rituals that members of her family must carry out. In the burial of a departed Alaafin of Oyo, Abobakus are known to lose their lives too. All over the world, there are different practices when it comes to burial and funeral.

The good people of Oka-Akoko have burial and funeral traditions that are unique to them and deserve some explanation and description especially, for the understanding of the new generation. There is a huge misunderstanding of some of our cultures/traditions and this is not only encouraging abuse but sadly pushing some of these traditions into extinction. It is therefore important to keep alive the knowledge of these traditions for scholarship, preservation and possible amendment in the future. Before I proceed to explain burial and funeral practices in Oka-Akoko, there is a strong need to explain some of the terms that will be frequently used in this article to aid the understanding of my readers. My readers need to understand that most of our burial practices are rooted in the understanding that an Oka man married an Oka woman. The reasons for this were enumerated in my article on this space in the last Oka day issue of this magazine.

IRA – human beings are either male or female and so it is for a corpse. Ira too can be explained in two ways depending on whether the dead person is a man or woman. For a woman, her Ira is the people from her father's house. These people are commonly called in-laws in most Nigerian traditions and it is not different in Oka-Akoko. Consciously or unconsciously in Oka-Akoko, the term Ira becomes the tag of in-laws during burial or funeral ceremonies. It is hardly used in day-to-day conversation in Oka-Akoko except by the woman describing people from her father's house. This may be because Iras are mostly prominent in burial matters. For a man, his Iras are the members of his mother's family. This inclination with maintaining the relationship with the family origin of a man or woman, especially from the mother's and father's lineage is one of the pillars upon which the Oka-Akoko society rests. The Iras are very key in all burial rites and stages in Oka-Akoko. This we will see as we proceed.

EPANSI - this is another important group when it comes to burial and funeral ceremonies in Oka-Akoko. The Epansi of a man are the married women from his father's house. They may be his younger sisters, cousins etc but must be married or widowed. If he has an elder sister, she would



send a female child to represent her because it is traditionally forbidden for her to partake in the burial of her younger brother. She must not taste anything prepared in connection with that burial. For a woman, her Epansis are the married or widowed women from her father's house. They are usually the ones she is older than and maybe her sisters, cousins etc. if

she has an elder sister, she will send a female child to stand in for her. Now we proceed to the burial and traditional rites.

Sometimes, a sick person is struggling to die. He still has a pulse but cannot live again. Sometimes he is labouring in breathing with no improvement in his/her health. At this point, elders are called upon to assess the situation critically and advise appropriately. Most times, the



advice given is for the Iras to be called upon to do their job. The job here is to either lift the sick person from the sick bed or stand him/her against the wall and put him/her back down on the bed. In most cases, the sick person dies within a few hours of the lifting. There have been cases of the person dying before the Ira could leave the house where the sick person was.

When somebody dies in Oka-Akoko, the first point of call are the Iras.

They will come and check whether the news is true. They will feel the pulse of the dead person, try to listen to the heartbeat, and check for possible foul play in the death by looking for injuries, foaming from the mouth and general signs of physical attack. After the check is complete, the representative of Ira goes back to the head of the family to report his findings. It is only when the Iras are satisfied that there is no foul play in the demise of their loved one that other stages of the burial can proceed. There is a popular song that the Iras normally sing when coming for their confirmation/autopsy inquiry and it goes thus; "Aya shubereee aya wo bo ti sheee".

Literarily, this song means we have come to inquire whether what we heard is true and how it happened. If the report says there is no foul play, then the Epansi will start their traditional music to mourn and extol the virtues of the dead man or woman.

Digging of the grave – as an important rule, the Iras must be the first person to start the digging before anyone. The digging of the Iras is usually symbolic. He is just expected to use the digger, hoe or shovel to make a mark on the spot and not to dig to the point of sweating. After this, the male children and sons-in-law of the dead person will begin to encourage the diggers with kegs of palm wine, crates of beer and other alcoholic drinks. If this is not done or the diggers are not satisfied, they will stop digging! Most times, the diggers are the age group etu of the youngest son of the deceased, though well-wishers do join if the dead person was good during his lifetime.

In some clans or quarters, for example, the Ashikede people of Ibaka, digging the grave is the duty of the members of the clan. Also in the Okaodo community, the family members of the deceased Omede and representatives from the houses of the Epansis are responsible for the digging and spending for the diggers. In the course of the digging, or after, the digging tools are converted to musical instruments by the diggers as they go from one house to the other of the relatives of

the deceased. After the digging, all the tools used are gathered and deposited at the main water outlet (Oju-oho) from the courtyard or in the graveyard for at least five days.

Interment – while the Epansi and the women in the house will be busy frying Ikara (bean cake), the men will be making moves to get palm wine for visitors and very importantly for grave diggers. As it is done in mortuaries, we also prepare corpses for burial in Oka-Akoko first by washing them. It is the traditional duty of Epansi to go to the stream and fetch water for the washing of the corpse. In some communities, the youngest wife in the deceased family is tasked with carrying the water while the Epansis follow her. It is in the process of fetching this water that they sing the popular Omi-sero song. In ancient times, earthen pots must be used to fetch water for the washing of the corpse of an Opan, who is the oldest person in the community. This tradition is also extended to some extremely old persons who may not be Opan.

The washing of the corpse is done by the Iras. It affords them another opportunity to further examine the corpse for a more comprehensive autopsy on the dead body. They will also apply palm oil to swollen parts, varicose veins, birthmarks, ulcerative wounds etc to prevent them from reoccurring in the person when he reincarnates. After the washing, the wrapping of the body commences in earnest. It is a rule that the first white cloth to be used to wrap the corpse must be that of the Iras. Preparation of a corpse for burial in Oka-Akoko is almost impossible without the cooperation of the Iras. Then white cloths from other sources will be used to wrap the corpse and then interred.

After interment – after the interment, the Epansi will continue their traditional display morning and evening. The morning session usually takes them to the homes of the dead person's relatives where they are also encouraged with money. When they come back from the morning session, they prepare food, eat and rest. In the evening, they continue their display but within the four walls of the house. That is the tradition. Then the Epansi will wear clothes belonging to the deceased and visit a farm owned by the deceased to harvest whatever they like. This visit is symbolic to the extent that they are establishing that the person is truly dead and not working on the farm. That is why they usually announce on their return from the farm that they didn't see the deceased on the farm they visited. All these happen within the first five days after the burial. The Epansi from the day of their arrival does not go back home till the five days are over. On the fifth day, commonly called Ikoru, all the clothes of the deceased will be washed with no exception by the Epansis. The Epansis will also wash their clothes, and plait their hair while the men will shave theirs. All relatives will wash at least one of their clothes to mark the event. As they wash the deceased clothes, the Epansis will pick any of them they like to serve as memorabilia of the dead person.

Furthermore, the Epansi will proceed to sweep everywhere in the house of the deceased including the surroundings. This sweeping is usually comprehensive and draining for them. They will also tidy up all the cooking utensils used throughout their stay in the house. Then the refuse gathered will be given to the youngest among them to dispose of. She must not look back on her way to the refuse dump! It is believed that the spirit of the dead person will be following her at that point and looking back will invite further death to the house. As she departed to the refuse dump, all her belongings and those of the other Epansis would have been packed for their departure. She and the other Epansis will not return to that house that day!

The Funeral – in planning for the funeral, a meeting is usually summoned by the children of the deceased under the leadership of whoever is next to the deceased in

the family. As a rule, the Iras must be present in the meeting. The Epansis will also be present. The approval and concurrence of the Iras is the most important factor in picking the date for the ceremony. Without Ira's support, no date can be picked for the ceremony; they are that powerful and important. Then the most senior male child would be accompanied by another person appointed by the head of the family to approach the community committee which will check the date against their calendar for approval or rejection. The committee will make sure that not many funeral ceremonies are slated for a particular week to avoid rowdiness and stress occasioned by people visiting many events at a time since most people are related one way or the other. If there are no ceremonies already slated for the date, then the committee approves. If there are, the date will be rejected and the family would have to meet again to pick another date but with the guidance of the information from the committee of available dates. The committee charges a bottle of strong drink and a token. The information about the ceremony is effortlessly released to the populace by the members of the committee who are representatives of the age groups in that community or quarter. The committee meetings usually hold a day or on the morning of the age group meetings. Each of the representatives goes back to their meetings to report everything that transpired in the committee meeting including approved dates for funeral ceremonies.

Nine days before the commencement of the ceremony, the Ihares (elders' council) will be treated to a good meal called Usha Ihare. It must be pounded yam and there is no margin for error here. The pounded yam must be soft while the soup must be prepared with Urun (locust beans). No synthetic seasoning must be added. A whole cow is prepared and distributed to the Ihares. Then the elder's council will appraise the meal to determine acceptance and rejection. If the meal is accepted, the most senior male child of the deceased is called into their meeting and the news is broken. Then the male child will shout Uba Mio! Or Iye Mio! Depending on whether the deceased is a man or woman. The Ihares will now give a go-ahead for the funeral ceremony to continue. It is believed that their approval equates to the acceptance of the ceremony by the deceased and the council of dead persons in that community. The cow would be shared with the elders based on seniority. They in turn will share with everybody in their houses and even in adjourning houses. They never eat it alone. It must be borne in mind that the Ihares will not gather for this event if the dead person was not an Ihare before his/her demise.

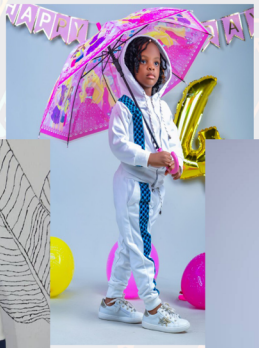


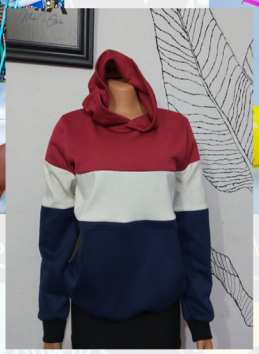
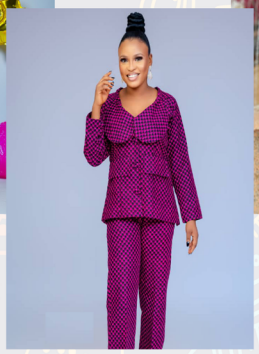


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UNI-TIE

CHIDIMMA CHUKWUMA

The evening sun damped our enthusiasm
Layered on cements of harmony
The dreams of fatherland in oneness with mother's land
Crippled the torrents of our blood
Unity! a subtle vision of heroes past
Nursed into our tender minds and burned into our ardent memories
In anticipation for a promised land on fold
where culture and approbation amalgamate
Till the earth and bury the hatchet once harvested by the slave's master
Yield to the trees that cry out in distinct pain
bind the threads that keep us apart

Hand the baton to the afrocentric man
For he has earned his race fairly
That he may judge and be adjudged
To fulfill our lifelong contemplations
In which unanimity cloaks our nakedness
Sift the stranger's imposition
As it has punctured syncretism
Plaster our fields in tufts of peace
That we may dissolve our differences in a single sport



Whilst incorporating our dumplings into a sole erudition
Conforming to our very own legal tender

Far into the nearest future we can start again
We would have sold our bitterness to the junk man for millions of cowries
And spread our disputes under the scourging sun
What is a people without their history?
Engraved on broken ribs
Which once bore the pangs of victory
In the new rich land, Africa
Where unity becomes the backbone of our survival

FALLEN

CHIDIMMA CHUKWUMA

And so began the Negro's journey
Back in time to the very roots
That bore the writer's bloodline
The Khoi Khoi people to the Songhai empire
Going down to the Nok culture and then the San
All birthed on rich earth, bedazzled Africa
Nurtured by its internal glories
Oh how Cobalt walked the soil
Diamonds fit for a king's bride
Iron and gold smithing paid the common man's dues
Whilst ivories and hides served the master's thirst
Enchanted in their place of bliss
Blessed far beyond the unfathomable
The people reeked from the aroma of diligence
Until time stopped to take a new dimension

The white beast emerged with fatal promises
In the skins of mirrors, gins and sugar
Set to strip the land of its humble jewel
And enslave what was called home
Years of animosity passed by
With the Negro chained to the ground
As a footstool for this deranged god
But the winds of liberty propelled
For it carried its seeds
and conditioned on fertile ground
To mend the stains of the white beast
Blood and sweat gained them sovereignty
Fathers mourned daughters for this deadly cause
Mothers struck gold for their sons
Yet this gold the children buried
To eat from the white man's bowls

Ages far spent in liberated bondage
Throwing emancipation to the dust
Hope promises to revisit the past
Where history and poetry abide
Flipping the pages backward
To judge the coloured side of these heroes



AFRICAN YOUTH INITIATIVE

(Culled from tribuneonlineng.com/african-youths-and-innovative-solutions-to-climate-change/)

BUKOLA OLUWASEUN OLUKOJU

Youths in Africa have ventured into different aspects of life and by so doing, impacted their communities positively.

Despite limiting factors, African youths have excelled in areas such as Crime Prevention, Climate Change, Youth Empowerment, Entertainment and Fashion amongst others.

Tomini Tai is a Nigerian fashion designer who has carved a niche for himself in the industry with what started as a personal need for well-tailored outfits and developed into a passion that addresses the needs of his clients. Tai Lore has therefore become a brand in the fashion industry, offering his services to clients and creating employment opportunities.

The devastating effects of climate change, evident in the recent heatwaves and wildfires across Europe, Landslides in Asia, melting glaciers in the Arctic region, etc. is now of global concern to world leaders.

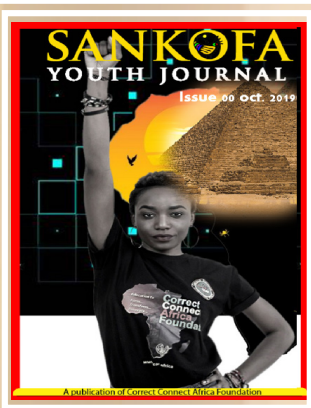
In response to this scourge, Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, an African youth from Chad is passionate about Climate Change advocacy. He has spent the past 10 years working to bridge the gap between international decisions on climate change and the realities on the ground.

She observed that indigenous communities who are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change offer some of the best solutions.

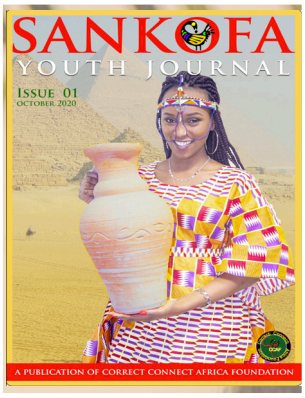
"Each year, I am seeing resources shrinking, and my people are struggling for survival," Ibrahim said on her Facebook page. "The traditional knowledge of indigenous people that is centuries old can help the world adapt."

Ifeoluwa Bunmi Ogunbufunmi

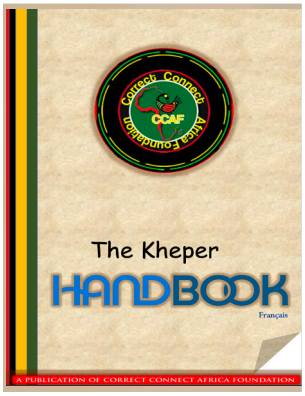
The 2021 Blog4Dev winner from Nigeria.
This young African brought her writing skill, social media astuteness and growth mindset to the fore as a blogger to proffer ideas and solutions to trending issues.

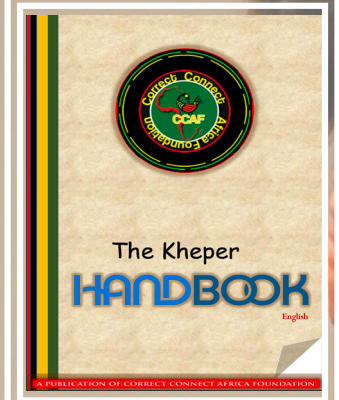


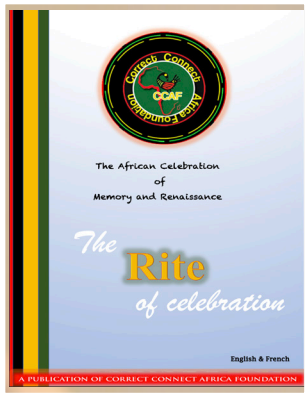
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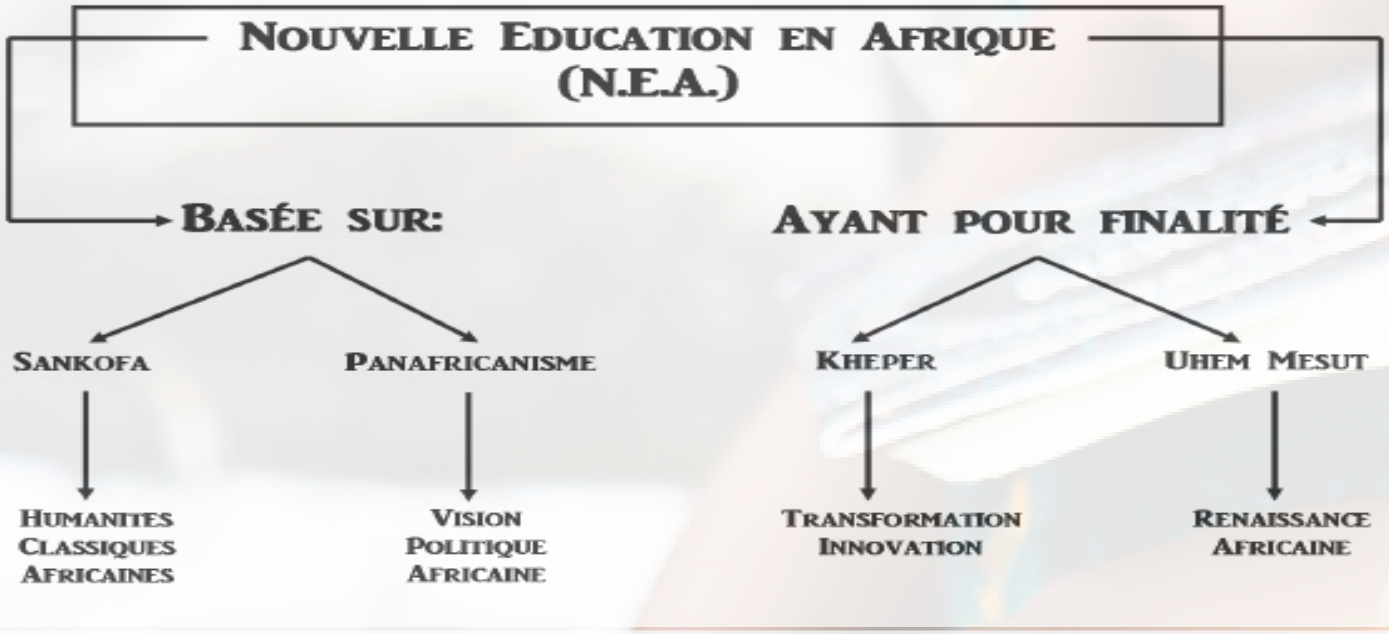
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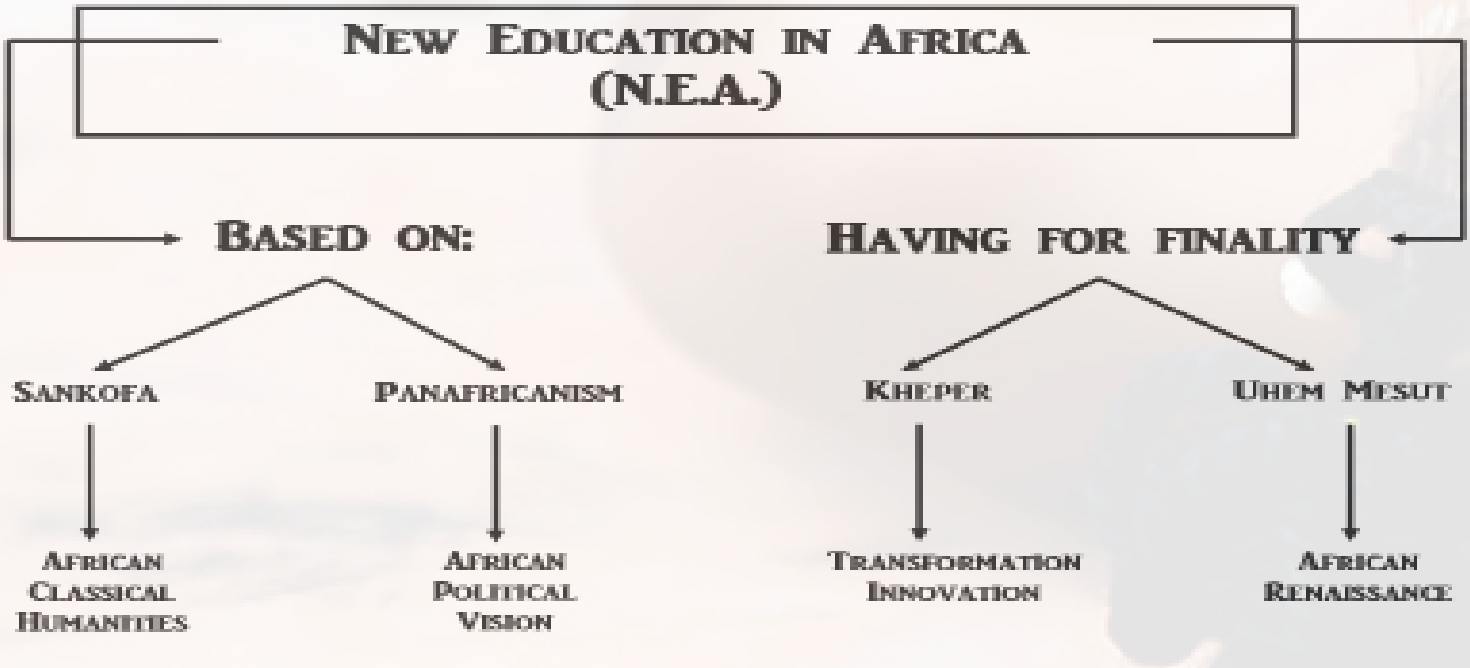


2022

CCAF MISSION







CCAF WEBSITE

It is our pleasure to announce to you, followers of Correct Connect Africa Foundation and the general public, that we have redesigned our website: www. ccaf.africa. We made this update having you, our followers, in mind. The new design looks good and feels good, with a simple layout, easy navigation and a responsive layout for all platforms. With the new design, we communicate a clear message of who we are and what we represent:simplicity,profoundness and clarity. Now, with just a click, you can easily share or re-post articles from the site to any social media platform you belong to. Moving forward, we will continue to make improvements to ensure easy use of the website. We are proud of the new design and we are certain that it will grant you the experience you are looking for when you visit the website. We welcome constructive criticism as we strive to continue to improve on past developments. Visit us! www.ccaf.africa

CCAF APP

If the rhythm of the drumbeat changes, the dance steps must adapt, says an African proverb. Correct Connect African Foundation continues her quest to make the journey of SANKOFA – Return to your Root – ever closer just by clicking an icon on your android mobile screen. This development was made possible with the recent launching of the Android APP version of the Correct Connect Africa Foundation website. This App will enable users to receive notifications relating to posts and the various activities of the Foundation. According to the Movement's Coordinator, this is the first step towards bringing the recent activities of the foundation closer to members; hence, enable participation and contributions from members and then form a family where creative and innovative ideas can be shared easily amongst members. The use of the App would guarantee smooth and easy access to CCAF contents.

SANKOFA HYMN

Oh Sankofa, high on the Heavens you soar
My soul is soon to follow you, back
to yesterdays moon will it remember me?

Back to yesterdays sun,
It will rekindle me
Rekindle the spirit into tomorrow and high on the wind Sankofa flys again and again
Oh Sankofa,
high on the Heavens you soar My soul is soon to follow you, back to yesterdays moon
will it remember me?

Back to yesterdays sun, It will rekindle me Rekindle the spirit into tomorrow and high on the wind
Sankofa flys again and again.

W. Cassandra

YOUTH JOURNAL



SANKOFA

THE RETURN TO THE AFRICAN ROOT

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