

yet three things are required in the African leader today. The first is a sense of value. The leader must have a sense of perspective before any valid leadership can be accomplished. Through perspective he will know that some things are important, others less important, and some not important. He will act according to this scale of values.

A leader must have the technical know-how of leadership in whatever form it is exercised. To do this he must be trained. A particularly interesting form of leadership training is being practised in various parts of Africa. Groups of people are brought together and given talks and practical demonstrations of such topics as a vision of the African reality, past and present; community development, administration, political science; techniques of speaking and running public meetings, and so on.

The third point necessary for the leader is, of course, a sense of responsibility. Unless the leader acts in the

name and on behalf of his people he will betray his cause.

It is this last point that I feel is particularly relevant in Africa today. In the old set-up, leadership of the chief was subject to the customs of the past and the counsels of the present. Very often today, the African leader is subject only to the whims of his people and sometimes not even to that. Power is perhaps the most terrible temptation of the African leader today. His use or misuse of power will form the Africa of tomorrow. It is too soon to judge what is now taking place in Africa. Unless, however, leadership training is embarked upon in the various forms, be it in the schools or colleges, be it in political thought or agriculture; unless this is done, it may well be that no new Africa will emerge. Instead Africa will remain for the foreseeable future a plaything between Communism and the West.

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## REVIEWS

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### Africanism

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#### R. N. NORDAU

*Pan-Africanism: a short political guide* by Colin Legum (Pall Mall)

*The African Image* by Ezekiel Mphahlele (Faber)

*Africa, A Handbook to the Continent* Edited by Colin Legum (Blond)

IT IS EASY TO ARGUE about Pan-Africanism, but much more difficult to describe it. In the first of these books, Mr. Colin Legum is not concerned with debating the merit of the concept, but with defining it and understanding it as it is used by African leaders today. In his search for its meaning, Mr. Legum makes substantial use of quotations from writers and politicians of African descent, and of documents embodying the declarations and speeches which conferences, meetings and individuals have contributed to Pan-Africanist literature. These alone justify the publication of the volume, and they certainly merit the half of the book which they occupy.

What distinguishes Mr. Legum's attitude to Pan-Africanism is that he treats it as a serious political force, and does not share the patronising view that it is no more than a slogan surrounded by a mystique. To adopt the latter approach would be to ignore the fact that a wide range of African leaders, of differing degrees of militancy, and with vastly different approaches to the more immediate problems of national and international politics, have affirmed their belief in the idea.

Yet the difficulty remains: even if it is a political force, to be reckoned with, it is not a political system.

still less a distinct and easily determined set of institutions—political or otherwise. In other words it is still largely a system of ideas—reflecting a number of goals shared by African leaders, with the ideas and the basis on which they rest still in the process of formulation and exegesis.

This is not surprising when one comes to consider the history of the Pan-Africanist movement. Itself barely sixty years old, it has only operated from a base (or, rather, a number of bases) in Africa since 1958, when the first Conference of Independent African States and the (politically as well as geographically) more extensive All African People's Conference took place in Accra.

The speed with which independence has been achieved by nearly twenty countries since then has also shifted the emphasis in the movement—away from the vague intellectual gropings on expatriate groups in the pre- and post-war periods, with their stress on generalised notions, cultural alienation and racial distinctiveness, to the political emphasis on unity.

That this unity does not exist yet is obvious—from a cursory glance at the different 'bloc' alignments (Brazzaville, Casablanca, Monrovia), as well as from the different forms that unity has been made to take where it has been achieved on a limited scale. There is, for instance, more than a difference in degree between the idea of *union* embodied in the Ghana-Guinea-Mali *entente*, and the regional political and technical association of the Brazzaville countries, the Confederation of the Maghreb, and the purely party-political meeting ground PAFMECSA.

Mr. Legum does not ignore these differences, nor does he fail to show that they have been extended into other fields; his chapter on the division of the trade union movement between followers of Mr. Mboya and Mr. Tettegah of Ghana is most useful. But, at the same time, he is able to show the broad measure of agreement that does exist between the groups as well as their individual members on the objective of African unity and its usefulness as a means of avoiding alignment with either major power-bloc in cold war politics.

That there is also substantial disagreement on the

components of the Pan-African idea and the meaning of each of them also becomes clear.

Mr. Legum believes that these differences reflect a divergence as to means alone, and that there is basic agreement on ends. To me this crystallises the problem of Pan-Africanism—whether African unity will mean more than *ad hoc* agreement on particular policies while institutions and systems remain fundamentally different; or whether some hitherto undisclosed factor will emerge which will enable a single set of them to be fashioned for use throughout the continent.

To Mr. Mphahlele, who deals with the cultural and literary bases of Pan-Africanism in two of his chapters—on *négritude* and the *African Personality*—these questions are largely irrelevant. He discards both notions as being either matters of common sense or of anthropology. He does not believe that there is any need to stress African-ness. If there is anything that is peculiarly African, he argues, it will appear automatically in the work of a good artist.

This view quite clearly contains a large part of the truth, but it overlooks the powerful emotional force behind the early development of both concepts, and their origin as a reaction to attempts at cultural assimilation and the divorcing of an educated elite from the mass of colonial peoples. If the original dynamic has been lost, and the notions have gained a momentum of their own in the setting of Africa, this does not mean that they do not exist or have value. Mr. Mphahlele's attitude also disregards the particular circumstances which constitute his own range of experience: namely, the more thorough, if at times brutal, extent to which traditional cultural patterns have been broken down and superseded in South Africa, so that there is little that is distinctive in African culture that has not been destroyed or somehow incorporated into the institutions of a multi-racial community.

All this may be so much pseudo-anthropological cant to Mr. Mphahlele, but it does at least mean that the existence of the two concepts can be explained and not just dismissed.

When he is writing of people, or politics, or criticising South African novelists and their treatment of non-whites in literature, Mr. Mphahlele shows no such impatience. The final two chapters of the books—on 'The White Man's image of the non-white in fiction' and the 'Black man's image of himself'—are both instructive and useful. So are some of his sketches.

*Africa, A Handbook to the Continent*, Mr. Legum tells us in his preface, sets out to provide a halfway house between Lord Hailey's *African Survey* and Mr. John Gunther's *Inside Africa*. It succeeds surprisingly well in doing so, though it suffers from unevenness, and includes much irrelevant and unnecessary material (sometimes more suitable to a travel guide than an informative work). It does, however, have several excellent articles on general subjects, the best of which I found to be the two on 'Aspects of African Art', which are finely illustrated. I must say, though, that I found it rather distasteful to encounter full-page advertisements throughout the volume, not least that of South Africa House—despite the presence of Mr. Legum's excellent article on this country to counter-act it. ●

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## World-Accepting Heart

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### ANDRÉ DE VILLIERS

*In a Green Night: Poems 1948-60* by Derek Walcott  
(Cape, London)

DEREK WALCOTT'S POETRY has been published in all the right magazines—*Evergreen Review*, *The London Magazine*, *New World Writing*; he is young (born 1930); he won a Rockefeller Fellowship in 1957, and a Guinness Award for poetry in 1961; he is a Trinidadian, a man of colour; and most fashionable of all, he shows in his poetry both a fierce rebellion against colonialism and an attempt to substitute an equally tyrannous opiate—unquestioning compassion. Popular and highly-praised in Britain—"the best poet in English of his generation",—maintains Cape's blurb—his work is comparatively unknown here. How much of the praise is hot air?

Colour-consciousness recurs throughout the sequence. In the earlier poems, this awareness, coupled with a fiercely scornful resentment of the insensibility and futility of colonialism in some of its aspects, sometimes leads to factitious effusions like "A Country Club Romance". In this poem, an attempt at ironic treatment of mutual unhappiness in a mixed marriage is forced into a sterile framework copied from Pound's *Mauberry* in which form and tone combine to produce an amazing vulgarity:

While every afternoon  
When tennis soothes our hates,  
Mr. Harris and his sons  
Drive past the C.C. gates.

While the almonds yellow the beaches,  
And the breezes pleat the lake,  
And the blondes pray God to 'teach us  
To profit from her mistake.'

But even here Walcott's strong point is visible. He reels in a wealth of controlled, sensuous imagery, expressed in vigorous metaphor and a tough, Donne-like compactness of language and thought. A more successful piece on a less individual more symbolic plane is "A Far Cry From Africa" in which Walcott foresees the changes impending in this continent, experiences delight at the assertions of liberty being made by those related to him in colour and ancestry, but feels horror at the way in which liberty is sometimes seized.

I who have cursed  
Between this Africa and the English tongue I love?  
The drunken officer of British Rule, how choose  
Betray them both, or give back what they give?  
How can I face such slaughter and be cool?  
How can I turn from Africa and live?

Perhaps Noni Jabavu could give him the answer. This conflict is the central theme running below the surface

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