

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES



# IROHIN

TWO THOUSAND AND TWELVE

- DEDICATED IN HONOR OF THE LATE WANGARI MAATHAI -

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*the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida*

# OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Center is partially funded under Title VI of the federal Higher Education Act as a National Resource Center on Africa. One of only 12 in the U.S., Florida's is the only Center located in the southeastern United States. The Center directs, develops, and coordinates interdisciplinary instruction, research, and outreach on Africa. The Outreach Program includes a variety of activities whose objective is to improve the teaching of Africa in primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities and local communities. Following are some of the regular activities which fall under the Outreach Program.



Teachers' summer institutes include hands-on activities such as preparing African food.

## Teachers' Workshops

The Center offers in-service workshops for K-12 teachers about instruction on Africa throughout the school year.

## Summer Institutes

Each summer, the Center holds teaching institutes for K-12 teachers.

## Jambo!

Each summer the Center holds a high school language program to introduce the students to an African language.

## Library

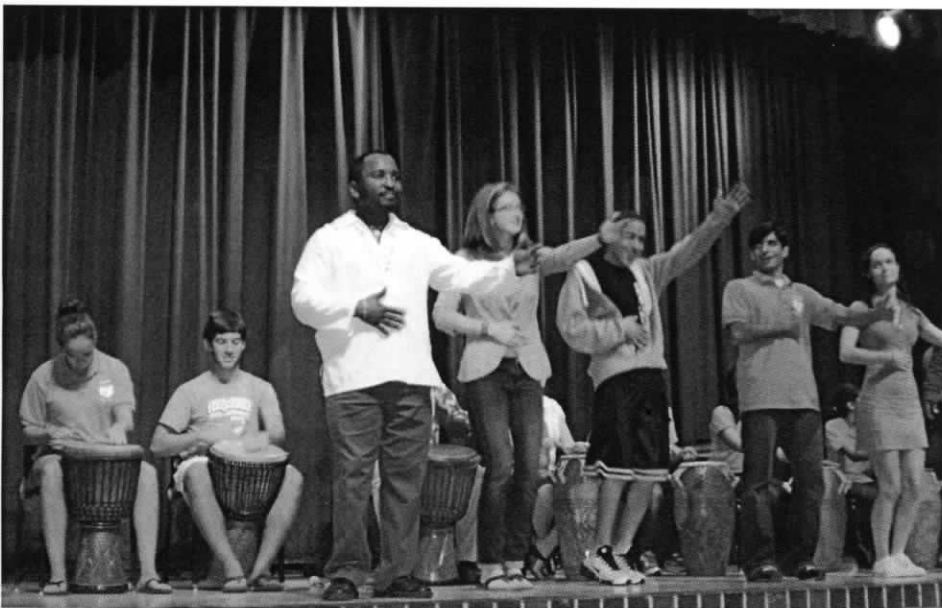
Teachers may borrow videotapes and books from the Outreach office.

## Publications

The Center publishes and distributes teaching resources including *Irohin*. In addition, the Center has published a monograph entitled *Lesson Plans on African History and Geography: A Teaching Resource*.

## Community & School Presentations

Faculty and graduate students make presentations on Africa to local communities and schools.



Students at Eastside High School participating in an African cultural presentation.

*a Note from the*

# EDITOR

Each summer, the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida hosts a K-12 Teachers Institute. The objective of the institute is to help teachers increase their knowledge about Africa and develop lesson plans to use in their classrooms. The creative lesson plans and articles in this issue of *Irohin* were written by participants in the 2011 institute. Please feel free to use these materials in your teaching and share them with other teachers. Write or call the Center for African Studies for additional copies or download this issue as well as previous ones in PDF format at <http://www.africa.ufl.edu/outreach>.

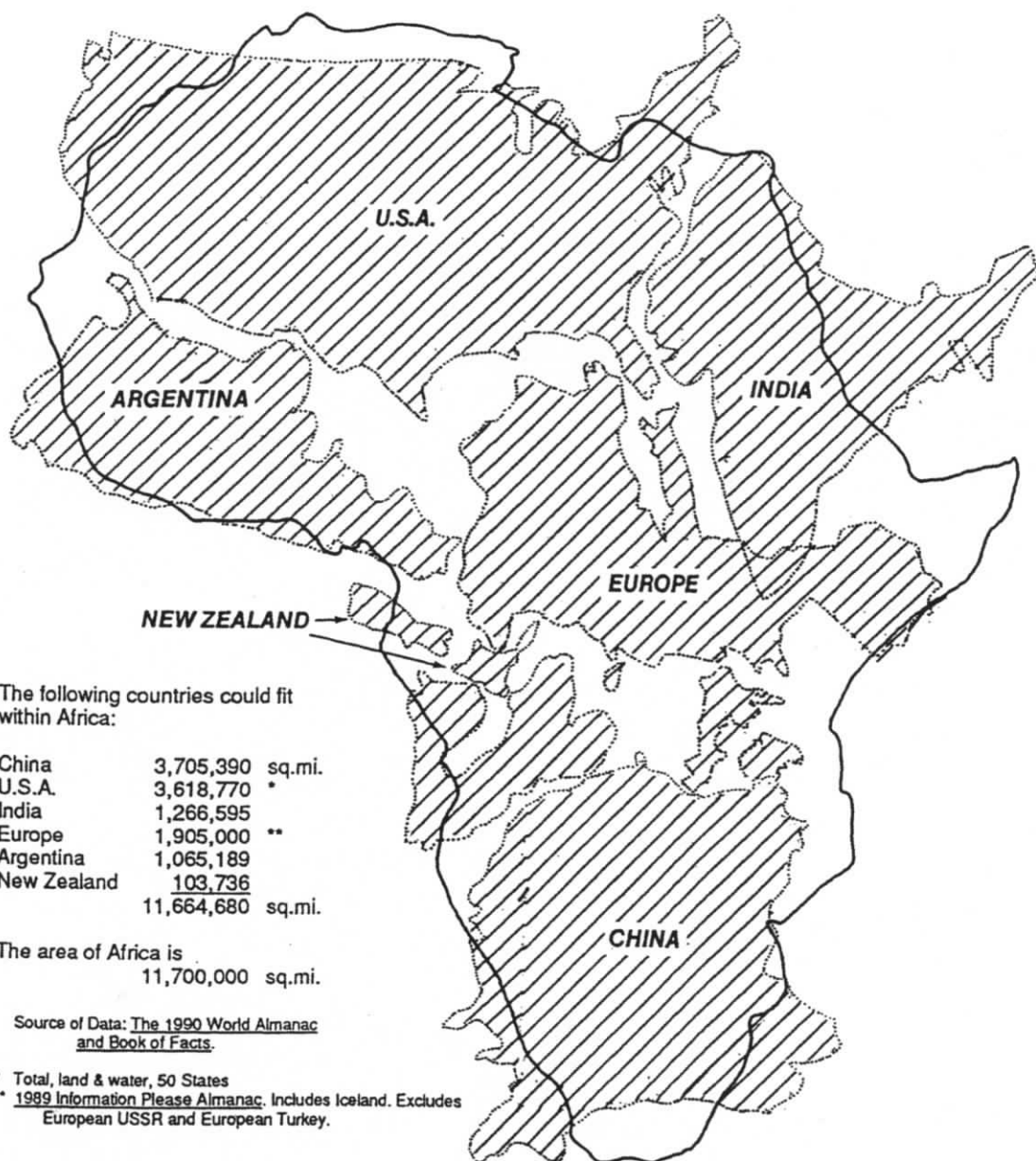


**2011 Summer institute participants model their African clothing in front of the Harn Museum:**

Dr. Agnes Leslie (Institute director), Carrie L Roberts, Sunny Vickers, Megan Putnam, Sasha Gessen, Elizabeth Gay, Ashley Whitehead, Dante Buckley, Maria Eugenia Zelaya, Sasha Gessen, Dr. Rose Lugano (presenter) and Paul Spradling.

*Understanding the Size of*

# AFRICA



The following countries could fit within Africa:

China	3,705,390	sq.mi.
U.S.A.	3,618,770	*
India	1,266,595	
Europe	1,905,000	**
Argentina	1,065,189	
New Zealand	103,736	
	11,664,680	sq.mi.

The area of Africa is  
11,700,000 sq.mi.

Source of Data: The 1990 World Almanac and Book of Facts.

\* Total, land & water, 50 States

\*\* 1989 Information Please Almanac. Includes Iceland. Excludes European USSR and European Turkey.

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Dante Buckley

# THE ROAD TO SUDANESE INDEPENDENCE

*The Emergence of the World's Newest Nation – Southern Sudan*

What's new in the world? Is it breakthrough science? Is it cutting edge technology? Is it game-changing education? How about a vibrant new and proud nation? On July 9, 2011, South Sudan, which was part of the largest country in the continent of Africa, became independent after a referendum shaping what once was the site of mass atrocities and political instability. Sudan and its culture has mystified our modern world with stories of their Lost Boys – the real version of the Survivor, a popular primetime show many Americans adore. The United States government has played a pivotal role with its U.S. Refugee Program (USRP) that placed many Lost Boys of Sudan across America starting in 2000s. The United States still plays a pivotal role in the emergence of Southern Sudan. This paper highlights the path to independence for Southern Sudan with a glimpse into the pride, food, and culture. The article concludes with supplemental material for curriculum enrichment and continual lesson planning based upon Sudanese-themed activities.

## THE STRUGGLE AND ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

Genocides in the twentieth century include Armenia (1915) and the Holocaust (1938). Many vowed that these atrocities would never happen again. In fact, the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was ratified by twenty nations, thus becoming international law, despite, Cambodia (1973), Anfal (1987), Bosnia (1993), Rwanda (1994), Srebrenica (1995), Kosovo (1998), and Darfur (2003). Darfur, which is in western Sudan border Chad, is approximately 200,000 square miles, about the size of Spain.

Sudan gained its independence from Egypt and Great Britain in January of 1956, yet was politically divided. North Sudan is largely Arabic and Muslim, while South Sudan is largely African Christian and traditional (animist) religions. As tensions between north

and south grew, South Sudan became fearful of the North. In 1958, the government began a violent campaign to convert the South. In reaction, former Southern soldiers form a rebel army – the Anya-Nya – to battle the northern aggression and Sudan remains in turmoil for fourteen years. National Unity Day occurs on March 27, 1972, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where the Sudanese government negotiates with the south to ratify a peace agreement. Afterward the government marginalized Darfur and began to hoard the wealth of resources and power. The Darfuris become known as the “abeeds” or slaves. In 1979, oil is discovered in Abu Jabra, southern Sudan, the American company, by Chevron, Sudanese president Nimeiri receives support from United States. The North adjusts its boundaries to include the oil in the North. In 1983, the Khartoum (north) government annuls the peace agreement. Sharia (which means Islamic or God's) law is imposed on all of Sudan. The Sudanese army is sent to the south to enforce laws. This action causes the formulation in the south of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). John Garang, the Sudanese politician and leader of the SPLA, is sent to bring troops back, but joins them instead. In the same year, the Khartoum government employs an Arab militia group, the Janjaweed, or Murhaleen. Chevron realizes the danger and withdraws from Sudan as thousands of mercenary fighters wage war and inflict terror upon the South. In particular, Christian Africans in Southern Sudan were targeted for years with an estimated 2.5 million killed.

In 1989, Brigadier General Omar-al-Bashir overthrows the Sudanese government with help from the National Islamic Front initially perceived to be supported by Libya. Omar-al-Bashir is still in power in the North as of 2011. In 1992, Bashir and the National Islamic Front hold a worldwide terrorist conference in North Sudan. Osama bin Laden establishes al-Qaida and a terrorist training camp. In 1996, U.S. diplomats are

removed from their Embassy in Khartoum due to safety concerns. In 1998, al-Qaida bombs the American Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. As a result, President Clinton commands Tomahawk missiles to be fired at the El Shifa Pharmaceutical Plant in Khartoum. After the missile strike, the CIA discovers remnants of nerve gas. In 2000, drought, poverty, and neglect by the government raise tensions in Darfur. Agricultural Darfuris clash with Arabic nomadic herders from the North. The government chooses to side with the North, resulting in the formation of three rebel tribes (Fur, Massalit, and Zaghawa) in Darfur. In April 2003, rebels attack a government air base in al-Fashar, Darfur. This action and others led to the 2003 genocide by the African Sunni Muslims. Over a million people seek aid as Jan Egeland, a prominent U.N. humanitarian, exclaims about Darfur, “It has quickly become the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.” In 2004, the African Union (AU) cease-fire starts monitoring the situation shortly before the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, describes the Darfur killings as genocide.

To admit committing genocide is a grave act, according to Article VIII of the U.N. Genocide Convention – one must take action if genocide is proven. Despite Colin Powell and others, leading U.N. nations contested this claim. Refugees continue to be displaced for years. In 2007, al-Bashir stalls the UN deployment of 22,000 UN and AU forces. Refugee camps spread communicable, often fatal diseases and malnutrition plagues them. A UN food drop campaign is initiated, but these starving refugees, when collecting this modern manna from the skies, were often ambushed by hiding Janjaweed militia. No viable option was available. In July 2008, the International Criminal Court (ICC) led by Chief Prosecutor Louis Moerno-Ocampo accuses Omar al-Bashir of genocide in Darfur. In March 2009, an arrest warrant is out for Bashir, yet he expels thirteen non-governmental organizations, claiming espionage by the

ICC. An arrest warrant cannot be executed. Elections are held in May 2010 but are considered corrupt. On July 21st, Bashir travels to neighboring Chad to sign a peace agreement. For the second time, the ICC issues the arrest warrant for Bashir. Chad, a participant in the ICC, refuses to arrest Bashir, citing keeping peace and protecting their civilians. Bashir exclaims that the arrest is a conspiracy of the west. On January 9, 2011, Southern Sudan voted to secede. Numerous aid organizations, including US humanitarian aid endorsed by President Obama have focused their attention on the independence and emergence of Southern Sudan. The delay was not long. On July 9, 2011, the world officially recognized Southern Sudan's rite of passage marking the birth of the youngest nation.

**NATIONAL PRIDE**

Independence is usually marked by a jubilant celebration and is highlighted in many textbooks. National pride is a powerful tool that can either bring people together or divide them. The national anthem of Southern Sudan showcases the power of a resilient voice:

*Oh God  
We praise and glorify you  
For your grace on South Sudan,  
Land of great abundance  
Uphold us united in peace and harmony.*

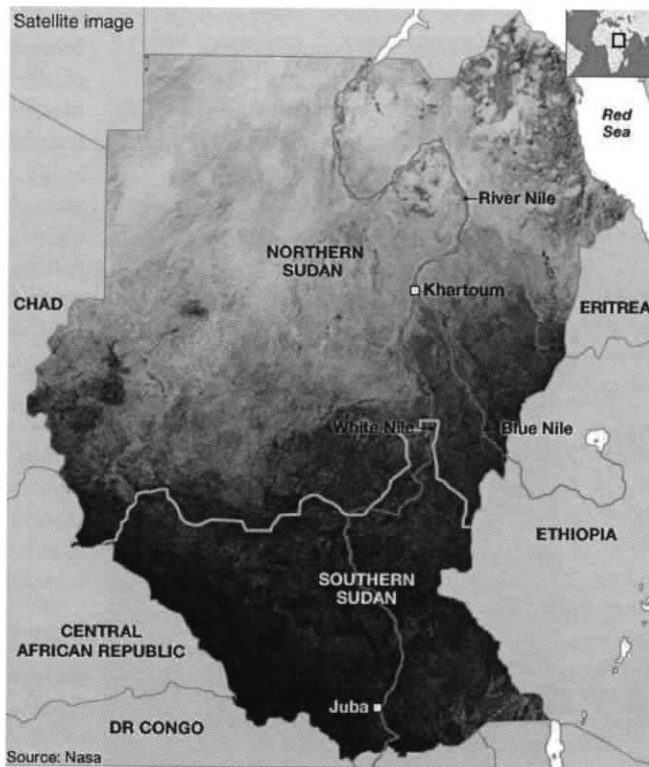
*Oh motherland  
We rise raising flag with the guiding star  
And sing songs of freedom with joy,  
For justice, liberty, and prosperity  
Shall forever more reign.*

*Oh great patriots  
Let us stand up in silence and respect,  
Saluting our martyrs whose blood  
Cemented our national foundation,  
We vow to protect our nation.*

*Oh God bless South Sudan.*

The Lost Boys, many now adults have been showing their pride as they continue to adapt to American culture since the USRP has granted them US citizenship. They have captured American hearts with their survival stories from Africa to America. One of the

affirmations shared by Jacob Atem (a Lost Boy who is pursuing his doctorate degree at the University of Florida), "We say that Education is our Father and Mother as our parents are longer living to help guide us, so we need to do our best in education." This sentiment and many other personal accomplishments were shared, giving the students a vivid perspective and hands-on experience of Africa. During a presentation, Jacob held up a photograph of a US marine, his brother, who carried him on his back for 2000 miles during the Darfur exodus.



*Northern and Southern Sudan borders*

**MAINTAINING PEACE**

Peace between Northern and Southern Sudan is imminent, but will require the powers that be to continue their efforts to protect it. The United States has invested its efforts into maintaining the peace based on the following conditions:

1. A peaceful and principled resolution to the crisis on the North-South border, including Abyei, South Kordofan, and the Blue Nile
2. Peaceful resolution of other outstanding separation issues that could lead to a resumption of North-South War, including border demarcation, oil wealth sharing, and citizenship status
3. An end to the crisis in Darfur and comprehensive peace agreed to by all parties

4. Security for all people in the Republic of South Sudan, including protection from militia violence, and responsible and accountable Southern security services
5. Tangible and measurable steps toward democratic governance in the North and the South
6. Accountability for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide

**Culture, Food, and Music**  
3 Simple Sudanese Dishes

- 1) Salada Aswalt (eggplant with peanut butter served with pita bread)  
Ingredients: eggplant, peanut butter, lemon juice, garlic, black pepper, frying oil for eggplant
- 2) Koufta (spicy meatball)  
Ingredients: ground beef, garlic, onions, red peppers, bread crumbs, meat seasoning, frying oil for the ground beef, then slowly cooked in tomato sauce
- 3) Moula Bawmia (beef/okra stew served with rice)  
Ingredients: beef, meat seasoning, okra, onions, tomato paste, rice

Okra is an abundant vegetable found in Sudan and many meals are prepared with it. Moula Bawmia is just one recipe. Some others are the Moula Kouthra (blended okra with beef) and Moula Bawmia Ou Tomathom (okra soup with onions or tomatoes).

**INVESTORS**

Southern Sudan is becoming an emerging market as its economy is literally being built almost from scratch. At present infrastructure is virtually non-existent, although the donor community, governments, and commercial investors are all involved. Since the commission of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, progress is evident, especially in Juba, the new capital. Time will tell what is in store for those who want to transform Juba and its neighboring states. The GoSS has outline specific investment strategies and policies critical to implementing them.



Elizabeth Gay

# GENDER AND LEADERSHIP

## *Powerful Female Rulers in African History*

Since it is highly important for humans to understand that gender is irrelevant to effective leadership, historical female rulers from diverse areas of the African continent have been highlighted to illustrate passion, bravery, and the importance of cultural preservation. The prominence of African women in government has taken place for centuries. These powerful women can be credited with helping to lay the foundations for both the women's liberation and African independence movements. Their demonstrations of confidence, prowess, and power are examples that can empower others.

### **EASTERN AFRICA: MADAGASCAR**

Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world, and home to diverse wildlife, lush vegetation, and a complex population. Its people, the Malagasy, derive from many ethnic groups, though the Merina people make up the largest portion of the population.

In 1829, Ranavalona I began her 33 year rule as the sovereign queen of Madagascar. Her reign is marked by her efforts to protect the island and its people from European influence and exploitation. Ranavalona's primary concern was the creation of an autarky, a completely self-sufficient economy.

Queen Ranavalona's husband and cousin, King Radama I, died suddenly at the age of 36. During his rule, Madagascar's ethnic groups were almost completely united. This unity was achieved largely by forced submission of non-Merina groups. By the late 1820s, Madagascar had begun a small scale Industrial Revolution of its own. The island traded extensively with France and Britain, was largely Christianized, and populated by many foreigners.

The queen's coronation ceremony took place in August of 1829. Except for her own expansionist efforts to dominate the entire island, the queen's political agenda differed drastically from that of the late king. Ranavalona sought to reverse the ways of

her husband. She was successful in halting the Europeanization of the island, as well as for revitalizing the fundamental traditions of the Merina people. She reversed many of her husband's policies with notable speed.

Ranavalona's purge of her husband's relatives and confidants was the first of many drastic changes to Malagasy government after her ascension. Many rivals of the Queen were executed, and her court was composed of those who often opposed the late king's perspectives and ideas. Scores of sorcerers, influential priests, traditionalists, and warriors surrounded the queen at all times.

Queen Ranavalona's vision was of a nation free from economic dependency. She nullified peace treaties and halted trade with the islands of Mauritius and Réunion, controlled by Britain and France, respectively. This action greatly angered Charles X, King of France. In retaliation, in 1829 he ordered an attack on the Malagasy cities of Tintingue and Tamatave. Queen Ranavalona's forces defeated the attackers with ease.

The queen's attempt's to expel Christianity and restore traditional Malagasy religion began formally in 1835. During that year, Ranavalona called an assembly of foreign missionaries to the capital city of Antananarivo. During the conference, the Queen declared her opposition to Christianity, forbade the missionaries there to alter the religious customs of the Merina, and demanded their departure from Madagascar. After her forcable removal of the missionaries, thousands of Malagasy converts were persecuted and put to death. The determination of the queen to ensure independence for Madagascar enraged the British and French. They formed a joint force and attacked the island in 1845, but again were forced to retreat by Ranavalona's mighty army, believed to be between 20,000 and 30,000 strong.

Ranavalona wanted to escape European influence, but she did bring education and modernization to Madagascar. Scholars whom she appointed created a new code of Merina law and wrote the first dictionary of Merina. Under her reign, over 20,000 Malagasy people were employed in local factories, producing a wealth of items, such as ink, porcelain, rum, guns, textiles, ammunition, glass, cement, and bricks. The queen's new palace, located in the capital of Antananarivo, was constructed entirely of materials from Madagascar. In August of 1861, at age 83, Ranavalona died in her sleep at her palace.

Ranavalona's only child, Prince Rakoto, was named successor, though the young king was assassinated just two years into his reign. During the last 55 years of the Malagasy monarchy, except for King Rakoto's brief leadership, only women ruled the island.

Though her rule is often perceived as oppressive and her punishments harsh, Queen Ranavalona is best remembered for her unwavering allegiance to Madagascar, her expansion of local industries and education, her territorial dominance, and her preservation of Malagasy culture. During her 33-year reign she managed to resist all attempts by colonial powers to seize Madagascar.

### **SOUTHERN AFRICA: ANGOLA**

Bordering the Atlantic Ocean, Angola is a nation with vast plateaus and lush forests stretching across its interior. Angola is home to many ethnic groups, and dominated today by the Ovimbundu people. Angola has a long history of brutal colonial control. Portuguese traders subjugated Angola for over 400 years.

Nzinga Mbande was born in 1582 in the kingdom of Ndongo, which is now known as Angola. Her 37-year reign is characterized by courage, pride, and resistance. Nzinga Mbande was one of Africa's earliest fighters for independence.

Nzinga, daughter of the ngola, or king, was born during a time of intense conflict between her people, the Mbundu, and the Portuguese. The oldest sibling of four, Nzinga was an intelligent and confident princess.

Nzinga's only brother, Mbandi, ascended to the throne in 1617, upon the death of their father. Ngola Mbandi was an ineffective leader, many times fleeing in the face of imminent danger. At the beginning of his rule, the capital city of the Ndongo, known as Kabasa, was burned down by the Portuguese. Due to widespread destruction of food stores and crops, famine ensued. The Ndongo were exhausted, starving, and fearful of another attack. Mbandi called upon his older sister, Nzinga, now age 40, to negotiate with and make peace among the Portuguese.

Her journey began in 1622. Nzinga and her servants traveled for weeks from their capital city of Kabasa to meet with the Portuguese viceroy, João Correia de Sousa, in the city of Luanda. When they arrived, Nzinga and a few of her servants were brought into the chamber of the viceroy. The room was richly decorated, and the viceroy was seated in a comfortable chair. Since there was no chair for her, Nzinga summoned one of her servants to kneel, and used her servant's back as a chair, demonstrating her royal power. This action stunned the viceroy, who listened intently as the proud princess gave a detailed account about the strength of the Ndongo kingdom, describing her people as well armed and ready for battle. She made logical arguments and intelligent statements that resonated with the foreign viceroy. During her stay among the Portuguese, Nzinga understood that her conversion to Catholicism would allow her to gain trust. She was baptized in Luanda and given the name Anna da Souza. By the end of Nzinga's stay, the Portuguese and the Mbundu signed a peace treaty.

Upon her return, Nzinga was well received by her people. Ngola Mbande is believed to have committed suicide in 1624, leaving his sister, Nzinga, to lead the kingdom. To consolidate her power, Nzinga had her nephew, Mbande's son, killed. She insisted on using the masculine title Ngola, which later developed into her country's modern name, Angola.

Nzinga wanted to perpetuate the traditions of the Mbundu culture. She formally renounced Catholicism and encouraged her people to embrace their ancient religions, medicines, ceremonies, and other customs.

Surrounding herself with women, Nzinga restructured the army. Three regiments were formed, Nzinga leading one, and her younger sisters, Kifunji and Mukambu, leading the others. The warrior queen, accompanied by her menacing army, attacked the Portuguese. The battle ended in victory for the Portuguese, who were equipped with thousands of horses. Nzinga's sisters were imprisoned in Luanda, and the Portuguese waged several more attacks on the Mbundu. Thousands lost their lives.



*Yaa Asantewaa*

In 1630, Nzinga's plan was to make another long and difficult journey. Because of the suffering of her people at the hands of the Portuguese, Nzinga made the decision to move her kingdom from the flatlands of the Ndongo into a new territory in the eastern highlands. This area was previously conquered by the Mbundu, and was known as Matamba. Over the course of five years, the Mbundu people and their animals walked for hundreds of miles, across dangerous terrain, hoping for a peaceful life in their new region.

As the new ruler of Matamba, Nzinga personally led her warriors into a series of ferocious battles with the Portuguese. The Mbundu were successful a number of times, causing the Portuguese to retreat. In 1640, in an attempt to further strengthen Matamba, Nzinga decided to ally her kingdom with the Dutch, the well known rivals of the Portuguese. She sold prisoners of war to the Dutch in exchange for guns and ammunition. Eventually, the Dutch conquered the Portuguese stronghold of Luanda.

In the year 1663, at the age of 81, Nzinga Mbande died peacefully in Matamba, leaving behind a thriving and independent kingdom. Her perseverance, bravery, and intelligence made her an effective ruler. Although some of her methods are viewed by some as severe or cruel, Nzinga Mbande has been regarded as a model for women's liberation as well as for fighters for African independence. Nzinga acted as a skilled diplomat and courageous warrior, and continues to symbolize wisdom and pride for many throughout Africa.

## WESTERN AFRICA: GHANA

Ghana is located just north of the equator. It has an assortment of landscapes: flatlands, coastal areas, mountains, forests, plateaus, and rivers. Ghana was dominated for two centuries by a state led by the Asante, which was the most powerful of a series of states formed by an ethnic group led by the Akan. The Akan people make up the most populous of all of the ethnic groups in Ghana.

For 19 years, Queen Mother Yaa Asantewaa led the Edweso people of Asante in the area now known as Ghana. Yaa Asantewaa's leadership is distinguished by her valor, her outspokenness, and her staunch refusal to submit to colonialism. Yaa Asantewaa's brother, Nana Akwasi Afrane Okpese, was a leader of the Ejisu people of Asante. He appointed her Queen Mother during the time of his rule. In 1894, he died, leaving his sister to choose his replacement. She chose her grandson, but his leadership was terminated just two years later, leaving her to rule the area known as the Ejisu-Juaben District, an area within the Asante Confederacy.

As a ruler, Yaa Asantewaa exhibited prowess, compassion, and intelligence. The queen was well-known for being hardworking, intrepid, forthright, physically strong, an excellent

judge of people, and a zealous nationalist. She possessed a profound love for history, the arts, and the traditions of her people. Yaa Asantewaa aligned herself with her female subjects. She considered brutalities against women personal insults, and levied harsh punishments against men accused of victimizing women. The Queen was both accommodating and communicative, but believed in the use of force when necessary.

Yaa Asantewaa was most likely born in 1832. During her lifetime, the Asante Confederacy, an independent federation of Asante families, brimmed with strife and discord. Civil wars, rebellions, and the impending threat of colonialism had generated instability and uncertainty for many Asante. The British, who dubbed the area the Gold Coast, interfered with the economy by taking control of gold mines previously owned by the state and demanding high taxes from the Asante. The British were relentless in their attempts to eradicate traditional religious practices and local customs. Several rebellions against the British were quelled and many lives were lost.

The Golden Stool, a sacred object of the Asante people, is believed to manifest the Sunsum, or spirit of the Asante nation. It symbolizes unity among the Asante people, and legend says that it descended from the heavens into the lap of the first Asante king, Osei Tutu I. The Golden Stool is sacred, and not intended to be used as furniture. Even kings were not permitted to sit on it. In 1900, the Asante capital of Kumasi was captured by British forces. The British governor of the Gold Coast then demanded to sit on the

sacred stool. The Asante people refused to relinquish the precious object, and their King, Prempeh I, as well as other Asante government officials were banished to the Seychelles as a result. The stool was quickly hidden underground, and the Asante began preparations for war.

Initially, many Asante were reluctant to join the cause because of their opposition to Prempeh I and the fear that his power would be restored. Yaa Asantewaa's resounding address rebuked the men for their hesitancy and called on the women to take up arms. Eventually, over 5,000 freedom fighters were assembled. The Queen's troops besieged the British for three months at Kumasi, but several thousand British soldiers pillaged towns, seized land, killed countless Asante, and captured Yaa Asantewaa. At the age of sixty, the Queen Mother Asantewaa headed the Asante Rebellion against the British and was actually present on the battlefields. This conflict is known as the Yaa Asantewaa War for Independence or the War of the Golden Stool. It began officially in March of 1900. She was exiled to the Seychelles, and died there twenty years later. At the war's end, the British absorbed the Asante Confederacy the Gold Coast colony.

History recalls Yaa Asantewaa fondly. She signifies the fact that gender has no bearing on the quality of leadership. Though her kingdom fell to the British, the Queen Mother exhibited passion, bravery, and loyalty in the face of injustice, and has become a lasting symbol to the Asante people in their stand against imposed authority.

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#### Image Source

<http://blackhistoryheroes.blogspot.com/2010/05/queen-mother-nana-yaa-asantewaa.html>

Sasha Gessen

# NUBIAN SPORTING TRADITION

*Wrestling in the Past and Present*

**B**ased on the amount of Egyptian art that had been found that featured wrestling, it can be said that wrestling was one of the most prominent sports in Nubia. The earliest portrayal of Nubian wrestling is found on the wall painting from the tomb of Tyanen, an Egyptian officer of 1410 BCE. The following illustration of wrestling was found on the relief in the rock tomb of Meryre II in 1355 BCE (Carroll, 1988).

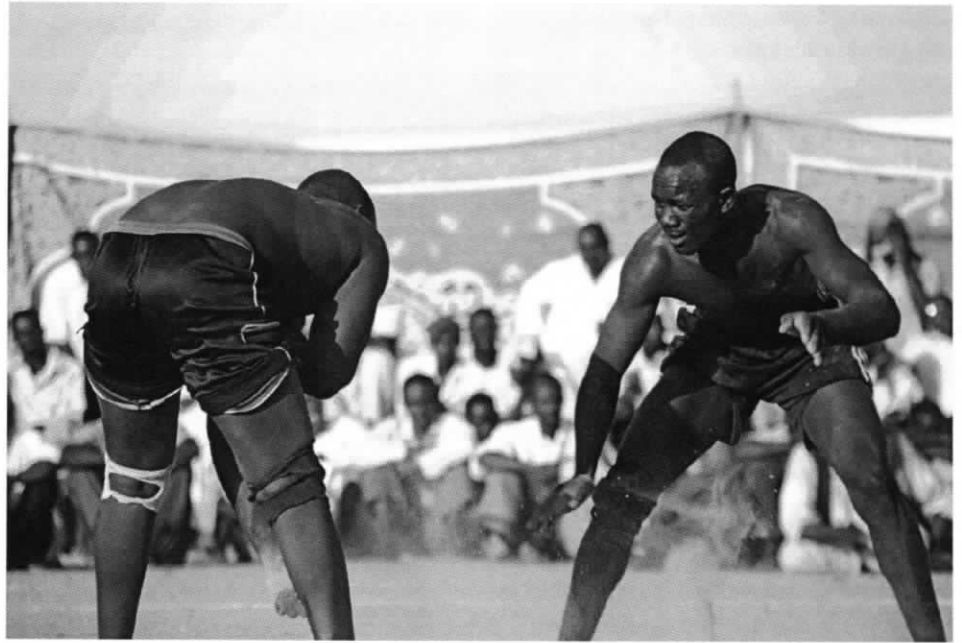
According to an oral tradition, the Nuba began wrestling to imitate the characteristics of nearby animals such as monkeys, insects, and other animals that were found in the nearby mountain hills. For example, if trying to imitate the baboon, they would rub their hands on the ground and stamp their feet.

## IMPORTANCE OF WRESTLING

The dream of every Nuba boy was to one day represent his village in a wrestling match. According to Leni Reifentahl in her book *The Last of the Nuba* (1976), the roles of young children in wrestling were the following:

*“Young children, not yet able to walk properly begin to imitate the dancing and wrestling positions of their elders. From his earliest youth every healthy boy will prepare himself to become a wrestler. The children hold wrestling fetes among themselves and decorate themselves in a similar way to their older brothers and sisters. The best of them rise to higher and higher grades. Their heart’s desire is to be selected for ‘initiation’ by being the winner of the ceremonial wrestling matches and then be accepted into the highest grade of the strongest wrestlers’ (Reifentahl, 1995).”*

“The immediate goal was to show their intelligence, character and to be chosen to live in the “Zariba” (cattle camp) outside of town” (Carroll, 1988). Those boys who showed at an early age to be exceptional were taken to the camp begin training. The rest of the Nuba boys were taken to the camp by age thirteen.



*Two Nubian wrestlers squaring off in Khartoum.*

Aside from their chores of caring for the herd, they were trained daily with techniques of wrestling by the village champion. The young boys built a bond and became part of a “cultic fraternity,” signifying the entrance into manhood.

## RITUALS BEFORE CEREMONIAL WRESTLING

The wrestling matches were held between Nuba villages during sowing and harvest seasons. They began after the first “dura” (harvest) in November and December and lasted until the end of March. During those years were the dura was very good, many matches would take place at the same time at the same place in a row beside each other.

The location of the ceremonial wrestling matches was decided by the Kudjur, the leader of the village, and was not told to the community until the last minute. The location was chosen based on the amount of surplus grain and beer that it had to offer because after the wrestling matches festivities followed. The surplus grain consumption

symbolized their gratitude to the spirit world for the plentiful harvest.

When the decision was made by the Kudjur, two messengers were sent out to offer invitations to the good wrestlers. The messengers would normally appear at sunset, which was after the Nuba returned from working in the fields. The messengers would carry a large triangular leather cloth attached to a wooden stem, which the Nuba always carried for cult matters. When they arrived at the village, one messenger would slap the ground, just like it is done before a wrestler enters the ring, and the other messenger would blow a horn. The word would spread quickly and the selected Nuba would run back eagerly to their Zariba to pass the word to all potential competitors.

If the ceremony was to be a large one, where the best wrestlers would attend, entire hill communities would attend except small children and elders that could not walk the long distances. When the site was extremely

far wrestlers would arrive at the host city the evening before and sleep in their host's house. Due to the long distances many had walked, most people went to bed early to be well rested for the following day.

Each village had its own flag that was stored with the ceremonial dress of the best wrestlers, the long horn, the drums, and other wrestling and ceremonial materials in a special house. It was tradition that a champion wrestler was only dressed and smeared with ash while his followers watched in or in front of this house.

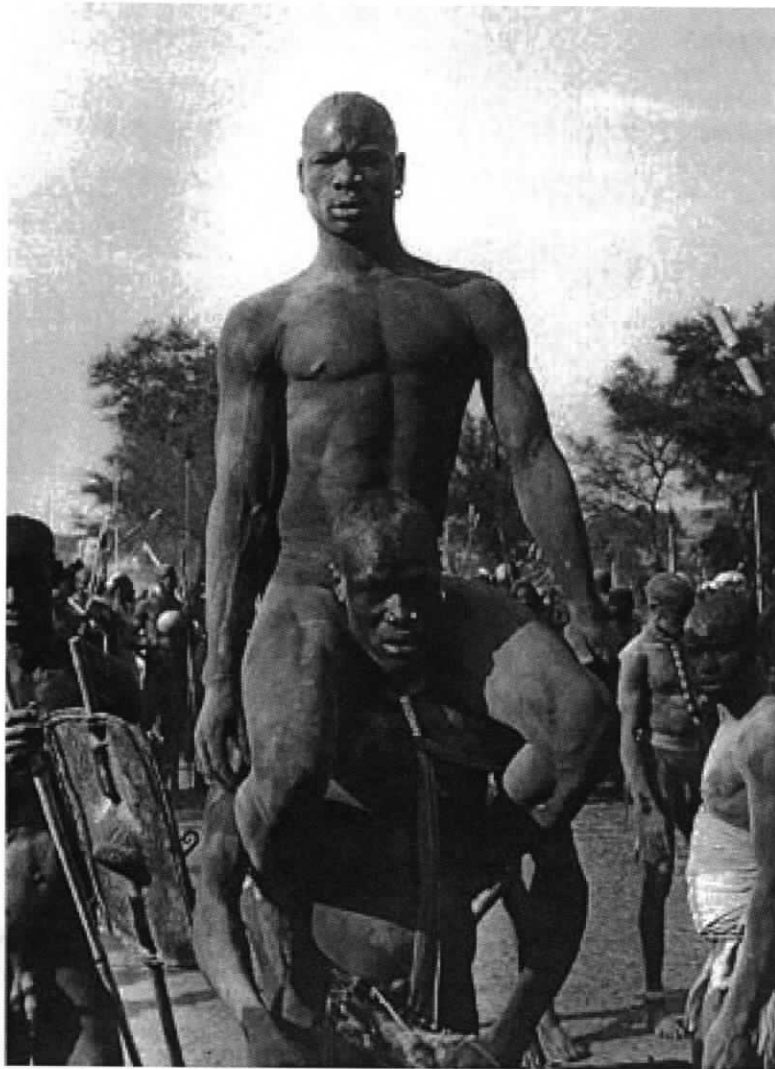
On the way to the site, everyone was decorated in some way with ash, fur, beads, and the wrestlers normally had calabashes (dried gourds) that hung from their belts. The village was normally led by their champion wrestler, who held the flag. Then followed the married men and boys and then the women carrying the heavy pots of water and marissa (stew) to the ceremonies.

## WRESTLING MATCHES

The matches normally began in the early afternoon, but sometimes when there were matches between experienced wrestlers, they would begin mid-day and last until sunset. During these matches other Nuba men would form a circle nearby and put their knees and forehands on the ground. Then the young men would put scatter ashes from calabashes over them. Also, other men would hum in chorus with one calling out

words in solo. This was a form of communal prayer that was done to help their champion emerge from the match as a winner.

Wrestling was extremely important to the Nubian people for both religious and social reasons. It represented the boys' entrance to manhood and provided all the young men the opportunity to be part of a group. It was believed that those wrestlers who had been successful in their matches would enjoy a status that would follow them to the grave.



*Nubian wrestler*

Furthermore, through wrestling they were able to dramatize their animistic beliefs. Wrestling was also believed to closely connect them to fertility rites. Finally, wrestling was a way to unify all men from a village, especially those that were dislocated or isolated (Carroll, 1988).

## MODERN DAY "UPPER & SOUTHERN NUBIA"

Nubia was broken into three distinct regions – Lower Nubia, which is modern southern Egypt, and Upper and Southern Nubia, which is modern day Sudan. Due to all the artifacts found by archaeologists, anthropologist, and historians, it can be said that the Nubas of southern Kordofan are most likely the descendants of the ancient Nubian wrestlers.

Wrestling is still a very important sport in Sudan. Some argue that, due to the current state of Southern Sudan's coming of independence, the country should not be taking time to focus on wrestling, but that is completely erroneous because wrestling is part of their tradition. To the Sudanese, wrestling is a way of bringing peace to a country that is in pain. Wrestling brings together different villages and allows them to have ceremonies where they celebrate their culture and their spiritual views, which are still very strong. Wrestling matches allow the tensions felt throughout the country to be released and brings people together to help develop new relationships

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Megan Putnam

# MAKING CROSS CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

*With Traditional African Foods*

*"The person who has not traveled widely thinks his or her mother is the only cook" - African Proverb*

**W**henver I start a new unit of study with my students, the first thing students ask is, "What kind of food do they eat?" Food is something that makes us human and joins us together. It is often more than simply sustenance in that it gives depth to our culture and to who we are as people. Meals have meanings and can comfort us or remind us of important events. Knowing about food from other cultures leads us to know about the cultures and the people themselves.

The vast continent of Africa has as diverse food as it has diverse people. Many traditional African staples have been blended with new ideas over time due to trade and colonialism. What is left today is an immense array of spices and flavors. This essay will highlight common features of African meals and touch upon various foods of regions of Africa.

Some aspects of food and food preparation are common to multiple ethnic groups across the continent. For example, meals are generally communal events in which a family shares a common bowl or platter. In this case, everyone washes their hands, gathers around the food, and uses their right hand as a utensil. By touching the food, one might assert that the diners are more connected with their meal. Table manners include only eating the portion of food in the section of the food bowl closest to you. To reach across and grab a desired piece would be rude. A gracious cook will tear up the meat into pieces and toss it around the bowl to ensure everyone has their proper share. In many cases, it is considered polite to leave a small portion of your food to signify that you have enjoyed a gracious sufficiency.

Recipes for preparing food are traditionally passed from the women of one generation to



*Tajine is a stew named for the dish it is cooked in: a pot with a cone lid*

another without being written down, so the cook must rely on the taste, smell, and look of the food to know when it is correct. Women throughout Africa are highly involved in food preparation; it is often the women and girls who plant and harvest, as well as cook and serve, the food. Food is traditionally cooked over a fire in a large pot supported by three stones. It is arduous work, but can also be a time for women to enjoy each other's company. Women often prepare aspects of the food together, for example, shelling peanuts or pounding grain can turn food preparation into a social activity.

Though foods can be broken down by ethnic group, many are common to an entire region. In north Africa, food may have been influenced by the cultures in the Middle East.

Breakfast would generally consist of coffee or tea and a porridge made from millet or chickpea flour. Common for lunch or dinner in Morocco, tajine is a stew named for the dish in which the meal is cooked: a pot with a handle designed to be easily lifted while the food is slow-cooked in order to adjust ingredients. Though there are four basic forms of tajines, vegetables and meats can be adjusted to create over sixty combinations. A tajine is often served over couscous, a staple grain in north Africa, where lamb is the most commonly eaten meat. Muslim influences in the north prohibit the consumption of alcohol for many people. This may have led to the variety of syrupy drinks in the area. For example, karkadeh (a hibiscus tea) in Egypt and orgeat/rozata (a flowery drink) from Tunisia.

Food in east Africa has been influenced by traders from India who brought curries and other spice blends. A thick cornmeal or millet porridge is often the base of a dish and may be topped or mixed with a soup or stew to add flavor and depth to the meal. Another common way to eat a soup or stew is to scoop it with a ball of starch (most likely made from cornmeal). In Tanzania, for example, a staple food is ugali, which is eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It is a cornmeal paste that is eaten by rolling it into a ball, making a small indentation, and scooping the stew-



**Yams**

-almost like an edible spoon. Along coastal regions, fish and other seafood are commonly eaten. Ethiopia, as it was never colonized, has perhaps one of the most distinct food staples in all of Africa. Here, teff, a grain, is used to make injera bread, which is then used to wrap the meat or stew of the main dish.

Southern African cuisine is heavily influenced by trade and colonialism, so that many

dishes are not truly African, but are a blend of cultures. Food in southern Africa has been influenced by India, which introduced many new spices. The British brought the idea of roast meat and potatoes for a feast. Also, the Malay slaves introduced the tradition of combining sweet and sour flavors that now mark South African cooking. A staple grain in southern Africa is maize, called "mealie pap." Most commonly a cornmeal porridge is a "mash" that can be topped with a stew.

West Africa offers a number of staple grains and root crops that are the base of meals. Yams are often eaten and yam festivals are common to celebrate the harvest. Yams are hearty and can be stored for six months therefore can be reserved for times when food is not as abundant. Cassava, though introduced from South America, is now a staple food throughout much of West Africa. It can be boiled and eaten with onions and oil or mashed into fufu. Fufu, much like ugali from Tanzania, is a thick, pasty substance that can be rolled into a ball and used to scoop a soup or stew. Fufu can be made from yams, cassava, rice, plantains, millet, and other grains. As is common in other parts of Africa, meals are generally a soup or stew served over a grain. One common stew is made from mashed peanuts and tomato paste. Fish is common in coastal and river regions and is often dried to preserve it.

In summary, African food is a central point to many cultural groups. What may initially look like simple starches with meager stews are "comfort foods" to many individuals. Foods are diverse and though similarities exist across the continent, each ethnic group has their own roots, therefore their own traditional meals. Learning about foods of a region can be an excellent way for students to take stock of what they are learning and truly make a cross-cultural connection.

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## IDEAS FOR CLASS

- 1 Have students compare and contrast foods they are familiar with to foods in Africa.
- 2 Have students identify familiar ingredients used in unfamiliar ways in African foods.
- 3 Encourage students to cook an African recipe with their family at home.
- 4 While researching a particular country, have students bring in a traditional dish to share.
- 5 Prepare samples of a cultural food to accompany a unit of study.
- 6 Encourage students to create a recipe using indigenous and/or locally available foods in your area.
- 7 Have students research crops of a particular region of Africa and how those crops are used in the food.
- 8 Have students research outside effects on the cuisine of a region (such as trade, migration, etc).

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Carrie Roberts

# THE SONG AND DANCE OF LIBERATION

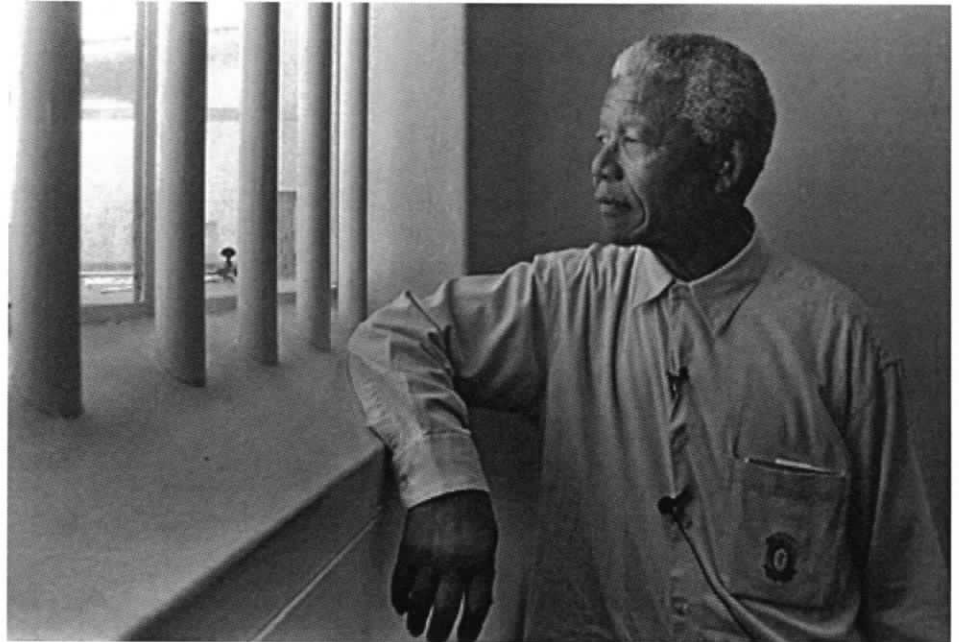
*The unsung story of the Apartheid of South Africa*

**B**oom, boom, boom. Listen. Sing. Dance. It's the sound of the heartbeat of the African people fighting for freedom. From Rwanda to Nigeria to South Africa, the untold stories of liberation were sung and danced in ways that could be felt all over the world. The history of dancing and singing to represent something with a greater meaning that could not be expressed merely through words goes back to before the beginning of time. Immense events like the Apartheid in South Africa show that what could not be spoken was sung and danced with a beat that moved everyone to change.

The history of singing and dancing dates back before the Mayflower left England's shore, before the slaves sang their way through the treacherous lands from the south to the north in the United States, before the daunting dehumanization and spiritual longings of the South African people. Whether it was for a celebratory occasion, such as a wedding or birth of a first born, or for a heart-rending occasion, such as death or bondage, music and dance was utilized as a mobilizing tool. With music, there was no age limit, no gender, and no specific guidelines needed to use this tool.

This tool, an organizer in its own right, created a way for the African people to join a force that was not to be reckoned with. There were different kinds of music that represented a specific purpose. The music and dance had a purpose that resonated within the souls of the African people and enabled them to form a union against the ones strangling their existence through extremely repressive conditions. This was especially true with apartheid in South Africa.

The year of 1948 was the mark of a tremendous struggle for the blacks in South Africa. For forty years, they nonviolently fought against the apartheid regime and sang a cry for their country far longer than anyone could have ever have imagined. In the 1948



*Nelson Mandela*

elections, the Herenigde Nasionale Party (Reunited National Party) under the leadership of Protestant cleric Daniel Francois Malan campaigned for the policy of apartheid – and won. Under this policy, the ruling party was empowered to separate the South African people into four distinct racial groups: white, black, coloured (mixed races), and Indian. “Life among [black] Africans was deeply disrupted by European settlement.” With this separation in place, they were then able to differentiate the torture between the blacks and the coloreds in South Africa.

The two main pillars of grand apartheid were the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act, both issued in 1950. Legislation prohibited any black from working or living in a white area unless they had a pass and also initiated the abrupt relocation of blacks to black-only townships from their own towns. These townships were poorly constructed and provided abysmal living conditions for the blacks. They were denied

basic citizenship rights and refused their basic freedoms, such as walking down a street without identification being demanded by white officials.

This pass was called a dompas (“dumb pass” in Afrikaans) and blacks were to carry this pass whenever they went to work in a white’s-only area. Ironically, the jobs they went to were only to benefit the whites. These jobs included, but were not limited to, diamond mine workers and house cleaners. Both of these jobs consisted of backbreaking 16-plus hour days for very little pay. Meanwhile, the black South African people were being slaughtered and hanged in jails. The purpose of this apartheid regime was not only to wipe out the black population completely, but to squeeze everything out of their spirits and feelings of self-worth as well – but their voices were heard.

The voices of angry, frustrated black South Africans caused an outcry heard by the diamond miners working near Johannesburg



and deep within the cold cells of the jails and prisons. Ingoma, or freedom songs, told stories that sent a message to the black South African people that the struggle was not over and that they needed to stand strong. They would cry out "Amandla!" which meant power! They would sing with a determination that could not be measured by anyone. The mineworkers developed a danced called "gumboots" that consisted of stomping and

Rivonia Trial. As their situation changed, so did the songs and dances.

Nelson Mandela speaks of his "long walk to freedom" during his 28 years in prison where he would be forced to perform demoralizing acts by the Afrikaan officials. Mandela spoke of a world of freedom and in February of 1990, black South Africa sang a victory for their leader when President Frederik Willem



*A page of a dompas Apartheid-era identity document.*

hitting their boots that showed a resistance not only from their mouths, but also from their bodies. Their resistance was unique and unstoppable. "In the 1976 uprising, thousands of youth left the country to join the African National Congress's underground army, Umkhonto we Sizwe (the spear of the nation)."

In the 1980s, the youth took the reins of their predecessors and fought with songs that gave them a new hope. "As the global anti-apartheid movement grew, South African youth were buoyed by a powerful new combination of song and dance: the *Toyi-Toyi*." They sang songs for their dying families, they sang for the harsh living conditions they were given, and they sang for their leaders in bondage, such as Nelson Mandela, who had been convicted of inciting to strike and leaving the country without a passport in 1961 and then later imprisoned for life for sabotage of the

de Klerk signed for Nelson Mandela to be released from prison on February 11, 1990, and later with the African National Congress in their victory, electing Mandela president in 1994.

Throughout history, song and dance within the African continent has not only set a mood within the hearts of the African people, but told a story to be remembered of struggle and distress, as well as told a story of victory and of a strong people that could not be defeated. It mobilized and organized the blacks of South Africa toward change that came about through the voices and movements of liberation. A song that comes from every heart and soul of the African people that sings "the good old days have just begun" (Hugh Musekela) and will continue for years to come.

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Oren Shahar

# THE INTERNET

## & *E-commerce in Africa*

The World Trade Organization (1998) claims that e-commerce is expected to facilitate low-cost access to international bidding and supply processes for developing country firms, and to information on import restrictions, customs regulations, and potential demand. It is generally believed that e-commerce enables developing country producers to overcome traditional limitations associated with restricted access to information, high market entry costs, and isolation from potential markets (April & Cradock, 2000; Cohen et al., 2000; Maitland, 2001).

Business-to-business e-commerce is as any form of commercial transaction or structured information exchange that takes place between firms within industry value chains via an ICT-based, computer-mediated network. B2B e-commerce can be divided into two categories: (1) open market-place-based trade that occurs in public Internet-based environments and (2) direct trade between business partners that occurs through either public Internet-based platforms or proprietary computer networks, or both. The former generally takes place at various World Wide Web-based auctions or exchange sites. In contrast, the latter tends to occur either through a firm's extranet, a web site that has an online purchasing function, or an EDI network.

This paradigm thus suggests that developing country firms can expect productivity gains through improved procurement and inventory control systems, reduced costs of intermediation and sales transactions, reduced communication costs between geographically distant partners, and lower search-and-compare costs in finding potential business partners (Bakos, 1997). The standard e-commerce model is heavily based on the transaction cost argument and is underpinned by six key propositions.

E-commerce:

- creates the platform for more efficient inter-firm commercial transactions;

- eliminates intermediate transaction layers between producer and customer;
- is relatively simple and inexpensive to design and implement in developing countries;
- B2B e-marketplaces increase transaction efficiency, reduce transaction costs, extend market reach and increase choice for developing country producers;
- enables/facilitates international trade, providing developing country producers with lower market entry costs, and extends geographic reach to a larger market;
- is a "transformational" or "revolutionary" technology which challenges the pre-existing ways of doing business, of collaborating and of competing.

It is, however, our contention that these six propositions do not stand up to rigorous conceptual and empirical scrutiny.

Efficiency gains:

- a substantial reduction in overall transaction costs;
- minimizing information search costs and a reduction in information asymmetries;
- better information processing (e.g. about future demand, existing and future supply, etc.) as a result of greater transparency and improved connectivity, and more efficient "make-or-buy" decisions as a result of a substantial reduction in transaction costs in inter-firm trade.

While information from Internet interaction is less personal, it has several characteristics that make it potentially very valuable:

- The low cost of providing very detailed content;
- information access can take place at any time through effective asynchronous communication, which is especially valuable when widely differing time zones in the global economy are involved;
- it provides considerable flexibility in dealing with information, with far greater interactivity and search capability than, say, catalogs or menu-driven telephone information.

One problem is that the literature on e-commerce is suffused with rosetinted vignettes of claimed success in developing country settings (April & Cradock, 2000; Leebaert, 1998), yet there are very few long-term analytical studies by independent researchers. E-commerce is generally presented in very positive terms, with negative impacts and opportunity costs downplayed.

Furthermore, buyers in global value chains are placing greater emphasis on the need for developing country suppliers to meet stringent production, quality, and management requirements and to comply with strict labor, environmental, and safety standards (Humphrey, 2002). It is unlikely that they will source garments directly through public Internet-based B2B trading hubs and/or public online auctions hosted on the Internet.

Broadly speaking, three kinds of e-marketplaces exist in practice, each with its own ownership structure and practical applications: consortium-backed, open third-party and private marketplaces. Their value propositions center around two key dimensions: 1) demand and/or supply aggregation to overcome market fragmentation (through search cost efficiency, price transparency, product cost savings, market liquidity, network externalities and customer lock-in); and 2) inter-firm collaboration for greater supply chain performance (through streamlined workflows, process-cost savings, customer lock-on and business process integration).

Open e-market-places supposedly bring together many buyers and many sellers, with such claimed benefits as price transparency, economies of scale, and network effects (Timmers, 1999), thus reducing transaction costs by minimizing search costs (Raisch, 2001; Sculley et al., 2001). However, open B2B marketplaces are likely to work for well-understood, highly commoditized products (e.g. tea, coffee, cotton), but it is doubtful they will facilitate transactions for specialized goods

where the customizing information cannot be transferred easily in digital formats that the Internet can currently accommodate. Key customers of third-party marketplaces (such as [www.retail.com](http://www.retail.com) and [www.tradeweave.com](http://www.tradeweave.com)) are likely to be small apparel retailers that cannot afford custom solutions, yet want to conduct business through efficient networks of approved suppliers, or large retailers in need of specific services or spot capacity from outside their traditional networks.

Buyers are reluctant to post privileged information online, such as pricing structures and design blueprints, while suppliers perceive e-market-places as efforts by retailers to reduce purchase prices through aggregation. Moreover, suppliers will be concerned about sharing competitive pricing data and will resist the substantial conversion costs and efforts associated with joining each new market-place. There thus needs to be an appropriate balance between information transparency and data confidentiality so as to minimize the competitive risks while safeguarding the collaborative benefits of information transparency.

The firms interviewed were primarily located in KwaZulu-Natal (32.1%) and Western Cape (53.6%)—the two major centers of garment production in South Africa, and the two most important platforms for export-oriented production.

A substantial 42.9% of the participating firms did not have a web site.

All the firms interviewed used computers and had connections to the public Internet. Of the firms, 57.1% had an intranet in place; typically used to enable staff to read company information and allow staff access to databases. A substantial 42.9% of the firms had yet to establish an internal network (or enterprise “infostructure”) through which enterprise personnel could access information through a single point of entry. None of the firms had developed and implemented an extranet. Consequently, the prospects for developing an external business network by providing clients and commercial partners with limited, firewall-managed access to the enterprise’s internal network was a long way off. In addition, very few (14.3%) of

the firm interviewees mentioned accessing the extranets of the buyers. E-mail was the most popular use of the Internet, being used by all firms to facilitate communication, data exchange, and integration with existing customers and suppliers, rather than to find new business customers and suppliers, or to support new transactions. All the firms reported that they used e-mail to place or accept orders with existing trading partners, thereby replacing the telephone and fax. E-mail was often used to receive (as attachments) customer specifications and orders, for order progress tracking and online post-sales support.

I am not aware of any South African garment producers trading through B2B hubs or e-marketplaces. There is a general lack of interest in B2B trading portals. As far as actual commercial transactions taking place over the Internet, we are a long way from it. There is also the question of how appropriate e-commerce is for the clothing industry. At this time its relevance is debatable.

For the firms interviewed, e-commerce was simply not yet a strategic priority. South African garment exporters appeared to have much more pressing traditional needs, such as investment in state-of-the-art manufacturing technology to meet international standards, and supply-side constraints, such as access to financial credit and skills training.

Since the dot-com crash in 2000, South Africa appeared to take on a wait and see attitude and imitated successful strategies and trends from first world countries. South Africa was thus able to learn from first world countries’ mistakes and could thus avoid major losses before significant investments were made (Cloete & Fourie, 2003; Worthington-Smith, 2003).

Agriculture is not only the single largest global sector, with its many facets it is possibly the most complex of all sectors (McKertich, 2004). While agriculture contributes only less than 4% of South Africa’s gross domestic product (GDP), it provides around 10% of the country’s formal sector employment opportunities. The agriculture sector has relatively large linkage effects with the rest of the

economy, and it is a major earner of foreign exchange: Currently, more than 20% of the country’s merchandized non-gold exports are primary agricultural products. Typical examples are the wine, fruit, and livestock industries (Worthington-Smith, 2003).

According to McKertich (2004), the nature of the agricultural sector has shaped essentially two types of e-marketplaces that address the needs of the agricultural supply chain. They are as follows:

- Exchange: An online exchange is typically a digital marketplace where buyers and sellers gather to trade. Exchanges are commonly found where buyers and sellers are dealing with perishables, such as fresh meat, seafood, fruits and vegetable, livestock, or dairy products. Exchanges will typically offer auction or reverse auction trading systems.
- E-marketplace: An e-marketplace, which usually provides tender management services as its core method to support business, can differ significantly from an e-exchange. This type of e-marketplace tends to attract the retail and processing end of the supply chain, as the buying process is more structured and less dependent on perishability of goods.

The results indicate that 18.92% of all respondents already participate in e-marketplaces and are therefore eligible for testing this study’s research model. Some of the respondents who did not participate in an e-marketplace (36.49% of all respondents) were asked whether they were aware of the benefits and if they had plans for future e-marketplace participation. Despite the fact that more than half of the respondents (51.85%) are not yet aware of the potential benefits of e-marketplace participation, approximately two-thirds of this group anticipated participation in the future. The majority (76.9%) of the respondents use the e-marketplace to sell their products and 53.8% make use of buying/procurement and advertising.

The data showed that there are still doubts regarding trust in the e-marketplace. Several non-adopters of e-marketplaces answered that they consider the lack of personal contact on an e-marketplace a serious problem. Many fruit exporters in South Africa use alternative electronic trading means, such as the system developed by DiPAR, in Cape

Town. Their export system, specifically developed for the fresh produce sector, allows exporters to streamline processes with producers and foreign clients in the fruit supply chain.

The electronic environment is generally known to be less personal than the traditional way of doing business, which is the main reason many agricultural firms are still skeptical about e-marketplaces. The perishability and high quality standards of most agricultural products also play big roles in the skepticism. The distance to foreign markets is very large, so for young firms, it is often risky to distribute products to far away countries on a large scale. Brick-and-mortar firms are still skeptical, though they consider e-marketplace adoption once they see how it fits into their way of doing business and how it is correctly applied.

There is also a younger attitude nowadays that is more computer literate and is aware of the benefits that can be reaped from using e-commerce. This is partly indicated by the fact that two-thirds of the respondents in this study have their own Web sites.

E-commerce adoption rate of 76.7%. This means the percentage of e-commerce adopters in South African agriculture is significantly lower than the average of all sectors in South African business. However, even though many non-adopters of e-commerce are not yet aware of the benefits of e-commerce, around 80% of them plan to make use of e-commerce in the future (Cloete & Doens, 2008).

While the base of Internet use in these countries has been relatively low, the rate of growth has been high. Between 2000 and 2005 developing countries' Internet user population grew by more than 300% to roughly 400 million, increasing their global share of all Internet users from 25% to 40% (Internet-WorldStats, 2005; UNCTAD, 2005).

It seems that a realistic view of e-commerce benefits in developing countries (at least in the short to medium term) will not necessarily be an optimistic one.

This raises the possibility that foreign firms

may be able to use the benefits of e-commerce to penetrate markets in developing countries while firms in developing countries may not be able to counter penetrate industrialized country markets. Hence, e-commerce may be part of a broader historical pattern that has seen new technologies tend to increase global inequalities (Heeks & Kenny, 2002).

Information and communication on accountability for the use of resources and the protection of the environment are essential to combat the fast growing desertification in Africa. Communication and information are crucial in improving agricultural practices to protect the environment, reduce population size, and reverse the causes of drought.

Dependency in the areas of manufacturing and trade can be reduced through on-line access to manufacturing tools and networked trading points in Africa. Destabilization that is rooted in food insecurity, poverty and low levels of education can also be improved through efficient communication. Improved access to information by local people and their ability to produce and share information leads to their communication of interests and reactions to their governments. The rise of the agenda for accountability leads to a more democratic society. The best informed citizens are less destabilized.

In some countries, the governments are the sole operator of telecommunications and ban the importation of telecommunications equipment. Consumers are denied the freedom to attach or own their preferred equipment for computing or communications to telephone networks. Though it is being lifted, type approval or complete ban of modems is practiced in many African countries.

There are estimated to be well over half a million regular users. The real figure is much higher than that. On a recent field trip to Zambia, the author noted that an average dial-up account services three to four members of the immediate family, as well as relatives and teenage friends. The actual number of Internet users for that one single Internet account could be up to five to ten people and this actually brings the total number of

Internet users to about two to five million. Africa is in danger of being left behind as the technological revolution gains pace, but telephone costs are extremely high in many African countries. Consequently local dial-up accounts can cost as much as \$60 per month.

The strategy for Internet connectivity in Tunisia, just like in most African countries, takes a three pronged approach: developing and modernizing the infrastructure, establishing suitable mechanisms for organization and regulation and capacity building that involves training, subcontracting and developing an in-depth knowledge about the technology. Most of the personnel running these African ISPs are local and that has to be good news for the future growth and sustainability of the industry.

The UN Economic Commission for Africa, which has been instrumental in accelerating the growth of the Internet, points out that there is about one incoming and one outgoing email per day of an average of three to four pages. These are mainly communications with people outside the continent. A recent survey by ECA indicates that 25% of email is replacing fax messages, while 10% are replacing phone calls and the other 65% represent new communications that would not have arisen without the email system.

The current digital divide is more dramatic than any other inequity in health or income (Edejer, 2000). An examination on the benefits of e-commerce for businesses in South Africa suggest that, by and large, the potential for e-commerce in developing countries is not being realized. A key conclusion is that developing an e-commerce capability does not mean that the exporter must be able to conduct each stage of the international transaction electronically. The market does not appear to demand this and Internet-based export development should not be regarded as an "all or nothing" proposition. E-commerce (particularly e-mail) may have more benefits for transaction preparation than for transaction completion. African countries need greater investment within them and more education to create a "digitally literate citizenry" (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka & Lal, 2003).

Paul Spradling

# THE IMPACT OF AFRICAN RELIGIONS

The other day a professor, who had finished a lecture on African connections, gave me an African gourd seed and told me that by planting it I would be establishing connections with Africa. I thought about what she had said, and I realized that she was right. Africa is the home of humankind, and I could not wait to plant my seed and establish my connection to Africa. As the heritage of Africa expanded worldwide, it spread westward through the African Diaspora of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the Americas it took many forms, especially culturally and religiously.

## CULTURE AND RELIGION

The way that people act, perform, create art and music, and establish political and social systems is considered culture. Culture can also be the establishment of ethics, morals, and religion. Religion, the richest part of African heritage, is found in all areas of Sub-Saharan Africa and has played an important role in the building of an African way of life. African religious beliefs encompass God, the Supreme Being, spirits, and the after-life, and the people use religious activities to express their beliefs. Most of the people of Africa adhere to Islam, Christianity, and traditional African religions (animism), which are indigenous. Islam is dominant in the upper one-third of the continent, while traditional African religions and Christianity tend to dominate the lower two-thirds of the continent. This is the area where the majority of Africans were sold into slavery, and it was not affected by other religions of the world, and it is also an area of Africa where you can see the traditional African religions and Christianity coexisting, oftentimes complementing each other.

## AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION

The traditional African religions are made up of beliefs, ceremonies or festivals, religious objects and places, and values and morals, and are led by religious officials. They were established by the early leaders

of African areas who developed ideas and beliefs and passed them on through storytelling, myths, and proverbs. Today Africans who live a traditional life are considered very religious. For most Africans, religion is the way of looking at the world and experiencing life. They do not preach to each other, and religion often takes different forms according to different tribal settings. Religious beliefs often developed over contemplations about such issues as who created the universe, with most believing that it was created by God or a god, which led to the growth of traditional African religions and Christianity throughout Africa. The people also believe that the earth and heaven are one, that the universe is everlasting, and that God is a creator who supports his creation, is limitless in power, is self-existent, is merciful and good, and is unknowable.

African religion was created by people reacting to various situations or events in life (environments), the universe, nature, or suffering. This is why traditional religions persisted in the Americas as slaves maintained their religious beliefs and reacted to their conditions by forming communities. These communities developed ideas while attempting to answer life's questions. When they found answers, they often shared them with others, who then adapted them to fit their own specific needs. Religion is more communal than individual and is held together by the community through ceremonies performed by groups or families. It influences all parts of life from birth to death and it provides them with security and confidence in life. There were no founders of traditional African religions and changes only occurred because of historical reasons or events (conquests, ceremonies, war). But changes have happened through the development of relationships between the people, thus showing that they are open to new ideas. Traditional African religions have no scriptures or holy books, which allows them to adapt to changing times, and are pragmatic and realistic, and applied to situa-

tions when needed. Most traditional Africans believe that they cannot have a direct contact with God or the Supreme Being, so there are gods, priests, and priestesses who act as intermediaries. There are more women priestesses than male priests, more female devotees than male, and more praise singers of the deities being women than men. The traditional African religions are not ancestor worship or superstition, nor are they magic. They are found and expressed in ceremonies, shrines, art, music, dance, proverbs, myths, beliefs, and customs.

## DIASPORA RELIGION

Religions of the African Diaspora are derived from African, European, and Indian religious heritages, yet they were alike in that they are all a part of African roots. Each tradition faced obstacles to their survival, which shaped their cultural heritage. Whether it was independence in Haiti in 1804 or Brazil in 1888, the religious tradition survived exploitation and established a front against injustice and a commitment to the protection and advancement of the communities. Each tradition established a relationship between the people and the spirits, expressed through ceremonies, rituals, festivals using symbolic objects and actions. This "ceremonial spirituality" helped to create the essence of the community by demonstrating what it wanted its members to know and what it wants known about itself. The "spirit" of individual communities describes their own behavior, and drums and dancing were important characteristics of worship.

The religions of the African Diaspora were a family of traditions that often shared common ancestors. Some examples of these traditions were evident in the Haitian "Voodoo," the Brazilian "Candomblé," and Black churches in the US. One similarity is that the "spirit" is created through the work of the congregation, which means that the ceremonies are actually services for the spirit, and they are also services of the spirit, which pleases the

congregation. The spirit can be God, the powers of God, and the spirit of the community. Vodoun is a dance of the spirit, created in Haiti in response to slavery. A dance performed by slaves from Arada, in Benin, is dedicated to a powerful being called Vaudoux. This dance alarmed the colonial authorities and Vodoun was later used by the disenfranchised majority against external pressures, which set the stage for the Haitian Revolution in 1804. In Brazil, by the mid 1850s, traditional African beliefs (with Islamic influences) survived and combined with Portuguese Catholic and Indian beliefs to create candomble or macumba a ritual established around sacrifice, praise, drumming, and singing. It also included emblems, sacred foods, and festivals organized into imaginary "nations" representing the Nago, Gege, and Angola-Congo traditions.



West African vodoun practitioners

## SLAVERY AND RELIGION

Slaves that came to North America often came from the Congo-Angola, Niger, Togo, Gold Coast, and Sierra Leone areas of Africa, where a part of religion was movement within ring ceremonies to honor ancestors. The use of the circle during slavery was so consistent that it probably gave form and meaning to black art and religion; it was also linked to burial ceremonies. The Afro-Baptist church has two ritual frames, devotion and service, that were and are similar to some African rites. They moved worshippers to a smaller secure place to face a hostile environment, thus allowing the communities to practice resistance through their rituals. The religion of African-Americans as slaves was not "slave religion," rather it was a mixture of Christian and African beliefs and practices where the slave community criticized

the white Christianity because it promoted and justified slavery, and this was seen in the punishment handed down upon slaves in their "Christian" masters. There were Christians within the slave community who believed there was a special social-ethical directive--to seek freedom by resisting, in the name of Christ, the social, cultural, and philosophical structures created by the masters to keep them in chains. A good example of this was Harriet Tubman, whose devout religious beliefs led her to achievements as one of the greatest leaders and abolitionists in American history. In Sterling Stuckey's *Slave Culture*, he states that the "ritual of the shout" made the connection between African roots and the slave community that consisted of values that united slaves and sustained them while they were under the yoke of oppression. Stuckey saw the "ring" as a ritual

of black unity that allowed the slaves to overcome the obstacles of linguistic and ethnic differences, and established an open the door to black creativity (jazz, art, and literature).

African religions played a major role in slave resistance, slave rebellions, and the abolitionist movement of nineteenth century

America. The uniting of communities, who believed that change was essential for them to reach Canaan (the promised land), encouraged African-American slaves to resist their masters, and even was a contributing factor to Gabriel Prosser's and Nat Turner's rebellions. Because of Christianity, many slaves were able to learn to read or comprehend that slavery was something that God would not have approved of. In Britain and America, the abolition movement ultimately led to the Civil War. One of the leaders in this movement was Bishop Richard Allen, whose sanctioned African Methodist Episcopal Church was a direct slap in the face of the institution of slavery. Bishop Allen's theology revolved around "Christian Moralism" that defined essential elements of sobriety, cleanliness, humility, and charity to all. He

felt that true religious morality established an understanding bridge between whites and blacks, and his Liberation Theology offered not a warning to white Americans, but an encouragement or hope that they would embrace true Christianity, free their slaves, and avoid the wrath of the Lord.

So through their beliefs, reactions, and commitment to their faith, Africans and African-Americans were able to persevere. Just like the gourd seed, once African religions were planted, they grew roots that remained strong and firm. As Africans migrated from the mother continent they were able to adapt to the change in their environment, and they were able to keep many of their African traditions. Africans were able to do this because the roots remained strong and intact, and today their traditions can be seen all over the world.

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Sunny Vickers

# PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

*Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement*

*Wangari Maathai died on September 25th 2011 from ovarian cancer. She was 71. The article below was written before her passing in June 2011.*

**W**angari Maathai was born in 1940 in a village in Kenya, Africa. While she was a young girl, she lived on a British settler's farm in the Rift Valley where her parents worked. She grew up with an eager curiosity for nature and the environment that surrounded her. She spent most of her time outdoors, working closely beside her mother, getting her hands dirty in the fertile fields of the farm. When she was seven, she and her family moved to a village in the central highlands. This helped her realize that small journeys are the beginning steps to life-changing experiences.

As Maathai's love for the natural world expanded, so did her desire for education and knowledge. She attended Catholic schools during high school and developed a nurturing spirit that would accompany her desire to work with people and the environment. For college, after earning a scholarship through the "Kennedy Airlift" program, she traveled to the United States. She earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Mount St. Scholastica College in Atchison, Kansas, and went on to earn her master's degree in the same field through a scholarship from the University of Pittsburgh. Subsequently, Wangari became the first woman in East and Central Africa to earn a PhD.

While Maathai was working diligently at her studies, her homeland was enduring many severe environmental and political problems. Kenya was faced with problems of deforestation as the result of stripping the land in order to make room for cash crops of tea and coffee. There was a limited supply of wood for fuel, very little clean water to drink, and food was scarce among families and livestock. With memories of her childhood, she felt a common connection with the problems facing the women farmers of Kenya. At this



*The late Wangari Maathai*

point in her life, Maathai was armed with the knowledge, passion, and determination needed to make a difference to the 70 percent of poor, rural women farmers in Kenya.

Planting trees could be the simple, yet powerful solution. Trees would be the gift that continued to give back to the people of Kenya. Shade would be provided, roots would prevent erosion, timber would be used for firewood and building materials, and a variety of fruits would help fight the battle against malnutrition. As Maathai and the women of Kenya began planting trees, seeds of empowerment were also being planted in their hearts as they gained confidence from their bonds with each other and Mother Earth.

On World Environment Day In 1977, seven trees were planted in Wangari Maathai's own backyard to celebrate the beginning of the Green Belt Movement. This movement began as a non-profit, grassroots, non-governmental organization (NGO), designed to inspire women to become environmental stewards armed with the necessary skills to protect Kenya's precious resources. The sim-

ple act of planting trees was intended to plant ideas and inspire action among the women involved in the movement.

Maathai's vision for the Green Belt Movement was rooted in her belief that empowering communities would encourage the protection of the environment as well as inspire fair governance and promote peace. Maathai believed that education was, and remains, the key to growth. Before tree planting began in any community, she took the time to engage local women in conversations about other needs of the community and asked for suggestions. In order to keep the power at the local level and promote positive change from within, the Green Belt Movement does not allow outside businesses or workers to become involved. In addition, communities plant only native trees from their area such as fig, banana, citrus, papaya, avocado, and mango.

Wangari Maathai's devotion to the environment and support of women's empowerment gained her loyalty from many followers. This type of strength and power among African women was heavily frowned upon by the harsh government. Determined to see Kenya thrive as an environmentally conscious country, Maathai spoke out against injustice in Kenya and paid the price, in many cases, with her health and safety. Nevertheless, the Green Belt Movement continued to plant trees. In 2002, Wangari received 98 percent of Kenyan voters' support for her to take a seat in Parliament. Because of this ground-breaking accomplishment, Wangari Maathai's voice would be heard in the defense of the people and environment of Kenya.

Two years later, in 2004, Maathai's devotion to her vision and work in Africa was again recognized when she was awarded with the

Nobel Peace Prize. She was the first African woman to receive this distinguished honor, as well as the first environmentalist to be awarded a prize that promotes world peace. To some, the connection between peace and the environment is not easily traced, but to Wangari, respect for our Earth and claiming responsibility for its protection are the ways to construct a path towards peace in any country.

In addition to the Nobel Peace Prize, Maathai earned fifteen honorary doctorate degrees and received over 40 national and international awards, including The Nelson Mandela Award for Health & Human Rights, being named One of the 100 Most Influential People in the World by Time magazine, and becoming a part of the International Women's Hall of Fame by the International Women's Forum Leadership Foundation.

The Green Belt Movement has evolved and become stronger than ever, planting more than 40 million trees in twelve African countries since 1977. However, there are still many ecological challenges faced by Africans and other people around the world. Maathai's vision for environmental activism and empowerment has reached far beyond the borders of Kenya. By creating Green Belt Movement International, Maathai's environmental objectives are being accomplished on a much larger scale worldwide.

Wangari Maathai was a charismatic storyteller who wanted her message to be easily understood and heard by everyone. In one of her most beloved stories, "I Will Be the Hummingbird," Wangari described a forest of animals that sat back and watched as their forest became consumed by fire. They watched in amazement as a tiny hummingbird decided he could no longer sit back and do nothing. The other animals mocked his efforts, teasing that he would never be able to do much, but the hummingbird continued taking water one drop at a time to the fire. Maathai enjoyed using this story to illustrate that we all have the opportunity to do the best we can, even when the odds seem overwhelming.

After Wangari Maathai's untimely passing in September of 2011, the Green Belt Movement has taken on an additional role, preserving and late celebrate the leader's extraordinary

passion and impressive legacy. Using the hummingbird as their powerful symbol, the "I Am the Hummingbird" campaign is an effort to continue the work Wangari loved most: planting trees. This campaign is also a reminder that we can make a difference, one seed at a time. The campaign's goal is to plant 1 billion trees around the world in memory of Wangari Maathai and the message she spread.

Just as a single seed grows to play an intricate role in the world around it, Wangari Maathai was an inspirational person both to those who knew her and to people around the world. Upon learning of her passing, President Barack Obama shared his condolences and praised her work by saying, "The work of the Green Belt Movement stands as a testament to the power of grassroots organizing, proof that one person's simple idea—that a community should come together to plant trees—can make a difference, first in one village, then in one nation, and now across Africa."

One can read several pages of messages posted on the Green Belt Movement's website that show Maathai's profound effect on the world around her. In addition to President Obama, Nelson Mandela, Hillary Clinton, Al Gore, and many other prominent figures expressed their feelings of sadness, admiration, and hope for the future.

Planted among the messages of distinguished individuals, heartfelt comments left by ordinary people, such as Juliana Salleh, can also be found. Salleh quoted Helen Keller, writing, "I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; I will not refuse to do the something I can do." Wangari made all the difference because she decided she could."

Wangari Maathai's lifelong vision and commitment to a movement that started with the planting of seeds is a tribute to the idea that one person truly can make a difference. The single idea of doing one thing that makes a difference in the world around us is as significant as the planting of a tiny seed. When ideas are nurtured and given the chance to flourish, that is when growth begins. Will you be a hummingbird?

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Ashley Whitehead

# REMEMBERING OUR HERITAGE

## *The Lozi and the Kuomboka*

*"The only time you hear about peace in Africa is when it is broken." - Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania*

In America, we see many negative events occurring in Africa. This has tainted many people's view about an amazing continent. We have often heard of things happening in Ethiopia, Congo, and South Africa. For the most part, Zambia stays out of the media. Why is that? You may not have heard much about Zambia because, since its independence fifty years ago, it has been a relatively peaceful and stable country.

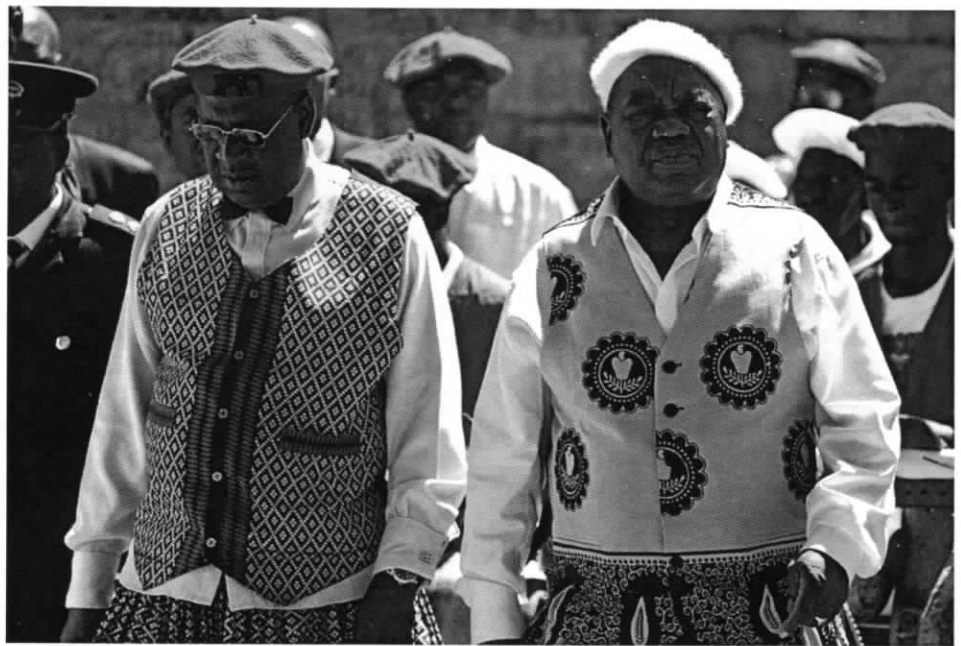
Zambia is a vast country of more than 290,000 square miles and has a population of about thirteen million people. "Zambia" comes from the Zambezi River, which is the longest river in Southern Africa. This river plays an important role in Zambia.

One of the model ethnic groups that succeeded in keeping the peace is the Lozi of the Barotse Kingdom. The Lozi, which means plain in the Makolo language, have a rich history. They have a sudanic type monarchy, with the sacred Litunga-paramount king-keeper of earth holds the power of the people and departed kings are still consulted. The Lozi kingdom is influenced by the flood cycle.

*The Lozi migrated into Western Zambia from the Luba Lunda Kingdom of Mwata Yamwa in Zaire, which was one of the greatest central African chieftainships in the seventeenth and eighteenth Centuries.*  
(Zambia Tourism)

During British rule, Zambia was known as Northern Rhodesia, in honor of Cecil Rhodes, the leader of the British South Africa Company (BSAC). He entered the region in search of minerals. He convinced King Lewanika, Lozi, to sign a treaty in 1890 giving Rhodes rights to the minerals on that land. Rhodes was also the founder in South Africa of De Beers, the diamond

company. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (the latter now Malawi) was dissolved in 1963. "It was the dawn of a new era which finally led to the territories involved" (Mwakikagile).



**President Banda and the Litunga**

Foreign influences have introduced new values and ideas to the country. Many people dress like Westerners, although the Lozi people have been successful at keeping their heritage alive. "They have a symbiotic economic relationship which leads to a blurring of tribal identities" (Basor 322). The government encourages fellow countrymen to be proud of their ethnic customs, traditions, and culture. The government has also developed ways to preserve, protect, and promote tribal cultures.

Dr. Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika is currently Ambassador of the Republic of Zambia to Belgium and also covers the Netherlands, Luxemburg, and the European Union.

Before that, she was Ambassador to the United States from 2003 to 2010. She is also part of the Lozi ethnic group. Her grandfather, Lewanika I of Barotseland (1878-1916), was the signatory to the 1900 Protectorate

Treaty between the Kingdom of Barotseland and Great Britain and a participant at a summit meeting in London with King Edward VII of Britain in 1902 (inongelewanika.com). Dr. Lewanika is proud of her heritage and it shows.

*"The ancient war drums sound, the enormous boat charges forward by the power of 100 royal paddlers in leopard skins and lion manes, smoke bellows to tell the Losi people that their Paramount Chief (Litunga) is alive and strong, and it is time to follow him to the highlands" (Hamre).*

Unlike the witness stated above, I can only imagine what it must be like to take part

in an old Zambian tradition. I imagine it would be an exciting and unforgettable event. Toward the end of the rainy season (March-June) as the flood plain of the upper Zambezi valley rises (40 feet above normal), the Lozi people make a ceremonial move to higher ground. This 300-year-old ceremony is called Kuomboka, which literally means, "to get out of water." They pack their belongings into canoes and the whole tribe leaves for higher ground. It takes between six and eight hours to cover the distance between the dry season capital of Lealui and the wet season capital of Limulunga.

The king (Litunga) of the Lozi travels in a

barge called the Nalikwanda, which has the Zambian coat of arms. The Nalikwanda carries a large elephant with moveable ears. Smoke rises from the barge, which signifies that the king is alive and in good health. The Litunga's wife is transported on a separate barge. Her vessel carries the cattle egret called Nalwange. Once they arrive, the successful move is celebrated with traditional singing and dancing.

Today, thousands of people from outside the country and other parts of Zambia travel to witness the Kuomboka ceremony. High-ranking government officials and dignitaries in the diplomatic service also drive from Lusaka

to witness this colorful traditional event.

This ceremony with its deep roots holds great symbolism and importance. It is a wonderful thing that this tradition is still flourishing today; the Lozi people have a lot to do with that. I hope other ethnic groups celebrate their heritage the way the Lozi do.

*"The events which transpired five thousand years ago, five years ago, or five minutes ago, have determined what will happen five minutes from now, five years from now, or five thousand years from now. All history is a current event."*

--Dr. John Henrik Clarke

# LESSON PLAN

KINDERGARDEN - 2ND GRADE

## DAY ONE — 30 MINUTES

- 1 Explain to students what a tradition is. Make a list of traditions celebrated. Examples: Holidays, pizza on Friday nights, bedtime stories, etc.
- 2 Ask students why they think it is important to keep those traditions.
- 3 Have students pick one of their favorite traditions and draw a picture of it. Keep pictures for Day Two.
- 4 Send home a questionnaire to guide the student in talking to his/her elders to learn more about his/her heritage and traditions. Also request that parents send in a photo or item to showcase a tradition.

## DAY TWO — 50 MINUTES

- 1 Allow students to discuss what information they discovered about traditions as well as talk about the photos/objects that were brought in.
- 2 Show the video about the Kuomboka ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7c\\_dyM9sds](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7c_dyM9sds)) Discuss how old the tradition is and why it's important.
- 3 Tell students they are going to celebrate their heritage/tradition. Distribute pictures from yesterday.
- 4 Instruments: Students will glue their pictures onto paper plates. Place several beans on each paper plate and staple a second plate onto the first. Insert a craft stick to make a maraca. Allow students time to play with their instruments and share with their peers.

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for general information on all aspects of Zambia, go to [Zambiatourism.com](http://Zambiatourism.com)

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María Eugenia Zelaya

# THE LEGACY OF THE AFRICAN KINGS

*in Latin America: Colombia*

Sometimes we think of the traditions left by the African ancestors in Latin America and we limit ourselves to the Caribbean region because the African roots in Latin America are associated with religion, food, music, and dance from some of the Caribbean Islands (Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic). It is known that certain type of music and dance have African roots: salsa, merengue, conga, samba, and reggaeton. The legacy of the African kings brought by the Spaniards and Portuguese during colonial times is not limited to the Caribbean Islands. It is found in countries like Mexico, Venezuela, Panama, and Colombia, just to mention a few. Some of those kings were King Yanga in Mexico, King Miguel in Venezuela, King Bayano in Panama, and King Barule and King Benkos Biohó in Colombia. In this paper, I will explore the particular case of Colombia and the legacy of those African kings in this South American country and how we can incorporate their legacy into our Spanish classroom curriculum.

## ETHNIC ORIGINS OF THE AFRICANS BROUGHT TO COLOMBIA

When the European powers arrived in Africa, they found a stable social structure and leaders in place within the kingdoms. Slavery was a practice already established where a more powerful tribe or group would seize people from other groups and use them for slave labor. Friedemann mentioned the differences between the slave system within African and the transatlantic slave trade: in the first, the slaves were given to other ethnic groups to solve family problems and they had the opportunity to return to their ethnic group after the terms of the contract were completed. In the case of the transatlantic trade, the slaves were treated like merchandise, with no hope of returning to their own ethnic groups.

To understand the culture and its legacy in the Americas, it is important to identify the

ethnic groups that came from Africa during the transatlantic slave trade beginning in the 1500s. The major issue in identifying the exact ethnic groups is the lack of accurate documentation. In the case of the Portuguese who brought slaves to the Americas, they changed the slaves' names and "baptized" them before they left Africa; this practice help them identify the slaves and also erased any connection to the slaves African families and tribes. Some scholars have suggested that the Africans who came to Colombia were from the Bijago and Bantu linguistic families (Ánzico, Kongo, Manicongo, and Ngola). One of the major ports of arrival of slaves to Columbia during this period was Cartagena de Indias; it was also a moajor point of inner trade for slaves within South America. In 1596, Alonso de Campo bought a slave named Benkos Biohó from a businessman, Juan Palacios. Biohó had been born in the region of Bioho, Guinea Bissau, West Africa. Bioho claimed to be a king in this native region of Bioho and like many other African kings who were forced to come to the Americas, he did not conform to his new status.

## PALENQUEROS AND CIMARRONES

There are two terms that are important in the study of the legacy of Africans in Colombia: palenqueros and cimarrones. Cimarronaje is defined as the form of resistance to slavery in the Americas. Some of the expressions of cimarronaje are found in the forms of cabildos, associations of people who came from the same region or place in Africa that met to share their common culture. In the case of the palenques, these were fortified towns built by Africans that run away from their masters. Historians have traced the existance of the first free town in the Americas back to one of these palenques.

*"Entre los palenques de Colombia, el más significativo es el de San Basilio por haber sido el primer lugar libre de Colombia y de América Latina reconocido por la corona*

*española, se considera heredero de la lucha iniciada por Benkos Biojó en el palenque de la Matuna."*

San Basilio de Palenque was founded by King Bioho in 1602 after he led a rebellion of slaves who found a place in the foothills of the Sierra de Maria (about 44 miles from Cartagena de Indias). After constant clashes with the Spaniards, a peace settlement was signed by Governor Geronimo Suazo in 1603.

## SAN BASILIO DE PALENQUE

San Basilio de Palenque is the oldest and probably one of the few towns in the Americas where you can still find African culture alive not only in the dances and music, but also through their social organization and unique language. UNESCO named it a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005. One of the unique aspects of San Basilio de Palenque is the use of kuagros.

*"The social organization of the community is based on family networks and age groups called ma-kuagro. A kuagro age group consists of all those community members that were born in a few consecutive years and last throughout lifetime. The kuagro membership comes with a set of rights and duties towards other group members but also strong internal solidarity. Daily work and special events are jointly undertaken by all kuagro members."*

De Friedemann mentions that kuagros (cuagros) formed by boys and girls last for their entire lives. Usually, they begin to form during childhood when the parents observed them and decided how the kuagros would be formed. The male members of the kuagros are called cuagros and the females are called cuadrillas. Within the Palenque, the kuagros were divided into Up (Arriba) or Down (Abajo) sections. In order to be initiated into a kuagro, the young men and women must start talking and making arrangements for the name of the kuagro, and what types of

symbol, dresses, colors that are going to make the kuagro unique. This initiation ceremony takes place when they are 15 to 16 years old. Only the members of the kuagro are invited to the festivities where they have dances and food. Once the person is part of a kuagro, these ties are for life and it describes as an strong emotional bond that will accompany the members until death when we see the traditional lumbalú ceremony.

Another unique tradition of San Basilio de Palenque is the juegos de guerra (war games). The male members of the kuagros would practice fighting with the puños (fists) and for the females muñecas (wrists). During Holy Week and also Christmas Day, the mellos of the different kuagros would arrange fights with the other kuagros. These war games or fight training were passed down from the original formation of San Basilio de Palenque because the people were in constant battle with the Spanish troops and both men and women would have to be ready to fight and defend Palenque against the Spaniards. In the 1970s, the training became very popular because of the Colombian World Boxing Champions, especially those from San Basilio de Palenque, including Kid Pambelé (Antonio Cervantes).

Another unique feature of San Basilio de Palenque is their language, which is Creole.

*“The Palenque language is a Creole language based on Spanish lexicon, but with the morpho-syntactical characteristics of the African continent’s autochthonous languages, especially Bantu. Researchers have also detected that the Palenquero lexicon includes words from the Kikongo and Kimbundo languages.”*

Even today in the schools in San Basilio, the Palenque language is taught to the children in order to preserve their African heritage. Unfortunately, because of the influences from outside of Palenque, probably only half the current population speaks Palenque, but the others are able to understand it. Still another unique tradition preserved in San Basilio de Palenque is lumbalu, a part of the folk dances of Colombia. It can be described as a funeral rite that uses two tambores (drums), pechiche and llamador.

*The first, the pechiche, was originally 1.8 meters in length but due to war has now been shortened somewhat. The second drum used is the llamador. The skill and privilege of playing the tambores for the lumbalu has remained in one family, that of the Batatas.*

In a lumbalu, the women dance and sing around the dead body while the men play the drums. The traditional songs of lumbalu mention the history of the ancestors from Angola and Congo, as well as making silhouettes of deities.

*Chimilango, chimilango  
cho Maria Langó ri angola,  
guán cún cún me ñamo llo  
guán cún cún me re ñamar,  
cuando sota caí ma mujé  
¡E lí le loo! ¡E lí le loo!  
Chimila ri ri angongo...  
Chimilango ta ñangando...*

## AFROCOLOMBIANS TODAY

The African heritage in Colombians is well represented not only in San Basilio de Palenque, but also in the strong Afrocolombian community in general. About 26% of the Colombian population is Afrocolombian, not because the government imposes this ethnic category but because they are proud of their heritage and choose to describe themselves as descendants of Africans.

Unfortunately, it was not until 1993 that Afrocolombians received some legal recognition of their ethnic group and their land. Also, the government established May 21st as the Día de la Afrocolombianidad (Day of Afrocolombianism) to celebrate the heritage and the cultural contributions of this important group in Colombia.

The contributions of Afrocolombians to Colombian culture can be seen in different aspects of life: literature, music, sports, dance, and food. With the preservation of San Basilio de Palenque, Colombia has one of the few places where we find those traditional and cultural heritage from the original African ancestors.

In terms of literature, Black Poetry (la Poesía Negra) has been one of the most representative types of Afrocolombian culture. It is believed that the first Afrocolombian writer was Juan José Nieto, who had a novel published in 1840. One of the greatest Afrocolombian

poets is Candelario Obeso, who was able to put in writing the oral traditions of his ancestors. An example of Afrocolombian poetry that could be used in the Spanish classroom includes “Negra Soy” by Mary Grueso Romero.

Another connection that can be made between the Afrocolombian culture and literature for the Spanish classroom is the novel “Cien Años de Soledad” (One Hundred Years of Solitude) by Gabriel García Márquez. In this novel, García Márquez named the town where his famous novel takes place Macondo. German de Granada in his article, title Un afortunado fitónimo Bantu: Macondo published in the Thesaurus of the Cervantes Institute, mentions that the word Macondo comes from the Bantu Makondo. The hypothesis is that García Márquez named his town Macondo because in Bantu Makondo refers to plantains and the town of Macondo in his book is located in an agricultural area where plantains and bananas were cultivated. Beyond this simple connection, de Granada also mentions that Makondo had some religious-magical connection in the Bantu language, which fits perfectly with García Márquez themes in “Cien Años de Soledad.”

## CONCLUSION

In Colombia, we are able to find several examples of the influences of the Africa in our culture. One of the best ways to teach our students the strong influence that the great African Kings left in the Americas is with the study of San Basilio de Palenque and its unique traditions. We are able to teach them the strong influence of AfroColombians in the culture of Colombia and how they have been able to leave their mark in all aspects of life: music, dances, literature and history. For me, the most interesting aspect is the pride of 26% of the Colombian population for their heritage and how they are able to keep alive the traditions of their ancestors.

# LESSON PLAN

## OBJECTIVES

- 1 Introduce the students to the contributions of the African Kings and slaves brought to Latin America.
- 2 Celebrate the diversity of Latin American culture by introducing the students to the Afrocolombian culture.
- 3 Apply the language skills to understand the literature, songs and traditions of AfroColombians

## MATERIALS

- 1 "Negra Soy" a poem by Mary Grueso Romero
- 2 Access to the site San Basilio de Palenque (<http://palenquedesanbasilio.masterimpresores.com/files/index.asp>)
- 3 "Rebellion" by Joe Arroyo
- 4 "Pambele" by Carlos Vives
- 5 "El Rey del Arcabuco" found in *Historias, Leyendas y Tradiciones de Cartagena* by Dr. Camilo S. Delgado

## DAILY PLANS

### DAY 1

Introduce the history of Afrocolombian with the song "Rebellion" by Joe Arroyo.

Explain the meaning of the vocabulary and grammar of the song and introduce the terms: cimarron and palenque.

### DAY 2

Give the students copies of "El Rey del Arcabuco" found in *Historias, Leyendas y Tradiciones de Cartagena* by Dr. Camilo S. Delgado. Ask them to read the legend in groups of 4 students.

Discussion of "El Rey del Arcabuco".

### DAY 3

Show the students a short clip on "San Basilio de Palenque" from BBC News and use the site <http://palenquedesanbasilio.masterimpresores.com/files/index.asp> to explain the unique traditions that are still preserved in this town.

### DAY 4

Explain the current status of AfroColombians.

Explore the Afrocolombian Literature by studying the poem "Negra Soy" by Mary Grueso Romero

### DAY 5

Afrocolombians in Sports: the history of Kid Pambele a Boxing Champion from San Basilio de Palenque. Use the song Pambele by Carlos Vives.

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