

Africa without African Americans by Ezra Aharone

There's an upsurge of high-level Asian activities in Africa that Africans in America should note. Most recently President Hu Jintao of China visited Nigeria in late April to sign a \$4 billion deal to develop oilfields and infrastructure. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi brought an astonishing 121-member delegation of political and business leaders to Ghana on a 3-day visit in early May. A South Korean delegation then arrived in Ghana shortly afterwards to solidify a multimillion dollar infrastructure contract.

Why is this relevant? Well, as so-called "African Americans," why aren't we heavily involved in African affairs? What do Asian leaders know about Africa that Black leaders don't know? These questions resonate being that Africa is nowhere incorporated within the Covenant with Black America blueprint. Yes, being besieged with poverty and destabilization, on the surface Africa certainly seems more like a calamity than a remedy. But such thinking overlooks Africa's strategic importance to Western expansion and the fact that we are native to the resource-richest continent on earth, of which all industrialized nations are partially dependant.

There is no other historical instance of a formerly enslaved people who valued integration with their former captors to the point where they completely abandon the superior wealth of their own homeland. If Euro-Americans were native to Africa instead of Europe, you can bet that Africa would be "fully developed" today. And there's no way they'd neglect Africa and all its richness just to integrate with us. It's therefore altogether backwards to prioritize our attachment to Euro-Americans above rapprochement with Africa. The disconnect of Black America's human and economic resources from Africa's human and natural resources, contributes to the poverty and powerlessness of us both.

Meanwhile, Europeans (and now Asians) entrench themselves deeper and cling to Africa for dear life because their economic and military might cannot otherwise be sustained without Africa's strategic resources. Instead of being spectators as foreign governments and multinationals heist daily tons of resources from our homeland, we should be integral to the production, management, processing, and international distribution of African resources.

This is easier said than done since Western "brands of democracy" operate in concert to forestall such arrangements ... Colonialism was the graduated continuation of slavery.

Colonialism thrived by virtue of slavery's success. Together they comprised a singular force to fuel the dual process of European development and African demise. The interrelation and long-term impact of these "bookend institutions" explain why Europeans reign spacious atop the present world order, while Africans are crunched down at the bottom fighting for survival.

It's urgent and imperative therefore that all leaders of African descent understand the "geo-strategic economics" of how the world was fashioned into this current state. Otherwise they are, by default, perpetuating a world system rooted in unresolvable inequities.

To maintain the current "balance of power," the U.S. government has historically sought to minimize Black America's interactions and impact in Africa. To make sense of this, you must understand that the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements ran concurrent with African Independence Movements. Since resistance to Western injustices was the common denominator to these movements, the U.S. government regarded Black activism in America and the revolutions in Africa as fractional particles of the same struggle – differing only in location and _expression. America guarded against the fractions from operating in parallel, so that no rubbed-off African influences would possibly (God forbid) augment the "Civil Rights Movement" into a "Sovereign Rights Movement."

America did experience uncertain moments in 1957 when both Dr. King and Malcolm X attended Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's inauguration in Ghana. It was a frightening omen to see two of the most visionary Black men in America interfacing ideals with the president of the first African nation to seize independence. This unprecedented meeting-of-the-minds between the "formerly enslaved" and "formerly colonized" should have opened a new advent in "world history." But here we are nearly 50 years later, still (psychologically and economically) detached from Africa and still preoccupied with notions of equality, while Asians now prosper from our homeland's wealth.

With or without the Covenant, we must fast awaken to the "geo-strategic economics" of this world, or we risk self-induced political extinction. Regardless of how many non-Africans invest in Africa or how far Black America assimilates into Americanization, we'll still face joint-related issues with Africa that require joint-related solutions. The Government of Ghana realizes this fact, and as part of its 50th independence anniversary in 2007, Ghana is subsequently launching the "Joseph Project" (recognizing the Biblical Joseph who triumphed after being enslaved and reunited with his brothers). Among other things, this historic and multifaceted initiative aims to reconcile Diaspora relations and generate wealth for ourselves.

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Written by Ezra Aharone ID2782
Monday, 26 June 2006 19:27 -

Although the unknown and uncharted course of African relations is not a cure-all, the known and well charted course of Americanization is not a cure-all either. Certainly our collective long-term interests as African people would be advanced if we mended both history and relations. Based on the singularity and common origin of our struggles, our interdependency for parallel movements will not vanish with time. Undoubtedly, a nucleus of us will reestablish a significant presence in Africa and ensure that unlike 20th century-Africa, 21st century-Africa will not be an "Africa without so-called African Americans."

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"Now is the time for us to come together with one another, to organize, to speak out and speak up on behalf of each other. There is no time to waste, while we debate, define, and discuss; the enemy continues his genocidal plan. We need to bear in mind the Ashanti proverb: "Two men in a burning house must not stop to argue." "- Dr. Mutulu Shakur

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