

PAN-AFRICANISM AND MODERNIZATION OF AFRICAN IDEOLOGY: A SHOT ON HAKIM ADI'S WORKS

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Abstract

Pan-Africanism, as the word illustrates, sheds spotlight on the cultural roots of Africans, evolving from the ancient to modern era. It's a philosophy which was brought into being by Du Bois. Eventually Marcus Garvey became the leader of the movement exerting considerable pressure as he was consistent in the idea of nurturing African values. In spite of being tagged as African diaspora, he has rendered a constant reminder of the African roots, regardless of adapting to the foreign customs and habitudes. He strives to put in a word with them about the struggles faced earlier. This desideratum aims at encouraging and strengthening bonds of solidarity among the African race through a pragmatic approach. Hakim Adi, who is well informed of the Pan-African theory, has published notable works on Pan-Africanism. Under the leadership of Marcus Garvey and through the writings of Hakim Adi, Pan-Africanism has come a long way and achieved a standpoint in literature. The thrust of this study is to examine the influence of Pan-Africanism in literature and films with respect to imaging blackness. This work will showcase how Pan-Africanism has created divergent shades of comportment, social relations and ideologies from getting the show on the road by Du Bois.

Keywords: *Pan-Africanism, Black, Marcus Garvey, Du Bois, Hakim Adi, cultural roots, ideologies, modernization*

Introduction

During the growth of pan-Africanism it was Marcus Garvey who brought a shape for it. To be more precise it's a fact that Europeans have a transfixed idea about Africans which makes it hard for them to let go. He points to it as a misconception since they have a judgmental attitude about the Africans for that matter. The movement has paved way for diverse ideas to pop out since it keeps reminding them of their African roots irrespective of their diaspora. In 1919 Dr. Du Bois wrote "The African movement means to us what the Zionist movement must mean to the Jews, the centralization of the race effort and the recognition of the racial fount. The emergence of pan-Africanism lies in the growth of diaspora wherein the Africans who were settled in other places were inclined towards foreign attitude and habitudes which paved a pathway for the arrival of the movement which was brought into being by Dr. Du Bois and further enhanced by Marcus Garvey who became a well known leader of this movement as he was focused on spreading the movement vigorously as he was keen on injecting the cultural and national patriotism periodically. The need of the hour according to Marcus Garvey was to bring the African descent together turning away from racism and colonialism which proved a sound response to the Europeans. This term came into being because the African descent adopted a lifestyle which compelled them to lay down the movement to bring the African descent closer. Especially the African descent fancied European lifestyle rather than embracing their roots it was majorly the diaspora population which loved it since they started masking their identity. This movement was laid down to bring together the people of African descent in order to maintain a healthy bond (M'bayo T. E 2004).

Disclosure of Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism was spotted to be the largest international movement of black people during the twentieth century during and after the course of World War I. Marcus Garvey along with his organization went on to conduct expeditions, inspired business enterprises and favored political candidates who were Africans. He gave them broad scope for improvement and individual enhancement (Stein, J 1991).

His sole aim was to uplift the Africans and to instill unity among them since they were segregated under the multiple conditions. Marcus Garvey was the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Contradictory statements are filed on Marcus Garvey since his lifestyle and ideologies were more inclined towards western behavior as he was a lover of western classical music and preferred Christianity (Dagnini, J. K 2008). Though he maintained a westernized image he did not let go of his Pan-African theory and ideas which made him a legendary figure among Africans. Marcus Garvey was an excellent orator which made him impress the

Africans and to create a optimistic attitude towards the knowledge they had on Africans especially (Martin, T 1984).

“The Negro problem” according to Du Bois

Du Bois framed an essay which he named as “The conservation of Races” wherein the prime concept was about race and to be precise it focused on Negro people. He comprehended it better as “The Negro problem”. Du Bois has a firm rooted understanding that the race did not focus only on the outward appearance but it also had a specific focus on the spiritual and diverse opinion that people believed in. He points to the fact that Europeans degraded them and dominated them for the sake of appearance which made Du Bois fierce in kick starting the movement which was called Pan-Negroism which was later renamed to be Pan-Africanism. Du Bois believed that the suppression caused to the Africans would solely bring them out with greater force since the level of dishonor they had faced earlier is vast. He solely focused on the problem faced by the Africans, the upliftment and empowerment of women and finally to make the peace with the world. Du Bois also being a pro-feminist he has put forth valid points related to women where he exclaims women to be powerful and not to be stated as examples for fragility and domesticity (Rabaka, R 2003).

Hakim Adi’s take on Pan-Africanism

Hakim Adi has solely focused on African writings and he is a well known British historian. His personal interest lies in bringing out the various aspects of African diaspora and the behavior of the Africans though they are scattered. The main idea of writing about Pan-Africanism is because Hakim Adi had always written and associated with the African culture and roots to get a clearer picture of the events. He is the founder of young historians project, he being a professor of the History of Africa and the African Diaspora at the University of Chichester has a vast knowledge about the term Pan-Africanism. Hakim Adi discusses his research, activism and politics. Adi has spent years researching the African diaspora, Pan-Africanism and communism in the 20th century. On the anniversary of the 1917 revolution he explains that the significance of 1917 is not so much how it helps us understand the past, or as a way of understanding Africa’s history, but rather that it shows that the alternative can be created in the present and future. When asked about his earlier involvement with activism and history he expresses the several experiences he has had. He mentioned that it would be impossible to be inclined towards the history of Africa and the cultural roots of Africans without having to fight for the rights against Euro centrism present in the entire educational system and the county. He mentions that a possible struggle and change is necessary as only when there is constant struggle there is progress.

He elucidates on the point that nowhere in Britain there was prime consideration rendered to African anti-colonial activism wherein they focused on the marginalization which serves to be the reason for exclusion of that subject at university level throughout Britain. He mentions that some people draw a line between history of Africa and African diaspora whereas in Britain they are hardly bothered about the African diaspora. He mentions that the students in Britain are not aware of the history and that they are resented from learning the past. A massive pressure is loaded into the African and Caribbean race who start losing power eventually as they feel dejected. Hakim Adi says that his activism revolved around a situation to change the curriculum, to contribute towards museums, libraries, carry quality filled research to make sure that the history of Caribbean, Africa and Asia gained its rightful position in history. He says that the situation has definitely evolved to become better than what it was earlier but still out of many historians from Caribbean and African history, it was only him who could cling firmly onto the position that he was served.

Hakim Adi says that many scholars should take interest in exploring this field of study. He expresses that his research was apparently focused on the Africans and the African diaspora organized anti-colonial and anti-imperialist actions during the twentieth century. According to him the history is the study of change and people are medium for inducing the change moving to the exploration and discovery of the methods African people had to follow in order to break the chains of trading to gain power and freedom. Hakim Adi expresses that according to him Kwame Nkrumah and Wallace-Johnson were major examples of anti-colonial activists since they were sound politically in gold coast as well as Britain. Hakim Adi mentioned that some deep understanding was necessary to comprehend that. They both were all rounder's as they were Pan-Africanists and they also had a large chain of contacts especially they knew activists from all over the globe. With respect to them indulging into the communist movement they had strong hold. Hakim Adi proposes that the struggle for freedom from bondage and the evolution of the communist to uplift them holds bits of importance. Moving to communism and pan Africanism he sheds light on the key pan-Africanists namely Padmore, Nkrumah, Wallace-Johnson and Kenyatta. Kenyatta found a deep felt connection with communism though it was merely coincidence. Some other personalities impressed by Marxism were Fanon, Cabral and Sisulu. He puts forth that Sisulu had planned to hold a prime Congress in Africa during the year 1950 apparently that was the time he had paid a visit to China and the Soviet Union (H Adi 2017).

Adi points out that during 1956 George Padmore had written a book names *Pan-Africanism or communism? : The coming struggle for Africa* in which he had jotted down his ideology that communism and pan-Africanism was contradictory. He still seems to be a significant figure though his views earn rapport. He says that the

communist functions of Africa were in the service of Soviet foreign policy. Hakim Adi mentions that Padmore composed his book with a solid chunk of cold war feelings within him. Adi has put down facts in Pan-Africanism and communism: The communist international, Africa and the Diaspora, 1919-1939 during when he also took the chance of becoming a critic of Padmore's communist career. Hakim in his book makes a point that for a span of time communist international had to adopt Pan-African approach towards the question as to how the Africans and African Diasporas free themselves. The Negro question was brought into the scene which brought out that Africans and African race faced common problems. Turning to South Africa a subtle decision was taken by the Comintern that demanded the communist party to be an African party on the first hand including its leadership and rule. He says he wanted to implement the rules and they were sure enough that they would recognise it.

Lenin has extended the investigation of imperialism and the struggle faced by the nation's especially Africa pointing that the imperialist movement had to be made numb. Lenin says that to speak of the oppression and to fight for it as one by accepting that all are one wherein he said every human had to stand and struggle for the sake of them. He emphasizes the fact that Africa and African Diaspora had always worked towards freedom from bondage and fought for their rights for a long time (H Adi, 2017). Speaking about the transatlantic slave trade it had long existed. Britain is known for trafficking which involved a trade of human beings from Africa for the purpose of slavery. The total count of Africans moved from their land to Arab is estimated to be between 9 million to 14 million though it doesn't hold any proof. The population of Africa faced a sound decline when a mass removal of nearly 25 million people had a void effect. The Africans were the only race who faced this condition compared to any other race which led to economic downfall. Gradually Africans learnt the fact that the Europeans are enslaving them under the ideology of racism. The Africans were made to believe they were naturally inferior to Europeans. It had been noted that Africans were degraded and cornered especially if they had committed a crime or owed a debt they were taken as slaves also if they were taken as slaves during the war (H Adi, 2012).

To strive against racism and abolition of trading slaves, the African descent had to come together to get their side to become even stronger. The emergence of Pan-Africanism took place during the nineteenth century though; the groundwork for this has been started during the course of the eighteenth century itself. Hakim Adi shed light on the effort put in by the Africans to steal a spot for them. They did not want to let go of their African personality though the trouble with reality was worse (Adi, H 2018). There was a time during which African slaves escaped from their owners in London during that time Africans helped each other escape slavery wherein they maintained secrecy among themselves. Young men were mainly targeted during slave trades which made them lose control of their threshold level. During the late

eighteenth century there was a rising support for the Africans for abolishing slavery at that point of time people started conducting debates, spoke in favour of Africans and started boycotting sugar produced by African slaves which made the situation much weaker. The people started becoming aware of the trafficking and misuse of people from Africa which created a chaotic condition as they went on to submit petition in the parliament against the London government.

During 1780's the famous writers Olaudah Equiano and Ottobah Cugoano started compiling reports and write-ups which brought out the struggles faced by the Africans. They started their own organisation which had a political base. It was named "the sons of Africa" which made rounds in the London newspapers frequently, especially "the morning chronicle" and London advertiser who went on to collaborate with other writers and abolitionists who were keen on putting an end to this practice which was prevailing for a long time. Thomas Clarkson led the society for abolition of slave trade which took roots during 1780's; he took deep interest in printing and circulating anti slavery literature from George yard where it's printed. Many campaigns were led by people with regard to abolition of slavery but it was a slow struggle as it took a lot of time to progress though the evolution of the movement took time it brought out commendable results. The struggle still continues as the Africans are judged even today according to their race and their appearance which still happens.

Gaining liberation though, was filled with trails Africans managed to get it. It has been swiftly developing and overpowering the colonialism by achieving a space for them individually. After colonialism they had to overcome another phase of struggle which was hardly visible, it was the cold war. Cold war emerged to beat up the growth and evolution of Africans which can be believed to be the agitation Europeans had over them as they witnessed the growth of them within a short time span (Murithi, T 2017). Hakim Adi says that a slave named Jonathan Strong expressed his situation to Granville sharp that pushed himself to get involved in abolitionist movement he was figured out to be one of the first English scholars to join it. Many royals were benefitted by this human slave trading especially there were monopoly companies based in London namely the Guinea Company, The Royal adventurers into Africa and the Royal African Company. These companies were in charge of the trading since it was established by the royal charter exclusively for trading.

The interesting fact given out by Hakim Adi was that monarchs who took charge after Elizabeth Tudor and the Lord Mayors of London, sheriffs and alderman were financiers of the slave trade who were benefitted well due to it. According to them owning slaves was considered a status symbol wherein it went on become a fashion during the mid 17th and 18th centuries in London .The banking system was also dependent on the slave trade because the revenue which they received through slave

trade because the fortune earned through this medium. The bank of England's finance condition was decent because of this purpose says Hakim Adi. The major slave owners like William Codrington and William Beckford became highly influential since they gained a place in the parliament through this business. It can also be said that the economical condition and the fortune that Britishers earned was through slave trade which made London a powerful and wealthy country but it was all done at the cost of the lives of fellow Africans. He specifies that slaves were brought and sold in coffee houses, at the Royal Exchanges and in ships berthed near Thames (H Adi 2014). As it is mentioned in the poetry of Langston Hughes wherein he mentions that in order to achieve solidarity oneness is necessary. There was always a feeling of inferiority among the Africans not because they had it within themselves it was evident that the world projected them to be so. The superiority and inferiority based on the colour of the person still takes place though it is not much evident as to how it was back in the days (Legum, C 1962). Today, Africans have moulded themselves to compete with anybody in any field where they are no longer annoyed of their race and identity which makes it much easier to unite Africans and the African Diaspora. The African race has started supporting and becoming more cultural in every aspect as they feel they need to keep their head held high and to keep their cultural roots blazing. The patriotism has relatively increased when compared to the situation that prevailed centuries back when people felt ashamed to be born an African and taken as slaves to another alien country.

Conclusion

The struggle of the Africans is real as it has historical evidence that they had undergone severe trials in life. To evolve and reach this level where they have achieved and made a mark in every field which makes the people of the other race comprehend that they have been entrusted with passion and goals in life as well like the other humans. Hakim Adi has brought out through his works, the evolution of the Africans from turning slaves to sorting their condition he also highlights the progress they had shown to becoming one among us. The life they had lived centuries back in other nations shows the endurance and innocence of the race. Hakim Adi sheds spotlight on the sensitive areas of Africans by subtly dragging important facts. His works are completely focused on the intricacy of information as his works expels chunks of in depth analysis about the Africans and African diaspora, especially Africans who survived in Britain. He sketches out the journey of Africans thoroughly which shows the vast storage of knowledge he holds. He has voiced his opinions without fear and commented boldly about various issues regarding racism through his works which seem to be a significant source to learn about Pan-Africanism and African Diaspora.

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