

COMMITTEE FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN AFRICA

NEWSLETTER N. 14 SPRING 1998

Introduction

In this issue we begin to explore the inequities that characterize the new turn towards "global education" at a time when many of the education systems in Africa and other third world regions are being destroyed or privatized. As Ousseina Alidou's article points out with reference to the Niger Republic in the aftermath of adjustment, European and North American students, teachers and NGOs often have the opportunity to use the facilities of African universities which are depopulated because of budgetary cuts, while the former—indigenous—teachers and students are reduced to the role of "facilitators" or "consultants" of these European and American visitors.

This development is a serious indictment of current international relations among academics, and a further evidence of the advancing recolonization process in Africa. It demonstrates, at the very least, the need for a professional code of ethics to be followed by those Europeans and North Americans involved in research and/or study abroad programs in Africa and we encourage our readers to send us their suggestions and thoughts on drafting such a code.

Assessing how to properly behave in the pursuit of "global education" also requires that traveling teachers and students understand the condition of the countries in which they plan to continue their studies. In this spirit, George Caffentzis looks at the pitfalls of the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* reporting on the so-called "higher education revolution" in the Sudan.

CAFA 14 also presents an insightful analysis by James Nduko of student organizing in Kenya, and some reflections by Silvia Federici on the politics of cultural appropriation. Starting with this issue, Ousseina Alidou of Ohio State University joins CAFA as a coordinator. We welcome her contributions.

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CAFA 14
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APOLITICAL INTELLECTUALS
Otto Rene Castillo

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|---|--|
| One day The apolitical Intellectuals Of my country Will be interrogated By the simplest Of our people. | Justifications, Born in the shadow Of the total lie. |
| They will be asked What they did When their nation died out Slowly, Like a sweet fire Small and alone. | On that day The simple people will come, Those who had no place In the books and poems Of the apolitical intellectuals. But daily delivered Their bread and milk, Their tortillas and eggs, Those who mended their clothes, Those who drove their cars, Who cared for their dogs and gardens And worked for them, |
| No one will ask them About their dress, Their long siestas After lunch, No one will want to know About their sterile combats With "the Idea Of the Nothing" No one will care about Their high financial learning. The won't be questioned On Greek mythology, Or regarding their self-disgust When someone within them Begins to die The coward's death. They'll be asked nothing About their absurd | And they'll ask: "What did you do when the poor Suffered, when tenderness and life Burned out in them?" |
| | Apolitical intellectuals Of my sweet country You will not be able to answer. |
| | A vulture of silence Will eat your gut, Your own misery Will pick at your soul, And you will be mute In your shame. |

Globalization and the Struggle for Education
in the Niger Republic

by
Ousseina Alidou
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This paper presents a synoptic account of the impact of structural adjustment on education in the Niger Republic, after the governments succumbed, in the mid 1980s, to pressure by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other western funding agencies to restructure its higher educational system according to what is known as the "globalization agenda."

The struggle for education in the Niger Republic is presently fueled by two major developments. First, there is the resistance of students, teachers and researchers against the government's attempt to privatize the public high schools and the national university. These institutions have provided a liberal arts education and equal access to knowledge for all students, regardless of their socio-economic or political backgrounds. Teachers, researchers and students are also rejecting the proposal presented by the ministry of higher education to transform the main national university into a teachers' training school (*ecole normale superieure*), in charge of graduating only middle-school and high-school teachers. They accuse this reform of ignoring the accomplishments of the national university, and undermining its capacity to generate a significant body of scholars prepared to work in highly specialized fields of the arts and sciences.

The proposed restructuring of higher education also calls for increased governmental financial support to vocational schools, that are to be given precedence over university training in the arts and sciences. Already, since the mid 1990s, the government has provided financial support to students voluntarily transferring from the university to the private vocational schools now proliferating in the capital city of Niamey. These private schools now offer technical and vocational training in such fields as accounting, computer programming, marketing, administration and management. The promoters of this restructuring claim that polytechnic training provides "underdeveloped" countries, like the Niger Republic, with more qualified manpower and the technical and administrative skills demanded by the new global economy. Within this context, university graduates with arts and sciences degrees are open to discrimination in the new labor market, as it is assumed that their skills do not match the global economy's requirements.

It is argued that the new labor market does not need an "overeducated" personnel having no "practical" training. Thus, today, a high-school graduate with two years of training in vocational schools is more likely to be hired by local private companies and foreign NGOs than a university graduate with a Bachelor's or a Master's degree in the arts and sciences. (Since 1988, more than 90% of the Nigerien students who graduated from the national university, or from foreign universities have joined the ranks of the unemployed). As a result, for the past ten years, the Niger Republic has witnessed numerous strikes by both high-school, sometimes even middle-school, and university students and teachers. In retaliation, the government has closed the high schools and the national university, and has persecuted students and teachers (see CAFA Newsletter N.10). Several sites on the national university campus have been named in memory of the comrades who were brutally gunned down by the military during student protests from the mid 1980's to the present.

Since 1988, only the medical school and the school of agronomy have been able to function on a more or less regular basis, while the Faculty of Letters and Humanities, the Faculty of Economics and Law, and the Faculty of Sciences have been continually dysfunctional. The former two schools continue to operate only because, from the start, they have been structured in such a way that part of their students' training is carried out in France or neighboring African Universities, which are technologically more equipped to accommodate the research that graduate students need to undertake and complete their educational programs. Students from these two faculties are also more likely to receive financial support from the Nigerien government or from France, while students from other disciplines, categorized as "less practical" and useful for the country's developmental needs (as recently identified by World Bank and IMF), are abandoned to themselves.

The crippling of the higher education system in the Niger Republic follows the pattern found in many other "developing" countries, and here too its goal is to create the conditions for the transformation of the world into a "market-place." Thus, over time, upon advice by the World Bank and the IMF, subsequent Nigerien governments have begun to suspend students' stipends and the salaries of civil servants at all levels. Today, the withdrawal of stipends, salaries and funds for university administration and research is the norm. There has also been an escalation in political persecution. To undermine students' and teachers' protest, mainly directed against the World Bank and IMF, the university campuses have been besieged by the police or the military, who have detained militant students and tortured them sometimes to the point of death. The government has also resorted to closing of the campuses and forcing students to return to their homes, away from the capital city where the university is located, hoping to depoliticize and destroy the students' and teachers' unions.

This maneuver has nearly paralyzed higher education. Its disastrous effects are a far cry from the "revitalization" and "capacity building" suggested by the World Bank's structural adjustment slogans or by the concept of "globalization." What they amount to is the sacrifice of the future of the younger generations of Nigerien students who normally would be expected to make a major contribution to the production of knowledge in their country.

Since 1988, the Universite de Niamey, the main national university, has ceased to produce college graduates on a regular basis. High-school graduation examinations, frozen by a governmental decision, allegedly in retaliation against students' protest, is in fact a means to check the growth of university enrollment. This strategy has generated a sense of despair, nationwide, among teenagers, who now turn to drugs, prostitution and other self-destructive activities.

Short-term consultancy work, in projects designed by the World Bank and other western funding agencies investing in the country, is now one of the few sources of income for many qualified teachers/researchers and college graduates struggling to make ends meet. The "donor" agencies determine the research projects, set the framework within which the results have to be processed, and provide the personnel for them. They mostly put their trust in the hands of foreign experts; in most cases, however, the "experts" lack a clear understanding of the local problems they are called on to solve and, in the end, have to be trained by the local teachers, researchers and graduates who work under their supervision. This pattern well shows that the World Bank and IMF have a total disregard for local academics, and are not interested in cooperating with them to assess the actual needs of the university.

Recently, a German bilateral cooperation agency known in Niger as GTZ provided funds for a bilingual educational reform that is to promote the use of Nigerien languages both as

subjects and as mediums of instruction in the school curriculum. This initiative may seem progressive, compared to the educational programs supported by France, as it recognizes the importance of national languages in the curriculum. However, its insistence to make the project conditional upon negotiations with the *Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique* (the French Cultural and Technical Cooperation Agency), rather than upon negotiations with the local institutions in charge of educational reform, indicates that ideologically GTZ has a colonial, control-seeking agenda. The head of the GTZ project, who is supposed to be the mediator between the funding agency and the national institutions associated with the project, is not even an expert in language education or in linguistics; does not understand any of the local languages, and speaks very little French in a country where French is the official language and the main medium of instruction in the same educational system that the project is intended to restructure. Not surprisingly, most of the Nigeriens who were 'lucky' enough to have an interview with the head of the GTZ project came out wondering how the interviewer could assess their qualifications, as the language barrier had prevented any meaningful discussion of the issues pertaining to the country's educational crisis. No one, however, can protest against this cultural/educational take over, since the government and the international funding agencies have managed to undermine the power of the teachers' and students' unions. Thus, the project's directors are not accountable to any Nigerien educational institution, but respond only to financing institutions whose headquarters are in Europe or the U.S. These projects are usually launched for a period of three to five years and have no interest in creating some continuity from one to the next.

The offer of consultancy contracts is a strategy also used by "donor" agencies for setting researchers or graduates up against each other, as hundreds of qualified people are lining up to compete for only one or two positions. It is

built upon much discrimination, as only people who have patronage in the expatriate community or have political influence in the government are informed about the available positions. Often priority is given to applicants who have had prior experience in working with institutions such as USAID, GTZ, World Bank and IMF, which effectively eliminates the new graduates seeking their first job opportunity.

While structural adjustment policies have disastrous consequences for the majority of Nigerien students, teachers, civil servants and peasants, they greatly benefit the children of the elite, the foreign consultants heading the programs financed by the "donor" agencies and the US students who are enrolled in "study abroad" programs in Niger. For the past ten years, while Nigerien students have been deprived of their fundamental right to education, U.S.- and French-owned private schools have been catering to the children of the expatriate communities who are working for the World Bank, the IMF, the embassies, as well as the country's elite's children. The latter also benefit from the fellowships that are accredited to the state as part of bilateral cooperation programs, that allow them to pursue university training in Europe or the U.S. after they have graduated from French and U.S. private high schools. This exacerbates the elitism created by the educational system, inherited from the French colonial system.

At the university level, the U.S. Study Abroad Programs, presumably established to promote a sister-relationship with the national university, continue to operate without any concern for the plight of teachers and students in Niger, and any solidarity with them. In fact, the closings of the national university has created favorable conditions for the Study Abroad Programs, which now have at their disposal the *de facto* laid-off local university teachers/researchers as well as the Nigerien university students or graduates who are seeking some means of survival.

The Nigerien teachers/researchers are hired for meager salaries as instructors, the Nigerien students, instead, find temporary employment as tutors and security guides for their U.S. peers, who pursue their academic goals in the country. This arrangement naturally raises many questions like: "what is the real nature of these 'exchange programs'?" "What is being really exchanged?" "And for whose benefit?" Officially, of course, the exchange is between the U.S. universities and the national university. But, in reality, U.S. academics mainly deal with the government, with the NGOs funded by agencies like the World Bank, IMF, or UNICEF, and with the foreign embassies, rather than with their local academic partners in Niger. Some of the U.S. students enrolled in the Study Abroad Programs, who become interested in extending their stay in the country, can easily find positions as interns, or part-time workers, in "donors" sponsored educational projects, or find training positions sponsored and supervised by the same hegemonic institutions. Some of them gradually become the "foreign experts," and eventually supervise the same Nigerien part-time consultants who were their teachers, during their first years in the country as exchange program students.

The globalization trend also affects the teachers, researchers and graduates who are not lucky enough to have part-time contracts with "donor" agencies, NGOs or U.S. Study Abroad Programs. These less fortunate Nigeriens end up working as taxi-drivers, small-scale neighborhood vendors, and private tutors for the children of the elite. Some of them, who have given up

the struggle for education, go down the very same path that destroyed their academic aspirations and accomplishments as they join political parties that promote the government's line. Job opportunities open up for former teachers, researchers and militant students who, after abandoning the struggle for education, find positions in key government administrative offices and, often, represent the government in negotiations with striking students' or teachers' unions.

To sum up, the "globalization" of education sponsored by the World Bank and the IMF is a destructive program, that deprives African students and academics of the basic right to acquire an academic training and contribute to various fields of knowledge, rather than being simply servants to the "global marketplace." Thus, the students' and teachers/researchers' struggle for education in the Niger Republic, as in many developing countries, is, in essence, an effort to resist the reduction of higher education to a market-driven, "global" commodity, manufactured for the benefit of multinational financial agencies and multinational corporations. Such a move, in fact, would promote elitism and a classist social model determining what category of people should have the right to higher education and which, instead, should be excluded from it, regardless of academic merit. As in many other African countries, in the Niger Republic as well, to break the vicious circles whereby educational elitism is reproduced and education is commercialized is one of the main goals of this struggle.

Suing the World Bank? Learning a Lesson from Mozambique

by
Silvia Federici

Taking a step that many people across the planet must cheer, the Mozambican government is preparing to sue the World Bank (WB), to make it account for his mistakes, and to compensate the people whose lives have been ruined by its imperial but ignorant recommendations. As a message circulated through the internet by Joseph Hanlon explained, after ordering the closure of Mozambique's cashew nut processing industry (presumably because the same process was being carried on more cheaply in India), in front of undeniable evidence showing that the recommendation was an utter failure, even from a market viewpoint, the WB has acknowledged that it made a mistake. Meanwhile 7,000 people were made jobless, and deprived of their main source of sustenance, and the country took another blow, as one more industry, this time apparently a successful one, stood ruined for good.

Will the WB get away again with this disaster, after the thousands of others it has brought about with total immunity and not a small degree of self-righteousness while pretending to deliver Africa's economic recovery? We hope it will not, and cheer the Mozambican government's decision to sue the Bank and ask for reparations. The sum asked—\$15 million—is modest compared to the misery caused by the closure, not to mention the pain the Bank is inflicting on Mozambique through its structural adjustment, which is completing the destruction of the country's reproductive system initiated by Renamo's low intensity warfare.

But what counts is the principle. There can be no doubt that if the WB were made accountable for its mistakes, and were forced to compensate the people it ruins, we would witness more caution among its staff who now, like demi-gods, play with millions of people's lives in the most irresponsible manner. It would put an end to one of the Bank's favorite strategies: acknowledging its mistakes when it is already too late and the damage they have done is irreversible. It is the strategy by which first the Bank dictates its programs to reluctant governments, not even allowing its victims to complain about them. (The Mozambican government, for instance, was told that it had to promote the closing of the cashew nut industry as if it were its own initiative, for the WB would not tolerate any public criticism). It then recognizes its mistakes, but *only years later, when the destructive effects of the programs imposed would have already left an indelible scar on the economy of the country affected, and cleared the way for the changes the WB had intended to achieve to begin with now the policy "regretted."* We have witnessed this ballet over and over during the last decade. When, like a dying rain forest, the reproductive system of a nation is terribly weakened by the policies imposed by the Bank, so much so that the country has no seeming alternative but ask the Bank for more loans, then the Bank can dry a few tears and play the wise agency willing to recognize its faults, so that the show can go on and on to more mistakes and more hypocritical tears.

To what extent this charade has become a policy can be seen by the recent admission by WB President Wolfenson that the Bank was mistaken even in its most cherished program: the attack on the nation state as a reproductive agent and on public spending on behalf of "human capital" investment (cf., the WB's *World Development Report 1997*). In other words, we now are told that what critics had loudly claimed for all the last ten years—defunding education, health care, and public transport was a recipe for disaster—was correct all along.

But unfortunately, this epiphany comes rather too late not only for the numberless students and teachers who were forced to leave their studies and even their countries, or were arrested, detained, tortured and killed in the course of anti-SAP protests, that now, in the new light offered by the Bank, should be recognized as being quite patriotic and appropriate. It is too late also for the

educational systems themselves whose infrastructures have been gutted in the process of "rationalization"— i.e., for the school buildings that have collapsed, the campus roads that have gone without repairs. Finally, it is too late for the academic staff that has migrated or has changed profession with an enormous loss of social wealth—wealth now transferred to other countries, usually countries positioning themselves as "donors" or creditors with respect to Africa.

As in the case of the cashew nut industry in Mozambique, also in the much more macroscopic case of "public funding to essential services," we have to ask: could all this immense misery have been unintended? We can hardly believe it. Rather, as with the Mozambican cashew nut processing industry, the WB can now afford to see the light in the case of the investment in reproduction because it has put in place the mechanisms it deems to be appropriate conditions for renewed investment. It has forced many indigenous teachers and students it considered counterproductive for its plans out of the system, often forcing them to migrate. It has introduced high tuition fees, thus eliminating the lower classes from tertiary schooling. It has installed the ever present international NGOs as the arbiters of what enters into the curriculum and how classes are taught. Above all, it has now so much control over African governments and politics that it can even restore some power to them, beside their power of repression which, not accidentally, was never diminished by the SAP.

It is less and less likely, however, that the WB's maneuvers will be met with success, even though the destruction is real and the achievements of the post-independence period have been irreparably undermined. Through the pain of this decade an immense knowledge has been acquired across the world, uniting ideologically and materially people throughout the planet, from Papua New Guinea to Zimbabwe, Mexico, and the Philippines. It is a knowledge and understanding deeper and more experiential than any course in "Marxism and Third World Revolution" could ever have hoped to impart. It is the

knowledge that capitalism — whose collective mind and spirit are represented by the WB as part of an infamous trinity it forms with the IMF and WTO—does not work for a large part of humanity. It is the knowledge that capitalism is only production of death for the majority of the people of the planet—production of famines, low intensity warfare, artificially created scarcities, and, to top it off, TV-induced stultification on a world scale, for those who can still afford TVs and the electricity to run them.

This knowledge is now the precious possession of the world population, who may not yet know, or not yet everywhere know, the ways to its liberation. Certainly, this liberation must be on the agenda, if life on this planet can be something other than bondage to transnational corporations, the IMF, and the WB—if, to paraphrase Kaunda, the lives of millions must have some better goal and hope than simply the payment of the debt. In this sense, while cutting educational budgets worldwide, the WB has granted all of us a major educational opportunity.

What ways people are, and will be, devising for disengaging themselves from the WB's plans for their lives, from the plans of complicitous governments, from economic programs that "mobilize them in the name of participation from below" to masquerade the loss of social entitlements— is something that will begin to unfold with clearer outlines in the coming decades, as it is now the Number One preoccupation of vast number of people internationally. As a start, however, let us join the struggle of Mozambique to make the WB pay. This, in our view is, strategically, a very important step and every organization that opposes the WB should pitch in and make its contribution to it. As we are reminded by chaos mathematics and the intriguing tales concerning the "butterfly effect," small, but strategically powerful, moves may have far more meaningful consequences than our everyday linear thinking can ever possibly imagine. Mozambique's suit against the WB is a move long overdue, if the wealth expropriated from millions of African is to make its way back to the continent.

Students' Rights and Academic Freedom in Kenya's Public Universities

by
James Nduko

On November 23, 1997 the First National Students Conference was held in Nairobi. The outcome of this forum, the formation of KENASU, the Kenya National Students Union, will test in the coming months the government commitment to democratization. The conference itself was the launching pad for a future strong student movement in Kenya. This article places the Conference and the formation of KENASU in the context of the Kenyan students' long struggle for the right to organize.

A Short History of Student Organizing in Kenya

Institutions of higher learning in Kenya have had a long history of repression during both the Kenyatta and the Moi regime. Kenyan students have been denied their most basic rights including the freedom to organize. Attempts by students to organize have been brutally crushed by the government's security forces. Students engaged in lawful activism have been expelled or suspended from their institutions, arrested, detained, tortured and even murdered. No means have been spared to intimidate any move towards student government in Kenya.

In 1987, for instance, the Students Organization of Nairobi University (SONU) was banned, and, in 1992, the government refused to lift the ban. In the same year, the National Union of Students of Kenya (NUSKE) was refused registration; in 1994, it was the turn of the Kenya University Students Organization (KUSO)—the reason given by the Registrar for his refusal was that the registration of KUSO would be harmful to the peace, stability, and security of the state.

Early in 1997, the students presented a lengthy memorandum to president Moi decrying the state of affairs at the institution of which he was Chancellor. Among the demands the students put forward to the president was that his government recognize the urgent need to respect the principle of the autonomy of the university as an institution devoted not only to intellectual pursuit but also to critical, ideological formation. In the memorandum, the students demanded that the government respect and institutionalize the principle of academic freedom and decriminalize the right of students and lecturers to organize and express ideas different from those of the establishment. The students were demanding that both they and their lecturers be allowed to form umbrella unions capable of rallying around issues affecting their lot. After the students read the memorandum and presented a copy of it to the president, he played down this demand, arguing that as a parent he was not surprised by it, but what the young people were asking was too much and could not be granted all at once.

At the same forum he retorted that he had no problems with the students and lecturers forming a union, but his worry was what they would do with these unions, and whether they would serve the national interest (whatever that may be!) To this day, no response has been forthcoming from the president, despite his promise that he would look into the issues highlighted by the students.

Over the years, as the Kenyan government has made it clear that it cannot tolerate the emergence of umbrella unions, a new phenomenon in student organizing has emerged. This has been the formation of district-based student associations and college/faculty based organizations. While

district-based organizations are basically student set-ups wholly dependent on political patronage for survival, college-based organizations are an archetype of the feeble mushrooming of pseudo-student professional clubs that exist, plagued with operational constraints in the hostile environment set by the academic authorities and the government, before they are allowed registration.

The existence of college / ethnic-based associations has obviously limited the students' capacity to unite and constitute themselves into a strong umbrella organization capable of championing their values, visions, and aspirations as both citizens and students. The result has been a fragmentation of the student body into small, unproductive professional or ethnic oriented units of young scholars, who have a scarce understanding of what they could do with their intellectual potential.

As it now stands, the Kenyan university is not a citadel of critical thinking, but a factory mass producing conformists who, even after graduation, will be safe for the maintenance of the *status quo*. The curriculum itself hardly allows for the development of a critical community holding debates on national policy or other key issues.

It is through continual interference and control that the government has succeeded in this policy of repression and denial of academic rights. Government control mechanisms, put in place to ensure that the university is constantly under close surveillance, include the following:

*The University Act which arbitrarily makes the President of Kenya the chancellor of the public universities. Such legislation obviously makes the university susceptible to presidential whims and manipulation.

*The chancellor (President) has the express authority, established under the University Act, to appoint the vice-chancellors of the

public universities, their deputies, college principals, and other senior university administrators, including the chairman of the university Council. Ineptness and a conspicuous lack of intellectual independence are, in this context, the norm. Little can be expected, as far as the defense of academic rights is concerned, of administrators who owe their position to the powers that be.

*The state's repression of the student movement, through the ban on umbrella student unions, the attack on existing organizations, the open as well as subtle intimidation of student leaders, and the infiltration of these organizations by police informers posing as genuine students.

*The state's denial of the university lecturers' right to organize, demonstrated in its refusal to register the University Academic Staff Union (UASU) in 1994. The dismissal from their teaching positions of lecturers crusading for this right, and the refusal of the courts to accord them justice—which shows to what extent the state is determined to stifle academic freedom.

*The victimization of student activists crusading for academic freedom through arbitrary suspensions, expulsions, unwarranted exam failures, police surveillance, the use of anonymous letters and telephone calls threatening their lives and even physical elimination.

*The state's repression of the students' right to free assembly, association and peaceful protest resulting in many unwarranted closures of the universities, the deaths of several students due to state police brutality.

*The deaths of vocal student leaders under mysterious circumstances and the failure of the judicial system to conduct effective investigations probing the causes of such deaths.

*The haunting of the university precincts

by state security agents and police reservists resulting in the spread of fear and despondency among the university community, and its unwillingness to engage in critical discourse at any level.

*The state's establishment of police stations inside university campuses which is an abuse of the university's extraterritoriality.

*The attendance of management meetings and students disciplinary meetings by senior special branch and CD police officers, automatically instituting the state's control on the decision-making structures at the university, even those of an academic nature.

The political paranoia that has characterized the post-independence Kenyatta and Moi regimes, sets the backdrop for the present state of repression in the public universities. They saw the universities as the cooking pot of the opposition to the *status quo*. Students and lecturers in the 1970s and early 1980s were seen as the forefront of criticism and opposition to the monopolistic, despotic one-party rule of KANU (Kenya African National Union). The university community was viewed as a community of nationalistic dissidents, that needed to be curbed to suit the will of KANU.

In this period, student politics moved away from welfare concerns to the more critical areas of national and foreign policy. Issues relating to governance and policy matters began to dominate the university debates. At the University of Nairobi there emerged a strong student union, SONU, and the stage for a bitter showdown between ideologically oriented student activism and state brutality was set. Exemplary were the many student protests and the government crackdown of progressive students and lecturers, carried out, in this period, under the guise of ridding the university of "Marxist elements." The period also saw the 1982 coup attempt, by the Air Force, in which university students came out in open support. Many stu-

dents from the University of Nairobi were killed on this occasion by loyalist government troops, many more were arrested, detained, some without trial, and sentenced to long jail terms. Many others were expelled and some forced to flee to exile.

The radical activities at the university alarmed the conservative regime of both Jomo Kenyatta and Moi and nothing was spared to ensure that the *status quo* would be preserved. This has set the condition for the repression of academic rights in Kenya, whose long-term effect has been the whittling away of the earlier spirit of independence that made of the Kenyan students the conscience of the nation and an important influence on the life of the nation.

SAP and Academic Freedom

In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the government introduced "cost-sharing" in its public institutions. This program was part of the implementation of the World Bank and IMF Structural Adjustment Program. The university was not spared, and it soon became clear that students too would be required to pay directly for their education. Prior to the introduction of this program, university students automatically received funds from the government to finance their studies. Upon attaining admission at the final high school examinations, even students from poor backgrounds had the guarantee of being able to go to the university. Accommodation, food, and tuition fees were directly paid by the government to the university and a personal allowance was advanced to the students for their subsistence while in college.

The new requirement stipulated that the students should be responsible for the financing of their education. It declared that government financing would no longer be automatic, and that needy students would be required to apply for loans from a board set up by the Commission for Higher Education—the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB). Only deserving cases would be considered for loans awards.

This provision was worrisome, because the majority of students who make it to the university in Kenya come from poor backgrounds, and the new rule would make it impossible for them to continue their studies. There was obviously a concern for the criteria that would be used to ascertain whether an applicant student was really needy. Clearly, it was going to be impossible for many students to finance their university education.

The implementation of the World Bank/IMF policy for higher education sparked off many riots in all the state universities with students demanding their immediate withdrawal, given their serious implications for the future of the country's university education. These riots saw a serious clash between the public universities' student body and the state police. The protests led to the closing of the public universities for periods ranging from nine months to over one year. Upon their being called back, the students were sent coercive forms that required them to either accept the new conditions and continue with their studies, or reject them and forfeit their chances at the institutions. There was a requirement that these bonds/form be signed before a magistrate. Faced with these alternatives, and separated from each other, in the isolation of their homes, the students had no choice but sign a declaration stating that they were ready to adhere to the new requirements. The loan forms were subsequently sent to the district headquarters, from where the students were supposed to make applications and forward them to the HELB. The recalling of the students then followed the pattern of the *colonial divide-and-rule policy practiced by the British*. These saw the fresh intakes recalled way ahead of the more mature and critical groups. The semester system, that would have all the students begin the academic year together, was deliberately interfered with, and a new irregular system was put in place with sections of the student body being made extremely busy with exams and

assignments at the same time when other sections would be busy settling down for their new semesters. A new system emerged that ensured that different student groups would have irreconcilable concerns at any one particular time of the year or of their stay in college. This essentially curtailed any possibility the students would have to make demands for the withdrawal of the new order.

The new set up made it difficult for the students to mobilize around common issues. The stringent demands of the new loan scheme now served to further fragment the student body, rather than to unify it. Soon a stratification among students became evident, as the students who got more of the loan awards would be having an easy lifestyle, while those who received less, or none at all, would be leading a miserable life in the 'next door room.' An unheard of and unimaginable division between rich and poor students began to emerge, that could now be seen in the groupings that naturally formed. It became difficult for students to face their problems as a body rather than as individuals. While the beneficiaries of the new scheme found it satisfactory, those who suffered its effects were still motivated to protest against the unfairness and arbitrariness of the criteria used to give the awards. There was no common rallying point for these two groups and what resulted was a silent, intra-students resentment, rather than a joining of forces against a common enemy.

The majority of the students' focus shifted sharply from the tradition of research, study, criticism and free socialization at the university, to a new situation where they would act as reserved individuals, with little confidence in themselves, and concerned primarily with their survival. Food and accommodations became the big issues in the students' daily lives at the university. Thus, more time was to be spent cooking in their rooms rather than interacting with colleagues after lectures to identify com-

mon problems and possible ways of solving them. More time was also spent now commuting from relatives' houses in city estates, rather than in the library researching and shaping new perspectives. Long hours were to be spent pondering on where the next penny would come from for the next meal. Money was to be spent purchasing electrical cooking gadgets, green vegetables, maize meal, cooking fat and salt for survival's sake, rather than to buy books, pens and papers.

In this situation, desperation and frustration have descended on the university students in Kenya. Thus, it may take quite a prompting to resuscitate a student movement into what it was in the 1970s and 1980s. Confronted with such struggle to survive, the higher values of academic freedom, the extraterritoriality of the university, and the need to democratize the governance of these institutions are only secondary concerns for the average university student today. Gripped by biting poverty and faced with a daily existential drama unfolding on the campus, students' main concern is to complete their degree and go away, no matter where to. The demand for survival is also reducing many students into intellectual beggars, thanks to the district-based organizations that often arrange for handout-dishing forums for their members. With the emergence of a handout-culture, in fact, well-to-do politicians have taken over the dis-

trict/ethnic based associations as patrons, thus effectively stripping them of their authority.

In spite of these drawbacks, Kenyan universities still have the potential of providing a progressive ideological formation. The main challenge facing a student movement in Kenya today is whether the students will absolve their responsibility towards the country and fight repression and dictatorship at all levels. For a start, Kenyan students should strive to establish the principle of the autonomy of the university, to make it illegal for the state to maintain a police post and have security forces within its precincts, to obtain a curriculum reform, that would make it relevant to the Kenyan situation, to win a greater student participation in the university government, and a greater presence of students in all the university organs.

Lastly, students should not await for the government's approval in order to start organizing. The November 23 First National Student Conference was an expression of this principle and perhaps the beginning of a new student movement.

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On the Politics of Cultural Appropriation : Notes on Appiah's Philosophy of Culture.

by
Silvia Federici

Kwame Anthony Appiah is one of the most influential African philosophers working in the U.S. His book, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, was an important contribution to the philosophical discussion of "race", "nativism," and "Africa". (1) Thus, when he speaks on matters pertaining to education and culture we should listen carefully to his words.

It is in this spirit that I want to rethink the notion of "cultural appropriation" that Appiah has developed throughout his work and he recently restated in the course of a presentation on Alain Locke at the "Philosophy Born of Struggle" Conference held in New York on November 1997 at the New School.

In pursuing what he called his "one, only idea," Appiah cast suspicion on a the notion of "cultural identity" and proceeded to define culture as consisting of cultural products that can be(come) the property, capital or stock of specific groups or individuals. From the viewpoint of culture as a set of products, the main questions concerning cultural appropriation are the following: who can claim "ownership" of these products; and what should be the basis of these claims? Here again, as in *My Father's House*, Appiah rejected the view that participation in a particular "racial" or ethnic group could entitle any one group or individual to cultural ownership claims, of the type that would, for instance, make of Shakespeare's plays the heritage/property of every white person, or make of jazz the heritage/property of every black person. Appiah properly wanted to establish that Shakespeare's plays are potentially the property of everybody and so is jazz. But the justification he offered for this view was highly problematic.

His argument echoed that presented by John Locke in the *Second Treatise of Government* with regard to land ownership.(2) The argument runs like this: the earth is a great common given by God to all humankind, but to use any of its products a process of appropriation is necessary that can only be accomplished by an individual and that requires work. Only by doing work can anyone take something out of the great common and be entitled to make it his/her own. Locke therefore rejected the "inheritance" model advocated by his arch opponent, Sir Robert Filmer, according to which the ultimate title to land is handed down from Adam to his "first born sons" (or any reasonable substitutes) down to King James II. (3)

Replacing "land" with "culture" in John Locke's argument, Appiah at the New School argued along the same lines. He rejected the cultural geneticist fallacy that decides cultural ownership claims on the basis of "genes," i.e. belonging to a "race" or ethnic group." He labeled the geneticist position a "lazy" person's viewpoint, that ignores the necessary *work* involved in cultural appropriation. He stressed that culture, or better cultural products, belong to those who do the work required, and they cannot be appropriated or assigned on the basis of "race" or on a collective basis, since the process of appropriation is always, necessarily, individual.

In making these arguments, Appiah firmly located himself in the 17th and 18th century bourgeois tradition, that looked at cultural work as (a) an individual enterprise, and (b) something that can be carried out independently of any power relations. These two assumptions are connected, and I will show why we cannot accept them, even though we may agree with Appiah's critique of cultural identity.

First, let us remember that Locke's idyllic description of appropriation and private property acquisition through work is just that: an idyllic tale with no historical foundation. When did work ever constitute the basis for the accumulation of wealth? Do we need to reiterate that conquest—rather than work—was the basis for the acquisition of land and accumulation of monetary capital? Should we say that Locke—writing from the heart of imperial Britain and a recruit to the slave-owning British ruling class, was somewhat disingenuous in ignoring the limits of "work" as a source for the accumulation of wealth? Far more realistic were those agrarian revolutionaries (from the English Diggers to the Mexican Zapatistas) who, in proclaiming "land to the tiller," were keenly aware that only a revolution subverting consolidated power relations would achieve this goal.

Continuing this analogy, let us see now where this discussion of John Locke and the 1911 Zapatista revolution takes us when land is replaced by "culture" (which, in fact, is based on the availability of land, as the indigenous peoples of the Americas remind us to this day).(4)

If we replace "land" with "culture" (as Appiah does), then we must see that the appropriation of cultural wealth is also deeply shaped by collective power relations, that often can prevent us from doing the very work that Appiah considers indispensable for appropriation.

Appiah forgets that work is not a given.

One cannot work, in a capitalist society, whenever and in the ways one want to, simply out of an individual decision. I cannot for instance decide to become a farmer and work the land without some capital, indeed a lot of it. This applies to intellectual work as well. A condition for intellectual work is access to the means of cultural production : from books, pens and chalk, to computers, laboratories, libraries, data bases, information networks, and the time to employ them-- all things which are not free.

To remain within the range of examples that was given by Appiah himself, we can say that to produce jazz you need to have a trumpet, to read Shakespeare you must have the money to buy the book and/or have access to a library with a functioning electricity system (which, for instance, most African students today do not have), not to mention the time to read it. This may seem all too obvious; but it ceases to be so, if we realize that today, in much of the African continent, these basic conditions for doing contemporary intellectual and artistic work are not available to the overwhelming majority of the African population, including African university students.

In the U.S. as well, the specific conditions for doing cultural work, and cultural production are neither universally nor equitably accessible. We can certainly say that to gain universal and equal access to the prerequisites for cultural work, no less than to gain universal and equal access to land, would require something of a social revolution. Even the powerful black civil-rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s did not succeeded in creating this situation.

In conclusion, Appiah's shibboleths on the appropriation of humanity's cultural products and the gaining of ownership entitlement to them — "culture to the cultural tillers," "all power to those who burn the midnight oil" — must remain empty words unless they are very

explicitly coupled with a process of social revolution, guaranteeing that the means of cultural production have not been privatized and are open to free appropriation. Short of that, such slogans support a reign of cultural meritocracy that is inherently unjust, since those who have "merit" are a subset of those who presently have the financial and political means to access the tools and environment appropriate to cultural work.

This is especially important today as the dismantling of the African education system is not only depriving students of access to cultural production but, in the process, it is facilitating their expropriation from the accumulated capital of African knowledge.

The bio-prospecting and gene-hunting that pharmaceutical and agricultural companies are doing in Africa today, and the World Bank/NGOs take over of African cultural property (both materially and in terms of its representation) should remind us that to speak of "individual work as a road to cultural ownership" is misleading (see CAFA N. 12).

Indeed, it is necessary to dispute the notion of individual appropriation of cultural products. This classic bourgeois notion should have been put into question by the very recognition (so central to the 20th century "linguistic turn" in philosophy) that language is a collective, social product and therefore any knowledge that is based upon linguistic elements of any type is indebted to supra-individual efforts and creativity.

Second, control of the means of cultural production and access to them is shaped primarily not by individual but by class factors—who can go to a good school and learn to read from a book and who, instead, has classes under a tree and must write in the sand, to use an extreme example drawn however from contemporary Africa, does not depend on how hard one is willing to work. In the US as well, it took a

women's movement to increase the presence of women in the graduate and professional schools. It was not an individual achievement. To make individuals the primary agents of such changes is again to uphold a classical bourgeois notion of the self-made man that has over and over been falsified.

In conclusion I recommend that
- we avoid making (as Appiah does) seemingly democratic appeals like "culture to those who work," unless we are prepared to talk about the conditions of cultural production and cultural appropriation, and to recognize that they will not be equally distributed without a major social change;

-we join the resistance to the take over of cultural products and the means of cultural production by transnational corporations, (through international property legislation) and by supranational agencies like the World Bank (whose lending policies are based upon tourism-driven definitions of "cultural property"). For these laws and policies increasingly prevent individuals and groups from engaging in any autonomous cultural work, and appropriating even the cultural production of their own ancestors.

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Sudan and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

by
George Caffentzis

The Chronicle of Higher Education is the "newspaper of record" for the U.S. academic. But it is not only the place where one looks for a job, or for a grant, or for a notice of one's recently published book. Its articles are also expected to chronicle the significant intellectual, institutional, pedagogical and political developments in U.S. colleges and universities.

In the early 1990s *The Chronicle's* editors decided to expand its coverage of events and trends in universities to include Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia and South America. This was a welcome development and a telling indication of the growing impact of "global education" on the U.S. academic scene. As "study abroad" programs are blossoming, as foreign students' tuition fees are becoming a new source of revenue for university budgets, and as "the imperatives of globalization" are being trumpeted on U.S. campuses, acquiring knowledge about academic life in countries as far flown as Tanzania and Thailand is becoming increasingly important for teachers, researchers, and administrators. With more U.S. students and faculty members going to campuses in foreign countries, the accuracy and good judgment of *The Chronicle's* coverage has become a matter of life-and-death; since it is often the only easily accessible source of current information about a far off environment that will become the destination of a university's students and faculty.

Is *The Chronicle* fulfilling its role well or is it falling into the temptation of diplomatically evading difficult truths? We fear that it has chosen the second path in its publication of two recent articles by Andrea Useem in its February 2, 1998 issue. Both articles examine the policy changes that have occurred in recent years in the higher education system of the Sudan and their consequences for the Sudanese academic community. Entitled "'Higher Education Revolution' Divides Academics in Sudan" and "Academics See a 'Catastrophic' Decline at U. of Khartoum," the articles are intended to give a contrasting, even-handed perspective on the "massive expansion" of the higher education system in the Sudan over the last decade, and the response it has evoked among the country's teachers and students.

The picture that emerges from such a diplomatic account hardly begins to confront, however, the dramatic situation that has developed in the Sudanese university-system— not to mention in the country as whole— since the National Islamic Front (NIF) *coup d'etat* in 1989. Useem refers to the government's repression of dissident academics, but she limits herself to mentioning their dismissal from teaching positions, and the presence of security agents throughout the campus. She quotes the case of Abdel Wahab el-Mubarak, the previous Minister of Education, who was fired after accusing the new universities of being nothing more than "glorified high-schools. But she makes no reference to the long list of academics who were arrested and/or tortured since 1989. Africa Watch named eighteen academics who were arrested and/or tortured between 1989 and 1990 alone. (1) Nor does she describe the continual killing, arrest and torture of dissident students—for example, in response to nation-wide university student protests, in September 1995, dozens of students were killed by police bullets, perhaps up to 2,000 were arrested, and many of those were beaten and tortured. (2) Also absent from Useem's report is any mention of the systematic violence against students from south who have protested the Islamization and Arabicization of the education program. For example, "In October 1991, some twenty-two students were reported killed as they attempted to flee the

southern city of Juba to Uganda, in the wake of a brutal government crackdown on a student which had been organized against the imposition of Arabic as the medium of instruction in the city schools.”(3) Sudan’s campuses are battlefields, but Useem does not deign to show us the corpses.

Against this background, we might justly question Useem’s echoing of President Omar al-Bashir’s and the NIF’s claim that they have made higher education a *national* priority, and her statement to the effect that the “obvious hitch in the plan is money,” as it is obviously not possible for the government to finance “such a far-reaching vision.” Useem may have asked what perverse strategy inspired the Sudanese government to open twenty four new universities in less than a decade without any financial support for such move—as shown by the fact that in response to the expansion the university budget has only being doubled. In this context, the article acknowledges that the multiplication of the universities has encountered some criticism, which has been muzzled in turn.

Some insight into the reasons for such a bizarre decision is provided by the second article, which focuses on the situation at the University of Khartoum. The article points out that the sudden expansion of the university system is seen by academics here as a move directed to undermine the prestige of their university whose budget has been drastically reduced, and it goes on to mention the atmosphere of repression prevailing on the Khartoum campus where few people dare to make their criticism of government policies public for fear of retaliation. But while beginning to acknowledge the political nature of the university expansion, Useem’s account here conveys the impression that what is at stake is an attempt to undermine Khartoum University’s “elite status,” in other words, the government is attempting to place higher education on a more egalitarian basis. Useem ignores the fact that what worries Bashir and the NIF is not the alleged snobbery

of Khartoum University professors. Rather, what the Sudanese government has attempted to destroy since the coup, is the power and experience of the students and faculty of Khartoum University, who have always played a crucial role in the country’s political history, often as catalysts of social revolutionary movements that changed the country’s course. It was the students of Khartoum University, for instance, that, together with trade unionists, led the mass protest movement that put an end to Nimeiri’s government and organized the demonstrations in opposition to the country’s acceptance of the policies of the WB and IMF in the late 1980s. The NIF obviously fears that it too will meet Nimeiri’s fate unless Khartoum University’s political threat is destroyed. It is for this very reason that Khartoum University is being defunded and its staff and students are under intense surveillance, and constantly exposed to physical threats.

We should also ask how much credence can be given to statements about “national priorities” made by a government that for years have been waging a most brutal war against the population of its Southern regions, has embarked in a policy of extermination against minority groups such as the Nubians, and is known to condone or promote a vast slave trade.(4) Were these crucial aspects of contemporary politics in the Sudan not of relevance for an article on educational policies?

All in all, then, the significance of the *Chronicle*’s two articles on Sudan is deliberately ambiguous. They are written so diplomatically that they mislead the reader. One wonders, indeed, why were they written in the first place. For, on a practical level, what is the average American teacher or student supposed to make of them? Are we just expected to balance in our minds the pros and cons of the NIF policy and make up our mind as we see it fit, or are we being given a more subtle message as to how we are expected to behave with respect to the Sudanese university-system? Are we being told, when in Sudan do not chose sides, for the issues

are complex and there is a little bit of truth on all sides?

Until not long ago, perhaps, such questions may have been less urgent, even though at no point should we forget the solidarity we owe to colleagues and students under attack in other countries. In the past, few academicians from the U.S., and even fewer students would have had an opportunity to ever visit or work in a Sudanese university. Today, however, the situation is very different, as study abroad programs are spawning all over the U.S. and taking U.S. students and teacher to every part of the world. Thus, reliable information concerning universities abroad is of the essence, if we are not to cooperate with repressive government, undermine the struggles of our colleagues abroad and jeopardize the safety of our own students and programs. Here is where the articles from the *Chronicle* fall short.

Notes

(1) Africa Watch, *Academic Freedom and Human Rights Abuses in Africa* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1991), pp. 86-93.

(2) Human Rights Watch/Africa, *Behind the Red Line: Political Repression in Sudan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1996), pp. 232-252.

(3) Al-Zubeir Hamad, Abdelhadi, “Sudan” in John Daniel, Nigel Hartley et al. (eds.), *Academic Freedom 3: Education and Human Rights* (London: Zed Books, 1995).

(4) See Human Right Watch/Africa, *Children of Sudan: Slaves, Street Children and Child Soldiers* (New York: Human Rights Watch/Africa, 1995).

WHO IS CAFA AND WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

The Committee for Academic Freedom in Africa (CAFA) consists of people teaching and studying in North America and Europe who are concerned with the increasing violations of academic freedom that are taking place in African universities and who believe that it is crucial that we support the struggle our African colleagues are conducting to assert and preserve their rights.

CAFA was organized in the Spring of 1991 and since then we have been involved in numerous campaigns on behalf of African teachers and students. We have also created and continue to update a "Chronology of the African Student Movement from 1985." The CAFA Newsletter contains scholarly articles on the impact of the World Bank and IMF policies on African education as well as action alerts and other information about student and faculty struggles on African campuses.

CAFA's objectives include:

- *informing our colleagues about the current situation on African campuses;
- *setting up an urgent action network to respond promptly to emergency situations;
- *mobilizing our unions and other academic organizations so that we can put pressure on African academic authorities as well as international agencies like the World Bank and IMF;

- * organizing delegations that will make direct contact with teachers and students and their organizations in Africa.

The annual fee for membership in CAFA is \$25. CAFA's coordinators and the editors of the CAFA Newsletter are:

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COMMITTEE FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN AFRICA

NEWSLETTER N. 15 SPRING 1999

Introduction

This issue of CAFA's Newsletter continues our analysis of the post-structural adjustment period in African universities. The most immediate impact of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) has been the defunding of African universities and the consequent repression of student and faculty opposition. This phase is vividly presented by Moctar Al Haji Hima, the former President of the Nigerien Students Union, in an interview.

Barbara Koffa graphically illustrates the devastating consequences of years of war on the schools of Liberia and the Liberian children themselves, who often were turned into soldiers. In this context, it is important to note that, though not every country in Africa has recently experienced warfare, (a) African school systems have suffered similar consequences from World Bank- and IMF-constructed SAPs which have literally waged a war on them, (b) the loss of hope caused by the destruction of schooling as a path to a better future has been an important factor in the recruitment of African youth as soldiers (as studies of Sierra Leone and Liberia itself indicate).

Where schools are still functioning, privatization is well underway and it is now taking place even *within* the public universities, as we learn from an interview with Dr. Gorgui, a Senegalese academic.

Finally, CAFA looks at the role of U.S.-based study abroad programs play in the recolonization of African universities when U.S. academicians take advantage of an immiserated educational system for their own purposes and proceed without regard for the fate of their African colleagues and students. In the hope of contributing to raising awareness of this problem, we propose a "Code of Ethics for Global Education in Africa." Although the Code is not in a final form, we hope it will stimulate a debate on this matter and that you will send us your thoughts on the Code, which we will publish in a future issue of the CAFA Newsletter.

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ETS Discriminates Against African Students and Then Backs Down

Discrimination against African students by international educational agencies comes in many forms, not the least is discrimination in the application procedure for scholarships to study in the US.

Starting in the Summer of 1998, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) began to require that its TOEFL exam (Test of English as a Foreign Language) must be taken only in computerized form. ETS also asked overseas students taking the test to pay 66% more for the exam, raising the fee from \$75 to \$125. According to the *FairTest Examiner* (Summer 1998), protests mounted against these changes in several countries. But clearly it was African students who were the most discriminated against by these new regulations. In Africa, few students have access to computers even at the college level, not to mention at the high school level. Even in middle class families personal computers are extremely rare because, on an average, the cost of a computer would equal the family's yearly income. The same applies for the CD ROM, made available by ETS, which provides a tutorial on the computerized TOEFL. This too is an piece of equipment that very few can buy or have access to the select city outlets that sell it. Thus, requiring a computerized exam sent a clear signal: African students are not in demand as applicants, except for a tiny minority of well-to-do youth who have a higher income and are being groomed to become members of the future elites.

It is important to add that the demand for computerized tests was not dictated by any pedagogical principle. On the contrary, it went against pedagogical wisdom, since computerized tests put many students at a disadvantage. For example, computerized tests do not allow students to compare and to check their answers against each other in the different parts of the test. Scrolling does not do the job, as it gives only one page at a time and makes it more difficult both to find errors and to erase them.

The protests against computer-based testing in Sub-Saharan Africa, however, were successful...for the moment. Beginning in the Spring of 1999, the ETS will provide paper and pencil TOFEL exams in Africa. But this does not mean that the ETS is giving up on its plan to totally computerize testing of Africans. As ETS Vice-President John Yopp said, "ETS and its client boards continue to believe that computer-based testing is the desired test-delivery system of the future."

Globalization and Academic Ethics

by

The Editors of CAFA

One of the consequences of economic globalization has been the internationalization of US higher education institutions and universities. International studies, study abroad programs, international cultural exchanges have become a "must" on most American campuses. In the last decade, a number of major U.S. educational organizations have asked that "provisions should be made to ensure that at least 10 percent of all students who receive baccalaureate degrees in this country will have had a 'significant educational experience abroad during their undergraduate years.'" (See Michael R. Laubscher, *Encounters with Difference: Student Perceptions of the Role of Out-of-Class Experiences in Education Abroad* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1994)). Equally momentous have been the efforts by U.S. administrators and funding agencies to turn American academic institutions into "global universities," i.e. global educational centers, recruiting from and catering to an international student body.

We have also witnessed the growing engagement of US academicians and colleges in the restructuring of academic institutions in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the former socialist countries, and the management in these same regions of private, generally English-speaking universities, unaffordable for the majority of aspiring students.

All these developments constitute the most substantial innovation in US academic life over the last decade. They have been promoted and hailed as a great contribution to the spread of "quality education" and global citizenship. The reality, however, may be quite different. We call on our colleagues to ponder on the implications of these changes, especially for African universities, and to oppose the mercenary goals which often inspire them. Consider the following :

1. The internationalization of the curriculum and academic activities is often conceived within a framework of global economic competition that turns multicultural awareness into a means of neo-colonial exploitation rather than a means of understanding and valorizing other people's histories and struggles.

2. As the National Security Education Program (NSEP) has demonstrated, the Pentagon and the CIA are the most prominent government agencies promoting and financing the internationalization of U.S. academic education. This prominence is inevitable since they, more than ever, need a cosmopolitan personnel at a time when the U. S. government is openly striving for economic and military hegemony in every region of the world.

3. The globalization of U.S. universities has been facilitated by the underdevelopment of public education throughout the Third World, upon recommendations of the World Bank and IMF in the name of "rationalization" and "structural adjustment."

4. In some African countries where universities have been shut down, the idle facilities are often used by American study abroad programs. These programs benefit from the cheap cost of study, and

the program directors can even hire at very low wages laid off teachers and former students as helpers/facilitators.

5. U.S. teachers and college administrators are being financed by USAID to intervene in several third world and former socialist countries to (a) set up private universities; (b) restructure entire departments, schools, programs, curricula. In other words, U.S. academics are being presently employed by the U.S. government to carry on cultural/educational work abroad that suits its economic, political, ideological objectives.

Considering the above developments, we believe that the time has come for U.S. academics to show our colleagues in Africa and other third world regions the same solidarity that would be expected of us by colleagues on our own campuses.

It is in this context that we are proposing the following "University Teachers Code of Ethics for Global Education in Africa." We urge you to circulate it among colleagues in the institutions where you work, at conferences, and other academic events and ask people to comment upon it. Please send your comments to one of the coordinators of CAFA as soon as possible. They will help us in the coming months to construct a final code of ethics that can be subscribed to by a substantial number of people involved in "global education in Africa." We intend to present the code to the organizations involved in financing or overseeing global education initiatives as well. Even more important, we want to use this declaration—amended as it might be—to promote solidarity with our African colleagues and campaign to reverse the recolonization of African universities.

University Teachers' Draft Code of Ethics for Global Education in Africa:

We are university teachers and we publicly declare our adherence to the following principles of academic ethics in our work in Africa:

—we will never, under any circumstance, work (as researchers, with a study abroad program, or in any other capacity) in an African university where students or the faculty are on strike or which has been shut down by students' or teachers' strikes and protests against police repression and structural adjustment cut backs.

—we will never take a position at or cooperate with the World Bank, the IMF, USAID, or any other organization whose policy is to expropriate Africans from the means of the production and distribution of knowledge and to devalue African people's contribution to world culture.

—we will never take advantage of the immiseration to which African colleagues and students have been reduced, and appropriate the educational facilities and resources from which African colleagues and students have been *de facto* excluded because of lack of means. Knowledge acquired under such conditions would be antagonistic to the spirit of multiculturalism and scholarly solidarity.

—we will consult with colleagues and activists in the countries where we carry on research, so as to ensure that our research answers the needs of the people it studies, and is shaped with the cooperation of people whose lives will be affected by it, rather being dictated by funding agencies' agenda

On the History and Current State of the Student Movement in the Niger Republic

Based on an Interview with Muctar Al Haji Hima,
Former President of the Nigerien Students Union
with Ousseina Alidou, Coordinator of CAFA
Niamey, December 5, 1998

The Nigerien student movement has gone through different phases in recent years, because it was banned during the military government of General Kountche and only recently has been able to regain its initiative, even though it was never completely destroyed and it continued to operate underground.

It is a broad movement and I want to first dispel the idea that it is an ethnically oriented movement, as some have claimed. In the period from 1974 to 1983, the leadership—that is the Executive Committee and the Directing Committee—of the UENUN (*Union Des Etudiants Nigerien de l'Universite' de Niamey*) was predominantly Hausa, but within it there were also comrades coming from other ethnic groups. Those who stress the ethnic elements, and keep asking, 'to what ethnic group does so and so belong?', are people interested in promoting divisions within the student movement, who try to convince some groups that they are being marginalized. It is true that between 1974 and 1983, the majority of the leadership was Hausa, but even among the Hausa there is a great diversity. There is uniformity as far as the language, but not as far the culture is concerned. You have the Hausa from Dosso-South-West, from Tahoua (North-West); Hausa from Douthi (South-West); Hausa from Maradi (East); Zinder (East).

Also at the level of the USN (*Union Des Scolaires*), the ethnic element is not important; it is not a factor in the choice of the leadership. The USN relies on a set of principles, on certain texts, on its statutes and its internal regulations. It operates on the basis of democratic centralism. The leaders must come from the grassroots and must have learnt everything bit by bit; they also

must know the statutes well and have assumed all the responsibilities to aspire one day to become part of the Directing Committee. In addition, they must have a good political formation. You must have a socialist perspective to become a leader in the student movement, particularly if you want to have a position of responsibility like the Directing Committee. The "line" has softened, but the comrades are still asked to conform to the guidelines of the organization, which are anti-imperialist and therefore can only be on the left. This is the ideological direction of the movement.

If you come from the grassroots as far as your ideological formation is concerned, if you master the principles of the organization, that is, if you support all the anti-imperialist principles, you can aspire to become a general delegate for a supporting commission located in an office, a high-school, or a university. At the university, for example, there are debate commissions, sport commissions, etc. If you have been tested this way, if you have shown that you are capable of defending the interests of everybody, and that you respect the principles of the organization, you can aspire one day to become a member of the Executive Committee. And if you have been a good member of the Executive Committee and have demonstrated that you can defend the interests of all the students, again in conformity with the principles of the organization, your section can propose you as a candidate to become part of the Directing Committee, which is the leading structure of the organization. The Directing Committee administers the affairs of the organization, not only at the national level,

but at the international level as well. It supervises the affairs of all Nigerien students wherever they are, whether they study at home or abroad. These are the questions the comrades take into account: Are you a good militant? Are you well-prepared ideologically and politically? Are you a comrade capable of defending everybody and respecting the principles of the organization? The other factors are of no interest for the student movement, because it is truly a mass organization.

Certainly the USN has always had regional structures as well. This is because of the activities it carries on during the vacation period. Usually, USN functions full-time, twelve months a year, because the Directing Committee reorients its activities during the vacation period. When the students return to the rural areas, the comrades too return to their villages, to help their parents or to set up other activities. What's happening is that by returning to their regions, the students realize what has taken place in the life of the country-side during the nine months when they were absent, and can make an assessment of the evolution of the population during the year, which then serves to make a more complete and reliable analysis of the national situation. People examine how the international situation has affected the condition of people in the country and then they examine the national life in all its dimensions. It's not just the problems of students that are examined, but also the problems of the peasants. How do they managed to survive? Has there been improvement or regression in their conditions? How has the national situation affected the life of the organization? The problems have to be identified to be corrected.

The Directing Committee relies on the work of the "vacation-structures" to make this type of analysis. These vacation-structures are created in April and function from April to October, when the people involved participate at the gatherings of the general councils of the congress, where they present their reports, region by region, so that an assessment of the real national situation can be made. The vacation-

structures, then, are a positive thing and they are not organized on ethnic bases. The comrades are chosen to go to this or that region and they volunteer to organize activities for the vacations; there is no connection with the regional or ethnic origin of the comrades involved.

There is another aspect to this question. Between 1983 and 1987 the Nigerien student movement suffered a serious setback under the dictatorship of General Kountche, who dissolved its organization after killing a number of its members and deporting others. The result was a state of paralysis, because the student movement no longer had an organization, as the only organizations that the regime allowed were cultural or regional ones. But our comrades could not remain unorganized for too long and they utilized these channels. People regrouped for cultural activities around the library commissions or the regional associations that always organize activities for the vacations. It was through these work-cadres that the students were able to address national questions again. At the university level, the regional associations were the only ones that could meet because trying to organize was very risky, and when they did the comrades were systematically persecuted, they were taken by the police and deported, or were sent before time to do the civic service. But they could organize on the regional level, because the authorities allowed it. So, there were consultations and people tried to start activities, even if they did not have the means to defend themselves. But people knew that the regional discussion did not necessarily include only people from the region.

Under the cover of regional associations, then, the student movement strove to overcome the constraints imposed by the dictatorship, but without pushing too far, because it was not possible to organize political activities like before. What they could organize were cultural activities, educational and literacy programs to be carried on during the vacation period. There were also fund-raising activities to help comrades in difficulty or to finance the activities for the vacation-structures. When students came

back they always gave a report of their activities and this would give people an idea about the national situation to such a point that when the student movement revived in 1987 there was no discontinuity with respect to an understanding of the national situation.

In 1987, when the Nigerien students regained the initiative, they were able to force the Kountche government, at the end of its regime, to accept the existence of their structures in their old organizational form, as Union of Nigerien Students (*Union Des Scolaires Nigeriens*, USN), this time with a Directing Committee inside the University of Niamey, which was also the Directing Committee of the UENUN (*Union Des Etudiants Nigerien*) at the University of Niamey. When the movement was revived, in April of 1987, there was no rupture with the past, because the reports produced by the vacation-structures served to analyze what had occurred during the 1983-1987 period.

At that time, it was agreed that it was necessary to define a program. The most active sections of the USN - those of the students from Niamey, from Cotonou (Benin), from Lome' (Togo), Abidjan (Ivory Coast), Dakar (Senegal), France - gathered, then, during the vacations, around the UENUN at the University of Niamey, to discuss what could be done to get the government to recognize the organization, so that it could regain its credibility and its means of intervention, which in the past had made it the only counter-weight in front of different dictatorships. It was also the only movement organized at the national level.

There were two types of schemes. The first proposed that the university students meet alone and leave high-schools and elementary schools students independent, free to have their own organization. Another scheme proposed that the old form of the USN be kept. There were periods of reflection that took place during the vacations. In any case, the mandate was to launch a vast movement which would in the end prevail over the military government and, therefore, over military dictatorship which continued even after the death of the first dictator Kountche

and his replacement by Ali Chaibooou.

It was necessary between 1983 and 1990 to find the means to launch a movement that could prevail over the military regime and create the conditions for democracy. These were the questions from which people started with in 1987. At this time, one began to give equal representation at the regional level; and there was a need, therefore, for comrades who knew the regional situations well in order to spur the mobilization campaigns. Thus, the comrades were regrouped according to their regional origins and they were put in a position of being able to go on a mission at any time of the year without this costing anything to the organization. They could keep in contact easily with their younger brothers who had remained in the regions, thus, it was much easier for them to go and mobilize the comrades fast, if it was necessary, the more so since the militants of the USN continued to be persecuted. This is why it was considered necessary to strengthen the regional structures, and give them a precise mandate. It is not because the comrades regrouped instinctively according to their ethnic origin. They regrouped because they had a precise mandate which they executed at the level of the different regions. I think that any democracy must recognize the ties people have to a particular locality, otherwise they would not be able to elect their mayors, and deputies. This is democratic and political regionalism in full respect of the principles of the organization, in the country, in the high schools, and regional colleges. This is what happened in 1989.

At the end of 1991, as the student unions were recognized, and it was decided that the mandate of the vacation-structures was finished and they were dissolved. At the level of the University of Niamey, they no longer had a permanent existence. But now the Directing Committee decided that the "vacation-structures" should exist in conformity with the way things were before the regional structures were imposed, and that they should again function from April to October, until they deposit their reports. These structures work under the guidance of the USN, which manages the activities of the high-school

students, and the Directing Committee -whose directives are transmitted through the different Executive Committees.

Between 1994 to 1997 the student movement suffered a political defeat because the politicians of the Third Republic managed to infiltrate the student unions. They realized that in Niger only the student union concretely represented a national force and that they could not have continued their bad politics unless they managed to weaken the student unions. Thus, they infiltrated the unions from a political viewpoint and used many tricks, including the ethnic card, to divide the students. As a consequence, the Central Union (*Central Syndacal*), which had been able to survive and remain united from 1960 until recently, despite all the dictatorships there have been since independence, today is divided. On one side there is the USTN and on the other there is the National Confederation of Nigerien Workers (*Confederation National Des Travailleurs Nigeriens*, CNTN). The USN is not yet divided, but the politicians have decided not to recognize it any longer, despite the decision by the National Conference which recognized the organization. They have dissolved again the organization (the USN) and today it is functioning underground.

Because of the infiltration and the fact that the comrades have been weakened, there has been a resurgence of ethnic feelings. What happens at the national level always has immediate consequences at the level of high school students. In the case of university students it is there, but not in a way that is open and can be exposed because the comrades know that any concession to ethnocentrism prevents you from having any leadership role in the organization. The fact is that the organization does not tolerate that people who are active in the regional political formations to return and have a position of responsibility in the organization.

There are no representatives of political parties in the organization, because it is a mass organization that must preserve harmonies among its members. If the commission for the "tea-debates" tries to plan a debate on the politi-

cal configuration of Niger, clearly the comrades can discuss their political views. If with the occasion they want to make their political affiliations known, they can do so; because this is acceptable in the context of an intellectual discussion. People can present their views and defend their belonging to a particular political formation, or defend a particular political party with regard to its social program or to compare it to another party. But they cannot hold a position in a party and a position of leadership in the student union.

Q. Let us look now at the international level. What does the USN think of the IMF?

A. (Sarcastic pause). Oh, it is an old story because obviously any serious left organization, above all an anti-imperialist organization, must oppose the international financial institutions operating in the present political order. If you have an anti-imperialist perspective you don't want financial capital to come in the country and impose its will and continue to exploit with impunity the population. This is why the USN, in taking a position, always analyzes the overall situation in view of this perspective. In recent times, we have witnessed the collapse of state socialism internationally; but the question for us is whether this legitimates the exploitation of people and of the Third World by financial capital. As an anti-imperialist organization, the USN refuses the idea that international financial capital can come to our countries and impose their views and demands on our people as if our people were not able to organize themselves and define for themselves a development scheme, in agreement with their needs rather than with the needs of the imperialists.

Q. What has been the impact of the intervention of the World Bank and IMF on the structure of education in Niger?

A. With the signing of the first SAP program, in the period from 1982 to 1987, there was a very restrictive educational politics because the state

was asked to concern itself only with elementary education and completely privatize tertiary education, from the high-schools to the universities. There has been no increase in the budget for these two school levels. The USN had to rebel against this plan, which did not take into any account the real situation of country. In Niger the rate of *scolarization* is about 28%, and it has not substantially improved since 1960. If we consider the number of persons who have had a tertiary education and those in particular who have a university diploma, and then we ask the state to disengage at this level, what we are really doing is sacrificing all the technical and professional formation in the country. They just want people to learn reading and writing. But what we say -"we" being the USN- is what is the use of learning to read and write for six years, if afterwards people do not have any use for it? People don't realize in Niger that already now those in the rural areas who don't pass the exam to enter a college or do not get into a college because their parents are poor, have to return to farming and a few years later they have become illiterate again. There is plenty of "second degree illiterates" in Niger. What is going to happen if the Nigerien cannot rely on the state after the first six years of education? What is this leading up to? It is the people who have the financial means who are now in charge of the

implementation of these programs; because they have the money and their children are never here in Niger; from the time when they begin the second cycle they leave Niger to go to study abroad, since their parents have the means. These are the only ones who will have the benefit of a higher education. Another form of oligarchy is going to be created and these will be the people who are going to lead the country. The masses will be at their mercy.

These are the contradictions the World Bank does not seem to acknowledge. But we should not have any illusions, because the World Bank is a bank and, like every bank, all it cares for is the profitability of its investments. The World Bank is guided by a politics of usury. This is why it does not care that people get an education. When we talk about schooling we should always ask, "what it is for?" What are the objectives? For instance, if people go to school and they are asked to learn a foreign language we should ask why, what is it for? What are people going to do with it after they have learned it? It is important to know at the very beginning what are our concrete goals? We support a formal education, literacy, an education that is technical as well as cultural and above all an education that is democratic. But the World Bank is not interested in all this, again because it is guided by the politics of usury. We want a democratic school, not one reserved for privileged people.

Post-war Education in Liberia

by
Barbara B. Koffa

Seven years of war have caused a massive destruction in the physical infrastructures of our country. Houses, schools, and other public buildings, shops, stores, none escaped the wrath of the warring parties. And these increased in number from two, initially, in December 1989 - Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia and the Armed Forces of Liberia, the National Army that was supporting the incumbent president Samuel Kanyon Doe - to almost five at the height of the war. All warring factions resorted to the use not only of small arms but also of heavy artillery which caused the maximum damage.

Restructuring the educational system in the aftermath of the war has been extremely difficult in several ways. First, we have had to deal with the psychological and physical abuse which so many Liberian boys and girls had suffered. It has been an uphill battle to get them to return to the classroom, since their minds, as well as their bodies, need rehabilitation first. Meanwhile, stories abound about how those who have gone through the rehabilitation process return to the battlefield at the first opportunity that presents itself.

Two of the institutions that are having an impact on education are the Children Assistance Program (CAP) and the Don Bosco Homes, which is run by the Sebastians of Don Bosco, a Catholic group. Here the children take vocational and literacy courses, undergo psychological therapy with trained counselors, and engage in physical activities like sports, especially football which is very popular in Liberia. Combined exercises of body and mind help to point the children in the right direction, although there is a large number of them who absolutely refuse rehabilitation.

While the situation of education has

improved immensely, compared with the period immediately after the first cease-fire in 1990, much remains to be done. In addition to the damage suffered by the school buildings, all the benches and chairs have been destroyed as they were used as firewood during the war. This has placed an additional burden on the parents, who in addition to having to buy books and uniforms, must fix the chairs and benches as a pre-requisite for admission of their children/wards to take school.

But the standard of living of our people has greatly fallen in the aftermath of the war. The majority of parents who work as civil servants are underpaid (salaries are still based on the pre-coup scale fixed in April 1980) and go without a pay-checks for months at a time. Recently, the government introduced what it calls the "Assisted Enrollment Program (AEP)," which is supposed to reduce the financial burden on the parents who have to send their children to school. The scheme reduces the school fees that students must pay in order to enter government-owned elementary junior and senior high-schools and also pays their fees for the National Exam administered by the West African Examination Council (WAEC), which is taken annually by ninth and twelfth graders in Liberian schools.

While the AEP has led to an increase in the number of students enrolling in government-owned schools, the situation has worsened due to the lack of space in the classrooms, and has not really eased the burden on the parents who must still provide for books and other requirements for their children. Moreover, the larger enrollment means that some students have to stand outside the classroom and miss valuable teaching time.

Another serious problem eroding the fabric of post-war education is the lack of teach-

ers. In many parts of the world teachers' services are the least compensated and Liberia is no exception. However, in post-war Liberia many of them have decided to leave for greener pastures at home and abroad. Many teachers who had fled the country and gone to neighboring countries because of the war, later decided to stay rather than return to the salaries that were to be expected. As a result, the few remaining in the school system have to make sacrifices and teach both morning and evening out of sheer dedication to the students. Working both with local and international NGOs is now a big trend in Liberia.

Many schools have no textbooks for the students; and when the books become available they are often too expensive for the average Liberian. So, very often, the students must study without books or have to share them with their colleagues. To try to solve this problem, UNESCO has sponsored a project undertaken by the Ministry of Education. The idea is to print textbooks by Liberian authors for the students' use. Let us hope that this initiative will succeed.

Unfortunately, the National Government has failed to prioritize education. Instead, areas such as security and defense take the larger share of the National Budget. This trend, however, will have to change, if any improvement is to occur

in the education of our youths. Presently, the situation with education is dismal. In most rural schools the teachers have to serve in many capacities and hardly ever get paid. They have to sacrifice even more than their urban colleagues. They sit in crumbling buildings, on mud bricks, trying to teach children who have had to walk for miles to get to school. Often one teacher teaches three or four different grades and the lack of textbooks is even more chronic. It seems that some help may be forthcoming from international NGOs planning to assist these schools. However, the overall picture is desperate. Definitely much attention needs to be focused on our country's educational system, because it is facing very serious problems in post-war Liberia.

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The World Bank, Privatization, and the Fate of Education in Senegal

Interview with Dr. Gorgui from the English Department of the Université de Dakar. (Dr. Gorgui is presently a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at the Ohio State University in the Department of African-American and African Studies)

Q: Dr. Gorgui can you tell us how Structural Adjustment and privatization have affected higher education in Senegal?

A: We often hear that the changes that SAP has introduced have created a "new Senegalese University," but this reform is not what the Senegalese people had expected. The "new University" enrolls a limited number of students and employs, possibly, a limited number of teachers, and marks the end of public education in Senegal. From independence till approximately 1980, the years of President Senghor's government, the Senegalese University was open to everybody. If you had a baccalaureate degree, you were entitled to enroll, and the students were coming from every part of the country and from every social group and class. Students from poor families and rich families met there, because enrollment depended on your social background as well as your academic achievements. The resources of the students' families were also taken into account for admission. The university was open to everybody, it was truly a "public university."

However, since 1980-1981, a new trend has been in place, under pressure by the World Bank and IMF which have instructed the local authorities to limit the number of students that are admitted and the number of teachers too. Their argument was that the country could not develop, if so much money was invested in education. (Senegal apparently is one of the countries that spend the greatest part of the national budget on education.) The idea is that selection will guarantee excellence. Thus, today, no attempt is made to ensure the participation of students from different family backgrounds. Students now do not have the same opportunities they had in the past,

because the students who have affluent parents can afford to go to private schools, while students coming from poor families cannot afford it. So, now, access to education varies depending on one's social class.

Q: Why should going to a private school make a difference?

A: You are privileged if you go to a private school because private schools have more resources. We are told that they are run better because they are run on a profit basis and teachers are dismissed if they do not do well their job; in reality, most of these teachers have not attended any teachers' training schools or college. So, normally, these schools are not better than the public ones as far as the preparation of the teachers are concerned, and the inspectors do not properly supervise them.

Q: Who sponsors the private schools? How are they created? Is their expansion part of a conspiracy to kill public education?

A: Ten years ago it was very difficult to open a private school; but today it is very easy. Once you have been a teacher in a public school you are given the opportunity to open a private school. You just need to come with your proposal and you can get loan from a bank or possibly can be helped by the government and then you can open your school.

"Conspiracy" is a strong word, but without admitting it the government is really seeking to kill the public education system. I am convinced that the government wants to get rid of public schooling and lay education in the hands of the private sector. This means that in

the future, education will not be available to everybody: Most likely it will be a privilege of the rich. People from the poor suburbs or the rural areas will no longer have access to it There will be a big gap between the rich and the poor not only as far as the living conditions, but also with regard to education. Maybe I am being too pessimistic; but even if public education survives, its quality will be abysmally poor compared to that in the private sector.

Q: What is the main difference between public and private schools?

A: If you go to the private school you can study from October until the end of academic year up in July, and then you can sit for your exams and probably you have a better chance to pass them than students who come from the public schools. For there are many strikes in public schools. Moreover, public school teachers are not very committed to teaching because they have to teach in the schools where they are officially posted by the government, and then they also have to teach in the private schools as well and they spend most of their time there. So the problem of "excellence" is a serious one. Those who are from the private schools have more opportunities to show their "excellence" because they are given more opportunities to learn and "excel".

Q: As a teacher how are you affected by these inequalities?

A: If you ask a question in a classroom and receive a good answer, you are always inclined to think that the student comes from a private school, and most of the time they do. It is a shame. Now you have to be rich to benefit from education.

Q: Let's about "decentralization" which presumably breeds "excellence," and "admission rights" to the university. What is your understanding of these concepts that the World Bank and the IMF keep pushing on African governments and

Ministers of education? How do they work in Senegal?

A: "Decentralization" means the shifting of decision-making from the ministry of education to the different university departments. Before the intervention of the World Bank and IMF, the assignments of the students to different departments used to come from the Ministry of Education. Now a limit has been set on the number of students going to the university, and the decision to assign students to different departments is being made by the teachers. They decide presumably on the basis of the grades the students have received until the time of examination. So from the beginning of the academic year the battle begins. They have a limited number of seats for each department and each college. I understand that the figures really come from the World Bank and the IMF and they (the university staff) have to abide by the quota. In the English Department we receive a quota. We received approximately 1000 to 1050 applications and we are just told not to admit more than 400 to 500. So, you see if you receive those applications you have got to select the best ones among the lot and naturally the students who have had access to better schools [Q. "or have more connections?"] are privileged.

Q: Does it mean that even if you pass the examination and have the passing grade point average 10 or 11 or 12 out of 20, you can be rejected, because you did not have any regular schooling and there is no seat left for you?

A: Yes, those who have received a better education in the private schools have a better chance to grab the seats, while those from public schools are rejected.

Q: The World Bank's adjustment and globalization agenda throughout Africa demands the privatization of education, so that now you have a sudden boom of private schools, including polytechnic schools within public universities. Is this happening in Senegal? I heard, for

instance, that there is a plan to create a private Institute of Management and Economics that will compete with the Department of Economics within the same public university. How will these kinds of outfits operate?

A: The way I understand it is that there are some teachers who are in the same field, in this case economics, who get together and set up an institute within their college. I don't know how to explain it, but that is how it is. The argument is that the university has not been able to provide proper services for the public and the private sectors outside the university, they have not created the proper expertise, and the teachers who know they have this expertise make the connection possible. So, outside people come informally and contact the teachers for the kind of assistance and expertise they need, and they pay for it.

Q: Is it a private deal? A private training enterprise?

A: It is private. They offer private training and people pay for that.

Q: Can a student who is not associated with a private company, but is enrolled in the university's Department of Economics attend the training offered by the institute within this Department?

A: Only if you can pay for it yourself.

Q: And yet this institute is within the public university?

A: It is in the public university and the money earned goes into the pocket of the teachers.

Q: Isn't this a form of privatization?

A: Yes. A similar thing is going on in the high schools where privatization is also evident. There are hundreds of private schools in the districts in Dakar, even in the poor districts. This

has been encouraged by the government. These private schools are created with their own management. But here these institutes use the university premises, they offer private training and the teachers get paid directly. It is a case of mismanagement, because the university has not created teaching opportunities for the teachers, outside of their regular schedules.

Q: So, the institute is operating within the public university and benefiting from public investments, but is not accepting the regular university students. This is not mismanagement, it is a question of unequal access to public entitlements. If I am a taxpayer and this is an institution that receives my tax money, why is it that my children cannot have access to public education through that very institute whose creation is partly due to my tax-money? If my child does not want to go through the general training, but would like to attend the institute, why couldn't s/he, since the institute is part of the public university?

A: I think it is a problem of mismanagement, because the university authorities have to devise a new system to enable the teachers to serve outside their regular teaching hours...

Q: Don't the teachers have the option to operate outside the university hours as private consultants? Isn't that possible in Senegal? And isn't there something problematic in the use of public structures to run private activities?

A: Well, we do have inside the university students who are sent by private companies—in addition to the regular students. They use the expertise of the teachers for two, three years and then become accountants or whatever else they want. This needs to be organized; the money that students from the private sector pay can even sustain the university.

Q: Is there a students' or a teachers' union that deals with these unfair policies? Are there people addressing these issues? Are teachers all mem-

bers of the teachers' union?

A: Most of them are, but I don't know the position of the teachers' union on this issue. What I can say is that, yes, it is a problem. Activities are carried out by teachers within the university and the money does not enter into the account of the university. It goes into the pockets of the teachers.

There is also the added problem that you are recruited into a department, you teach there, and receive a salary for that. Apart from the fact that now you use the premises of the university for private teaching, it is bad for your regular students because the time you should allocate to them is used now for your private activities.

Q: But what is the union saying? Is your union a real union in the traditional sense of the word?

A: Are you criticizing our union?

Q: No! I am not criticizing! I just want to understand what type of union you have. Is it a union that is just concerned with the salaries of the teachers, or is it a union that is also committed to teaching and learning and to the protection of the university's integrity regardless of

Dr. Gorgui: [laughs...] I mean they are committed to teaching and learning, but survival is also important....

WHO IS CAFA AND WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

The Committee for Academic Freedom in Africa (CAFA) consists of people teaching and studying in North America and Europe who are concerned with the increasing violations of academic freedom that are taking place in African universities and who believe that it is crucial that we support the struggle our African colleagues are conducting to assert and preserve their rights.

CAFA was organized in the Spring of 1991 and since then we have been involved in numerous campaigns on behalf of African teachers and students. We have also created and continue to update a "Chronology of the African Student Movement from 1985." The CAFA Newsletter contains scholarly articles on the impact of the World Bank and IMF policies on African education as well as action alerts and other information about student and faculty struggles on African campuses.

CAFA's objectives include:

- *informing our colleagues about the current situation on African campuses;
- *setting up an urgent action network to respond promptly to emergency situations;
- *mobilizing our unions and other academic organizations so that we can we can put pressure on African academic authorities as well as international agencies like the World Bank and IMF;
- * organizing delegations that will make direct contact with teachers and students and their organizations in Africa.

The annual fee for membership in CAFA is \$25. CAFA's coordinators and the editors of the CAFA Newsletter are:

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