

# A Narrative of the future

By Paul T. Shipale

"The answer to the question how can African peoples (plural) become the African people (singular), resides in an ideological structure that must be historically discovered, culturally maintained, and politically buttressed by the masses of African people... It is therefore important to construct a narrative of the future for ourselves, engaging in a persistent and consistent propaganda of the value of Pan Africanism as a viable strategy in defense of Afro-centric solidarity"

"The emerging minimum bases for continental civil society are among others; an active and genuine promotion of African culture as determined by symbols, motifs, rituals, education, scripts, proverbs, and ceremonies that are relevant and progressive. This is the only way to reduce and minimize national antagonisms and regional disputes based upon stereotypes and false images of others" concluded Professor Molefi Kete Asante in a speech titled (Commitment to the Civil Society: The Role of an Afro-centric Ideology in Reducing Religious, Regional, and Ethnic Obstacles to National Integration Dakar, Senegal, July 27-30, 2009).

## Conceptual Framework

Without trying to use complicated manner of speech and lest I am accused of trying to sound too academic, it is an established fact that unless we have a clear paradigm, with its cognitive and structural aspects, principles and assumptions, we can not fully grasp and comprehend the length and breadth of a phenomena. Pan-Africanism without the engine of a commitment to the best interest of Africa is without energy and without a thriving ideological focus. To say, "I am a Pan Africanist," and not to work in the interest of the agency of Africans is to abuse that term. "To be African is to believe in two overarching constructs: a narrative of the future and the idea of a Nation Embracing Diversity" says Dr. Asante.

Tragically the idea that Europeans have some different superior intellectual or scientific ability is an accepted doctrine in the minds of many people who will even go to any length to try to uphold it by making assertion and offering their own interpretations as evidence to uphold European triumphalism in order to obscure the deeper influences of Africa due to their racist views. Skin pigment levels come from the body's ability to absorb Vitamin D from the sun. People in Africa needed



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more pigment to protect themselves from UV rays and become resistant to many kinds of diseases. In Europe, there is less sun and so the skin had to lighten to compensate in order to get adequate Vitamin D. That's the truth, and pretty simple. Nature and God don't design people with motives; but to be simply the most efficient in whatever environment we live in.

## Contextual Perspective

I reiterate that, all Afro-centric analysis is a critique on domination. Furthermore, all Afro-centric analysis is a critique on hierarchy and patriarchy because the analysis stems from all forms of oppression. An Afro centric paradigm is also the application of the principles of the Afro-centric method to textual analysis and whether the value of etymology and semantics, that is, the origin of terms and words is in the proper identification and location of concepts in order to know the source of an author's location. On that ground, I applaud ECN decision's to impose a 13 year old piece of legislation for a 30% women's representation in decision making bodies. I also agree that the looting must come to an end in the GIPF saga before we are left with political eggs on our face and the message should be; don't touch our pension!

What will constitute the substantive ingredients for a common body polity? What metaphor for the literal state will emerge as the national instrument for what philosophers call 'dignity-affirming integration'? How shall our deepest character be announced in ways that produce in citizens a sense of togetherness, community, and shared destiny? These are the issues that must be managed to build that commitment and this is what our visionary leader, Founding Father of the Namibian Nation, Dr. Sam Nujoma, as a true Pan-Africanist, has been advocating all along for "a nation united and striving to achieve a common good for all the members of our society..."

Without going into long parabolic and episodic detours, let me just say that to construct a narrative of the future, we must operationalize by introducing turn-key activities that engage the citizens. The commitment to diversity is also central to the advancement of the civil society and this means that all forms of ethnic chauvinism should be discouraged so as to dictate the idea of a nation that embraces unity

in diversity.

On that score, as a student of Constitutional and administrative laws, I concur with the view that in a unitary state, regions are administrative units with no legislative powers and power of taxation. As such, a constitutional head, elected on direct universal suffrage, should be represented by appointed authorities instead of a Chairman of the Management Committee elected by his peers. Apart from the usual emotional regurgitation from the opposition benches, including a maiden speech by RDP's vice President lecturing on the representative nature of the MPs and others dishing out a litany of prescriptions and a 'laundry list of errors', the only reasonable proposal came from SWANU President who alternatively suggested that such appointed Governors by the President, be subjected to approval by Parliament for checks and balances. Decentralization comes in two primary forms: A political decentralization or devolution of power on one hand and administrative decentralization or deconcentration of power on the other. Devolution exists if local entities have substantial authority to hire, tax, and contract, expend, invest, plan, set priorities, and deliver the services they chose that is, if they have legislative power as in a federal state in an asymmetric decentralization.

Deconcentration, in contrast, occurs when local entities act largely as the local agents of central governments to manage personnel and expend resources and act as a first step to devolution in a poly-centric movement and matrix of relations and not a mutually exclusive dichotomy. True, a growing body of research suggests that democracy must be rooted in functioning local, participatory self-governance and "ownership" of political institutions, mobilization of talents and resources, and countervailing power vis-à-vis national institutions (Harbeson, Rothchild and Chazan, 1994; Wunsch and Olowu, 1990). Despite these compelling reasons, most "experiments" in decentralization and local democratic governance suggest that African local democracy and governance has failed in virtually everyplace it has been tried. Besides, Political decentralization or devolution is a double-edged sword with a negative side as eloquently elaborated by the PM and Minister Nickey Iyambo such as clientelism, enlargement of bureaucracies; Undermining efficiency, increasing disparity, jeopardizing stability; the risk of decentralized corruption ruled by predatory local officials, the consolidation of money politics and political gangsterism among others. President Hifikepunye Pohamba and the Founding Father Dr. Sam Shafiqhuna Nujoma recently reminded us to maintain the Policy of National reconciliation and ensure that our country remains a Sovereign Unitary State as per Article 1 of the constitution, as we laid to rest one of the heroes of the liberation struggle at the national shrine of the revolution, the heroes Acre, the former Director of the Intelligence Services, comparable to the 'keeper of the national girdles and insignias

and carrier of the fire-log' in African tradition (Omkwatelipo dhomiiya dho Shilongo, Omuhumbati goshikuni/onyeka) (Pettinen 1889-1895, Savola, 1916, pp. 85-97), the late Angura Peter Tshirumbu Tsheehama, an African man from the locust clan as we heard from Minister Nghidinwa, a fellow clan-member.

Indeed, in Oshiwambo tradition when a child is born, he/she is given an aunt-mother, a blood sister of the child's father to be the guardian who offer a traditional symbolic necklace called oshinyenyene made from beads of shells or ostrich eggshells combined with earthly metallic beads called ouputu to link the newborn to the clan of the father and their ancestors, awoken to be the guardian angels in the child's life. After all, what is the difference between an African purification or enthronement ceremony, say after the birth of twins or at a coronation of a king, and the biblical purification ceremony as written in Leviticus 12 & 14? Don't we also take the fat from the Lion cooked and mixed with ochre to anoint (okugwayekwa) by smearing the mixture on the right ear lobe, the big toe on the right and the right thumb and sprinkle seven times? However, not all taboos and rites (iidhila nomisindilo) from "the heart of Africa" are good (Miller, 1976, p. 153) (HD Namuhuja, 1996, p.44)

On another note, Founding Father Dr. Nujoma called for the country's mineral resources to be exploited to create employment and singled out mining and agriculture as the two economic sectors with huge potential for employment. But some are quick to jump on a bandwagon with a barrage of criticism to dismiss these concrete con-structural functional ideas, unlike the fallacies of some people with their new found marriages of convenience and political outings with former colonial masters conducting the orchestra in the background with "slush fund" of "N\$100 million used to cheat Namibians..."

I flag that last backdrop to remind the readers of the latest revelation that this alliance is just part of a puzzle to regain control of the media as a strategic political tool for their "information is power" strategy. As the nation pondered on this change and when they were furthered quizzed on their intention, the cloth was lifted and it was revealed that RP will disband and there was more drama to unfold. It now appears that the whole saga was meant for the opposition to secure the Democratic Media Holdings (DMH). As it now stands, the marriage hatched in sin needs consummation and surely their first premature child will receive a baptism of fire come next regional and local elections where they will have to avoid been squashed and their bubble busted. Some one said a fortnight ago "at long '40 years' last, the hiding in SWAPO colors came to an end and the two sides of a neo-colonial coin have melted together in the open" presumably to keep the political fortunes of the Mudge's dynasty and HH's Presidential ambitions.

## LOCAL TENDER BOARD

FOR THE CITY OF WINDHOEK



### TENDER INVITATION

#### TENDER NO. M 121/10

**Description:** Yearly Contract for the provision of Low Voltage Service connections to low cost housing for the City of Windhoek.  
**Site Inspection:** Compulsory site meeting will be held on Thursday 21 October 2010, 10:00, Electricity Department board room, c/o Armstrong & Stokes Streets in the Southern Industrial Area.  
**Closing Date:** Wednesday, 10 November 2010 at 14:30  
**Tender Documents:** Available as from Friday 15 October 2010 at 14H00, at the Customer Care Centre, Rev. Michael Scott Street, Windhoek  
**Levy:** N\$ 100.00 (Non-refundable)  
**Enquiries Technical:** Mr. J. Mumba - Tel: +264 61-290 2457/ Fax: 290 2494

#### TENDER NO. M 122/10

**Description:** Production, Design, Layout and Printing of 5 000 A5 City of Windhoek Corporate Diaries and Production, Design, Layout and Printing of 40 A4 Executive Diaries (Two Yearly Tender)  
**Site Inspection:** Compulsory briefing will be held on Tuesday, 26 October 2010, at 10h00 at Customer Care Centre, Rev. Michael Scott Street, Windhoek  
**Closing Date:** Friday, 12 November 2010, 11:00  
**Tender Documents:** Available as from Friday, 15 October 2010 at 14h00 at the Customer Care Centre, Rev. Michael Scott Street, Windhoek.  
**Levy:** N\$ 150.00 (Non-refundable)  
**Enquiries Procurement:** Mr. Nguvitjita Kapere - Tel: +264 (0) 61-290 2416  
 Fax: +264 (0) 61- 290 2057 - E-mail: [knk@windhoekcc.org.na](mailto:knk@windhoekcc.org.na)

#### TENDER NO. FIN 1 2009/2010

**Description:** Financing of Vehicles and Equipment  
**Closing Date:** Wednesday, 10 November 2010 at 14:30  
**Tender Documents:** Available as from Friday 15 October 2010 at 14h00, at the Customer Care Centre, Rev. Michael Scott Street, Windhoek.  
**Levy:** N\$ 150.00 (Non-refundable)  
**Enquiries Technical :** Ms. A.N Numwa - Tel: +264 61-290 2651

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 E-mail: [ans@windhoekcc.org.na](mailto:ans@windhoekcc.org.na)

**DELIVERY ADDRESS:** Tender Box, Customer Care Centre, City of Windhoek  
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