

## Dedication

We are pleased to present the first issue of *Umoja*, a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal published by the African and African American Studies Program at Grand Valley State University. *Umoja* means solidarity, unity, and oneness in Swahili, an East African language widely spoken as a lingua franca. *Umoja* is also the first of seven cardinal principles of Kwanzaa, which stresses the need to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, and the nation. What other word could better express the core values for which the African and African American Studies Program stands?

The publication of this journal is part of a larger vision, under the new leadership of the African and African American Studies Program, to foster quality scholarship and intellectually engage the community on major issues facing Africa, the African American community and the African diaspora at large. *Umoja* offers a great opportunity to connect the AAAS program and Grand Valley State University to a large community of scholars engaged in the same enterprise, reaffirming the cultural continua that unites them and marks the essence and rationale of *Umoja*.

*Umoja* will provide an interdisciplinary forum for scholars to present results from research—both theoretical and empirical—that advances our understanding of Africa and the diaspora. In addition, *Umoja* will publish opinion pieces and book reviews dealing with African and African diaspora affairs. We hope all contributions to *Umoja* will create new avenues for thinking and theorizing about Africa and its global diaspora. We are presenting this first issue with the conviction that *Umoja* should not only present innovative theoretical and empirical contributions but also foster seminal discussions, criticisms, and suggestions for further work.

Together, the different articles, opinion pieces and book reviews published in this first issue begin a lively discussion that all those interested in Africa and the diaspora should find engaging and stimulating. We invite each and all of you to become a contributor and supporter of *Umoja*. We hope you enjoy this first issue.

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## **RESEARCH ARTICLES**

### **Alternative Funding Strategies for African Universities**

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#### **Abstract**

*Higher education in Africa suffers a severe crisis of funding, and its leaders possess little experience with “Institutional Advancement” as an alternative source of funding. This area of university administration, which broadly includes development, public relations and alumni activities, has contributed to the advancement success of private universities in the United States. This article provides African universities with the results of a study on the American funding strategies conducted at seven most-funded universities including Harvard and Stanford. It finally proposes alternative funding venues that African universities can adapt to their own social and cultural environments.*

No comparison can be made between the funding methods used in universities in the United States and those used in African universities. Rather, it pays to contemplate the advancement mechanisms of the best universities in the world as the ideal in general. American private institutions of higher education count among the best-funded universities and colleges in the world (Fisher and Koch 1996, Hall 2000). Yet, funding strategies are believed to be the backbone for the financial success of most American private institutions of higher learning (Klinger 2000). Meanwhile African institutions of higher education possess little experience with institutional advancement and its constituencies (Altbach and Peterson 1999).

Higher education in Africa suffers a severe crisis of quality funding. In the Democratic Republic of Congo for example, private and public universities face serious challenges related to funding sources and funding strategies (World Bank 2005). Independent financing, which so distinctly separates private universities from their public counterparts, is the biggest challenge for African universities and colleges. Finding the money to run even a small private university poses a serious difficulty. Tuition and subsidies from religious organizations have been identified as the two main funding sources for private universities in Africa (Useem 1999). Most institutions of post secondary education use tuition to cover operating expenses, whereas a few religiously affiliated institutions receive some subsidies from their religious establishments (World Bank 2005). These two sources of income do not usually suffice to develop campus infrastructure, expand libraries, and hire more staff members. To remain functioning, experts urge African private universities to use all the creativity they can muster to raise money for their institutions (Useem 1999).

However, many African university presidents, administrators or faculty are not familiar with the procedures, techniques, and resources needed to attract funding (Saint 2002). Most administrators and leaders of African universities have little experience with writing grant proposals to the World Bank, the African Development Bank, foundations and other agencies (Hayward 1991). A majority of African universities do not possess current information on available sources of funds or foundations’ guidelines and do not share this with other colleges or universities in need of such basic information. Hayward (1991) maintains that the leaders of African Universities have almost no experience of alumni giving as a considerable source of funding. He suggests that African university leaders examine the American experience as they seek to improve the financial condition of their institutions. First, what are the funding strategies that have furthered the advancement of American private universities? To what extent can American institutional advancement practices affect African institutions? Finally, what should be expected of the presidential leadership at African universities?

#### **Funding Strategies Used in American Universities**

Seven universities in the United States were selected for study, which was conducted from November 2000 to February 2001, based on their fundraising success – as defined by the 1998 Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac (Chronicle of Higher Education 1999). Each institution held an endowment fund of more than 300 million dollars in 1998, and showed

continuous financial improvement from 1998 to 2000. Since the researcher targeted Catholic institutions of higher learning, five were selected that fulfilled the conditions of fundraising success and accepted to participate in the investigation. The seven universities, namely, Harvard University (MA), Stanford University (CA), Dayton (OH), Georgetown University (DC), Santa Clara University (CA), University of Saint Thomas (MN) and University of San Francisco (CA), took a survey that included both quantitative (descriptive statistics) and qualitative (interviews) methods. Two other Catholic universities in Africa (Catholic University of Kinshasa and *Institut Technique Veterinaire de Kimwenza*), were selected for qualitative data collection through face-to-face interviews. Data were collected on the site of each institution during a thirty-minute interview with previously selected respondents.

The findings have shown that there are many sophisticated mechanisms and techniques that make a college or a university in the United States financially successful. General strategies include university strategic planning, prestige, age and experience, communication techniques, advancement strategies, skills and team building, endowment income, stable enrollment, and tuition increase. For more than three-fourths of American universities, institutional advancement strategies are among the five top sources of funding (Bongila 2003).

Institutional advancement is defined as the area of college and university administration that usually includes development, public relations, and alumni activities, but excludes athletics, admissions, and placement (Fisher and Koch 1996). The strategies that have contributed to the advancement success of private universities in the United States are identified as: a) institutional advancement structure, b) development programs (practiced by 100% of the institutions), c) alumni affairs (by 86%), d) public relations (by 71%), and advancement involvement of presidents and trustees. Each institutional advancement strategy involved several specific techniques.

The most effective institutional advancement structure appears to be centralized around the chief advancement officer (Shea 1986), and it includes the board of trustees, the president, the advancement officer, the development director, alumni and public relation officers, and several fulltime and part-time staff members. More than half of the institutions studied had a centralized model of advancement structure with full advancement responsibility delegated to an advancement officer, namely: vice president for university relations, vice president for development, senior vice president for external affairs, or vice president for alumni and university relations.

Development strategies involve major gifts, annual fund gifts, capital campaigns, corporations, foundations, planned giving, estate planning/deferred giving, and bequests/wills. Each development strategy encompasses additional minor strategies and techniques.

Alumni strategies include class reunions, homecomings, alumni awards, alumni chapters and student advancement programs, all of which provide ways of involving alumni in institutional advancement. All the alumni strategies were organized within a *dependent model of alumni association*. Other more creative alumni strategies include president clubs, donor clubs, president round tables, and committees on university resources.

Public relations combine such activities as publications, mailings, telephone solicitations, personal solicitations, workshops, seminars, and news reports. The model for communication was two-way in nature (Bongila 2003). The institutions used this public relations/communication strategy to approach alumni, donors, corporations and foundations. The model of communication became two-way asymmetric, however, because the institutions emphasized their own needs rather than the mutual needs of both the institution and the donor.

### **Lessons Learned from Institutional Advancement in the USA**

Advancement officers of successful institutions of higher education in the United States could offer some examples of advancement strategies in a way that Wagner and Gillespie have proposed:

First, we can apply our knowledge and experience in helping solve new problems and second, we can have the fascinating and marvelous opportunity of learning how fund raising can work elsewhere. By using what we already know and taking the time to research and develop an effective plan ..., we will have greater likelihood for success. We can make the fund-raising community a truly global one by sharing our expertise and information and doing so wisely in different cultural, national and traditional settings (Wagner and Gillespie 1994, p. 22).

However, African universities possess some advancement basics, such as donor solicitation and grant writing. One university in the Congo has even shown the need for a staff member coordinating university solicitation activities abroad. I suggest that African universities should appoint staff personnel in charge of development activities, institutional needs, assessments, grant writing, foundation and corporation relations, alumni relations, and special events. At both the Universities of Dar-Es Salaam (Tanzania) and Makerere (Uganda), there is a strategic planning that would clearly assess the institution's potential, assets, and needs, and build relevant case statement around those needs (Bollag 2000; The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa 'PHEA', 2000). This requires a team of technocrats that focuses primarily on establishing a set of plans. African universities are aware of and utilize special events, and I suggest they use such events qualitatively for social interaction and focus them around a specific charitable interest. They should use special events to raise awareness about university needs and develop an interest in future funding by donors and alumni. Religiously affiliated institutions track their alumni and keep them mindful of their alma maters (World Bank 2005).

American experts have suggested keeping the people involved, building relationships with individuals and organizations, inspiring the feeling of gratitude, and making giving a habit. But what can African universities do in the meantime?

First, I propose making a simple and compelling case for support that would make use of the institution's strengths. According to a Georgetown University advancement officer, "It is very important from a marketing sense that you have a detailed case for support, also what I would call a one-page case for support and a one-sentence case for support. What is going to grab their attention and what is the compelling case for support? In higher institutions, you want to play to your strengths, not your weaknesses" (Bongila 2001).

It has been hypothesized that 0.5%, at least, of all the students that each African university has educated, is either economically, socially, or politically advantaged and would be willing to give back to their alma maters if African universities identify and gather their alumni together, present a compelling case for support, and make the ask, even in an economically hostile environment (World Bank 2005).

Next, a broad-based effort is needed. One Institutional Advancement Officer at the University of Saint Thomas advised: "Make sure you have an annual giving program that people are in the habit of giving to your institution. As you do that, you can move them up to the next level – major donors. This gentleman who gave \$50M to us (University of Saint Thomas) did not go to our school; his children did. A student called him and we received \$100 (as an annual gift). Years later we got \$50M as a gift. If you pay all your attention to major donors, you will not have any one to move up to become major donors unless they have been in the habit of giving annually. Do not forget about the people who give less" (Bongila 2001).

Another proposition is developing awareness on the part of politicians, people, faculty and students as well, for students are future alumni, prospects, and donors to the university. A positive experience during student life matters and motivates loyalty to the institution. Tom Reardon, Vice president for Development at Harvard University says: "You need to understand that it is not just identifying 4 or 5 activities that a college president can do on his own and bring in some success; it is a cultural, governmental, and institutional practice combined, I think. Try to begin to develop awareness, try to get awareness on the part of the politicians, on the part of the people, on the part of the faculty. Remember that you are not going to have instant success, you are not going to have the success that Stanford or Harvard or some place else has that have been doing that for a couple of hundred years. But I think if you begin now, twenty-five years from now, it can pay huge dividends" (Bongila 2001).

Finally there is the sense of partnership. Many African universities have already formed various international partnerships. During 2000 and 2001, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation contributed an aggregate \$62.3 million toward higher education development in six focus countries—Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda—and on an Africa-wide basis (Levey 2003, PHEA 2001, Higher Education in Mozambique 2003, Higher Education in Tanzania 2003).

In 2001, the Yale University International Higher Education Initiative received funding to convene a conference on "International Higher Education and African Development." The conference provided an opportunity for US and African

academics, government representatives, and members of the donor community to explore issues of concern to universities in both developed and developing countries (PHEA 2003).

John Lippincott, president of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) has said: “In this environment, (African) universities must broaden both their funding sources and bases of support. CASE, with its international reach and professional development programs, is uniquely positioned to offer the assistance they need. We are grateful for the Corporation’s confidence in our mission and approach” (Newswire 2005).

Given the current financial condition of African institutions of post secondary education, university presidents and trustees have no choice but to invest their time and leadership in making friends and raising funds. Through seminars, conferences, and forums on fundraising, the university presidents will be asked to shift their focus in order to undertake the paramount task of soliciting funds from foundations, corporations, and individuals (Fisher and Koch 1996).

Schoenherr (1984) argues that some university presidents will consider this new responsibility an embarrassment or a reason to be fearful that others might see them as beggars or intruders into personal lives, as someone invading one’s privacy. Fear of rejection or fear of offending people by asking them for a contribution might characterize African university presidents who could reveal a wavering attitude toward fund-raising activities. Such presidents should carefully consider the fact that they are chief executive officers of their institutions, who bear the responsibility of their financial stability. Nothing will improve the spirit of those institutions more than money would. Unlike the faculty, the president ought to be mindful of ensuring the overall university operations with adequate funds (PHEA 2003).

Boards of trustees should have clear roles, including stewardship, seeking major contributions, representing the institution to the public, and representing the public to the institution. The strategy may consist of getting the most successful African alumni on the boards of their own institutions. Members should accept the fact that the institution needs their financial support to fund defined activities. Their support is vital to the president’s advancement efforts. The president and his or her trustees should start with small groups of people close to the organization while expanding relationships with international organizations.

## **Conclusion**

This work was designed to contribute to the body of knowledge dealing with institutional advancement at private institutions of higher education in the United States, and to provide African universities with invaluable information. Through this study, the presidents and chief institutional advancement officers at private universities and colleges in the United States have determined the advancement strategies which have caused the financial success of their institutions and shared that information.

Institutional advancement is a typical American phenomenon that encompasses the areas of fund raising or development, alumni relations and public relations. This general strategy has been successful for the most respected and best universities in the world, in the absence of the government funding. This work has shown two types of institutions of post secondary education: on the one hand, such universities as Harvard University with an endowment fund of over 30 billion, and on the other hand, African universities like the University of Kinshasa with an annual operating budget of less than \$16 million. The former type has designed lasting and sophisticated mechanisms to attract donors and generate funds; the latter has not even assessed its needs and visions. Such appears to be the contrast between most American universities and African institutions of post secondary education.

African universities can draw some optimistic lessons from the larger and well funded universities, however. Elements of the American funding strategies that are already practiced by their African counterparts, such as grant solicitation, international partnership, and special events, point toward adapting a development-like funding alternative. The leadership of African universities is able to assess their needs, to write compelling case statements, to raise people’s awareness, to organize alumni relations, to put together public relations, and to establish prospect management. With a development-focused leadership composed of a capable and popular president and a small core of involved trustees, African universities can be on the track of raising needed funds. The sooner they start this long process the better the chance they will have to resolve their deepening financial problems.

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# Africa's Demographic Momentum, 1950 to 2100: The Africanization of the World?<sup>1</sup>

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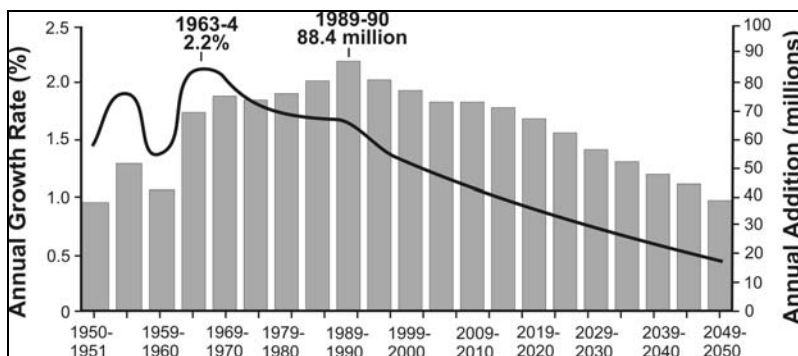
## Abstract

*Over the last few decades women in an increasing number of countries have been having fewer babies. The world population growth rate peaked in 1963-64 and the annual additions peaked in 1989-90. This paper looks at the demographic evidence for differential population decline around the world from 1950 to 2100 and concludes that of the major world population clusters Subsaharan Africa is poised to have a significant impact on the population-deficit regions of the world.*

**Key words:** world population, Subsaharan Africa, demographic transition

Over the last few decades women in an increasing number of countries around the world have been having fewer and fewer babies. The world population growth rate peaked in 1963-64 and the annual additions to world population peaked in 1989-90 (Figure 1). Of the countries with high levels of development, several European populations have been declining for quite some time and Japan's population is shrinking as well. In 2000 the population of Russia was 145 million. The Population Reference Bureau reports that in 2050 Russia's population will be 110 million, a decline of 35 million. In addition, in almost all of the countries where population is declining, people are living longer, placing a serious strain on fewer and fewer people of working age who must support a growing population of retirees. Six years ago the United Nations held a meeting of demographers to look at policy options for the greying of populations (van de Kaa 2000). But as yet there is no consensus on the way forward.

If demography is destiny then one can learn a lot about the future by looking at the tea leaves. By tea leaves I mean the latest available data from the Population Reference Bureau, the United Nations and the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Researchers at these organizations collect data and look for demographic trends; they create population projections into the future. The present article examines the current population data for major population clusters around the world and concludes that of all of the population clusters, it is Subsaharan Africa that will have the last word on the demographic "face" or makeup of the population deficit regions of the world.



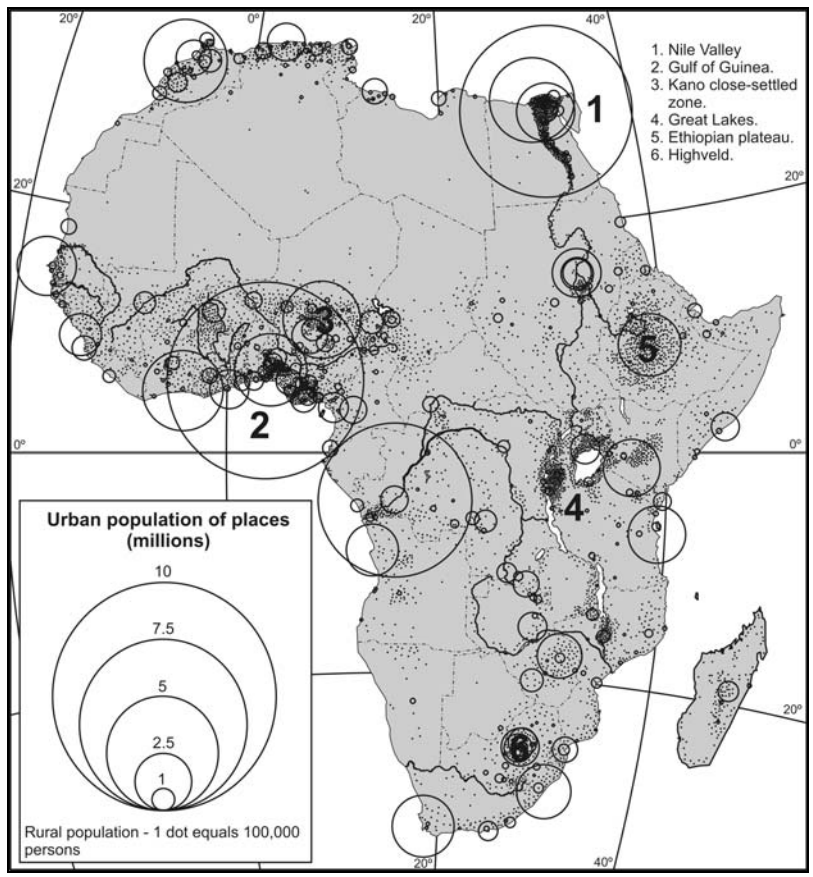
**Figure 1. Declining world trends in population growth rate and in annual population additions.**  
Source of data: U.S. Census (2006).

## The First Law of Geography

Africa's population thirty years ago in 1975 was 401 million of which 321 million lived below the Sahara. By 2005 that same population had more than doubled to 906 million for the continent and 792 million for Subsaharan Africa (PRB

<sup>1</sup> The author would like to thank Dr. James Penn of the Department of Geography and Planning at GVSU for his helpful comments on a early draft of this paper.

1975, 2005). Sub-Saharan Africa's population will soon be over one billion. Africa's population is distributed discontinuously: about half of Africa's population lives on less than 5 % of the land (Grove 1989). Because its population is distributed discontinuously over space, SSA is comprised of population clusters. Taken individually, these clusters are smaller than their counterparts in East Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, and Europe but not that of the eastern United States or southeast Brazil. Great distances separate the population clusters around the world: the European and East Asian clusters anchor either end of the Eurasian land mass while the Indian cluster is found in South Asia, while both the United States' and Brazilian clusters extend along humid eastern continental margins. The largest and most vigorously expanding cluster of Sub-Saharan Africa is focused on the Gulf of Guinea and involves, from east to west, the countries of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, and Cameroon (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. African population: urban, rural and population clusters.**  
 Source: Cole and de Blij (2006).

Other African clusters depicted on Figure 2 are located along the Nile Valley and Delta in Egypt (1), on the Ethiopian Plateau (5), in the Great Lakes region of East Africa (4), on the highveld of South Africa (6). The Gulf of Guinea (cluster 2) and the Kano close-settled zone (cluster 3) are growing together. What has separated them (and all countries that have their feet in the Gulf of Guinea and their heads in the northern savanna) is the “Middle Belt,” a middle ground located between the predominantly Muslim north and the predominantly traditional south. This area was depopulated by northern slavers working to aliment the trans-Saharan trade as well as southern slavers feeding the trans-Atlantic trade (Lovejoy 2000). There are no physical or cultural reasons for the Middle Belts of West Africa to remain underpopulated and, as population increases, they are being repopulated by farmers. Nigeria has even invited some of the recently displaced white commercial farmers from Zimbabwe to set up farms in Nigeria's Middle Belt. The Gulf of Guinea population cluster is the largest and most-urbanized in the sense of having the highest number of urban places in Africa.

The observable evidence on the population clusters around the world echoes Waldo Tobler's first law of geography: “Everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related to each other.” It is the argument of the present paper that these relationships are going to change dramatically over this century. These changes are related to the lagging levels of development in Sub-Saharan Africa and the way that population and development are interrelated.

Subsaharan Africa's future impact on world demography is ironic since Subsaharan Africa has experienced deep isolation from other world population clusters as exemplified by the deep linguistic distance that separates Subsaharan African languages from those of the "out of Africa peoples." The relationship between the three African language families (phyla) of Subsaharan Africa (Niger-Congo, Nilo-Saharan, and Khoisan) and language families outside of Africa has not been established—although it is agreed that these relationships must exist in very, very deep antiquity (Cavalli-Sforza et al. 1994).

## **Development and Subsaharan Africa**

Subsaharan Africa is the least-developed world region: it lags behind virtually every place else in the world and has been lagging for as long as systematic data has been collected on development. According to the United Nations Development Program (2006), Subsaharan African countries are among the poorest in the world have the lowest levels of human development as measured by the Human Development Index (HDI), a composite of three measures of development. According to the UNDP the HDI measures the "overall achievements in a country in three basic conceptual dimensions of human development—longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. These concepts are measured by life expectancy in years, educational attainment (adult literacy rate and combined primary, secondary and tertiary enrollment rate), and income per capita (purchasing power parity) in U.S. dollars (UNDP 2001). Subsaharan African countries comprised 94% of the 32 countries categorized as Low Development by the UNDP in 2005.

Subsaharan Africa's general and longstanding low level of development has provided grist for many, often lively, debates as to its proximate and ultimate causes. Many researchers have found the cause of the Subsaharan African development deficit to lie with external forces (Abrahamsen 2000, Watts 1983, Gunder Frank 1979, Wallerstein 1974, Rodney 1972), while many others attribute the problem to internal forces (Quinn 2002, Hodges 2001, Ayittey 1999, Bayart, Ellis and Hibou 1999, Chabal and Daloz 1999, Ellis 1999, Reno 1998). Although the general findings of recent literature indicate that the low levels of African economic and human development have been caused by both external and internal forces, the complex causal relationships have been found to be especially linked to internal political and economic problems and instabilities (Calderisi 2006, Easterly 2006).

Nevertheless, there is one issue that analysts have lost sight of in the developmentalist debates over the last several decades: Subsaharan Africa's low levels of development will have profound implications for world demographic makeup this century and into the twenty-second century. Let's start with the demographic transition theory, the basis for my argument.

## **The Demographic Transition Theory**

Examining demographic data from around the world between 1908 and 1927, sociologist Warren Thompson (1929) found a peculiar pattern. He found that countries of the world fell into three groups: those that had experienced a rapid decline in birth and death rates (northern and western Europe and the United States), those which had had a moderate decline (Italy, Spain, and central Europe) and those in which there had been no decline at all for the years of the study. He later called these groups of countries Type A, Type B, and Type C countries respectively. The early demographic transition model (DTM) explained high fertility as a reaction to high mortality but thirty years later other analysts explained the changes in demographic behavior (birth and death rates) with reference to modernization (Weeks 1992) or economic development. In those countries where there were low birth and death rates there were also high levels of economic development (and knock-on effects such as urbanization, education, etc.), and in less developed countries there were high birth and death rates. The model that eventually emerged possesses four stages: a start stage, and end stage, and two periods of transition in between. The transition discovered by Thompson was one from high to low birth and death rates and was caused by variables associated with economic development: improved sanitation, urbanization, the rise of industry, technological change, wealth, etc. (Figure 3). With a growing body of research literature on the topic, the Demographic Transition theory was refined and became less descriptive and more a predictive model of change.

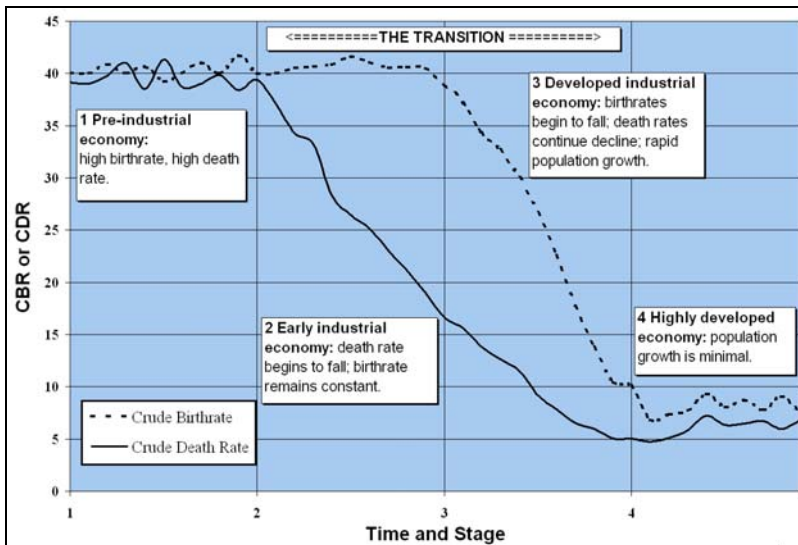


Figure 3. The demographic transition model.

Later it was discovered that a focus on the development of women (education, for example) could be enough to change demographic behavior. In many African countries, women are married by the age of 14, perhaps even younger, and there is considerable pressure on them to have children as soon as possible because, in this least urbanized of world regions, many children are needed as labor on the farm. But the education of women—in the absence of other changes—has a profound impact on the number of children a woman bears: or so this line of thinking goes. For one thing, a woman who is educated through high school generally remains unmarried and childless until marriage. Moreover, an educated woman may have employment and income possibilities undreamt of by her sisters that may further delay her entry into a sexual union and childbearing.

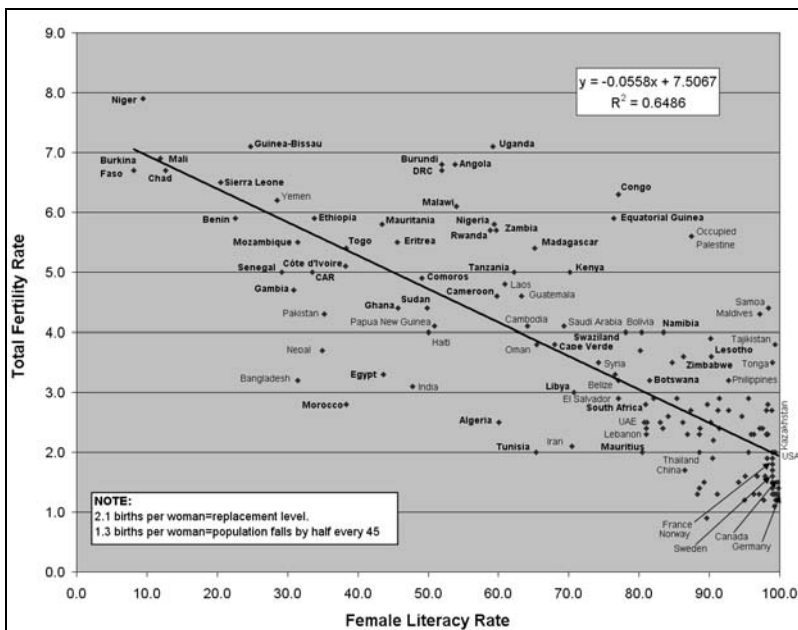


Figure 4. The effect of educating females on their fertility.

Source of data: UNDP (2005).

However, Figure 4 demonstrates that in spite of high levels of female literacy), Subsaharan African women are continuing to have many children: well above replacement level. For replacement level 2.1 births are necessary while births of 1.3 children per woman result in a shrinking of the population by half every 45 years. Regardless of the female literacy rate, North African countries TFR is between 2.5 and 3.3. None of the countries with a female literacy rate over 80 has a TFR

of less than 3, and of those countries, Equatorial Guinea and the Republic of the Congo have 5.9 and 6.4 TFR respectively. The question is: how long will this trend continue?

### The Argument for Africanization

The world’s population is increasing at a decreasing rate as a result of the demographic transition. The demographic transition theory postulates that as a population experiences development it will undergo a transformation from high to low birth and death rates. As a population nears the end of the transition, growth peaks and begins to decline.

During the nineteenth century, Europe, particularly Western Europe, was the first world region to enter into the demographic transition (Population Reference Bureau 2004). Japan soon followed. As the process of economic development diffused around the world, other countries and regions were affected: China, Latin America, and the Middle East. The impacts of the transition on Europe have been profound. Europe has experienced below replacement fertility since the 1960s and 1970s and has developed “negative population momentum.” Kohler, Billari, and Ortega (2006) suggest that immigration to Europe will not prevent population decline, rapid population aging, and the critical decrease in the number of people of working age. It seems likely, however, that increases in immigration levels will be the general response of European countries to low fertility. In addition, Kohler et al (2006) suggest that the world convergence to the European model is occurring in an unanticipated way.

The spread of below-replacement fertility to formerly high fertility countries has occurred at a remarkably rapid pace and implied a global convergence of fertility indicators that has been quicker than the convergence of many other socioeconomic characteristics. [Furthermore] earlier notions that fertility levels may naturally stabilize close to replacement level—that is fertility levels with slightly more than two children per women—have been shattered. Sustained below-replacement fertility has become commonplace. (Kohler et al 2006: 1)

But Subsaharan Africa will be the only world region to continue its positive demographic momentum into the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. Africa (esp. SSA) is the last large world population group to go through the demographic transition. Africa’s population is, and will remain, more youthful and reproductive than that of any other world region well into the future. Therefore, the proportion of Africans in the annual additions to world population will become more and more as time goes on (Figure 5).

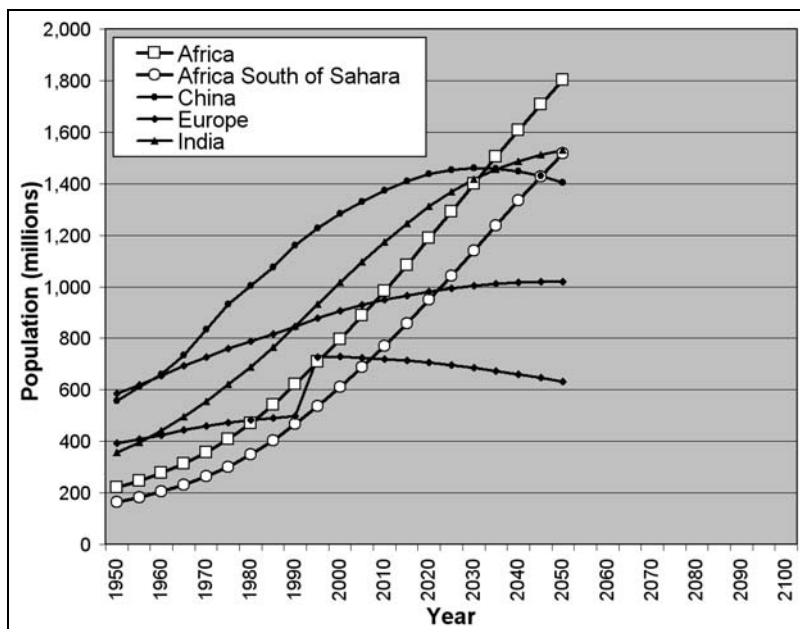


Figure 5. Total Population for Selected World Regions or Countries, 1950 to 2100. Source of data: U.S. Census (2006).

In economic terms this means that as more and more world regions go into the last stage of the demographic transition and population declines, the worldwide demand for skilled and unskilled labor will go up. But at the same time as demand is going up, supply is going down because more and more regions are entering population decline. Toward the end of the

present century Sub-Saharan Africa will be the only region producing a surplus of workers. From a demographic perspective, the implications of this for the rest of the world cannot be but profound.

## Conclusion

Europe has experienced below replacement fertility since the 1960s and 1970s and has developed “negative population momentum.” Immigration to Europe will not prevent population decline, rapid population aging, and the decrease in the number of people of working age, but all the evidence indicates that increases in immigration levels will be the general response of European countries to low fertility (Kohler, Billari, and Ortega 2006). The evidence seems to indicate that all world population clusters will follow in Europe’s footsteps, South Asia (India) being just in front of SSA in the demographic transition. Thus, SSA will be the only world region to continue its positive demographic momentum into the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. It seems quite likely that Africans, particularly Sub-Saharan Africans, will become more and more demographically representative, or typical, of the population-deficit regions of the world.

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# **OPINION**

## **The Commemoration of the Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in 2007**

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### **Introduction**

In 2007, a significant part of the international community, led by the West African nation of Ghana, will commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Ghana has launched a campaign to attract visitors to the country to see the slave castles along the coast and to participate in numerous cultural activities. Several Caribbean governments have established national committees to host educational, religious and cultural events while many academic institutions and museums throughout the Americas as well as here in the USA will be taking part. The Smithsonian Institution is preparing a documentary film on the subject of the slave trade, and the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery and Resistance at Yale University plans to organize conferences on the slave trade. European countries are also participating in this endeavor. Britain will be erecting a memorial in London to the victims of the slave trade, and in France, President Jacques Chirac has declared May 10 as an annual National Day of Remembrance for the victims of the slave trade and slavery.

As part of this global observance, a committee has been formed to plan and implement a program of activities consistent with the importance of this momentous occasion in human freedom. The goal of the program for 2007 is to enlighten, inform and educate students and the West Michigan community about the horrors of the slave trade and its impact and residual effects on the lives of Africans and their descendants throughout the Diaspora. Program activities will also address the topic of modern-day human trafficking. This plan is a collaborative effort and the committee consists of GVSU faculty and students, faculty from Calvin College, Grand Rapids Public Schools, and staff from the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. The committee has the support of GVSU administration and is co-chaired by Professors, Steeve Buckridge (buckrids@gvsu.edu) and Randal Jelks of Calvin College.

### **A Brief Overview of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade**

The Portuguese were the first European traders of African slaves beginning in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. European colonization of the Americas created the need for a reliable, cheap, experienced, and inexhaustible labor force to work in mines and on plantations to produce goods for the European consumer market. The use of European indentured servants and indigenous people for labor proved unsuccessful. As a consequence, Europeans resorted to African labor. The Portuguese supplied African slaves directly from Africa to the Americas under the *Asiento* contract granted by Spain and soon the trade developed and continued to expand over time. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, other countries including Holland, France, and Britain began to participate in what became a thriving and profitable business.

Although Europeans created the conditions for the growth of the Atlantic slave trade, the role of the Africans can neither be overlooked nor excused. Ethnic conflicts and wars among Africans between 1660 and 1775 in the region, which now comprises Ghana, Nigeria and Benin, added considerably to the availability of captives for export, since the defeated automatically became the property of the victors. It was the Ashanti who emerged the victors and the supreme military power among the Akan-speaking people of the Gold Coast and Ivory Coast, and as a consequence one of the controlling forces in the slave trade. Whereas before, African wars were the principal source of accumulating slaves, kidnapping and organized raids were now added as major strategies for obtaining slaves.

### **How Did the Trade Work?**

Captured Africans were marched to the coast in “coffles” with their necks yoked to each other. They were placed in trading posts or forts to await the horrifying journey across the Atlantic Ocean. European slave ships laden with

manufactured goods traveled to the African coast where captives were exchanged for a variety of objects ranging from glass beads and iron bars to cotton textiles, guns and muskets.

Captives were chained together and placed in the holds of ships. On the *Middle Passage*, as the voyage across the Atlantic was called, captives were allocated a space 2 ft by 5 ft and kept chained. In this position, they remained for the entire voyage which lasted anywhere between six and twelve weeks, coming up sometimes once a day for exercise and to clean the pails. This provided the opportunity for the ship's crew, from captain to cook to rape slave women. When the slaves were rebellious or the weather bad, then they stayed below for weeks at a time. Sometimes slaves were thrown overboard to "lighten" the cargo holds to prevent the ship from sinking during storms. The close proximity of so many naked human beings, their bruised and festering flesh, the fetid air, the prevailing dysentery, the accumulation of filth, turned these holds into a hell.

Between 1500-1800 some eleven million Africans were transported (the exact number is unknown). Those who survived the journey were washed and sometimes oiled to look healthy prior to being auctioned in public squares, slave markets and shipyards to the highest bidders and then branded with the logo of their new owners. African slaves were deprived of their identities and sold as cattle. The price of slaves varied throughout the Americas and depended on the slave's health, gender, age, ethnicity, skills and if Christianized or not. Money obtained from the sale of slaves was used to buy plantation goods for the European consumer market. When slaves arrived on the plantation or place of enslavement, they underwent a "seasoning" process in which they were placed with an experienced slave who taught them the ways of the estate or place of enslavement.

Although the initial slave traders were the Portuguese and then the Dutch, by 1750 until 1807 Britain dominated the buying and selling of African slaves to the Americas. In Britain during this period shipbuilding flourished and manufacturing expanded. The process of industrialization in England from the second quarter of the eighteenth century was fuelled by Britain's role in the slave trade and slavery. Colonial settlers who owned plantations worked by African slaves were now demanding equipment and tools for the smooth operation of their estates and vast quantities of textiles to clothe their African slaves.

The sustained exploitation of Africans as slaves quickly acquired a racial character and over time there developed an ideology based on racism, which made the terms 'Negro' and 'slave' interchangeable. African speech, religion, dress, mannerisms and indeed all forms of African institutions were systematically denigrated as constituting marks of savagery and cultural inferiority. This was also extended to the physical, genetic and biological attributes of black people.

The trans-Atlantic slave trade was officially abolished by an Act of the British Parliament in 1807. Britain, a world power and the largest European dealer of African slaves at the time, insisted that other nations abide by this declaration. The pressure of the abolitionist movement, public opinion combined with new economic interests and mounting slave resistance, compelled the British government to declare the trade illegal. The Act of Abolition did not result in a complete cessation of the slave trade. The profits were too large and tempting. An illegal trade in African slaves continued across the Atlantic and in several parts of the Americas internal slave trades were expanded. The trade in human beings continued until plantation slavery throughout the Americas was officially abolished.

### **Who Were the African Slaves?**

They included men, women and children, African royalty, priests and priestesses. The cream of African artisans, blacksmiths, millwrights, musicians, weavers, farmers, wheelwrights, masons, plumbers, carpenters, coppersmiths and engineers among others who could hold their own with their counterparts in any part of the world. The majority of these slaves came from the regions of West Africa known then as the Gold Coast, and the Slave Coast. Others were also obtained from central Africa, such as the Congo and parts of East Africa. African slaves brought with them aspects of their cultures, specifically the things they could remember. These African elements were adapted, retained, nurtured and passed down to their descendants.

## **Why Commemorate the Abolition Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade?**

The commemoration of the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade is important for several reasons. It allows us to re-examine our history, no matter how painful, and to educate ourselves and increase our knowledge about this abomination and why it was perpetrated for centuries. An observance will help us to develop some understanding of the residual effects of this tragedy on the lives of all black people and its impact on all American societies. This observance is also one step towards building a better climate of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between all people especially in a nation so divided by race. More important it is about honoring and remembering the victims of the slave trade and slavery and confronting new forms of slavery and human trafficking that exists in the world today.

### **Sources and Suggested Readings:**

*The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave trade: 1440-1870* by Hugh Thomas. 1999.

*Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made* by Eugene D. Genovese. 1976.

*The African Slave Trade* by Basil Davidson. 1988.

*Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* by Philip Curtin. 1969.

*Atlantic Slave trade and British Abolition 1760-1810* by Roger Anstey. 1969.

*How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* by Walter Rodney. 1972.

*Capitalism and Slavery* by Eric Williams. 1994.

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

**The Fate of Africa**, by Martin Meredith. New York: Public Affairs Books, 2005. 735 pages. \$35.

Reviewed by Mark Schaub,  
Executive Director, Padnos International Center, Grand Valley State University.

What was Martin Meredith thinking? He set out to do the impossible: write a comprehensive history of the past half century in and analysis of... the entire *continent* of Africa. If anyone would know what a huge project this would be, it would be Martin Meredith, who covered Africa for the *London Observer* and the *Sunday Times* for decades. The result of this ambitious undertaking? An impressive summary of the ups and downs of post-colonial Africa, detailed country by country.

If the reader is familiar with African history there will be no surprise to know that there are probably more “downs” than “ups.” The subtitle for the book is the perfect summary: “From the hopes or freedom to the heart of despair.” In the mid-1950’s with the beginning of independence for one African nation after another, there was reason for great hope. Colonial powers were ceding control to locally elected leaders, and profits from natural resources could “stay home.” But now, half a century later, despair reigns. Even a country like Nigeria, blessed with incredible mineral (i.e., oil) wealth, this despair and hopelessness seems to reign. If you are not very familiar with African history, then you’re in for a very thorough lesson. You’ll learn why things have gone badly for so many nations: manipulations by foreign powers, cold war politics, the ravages of AIDS and malaria, and—finally—leaders who are incredibly greedy, incredibly brutal, or both.

The finger of blame for the ills of Africa is pointed in so many directions, including us; those of us who live, consume, and vote in our American shell are of course partly to blame for many evils. But the strength of this tome is that the blame is indeed shared by so many, in so many ways. Meredith continually acknowledges the complexity of the situation and hesitates to point the finger of blame. The few times he does, it stings all the more. Take the Rwandan genocide, for example. Among the related tragedies involved with that slaughter is the fact that so many people in the West had to wait for the film *Hotel Rwanda* to introduce them to this holocaust. Yet all of us were sitting right here, ignoring it all equally.

As depressing as the tales of famine, murder, and greed are, I found the book somewhat hopeful, too. The miracle of South Africa’s move from apartheid to democracy, and the difference good leaders can make in countries like Botswana provide room for optimism. But still, the story Meredith tells is nothing less than a tragedy.

Meredith is a strong writer and his research is first-rate. The biggest weakness lies in its overemphasis on the economic and the political. The book is not helpful in providing readers with insight into tribal and cultural issues so that the societal forces can be better understood. Another nit to pick is the random organization of the book. Meredith swings without transition between Zambia and Libya and Benin, jumbling the regions into one confusing hash. The primary flaw in this may be that he’s tackled the whole geographical continent of Africa, fusing the very different worlds of North and Sub-Saharan Africa into one study. I believe the book would be stronger if it would focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, as the parallels between Nasser and Banda (in the north) with Banda and Sese Seko (south of the Sahara) as superficial beyond the cold war politics.

This is the perfect book for an introduction to African politics and history. I recommend it for students, faculty, and staff alike—especially if they are not an African and African American Studies minor or are not familiar with African history.

**The Last War: Racism, Spirituality and the Future of Civilization.** By M.L.Perry. Oxford: George Ronald Publisher, 2005. 338 pages. \$29.95.

Reviewed by Jacques Mangala,  
African and African American Studies Program,  
Department of Political Science, Grand Valley State University

At a time when our collective attention, energy and resources are focused on the War on Terror, M.L. Perry's book comes as a refreshing reminder that we should not lose sight of the war on racism. Calling the fight against racism the "last war" may come as surprise to many who consider racism as a bygone issue. Don't we have antidiscrimination laws? Don't we have affirmative action? Don't we have diversity policy in public institutions? Isn't apartheid over in South Africa? Isn't Condoleezza Rice Secretary of State? Don't we have thousands of civil and human rights groups all over the world ready to challenge any ugly appearance?

M.L. Perry's book comes as a wake up call and presents a powerful challenge to the culture of complacency which, the author opines, merely reflects a legalistic, instrumental, and ultimately cosmetic approach to addressing racism. In this extensively researched, deeply philosophical, sometimes almost piercingly observant, and superb book, Dr. Perry contends that although racism has been outlawed, it has in many cases simply gone underground, where, like the Leviathan, it remains hidden—often unconsciously—in the minds of many people. In calling for a deeper examination of the issue, Dr. Perry writes, "Race is not in our vocabulary ... it is not brought up in polite conversation because, like UFOs, it causes embarrassment among mature, well-educated realists and rational thinkers. Racism is a myth" (p. 25).

The aim of the book is to demonstrate how deeply racism, and more specifically, the institution of slavery, has cut across the face of Western civilization—leaving scars that must be fully examined if they are to be completely erased. To undertake this task, Dr. Perry thinks deeply and explores widely, addressing issues ranging from the importance of Calvinism in "enabling" slavery in the colonial United States to the far more universalist thinking that existed in early Christianity; from the failure of secularism to "cure" racism to the possibilities for a new kind of urban design that would help banish prejudice. What sets apart *The Last War* from other books written on the topic of racism is that Dr. Perry brings to the fore a new tool for analysis in social science: spirituality and religion as a means for understanding the historical and current realities of a phenomenon like racism. Dr Perry is also well served in his scholarly enterprise by a rich and distinctive background: born in America, he teaches social science and cultural studies at the Lebanese American University in Beirut and, as noted in his introduction, comes from a multi-racial family, with one parent of African American and the other of European American ancestry. Speaking about his multi-racial heritage, Dr Perry writes:

My family was illegal in 16 states of the United States until 1967. Over the course of our country's history 38 states had had some form of anti-miscegenation law.... These laws characterized people of mixed racial background as social and legal abominations. Yet we, as children of African American and European American parents, were very fortunate, for we knew the unity of the human race as a reality, not as an abstract concept or ideal. We knew it because we lived it every day. It entered our consciousness not through the mind but through our very being. We could not entertain any notion that one "race" was different from the other, just we could never be told one's own hand belonged to another person. (pp. 1-2)

*The Last War* is divided into four parts. The first part offers a broad introduction to racism and spirituality. Connecting the dots between the two, Dr Perry writes: "Most societies and peoples experience racism and prejudice of varying degrees of intensity. While the form that racism takes differs from one society to another, the content is always the same: a profound lack of spirituality" (p. 3). Bringing spirituality in the discussion of racism will certainly encounter a rejection from most contemporary social science, which regards religion not only as irrelevant to the solution of social problems but also as historic contributors to the problems themselves. Such opposition stems from the fact that most social sciences are predicated on the principle that all problems are material in nature and their solution is only a matter of rearranging material relations between people—their money, land, jobs and so on.

While Dr. Perry accepts the premise that "human behavior can be studied, analyzed and corrected making use of rational, scientific means," he also contends that "science and rationalism are limited in the study of human behavior..., humanity is not only material but also spiritual in nature and thus a purely materialistic approach would fail to account for the

totality of human experience” (p. 14). The central paradigm of *The Last War* is that humanity must also be understood in terms of this spiritual reality. The work is clearly located at the interface where the spiritual and the material meet. As Dr. Perry brilliantly puts it,

Materialistic social science argues that slavery and racism arose because of economic forces: the desire for cheap labor, especially as industrial revolution emerged and stimulated a vast international demand for raw materials. Many social scientists, politicians, economists and philosophers of all stripes have offered countless remedies for racism, typically centering around an ostensibly pragmatic solution involving governmental and economic policies, voting systems, civil rights, housing resources, educational opportunities or a combination of these. They propose manipulations of money, political power, and symbols. Such remedies consist of strategies, agendas, logical arguments, analyses of the mechanics of society, an almost scientific ‘physics’ of the push and pull of human emotions and their relationships to material wants and needs.... Many of these perspectives are reasonable, at least in part, for racism manifests itself as various social and economic problems. The difficulty is that purely materialistic solutions have not yet yielded satisfactory results. The system continues to be as faulty as ever, no matter how many new policies, adjustments or strategies are implemented. This is because the heart of racism, the disease itself, as opposed to its outward symptomatic manifestations, is not social but spiritual. And if racism is essentially a spiritual problem, then so too is its solution. But since traditional social science believes that spirituality is not a true reality, it fails to understand the essence of racism. (pp. 14-15)

In the second and principal part of the book, titled “Despiritualization: The Archeology of Racism”, Dr. Perry undertakes to explore racism’s roots using a somewhat unusual rhetorical device: he compares his exploration to archeology and identifies eleven levels of exploration, digging ever deeply through the layers of culture, religion, politics, economics and history. It could be argued that this book is trying to do too much, that it is trying to cover too much ground and raises too many questions. Yet, it is precisely because it is attempting to understand what could possibly have allowed one group of human beings to treat another with such inhumanity for such a long period of time that it is so worthwhile. Having conducted the archeology of racism, Dr. Perry ultimately lays blame for racism, in America, at least, to a mercantilist, Protestant culture that allowed early American colonists to rationalize that Africans were somehow subhuman and therefore exempt from a Christian application of the Golden Rule. He describes a process of “despiritualization”, whereby “whiteness itself, like material success, became a sign of spiritual election and God’s favor. Possession of white skin absolved the individual and the community of the duty to practice Jesus’ teachings to love the other without regard for material qualities of body and social status” (p. 109).

In peeling away such layers of rationalization and history, Dr. Perry offers some keen-sighted observations. He notes, for example, that although slavery was brought to America by Europeans, in Europe itself it was outlawed—something he attributes to a greater sense of spiritual law in Europe at the time. And, attempting to understand the relationship of slavery to racism, he rightly notes that although Islam allowed trade in slaves, this was not so much connected to race as it was to conquest.

In Islam, as in the Greco-Roman world, slaves were of all skin colors, races and ethnicities and were able to rise to the highest levels of society.... A significant number of black African slaves rose to highest ranks in the Islamic world” (pp. 45-46). In the end, concludes Dr. Perry, racism is essentially a spiritual disease, fueled by a materialistic view of the world that is largely a Western, Protestant Christian construct. “By focusing so obsessively on humanity’s physical traits – by not only speaking and writing of these traits but by creating for them laws, philosophies, sciences, elaborate institutions and complex cultural traditions- we have created another heaven, another ‘spiritual’ world, contrary to the heaven described by the religions. (p. 240)

Despite some limited references to other countries and cultures, the basic weakness of this book is that the case selection—the USA—limits the analysis and creates some problems for the argument. Placing such important topic in a broader comparative context would have deepened the analysis and sharpened the argument. Dr. Perry justifies his case selection on the ground that “It (racism in America) is one of the oldest, most powerful and most deeply entrenched forms of racism in the world. Methods of oppression used against African Americans and American Indians have been taken as models by some other countries.... As the leader of democratic nations, the United States has long been regarded by many peoples as the exemplar of modern civilization. For the exploration of racism, then, there is no better place to begin than American society” (p. 3).

Having identified, in the second part of the book, the process of “despiritualization” of society as the root cause of racism, the third part is understandably titled “Respiritualization,” which Dr. Perry poses as a condition *sine qua non* if we are to build a true “Civilization” –focus of the fourth part of the book—which will see the end of racism. Dr. Perry asserts that reform of laws alone will not solve the problem of racism if the underlying cultural base is not spiritual.

From a materialistic point of view racism was a great success. It buttressed slavery and enabled the realization of sky-high profits from agricultural capitalism in the New World.... Advocates of slavery worked long and hard to clear religion’s influence from the promising field of unlimited capitalism in North America. Since they considered the removal of spiritual unity essential to the success of slavery, spiritual revitalization logically is the key to elimination of racism. (p. 205)

Such discourse is rarely heard in the debate about racism, which tends to solely focus on materialistic approaches and solutions. In fact, in the third and fourth parts of the book, Dr. Perry transcends the issue of racism and poses the respirtualization of the society as the key in solving a host of domestic and global problems ranging from poverty to economic development, urban design, immigration, environmental issues, conflicts, status of women in society, and human rights abuses. The analysis is truly refreshing and brings the debate to a higher ground. As Dr. Perry writes: “In this quickly globalizing world, the lack of spirituality in relations between human beings in society is gradually becoming recognized as the root cause of racism and all social problems” (p. 295).

*The Last War* emerges as a breakthrough in the study of racism and in our quest for solutions to most social problems. Dr. Perry has written an important book, one that is dense with ideas and replete with insights into a subject about which we must—as individuals and as communities—remain vigilant. “The solution to racism lies far beyond skin color, beyond the oppressed and the oppressor, beyond policies of distribution of social benefits, economic resources and power, beyond history. The solution to racism lies in the way we intend to make our future as a people on this planet in building a true, spiritually-based civilization” (p. 11). *The Last War* is worth adding to one’s shelves.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS: FALL 2006

### **I. Mandela-Parks Lecture Series**

1. **Dr. Amy Patterson**, Associate Professor of History, Calvin College. "Institutionalizing Commitment to AIDS in Africa: The Politics of the Pandemic." September 13, 3:00-4:30 P.M., 215/216 Kirkhof Center.
2. **Dr. Gloria Stephen**, Professor, Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education and Director, African and African American Studies, Michigan State University. "African Americans and Genetics." October 25, 3:00-4:30 P.M., 215/216 Kirkhof Center .

### **II. African /African American Perspectives**

1. **Dr. Christopher Buck**, Alain Locke Scholar, Michigan State University. "The Salvation of Democracy: Alain Locke's Philosophy of Social Evolution." September 27, 3:00-4:30 P.M., 215/216 Kirkhof Center.
2. **Dr. Paul Mavima**, Assistant Professor, School of Non-Profit and Public Administration, GVSU. "Corruption, Sovereignty and Management in Zimbabwe's Public Sector." October 11, 3:00-4:30 P.M., 308 Padnos.
3. **Dr. Mambo Mupepi**, University of Michigan Health System, Adjunct Professor, African and African American Studies. "Re-drawing the Map in Zimbabwe: The Land Issue." November 29, 3:00-4:30 P.M., 308 Padnos.
4. **Dr. Oliver Wilson**, Dean of Multicultural Affairs, GVSU. "Factors Contributing to Success: Perceptions from African American Male School Administrators." December 6, 3:00-4:30 P.M., 215/216 Kirkhof Center.

## FALL 2006 NEW CLASSES

AAA 380 Special Topics: **Civil Conflicts in Africa**. TTh, 10:00-11:15 A.M. 179 Lake Ontario Hall. Instructor: Dr. George Kieh, Professor of Political Science and African Studies, GVSU.

AAA 380 Special Topics: **African Religions**. Thursdays, 6:00-8:50 P.M. 174 Lake Ontario Hall. Instructor: Dr. Mambo Mupepi, University of Michigan Health System, Adjunct Professor GVSU. Part of World Perspectives General Education category and the Religion General Education Theme.