#### AFRICA IN THE WORLD TODAY

BY WILFRID D. HAMBLY

Member of the Henry S. Wellcome Expedition to the Sudan, Leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition to West Africa

In Africa today social unrest arises from three causes. These are economic depression, competitive imperialism, and the violence of cultural clashes between governing Europeans and the native races under their administration.

To forecast the political future of Africa is hazardous, but, in common with all abstruse subjects, the problem can be illuminated by recognizing component parts. And although these divisions are mutually related they can be separately considered.

A preliminary obstacle to the discussion of African affairs is the size of the continent, which is about twelve million square miles, approximately four times the size of the United States of America. But this difficulty is readily overcome by dividing the continent into natural regions with characteristic topography, climate, plants, and animals. If, in addition to this, we take into consideration the modes of life which native Africans have adopted in response to these physical conditions, the warp threads of the social pattern have been disentangled.

The present economic situation in Africa, which is characterized by a reduced demand for manufactured imports, and greater difficulty for disposing of raw materials, is part of a world-wide situation which no economist can fully explain, and for which no one has yet offered a remedy. It is easy to point out economic difficulties which affect Africa in particular, for example the underselling of British cotton goods by the Japanese, the slump in exportation of tin from Nigeria, and the lack of capital for improving processes connected with the extraction and refinement of palm-oil. But for the main part the African commercial situation is a corollary of the world situation with its international debts, tariff wars, and competitive armaments.

The European scramble for Africa is a phase of the past, and though a rehabilitated Germany may seek restitution of mandated territory, the present partitioning of Africa is likely to be maintained for many years. Therefore, if these premises be true, Africa is a pawn in the economic and political game.

I think that the main problems of Africa may be reduced to a series of questions relating to internal administration, and the adjustments which are necessary when European governments having different ideals and methods attempt to rule African natives. It should also be borne in mind that the core of the administrative problem lies in the great disparity of race, language, religion, and cultural level among these subject peoples.

Therefore, a presentation of African social problems and the nature of the adjustments that have to be made must depend on a preliminary survey of geographical conditions, native modes of life, and the historical facts involved in the European intrusion.

No fallacy is involved in claiming the paramount importance of internal social problems, for to a great extent commercial enterprise, transport, and mechanical invention do take care of themselves despite economic depression. The transcontinental railway from Lobito Bay, through Angola and the Belgian Congo to the east coast, was opened in 1929. Imperial Airways have established a Cape to Cairo route, and French aircraft of the Aeropostale follow a regular route from Paris to Marseilles, Tangier, and Dakar on the west coast. In addition there are many local lines, British, Belgian, and Italian. Africa shares in the general advance of mechanism, but in Africa, as elsewhere, there remains social lag, a failure to understand the human problem.

Rapid extension of facilities for transport, combined with tourist traffic in parts of north and south Africa, may leave the impression of a Europeanized and denaturated continent. But a recent journey of ten thousand miles in Angola (Portuguese West Africa) and Nigeria, which is under British rule, convinced me to the contrary.

Millions of Africans are remote from railways, and even where European influence penetrates, the new objects and elements of culture which are introduced form but a thin veneer under which native languages, thought processes, and ancient institutions thrive. Who are these African natives? What are their modes of life apart from European interference? How has the grave social unrest arisen? In what way may amelioration take place? These are the most important of the questions discussed by ethnologists, educators, missionaries, and politicians.

A birds-eye view of Africa reveals three main topographical divisions; forest, parkland, and desert. These regions are not sharp-

ly divided, but on the contrary show a gradual transition from one type of country to another. The northern deserts are characterized by heat and dryness, the forests by heat and moisture, and the parklands by many areas in which elevation modifies tropical heat, secures ample rainfall, and so favors European settlement. Naturally the so-called 'native problem' becomes most acute in those regions where the white man has been able to establish himself permanently, to raise his family, and to form towns.

With the exception of the warm temperate and sub-tropical elevations of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, the greater part of northern Africa is occupied by the Sahara desert, which extends the width of the continent. But not everywhere is the desert so barren and hostile as is commonly supposed, for several habitable regions exist including high plateaux and numerous oases.

In the west are the mountains of Hoggar and those of Air where sedentary and nomadic Tuareg live under French rule. In the central region is the Tibesti plateau, also under French administration, inhabited by camel-owning Teda and Tibbu. Kufra and other isolated oases of the eastern Sahara are occupied by Senussi Arabs who have gradually been brought under Italian control by forceful measures, while further east, and bordering on Italian Libya is the independent kingdom of Egypt. The annual innundation of the Nile, which is now controlled and utilized for the irrigation of cotton fields, made possible the evolution of one of the greatest and most ancient civilizations of the world. Egypt, without the Nile, would be inhospitable desert.

The forest zone occupies a broad coastal region in the west, extending over Liberia, the Ivory Coast, Ashanti, Dahomey, Nigeria, and part of Cameroon. Dense vegetation is also typical of the vast central area of Africa drained by the river Congo. The forest zone is occupied by Negroes of two main linguistic families, the Sudanic in the west, and the Bantu in the central and southern portions. Hundreds of distinct languages and thousands of dialects are spoken by Negro tribes, while many differences of physique and culture have to be recognized. Yet, notwithstanding differences, there exists a basically Negro mode of life based on agriculture, ancestor worship, Negro law, social organization, and ancient methods of native government. This forest region contains unestimated wealth in the form of hard woods, oil palms, and other vegetable products both indigenous and introduced.

Along the entire length of east Africa, continued through the south, and extending into the southwest even so far as Portuguese Angola, are expanses of parkland, which are the typical habitat of herds of antelope, carnivora, and big game of all kinds. In this region are many large areas which are free from the tsetse fly, that carrier of sleeping sickness to human beings and disease to cattle. In these zones of immunity cattle are reared by natives in large numbers, but the economic use of the herds is slight in comparison to their religious and social significance for the tribes who raise them.

Among these east African cattle-breeders the beasts are not ridden, used for haulage, or killed for food, though they are ceremonially slaughtered, often in large number, at the death of a king. Among typical cattle-keepers milk is the principal food, agriculture is disdained, and the pastoral Hamitic tribes form an aristocracy among the Negroes they subjugated. One of the difficulties of European administration in this area is the promulgation of scientific husbandry, the encouragement of agriculture, and the establishment of economic uses for cattle.

In addition to the camel zone of the northern deserts, the cattle zone of the east, and the agricultural forest zones of the center and west, are tribes of a purely hunting culture. The principal of these are the Bushmen of the Kalahari desert in south Africa, and the Pygmies of the northeast forest region. The present tendency is for these primitive hunters to be absorbed in the Negro tribes who surround them. In a political sense, therefore, and apart from antiquarian and ethnological interest, the hunters and food-gatherers are negligible.

Of the early history of Africa, apart from Egypt where written records were kept from B.C. 3500, little is known, though some inferences are drawn from archaeological study, physical types and their mixtures, languages, and cultural patterns. An early Negro population of unknown antiquity is assumed, and onto this mass many incursions of Semites and Hamites were projected. The generally accepted hypothesis states that Semites and Hamites with a camel-keeping and cattle-keeping culture formed a large body of people occupying parts of Arabia and southwest Asia.

The Semites, of whom the Arabs are a part, entered Africa in several migrations, bringing early Semitic culture, and later the Arabic language and Mohammedan religion. Two important Arab incursions over northern, and into Negro west Africa, were those

of the seventh and eleventh centuries of the Christian era. Then for several centuries the Arab conquest spread from Egypt as a focus.

One of the most potent factors with which administration has to cope is the intrusion of Mohammedanism and Koranic law, which have affected the Berbers of north Africa, the Tuareg of the Sahara, and the Negroes of the west.

Hamitic intruders were divided into two main branches, the northern, including Berbers and Taureg, and the eastern comprising Somalis, Hadendoa, and many other tribes of similar type in which the refined features and the frizzly hair are quite different from the coarse physiognomy and wooly hair of Negroes.

On this heterogeneous mixture of races, languages, and modes of life came a European impact, which from the time of Portuguese voyages of the fifteenth century continued without interruption, and with an ever-increasing intensity. Exploration by adventurers, missionaries, traders, slavers, and government agents with political interests, form a chapter of sacrifice and daring initiative, which was focussed about the courses of the main rivers Nile, Niger, Congo, and Zambezi.

Rival trading companies fought the natives when necessary and indulged in combat among themselves, while their respective governments supplied ammunition, and somewhat tardily gave financial support. But boundaries were vaguely delimited, and the political and commercial situations were so complex as to cause frequent international tension, until in 1885 a concerted attempt was made toward demarcation of possessions, prescription of spheres of influence, rights of transport on main rivers, and political relationships between European governments and native rulers.

In this partitioning, which is often referred to as "the scramble for Africa" native rights were neglected. The Masai tribes were divided by the boundary separating Kenya Colony, which is British, from German East Africa (now mandated Tanganyika). In southwest Africa the Vakuanyama, a pastoral tribe of southern Angola, remained under Portuguese rule, while the matrix to which they belong, namely the Oyambo, were placed under German administration.

After the World War Germany lost, in addition to German East Africa, her possessions in west Africa, namely Togoland and Cameroon. The former was divided between Ashanti (British) and Dahomey (French); while the latter was separated into a narrow strip to be added to Nigeria (British) and a broader slice for inclusion with French Equatorial Africa. German South West Africa was incorporated with British dominions in south Africa.

Such are the broad facts of geography, climate, ethnology, and history which are fundamental to an understanding of the present political situation, which can now be considered in relation to the various types of European control. In addition to the independent territories of Egypt, the Liberian Republic, and Abyssinia, many European nations have territorial rights with possibilities of commercial expansion, jurisdiction over millions of Africans, and at least a moral responsibility to the League of Nations.

Egypt is a sovereign state ruled by King Fuad, but Britain retains certain rights, chiefly to guard the Suez canal. In the fourth century Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia, and the history of the country has been centered around two main endeavors, namely the repulsion of Mohammedanism and Islamic conquest, also the avoidance of European dominion. Abyssinian independence was finally assured by defeat of the Italians at Adowa in 1906.

To see motion pictures taken in the capital, Addis Ababa, which is the terminus of a railway from Djubiti in French Somaliland, gives a false impression of the development of the country as a whole. Slave raiding into the Sudan is reported at intervals, much of the country is rugged and inaccessible, communication is undeveloped, agriculture is primitive, and among both Somali and Galla are frequent feuds. The capital available is insufficient for irrigation and engineering schemes, and the country lacks a seaport, since Abyssinia is excluded from contact with the Red Sea by the intervening territories of Italian Eritrea, also French and British Somaliland.

Liberia has had a chequered career dating from 1820 when the American Colonizing Society sent out a company of freed Negroes from America. General Roberts (1841) was the first man of color to take charge of Liberian affairs, and a few years later Liberia adopted a republican constitution. Philanthropically and politically America has been brought into contact with Liberian affairs in the way mentioned, and financially the United States are interested because of the Firestone concession of a million acres for rubber production.

Politically, Liberia is an instance of the fact that colored rulers

can surpass their white competitors in repressive measures toward a Negro population. From the time of the first settlement of the coast with imported Negroes these have exploited the primitive inland tribes, and within the past few years the conduct of Liberian officials in securing forced labor has been a subject of inquiry by the League of Nations. The reports of the League and the discussion of these in the Journal Africa leave no doubt respecting the truth and gravity of the charges. Liberian forests hold an inestimable wealth of timber, but natural resources remain to a great extent unexploited, no railways exist, and general development is at a low ebb.

The two minor European powers in Africa, Italy and Spain, hold great areas of barren and sparsely inhabited territory. Spain has a nominal control over the Rio de Oro, a desert region in the western Sahara, and in addition to this the Rio Muni, a small coastal possession in the tropical forest belt.

Following the World War, and as a result of the expulsion of the Turks. Italy has sought to build a colonial Empire in the unpromising region of Libya in the eastern Sahara. Apart from the coastal belt, and with the exception of widely scattered oases, one is left to speculate with regard to the value of this concession and conquest. On the Red Sea coast, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland are important strategically, while commercial development centering in the production and export of coffee, hides, and gums, is to be expected.

Among the major European powers, France is prominent as suzerain of territory extending from the north coast to the equator. In Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia the French have brought order out of chaotic rebellion. They have established schools, dispensaries, and air ports, also a line of motor transport across the Sahara to French territory at the bend of the Niger. A railway across the Sahara is advocated on strategic grounds for the transport of west African troops to Europe, and as a commercial enterprise to aid agricultural development, especially the cultivation of cotton in the French Sudan.

In her northern territory France has a complex series of problems associated with Mohammedanism, and the desert nomadism of a proud intelligent people, the Tuareg, who are unaccustomed to domination of any kind. In the eastern Sahara, French territory marches with the border of Italian Libya, so giving rise to territorial jealousy and intermittent discord. The west African and central African regions governed by France present the Negro problem, which will be analyzed later, and in addition to this the Mohammedan contact with western Sudanic Negroes complicates the administrative situation.

I thought during a journey of 5000 miles through Portuguese West Africa (Angola) that Portuguese enterprise in making roads, especially in the central region where stone is available, had been particularly successful, but the sandy tracks of the south and east are extremely difficult for motor transport. An enormous amount of engineering work remains to be done, especially in the direction of building bridges and providing ferries. Transporting a truck over weak wooden bridges and on frail rafts is a hazardous enterprise.

Lobito Bay is one of the finest natural harbors in Africa, and here starts the transcontinental railway. But, unfortunately, the line was completed about the time the world depression began, therefore no fair test of the enterprise has been made.

Portugal lacks capital, consequently there is an attempt to secure solvency by high tariffs, favored rates for goods carried in Portuguese ships, heavy taxation, and burdensome export duties. Boer farmers who trekked into Angola from South West Africa, also German and other settlers concerned with the production of coffee, sisal, and tobacco, are apt to ask lugubriously "Is it worth while?"

In 1929 the currency system was based on a paper unit named the *Angolara*, worth about a nickel, but at the same time the *escudo*, also a paper unit of small denomination, was circulating, and neither of these had an exchange value outside Angola, except perhaps in Portugal.

The population of Angola consists of Bantu-speaking Negroes of many physical types, but for the main part they are agricultural with maize and beans as their principal crops. These commodities have to supply sustenance and provide a surplus for the payment of government taxes. In the south of Angola are the cattle-keeping Vakuanyama, an intelligent warlike tribe who are now subdued, though formerly they were as truculent toward the Portuguese as were their southern neighbors, the Herero, toward German rule.

British territory consists of several west African tracts, of which the chief are Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ashanti, and Nigeria. But Britain's major possessions, like those of France, show a scheming for continuity. British territory stretches continuously from the Cape to Cairo, from the Union of South Africa, through the Rhodesias, Nyassaland, Tanganyika Territory, British East Africa (Kenya), Uganda, and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

In the west coast possessions Britain has her Negro problem, but political difficulties are somewhat simplified by the unsuitability of the tropical forest country for permanent settlement by Europeans. The general policy is one of administration through native chiefs, commercial development, and the provision of educational facilities, together with medical benefits.

The Union of South Africa, whose political outlook is complicated by rivalry of Dutch and British subjects, has problems of native administration which are particularly acute. Colored people outnumber the white population by about six to one, and elementary education has been sufficient to arouse a racial and social consciousness. Among the many intricate questions that arise are those relating to a franchise for natives, the segregation of natives, the occupations which shall be closed to natives, and the extent to which natives should, under a system of segregation, be allowed to manage their own affairs without intervention. Those who oppose segregation and self-development, along with self-government, point out the Europeans' need for native labor in both urban and rural areas, and if this need is conceded, how far may the native go in his competition with Europeans?

The east African possessions differ from those of the west topographically, since the former contain highland areas which are suitable for permanent settlement by Europeans, who can turn to cultivation and animal husbandry. And in addition to the clashing of European ambitions and native rights, the problem has been made more complex by the entry of British subjects from India, who function chiefly as traders, in which capacity they are adept at fleecing the Negro and the Hamiticized-Negro population. Consequently one has to ask what are the territorial and political rights of Europeans, Indians, and Negroes? and how are the rival claims to be adjusted? But despite all this complexity the social problems arising from government of Africans by Europeans can be analyzed under the concepts of native health and population, systems of education for natives, labor laws, and administrative method.

When considering the problem of health and population several premises may be accepted. For the greater part of Africa birth and death rates are unknown. Infantile mortality is high, but this is probably balanced by fecundity. An international conference dealing

with mortality among African children made clear that syphilis, yaws, malaria, sleeping sickness, and respiratory diseases take a heavy toll, while another cause contributary to high mortality is lack of care of expectant mothers and want of attention during delivery. The suggested remedies are an extended use of hospitals and dispensaries, further employment of itinerant doctors and sanitation officers, also the establishment of welfare centers for the instruction of Africans.

Beyond doubt, military operations of Europeans against Africans, diseases both indigenous and introduced, also unjust labor laws which separate families and take males to work in mines, have imposed a heavy toll on native life. But no probability exists that the indigenous population is likely to be reduced to the extent which has been the fate of North American Indians, Maoris, and the aborigines of Australia. Negroes and Hamiticized Negroes who form the bulk of the African population are physically and mentally resistant, they are not of the racial type which readily shrinks before European contact.

With the advance of medical research, therefore, and an improvement in sanitation, I surmise that a stabilization, if not an actual increase in the native population can be expected, yet it may be that a check will be placed on the growth of population by a post-ponement of marriage, as a result of European influence. If, however, the maintenance of anything like the present ratio of native Africans and Europeans may be postulated, the core of the social problem becomes evident.

Apart from local disturbances, peace is preserved when uneducated natives are wisely ruled and protected from the worst effects of disease and famine. But along with improved health, a possible increase in numbers, and a wider dissemination of education, the demand of natives for at least a measure of political control will arise.

In some stages of native development, and under local conditions which do not favor permanent settlement of Europeans, a paternal oversight and government through native chiefs is effective, as for example in several parts of Nigeria. If white rulers are able to preserve order and at the same time make a profitable commercial adventure they are satisfied, and the natives also are contented for they share the economic gains, and their sense of justice is not offended by the feeling of direct control.

But this west African situation is politically and socially simple compared with conditions in south and east Africa where highland country, moderate temperatures, and absence of disease encourage permanent settlement of Europeans on the most favorably situated land.

The educability of Africans is a question which has given rise to much discussion. The argument is sometimes advanced that Negroes should not be educated since they are required solely as a source of cheap labor for their European masters. But a consensus of intelligent and informed opinion has decided on some form of education; and the importance of the vernacular, and not a European language, as a medium of instruction, has been conceded.

Commissioners who have visited several parts of Africa have reported on the advisability of selecting certain languages as a basis for instruction and communication over large areas, where great diversity of speech prevails. Such a suggestion, logical as it may be, recalls the fact that in administration the solution of one difficulty often creates another. Language is the instrument of thought and social consciousness, and with the wider adoption of one tongue arises social cohesion, an increase of racial consciousness, an ability to give expression to political ambitions, and a general demand for greater recognition. Africans who now regard themselves only as members of this or that small local group will presently, on account of linguistic homogeneity, take a broader outlook and a more effective political cohesion.

Much discussion has centered about the choice of a curriculum, and in view of the Negroes' skill as an artisan the founding of additional trade schools has been advocated. At the present time many Africans have been trained as railway and motor mechanics. But a tendency exists for semi-educated natives, who have only a rudimentary knowledge of the three R's, to drift into coastal towns where they form a class of cheap clerical labor for Europeans. The crucial question is the discovery of an educational scheme, which will make scholars both able and willing to return to their own villages and pursuits, in order to be of service to their own people, who require help in sanitation, agriculture, and animal husbandry.

With European contacts comes a breaking down of native controls and traditions which have been effective in past time. The white man takes away and he breaks down such rites as tribal initiation, the ceremonies connected with ancestor worship, the respect for chiefs as emblems of the soul of a people; and what does he give in return? A missionary would reply that he gives the doctrine of Christianity, but does this grip the native mind so as to provide a control?

What can Mohammedanism do for the Negro? The acceptance of Islamic teaching is often made in the most perfunctory way without a knowledge of the fundamentals of Koranic precepts. Mohammedanism is able to give some uplift from nakedness, paganism, cannibalism, trial by poison ordeal and other practices. But on the other hand Mohammedanism is repressive to art, literature, and to free education unbiassed by the Koran; in general the teaching of the Prophet is unprogressive.

The British dictum is that "Interests of African natives must be paramount, and if those interests and those of the immigrant races should conflict the former must prevail." This sounds noble enough: but what would happen if the injunction were literally carried out with regard to apportioning the best land, the healthiest situations, and the ownership of gold, diamonds, or other mineral treasure found under the soil. Obviously, if the political dictum is not a platitude Africans will soon be the rulers.

What the future holds, and what the final adjustment will be no one can foresee. A wise administration will make the utmost of ethnological inquiry in order to obtain an accurate background of native tradition in law, religion, and social organization, for only in this way can conflict with Europeans be minimised. Labor laws will be just, education will be practical and directed toward improvement of health, food, and the general standard of life. With these advances will arise a growing consciousness of power, then will come the crucial test of administrative ability in fostering this sense and using it for political cooperation.

But when, perhaps in the far distant future, Africans all over the continent shall ask why the white man rules a people who outnumber him by a thousand to one, who shall give the answer?

# Books Relating to Oriental Subjects

# FAR EAST

## JAPAN

W. G. Ashton—Shinto, the Ancient Religion of Japan. Cloth, 60c. Frederick Starr—The Ainu Group at the Saint Louis Exposition.
Boards, 75c.

#### **INDTA**

WM. NORMAN BROWN—Indian and Christian Miracles of Walking on the Water. Cloth, \$2.00.

Paul Carus—The Gospel of Buddha. Paper, 75c., Cloth, \$1.25, De Luxe, \$5.00.

PAUL CARUS—Karma, a Story of Buddhist Ethics. Paper, 15c.

PAUL CARUS—Nirvana, a Story of Budhist Psychology. Cloth, 60c.

Paul Carus—Portfolio of Buddhist Art. 50c.

S. N. Dasgupta—Hindu Mysticism. Cloth, \$2.00.

Albert J. Edmunds—Hymns of the Faith (Dhammapada). Cloth, \$1.00.

RICHARD GARBE—Akbar, Emperor of India. Paper, 50c.

RICHARD GARBE—The Philosophy of Ancient India. Paper, 30c.

### CHINA

Paul Carus—Canon of Reason and Virtue (Lao-Tze's Tao Teh King). Cloth, \$1.00, Paper, 50c.

PAUL CARUS—K'ung Fu Tze. Boards, 50c.

Paul Carus—Tai-Shang Kan-Ying Pien. Boards, 75c.

Paul Carus—Yin Chih Wen. Boards, 25c.

H. G. Creel—Sinism: A Study of the Evolutoin-of the Chinese World-View. Cloth, \$2.00.

Frederick Goodrich Henke—The Philosophy of Wang Yang-Ming. Cloth, \$2.50.

### NEAR EAST

LAWRENCE H. MILLS—Zarathushtra, Philo, the Achaemenids and Israel. Cloth, \$4.00.

LAWRENCE H. MILLS—Avesta Eschatology. Boards, 75c.

LAWRENCE H. MILLS—The Yasna of the Avesta. Price, \$5.00.

LAWRENCE H. MILLS—Our Own Religion in Ancient Persia. Cloth, \$2.00.

Hugo Radau—Bel, the Christ of Ancient Times. Boards, 75c. A Series of Monographs on Oriental Culture

# THE NEW ORIENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA MONOGRAPH SERIES ARE NOW AVAILABLE IN BOOK FORM

# THE NEW ORIENT

Volume I With an Introduction by IAMES HENRY BREASTED

THE NEAR EAST

Editors:

A. E. Haydon, Halford Hoskins, A. H. Lybyer, A. T. Olmstead, Martin Sprengling

Contents:

The Heritage of Eastern Asia, Heritage of Western Asai, Modern Turkey, Egypt, and Arabia

Price \$3.50

Volume II

With an Introduction by

BERTHOLD LAUFER

THE FAR EAST

Editors:

Arthur Upham Pope, Berthold Laufer, Quincy Wright, Walter E. Clark

Contents:

Persia. Central and Russian Asia, Japan, India, China, North Africa

Cloth. Pages 473. Illustrations 130. Cloth. Pages 400. Illustrations 65. Price \$3.50

#### ORDER BLANK

OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY, 149 East Huron St., Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sirs:

Inclosed please find \$......for which please send .....of THE NEW ORIENT. Vol. I, Vol. II.