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SUMMARY



WOMEN IN VIEW

6/ Africa Needs Developmentalist And Transformative Leadership

10/ Elle Smith, Miss Usa 2021

12/ Josephine Baker, The First Black Woman And The First American To Enter The French Pantheon

FOCUS

14/ Audrey Azoulay Re-Elected As Head Of Unesco

16/ Unesco In Central Africa: These Women At The Heart Of The Action ...

ENTREPRENEUR

20/ Rene Bissong, Entrepreneur, Founder Of "The Nubian Princesses" Dolls London, UK

SPECIAL REPORT

24/ African Women Harnessing Technology To Advance The Continent Toward Pharmaceutical Independence

30/ Precious Matsoso, Former Director-General Of Health; Health Diplomat South Africa

34/ Njenga Hellen, Chemical Engineer Member Of The Kenya Chemical Society, And Of The Environmental Insitute Of Kenya

38/ Stella Chinyelu Okoli Ceo And Founder Of Emzor Pharmaceuticals Nigeria

TOURISM

42/ Andeme Bindang Tung, General Manager Of Hotel 3 Agosto Malabo - Equatorial Guinea

HOMAGE

44/ Sojourner Truth, Bright Lessons From The Life Of A Very Great African Woman - Part One

48/ Sojourner Truth: Amazing Black Woman

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

50/ Master Paulette Oyane Ondo, Lawyer At The Gabonese Bar

GLOBAL AFRICANS

54/ American Psychological Association's Apology To People Of Color

56/ The Apology Of The American Psychological Association To Black People

BEAUTY

58/ Sanae Benabdi, Founder Of L'or D'orient, A Moroccan Cosmetics Firm



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A MERITOCRATIC EDUCATION SYSTEM IS THE FIRST CONDITION FOR COMPETENT LEADERS

«**W**hy do so many incompetent men become leaders?» is the title of a book a Harvard University professor published two years ago. Good question! The professor is a man. Fine! At least he is honest.

His thesis? Too many incompetent men too easily reach leadership positions in too many domains. For instance, politics, of course, but also business, NGOs, military, education. He says the thesis is universal. Therefore, it is valid in Africa.

For good or bad, men still shape and dominate the world we leave in. Is it a satisfying world? I doubt. It is a man-made world, as James Brown sang. Made by leaders, who are predominantly men. Mostly incompetent, according to the Harvard Professor. We are in a boat, whose commandant is incompetent. A very bad situation. “How to fix it?” That’s the book’s subtitle.

Before fixing the problem, what is the diagnosis? Why are too many incompetent men leaders? Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, the book’s author, has two answers. One, men are inept than women. I’m not the one saying it: a Harvard professor is affirming it. That’s the result of thorough research scientifically conducted.

Is it a shocking result? Let each of you, women or men, verify around you. What is the situation in Africa? In African cities and villages? Are dads often inept than moms? Uncles inept than aunts? Grandpas inept than grandmas? Are male ministers more inept than female ones?

If I haven’t made up my mind about the first answer, I fully agree with Prof. Chamorro-Premuzic on the second one. He says men, more, much more than women, excel in “confidence disguised as competence.” That is probably an important reason why men climb to the top leadership seat faster and in a greater number than women.

Such a reality means that on average, men cheat more than women to become leaders. Since year after year, it is easy for men to fudge the leader selection system, an urgent task is to change that system. Women and girls should be the first to demand that change. Wake up sisters, add your voice to that demand!

Women are not asking for a favor but for fairness.

The world would be better if half its leaders were women. That is another Prof. Chamorro-Premuzic’s result. He dedicated a whole chapter of his book to that result. To that chapter, he gave the following significant title: “The female advantage.”

After reading the chapter and checking the proofs it presents, any objective person will be convinced: regarding leadership, women have an advantage over men. Women are, naturally, potentially, better leaders than men. That’s

the fact. It is time the world draws the conclusions that fact implies. Africa should be among the first places to draw those conclusions. A major one of those is to change the system that selects leaders.

In politics, the selection system is obviously biased against women. That is true even in the countries reputed democratic. If it was not biased, at least half the rulers in each country would be a woman. The elimination of women starts early in the political section systems: at the candidacy level.

Check by yourself. You will see the huge privileges those systems gave men, contrasting with the huge hurdles they put on women’s way.

Leadership is a serious topic, particularly in Africa. If that continent has the highest number of failed states in the world, the reason is simple: bad leadership. Anyone sees it, that leadership is almost exclusively male. Changing the leadership selection systems in the whole continent may take time. Yet, Africa needs to reform them now. What to do? We have asked one of the best African experts on leadership to answer that question. The Director of the National School of Business and Management of the Cadi Ayyad University in Marrakech, Morocco, Professor Fatima Arib has accepted our demand.

“Africa needs leaders aware that the sources of wealth are found in education and institutions,” she says in the very instructive article that I invite you to read in the following pages. Indeed, a meritocratic system of education and sound institutions are the two feet of any successful nation. That is as true today as it was true in the past, in Africa, and elsewhere in the world.

For instance, it was true in the Japan of the Meiji Revolution that, between 1868 and 1889 transformed a poor backward archipelago into the second most industrialized country in the world. “It was Takato Oki who set up the real education system during the Meiji period,” writes Professor Eisuke Sakakibara in his book published in 2003: “Structural reform in Japan: Breaking the iron triangle.”

One of the most influential Japanese in Japan and abroad, Vice-minister of finance and international affairs during the critical years from 1997 to 1999, that won him the nickname “Mr. Yen,” Sakakibara recalls: “In August 1872, he [Oki] wrote the following in the official document promulgating the fundamental ideas behind the education system: “[People] should study according to their ability, dedicate themselves to it, leave a legacy, build a fortune, and work hard; education is the foundation of success and wealth,” and “all humans’ should obtain an education.””

From the three professors, Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic in the USA, Fatima Arib in Morocco, and Eisuke Sakakibara in Japan, what is your takeaway to fix the leadership problem in Africa? Here is mine: a meritocratic education system is the first condition for competent leaders.



Fatima ARIB

AFRICA NEEDS DEVELOPMENTALIST AND TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

CONTEXT

Africa's development expectations are considerable. To transform Africa socially and economically, it is necessary to reconsider governance, reinvent leadership, rethink the training of the continent's new leaders.

All over the world today, complexity and unpredictable phenomena complicate human activity, amplify the imbalance of economic power, increase inequality. More than ever, Africa is at a crossroads. What should she do?

Of course, Africa has plenty of natural resources: mining, energy, agriculture. Her population is the youngest in the world, and her youth is the most numerous. But she continues to suffer from a leadership crisis. This prevents her from effectively exploiting

and managing her abundant resources, and using them effectively to improve the lives of millions of her inhabitants and achieve development goals.

Today, our continent is at a strategic moment in history. The global health crisis has aggravated the challenges that were already multiple and considerable, including economic and social threats. Climate change causes disasters, the frequency of which is increasing. Armed conflicts, which are detrimental to peace and security, are not abating. There is even a resurgence of an evil that was thought to have been eliminated in Africa: the coup d'état.

To meet all those challenges: Africa needs to develop her leadership. She will have to support good governance, influence her own development, unlock her economic emergence, and realize inclusive and sustainable economic growth for the achievement of the 2030 and

2063 agendas' goals.

New Leaders to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063

The vision of the 2063 Agenda is to have an “integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, led by its own citizens, and which represents a dynamic force on the world stage”. The implementation of this agenda, together with that of the sustainable development agenda (2030) involves transformations on multiple levels. Among these, the construction of a vision, the definition of roles, the reorganization of structures, the constitution of networks, the establishment of relationships, or the continuous improvement of human capital.

African leaders have made a commitment to accelerate the continent's growth, development, and prosperity by 2063. They have adopted several initiatives to support the implementation of this agenda. These initiatives offer an opportunity to question the purposes and modes of operation, the governance models of institutions. They demand that new ways of doing things and thinking be invented. Africa must redefine her priorities.

Leadership is, therefore, an urgent and essential component to achieve all those goals. A new leadership, based on a modern vision of the role of managers, professionals, citizens, and partners as well as the purpose of organizations, is needed to accelerate and strengthen structural transformation through regional integration, productive transformation, improving skills, promoting innovation and technologies. A developed and transformative leadership is sought in this era of change to guarantee and maintain a strong level of commitment. An effort from all sectors is necessary,



but the existence of competent, participatory, responsible, and innovative states and institutions is essential.

Africa Needs a New Evolutionary and Transformative Leadership

Development issues in Africa are too complex and confusing. Traditional leadership is ill-equipped to address them. The quality of leaders is one of the

major challenges in the economic emergence of African countries. The latter are forced today to train a new generation of leaders, men and women, capable of meeting the real economic, geopolitical, social, and environmental challenges facing all the African countries.

Africa needs a new kind of leadership at the top of governments, institutions, businesses, and civil society. A new leadership endowed first with legitimacy, a catalyst for structural development, capable of initiating the transformation of the continent in all fields: socio-economic, political, environmental, technological. A leadership that meets the challenges of food security, population growth, sustainable development, and social services that are above all: education, health, access to water, and sanitation.

Africa also needs a new leadership ready to face the demands of the contemporary world and possessing the courage to lead Africa out of its heavy dependence on commodity

Africa needs a new kind of leadership at the top of governments, institutions, businesses, and civil society.

exports, also possessing the skills necessary to build and reinvent the continent in these times of complex, dynamic, and unpredictable change.

Africa needs leaders aware that the sources of wealth are found in education and institutions. Leaders conscious that real wealth goes beyond human, mining, and energy resources, and is acquired through hard work that gradually generates produced capital, resulting from the quality of human capital and institutions.

Africans also need leadership that, on the one hand, appeals more to long-term intrinsic needs and less to short-term extrinsic demand, and on the other hand, fundamentally believes in collective intelligence, technical, and emotional as well. More than anything, Africa expects her leadership to firmly show Africanness, carrying values, meaning, to accelerate sustainable economic development, which will have a positive impact on the whole society.

African Youth: Driving Force for Development and Transformation

Africa's women and men make her rich. As young Africans are the future of the continent, it is essential to invest heavily in their scientific and technological education. Investing in education and youth is the best way to change the development paradigm in Africa.

There are millions of untapped opportunities in Africa for socio-economic development and improving the well-being of Africans. It is therefore important that Africa has leaders capable of liberating this youth so that it spreads the wings of its creative imagination. Africa's youth's tremendous genius will then contribute to the construction of a



better Africa, the Africa we want.

It is up to African leaders to mobilize youth to promote lifestyles and a sustainable future. They will also have to teach the youth to combine thought and action, to be open to movement, innovation, and the encounter of meaning.

Conditions permitting, young African women and men will play a vital role in creating and promoting influential policies, innovative solutions, and sustainable models for inclusive development. It is now essential to provide them with the necessary means to carry out their projects. It is necessary to facilitate their exchanges at three levels: community, national and continental. Providing young people with the most appropriate ways, resources, and means of expression and action for better engagement should be any African government's priority.

To be developmentalist and transformative, African leadership must assume a societal responsibility, draw on the rich

African history, rediscover the qualities buried in African culture, to be able to rethink the concept of development. Placing African women and men at the center of their vision and their action, such leaders will act competently to make Africa regain the place she deserves in the competition imposed by the new global ecosystematic paradigms.

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This text is a summary of the author's remarks, at the conference of the African Union Commission "Key Requirements for Generating Developmental Leadership Across Africa," October 29, 2021.





ELLE SMITH, MISS USA 2021

Marcus Garvey is reported to have said: “The Black skin is not a badge of shame, but rather a glorious symbol of national greatness.” Elle Smith, a Black woman, has reached greatness: she is Miss USA 2021.

A 23-year-old journalist, Smith competed as Miss Kentucky. She won her crown in the final competition held on 29 November 2021 at the River Spirit Casino Resort in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

What a symbol ! Black Wall Street, the area of prosperous Blacks that white racism bombed to ashes was in Tulsa. The Tulsa massacre lasted two whole days: 31st May and 1st June 1921. Let us turn our respectful thought to those innocent victims. We must never forget what they endured, and who killed them. Justice calls for reparations.





JOSEPHINE BAKER

THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN AND THE FIRST AMERICAN TO ENTER THE FRENCH PANTHEON

Unprecedented event in Paris on 30 November 2021: for the first time, a Black woman entered the Panthéon, the temple where the French Nation honored its most esteemed heroes and heroines.

A singer, dancer, and actress, this multitalented woman took Paris by storm in the 1920s. Her costumes were originally sexy, never vulgar, with a tribal-humoristic use of an artificial bananas belt. Her millions of fans nicknamed her: “Black Venus,” “Creole Goddess,” “Bronze Venus,” “Black Pear.” Her most famous song is “J’ai deux amours, mon pays et Paris » (I have two loves, my country and Paris).

During the darkest day when Nazi Germany’s yoke was suffocating France during World War II, she was one of the first resistant fighters, risking her life many times as an intelligence agent against the Gestapo.

Unsurprisingly, at the end of the war, the new French authorities honored her many times. It awards her among others the Resistance Medal and the Croix de Guerre. General Charles de Gaulle gave her the Chevalier of the Légion d’Honneur Medal, one of the highest distinctions in France.

Married, she did not give birth. She adopted 12 children. Born Freda Josephine McDonald on 3 June 1906 in St. Louis, Missouri, USA, she died, brain hemorrhage, in Paris on 12 April 1975. She is the first American to enter the Panthéon.

Coincidence: this beautiful Black woman who fled racism and Jim Crow laws in her country to settle in France, entered that sacred French shrine the day after another Black beauty, Elle Smith, 23, was crowned Miss USA 2021. Black is beautiful.



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AUDREY AZOULAY RE-ELECTED AS HEAD OF UNESCO

Audrey Azoulay, director general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, was re-elected Tuesday, November 9, 2021 for a second term.

French Audrey Azoulay was re-elected with a very large majority for a second four-year term as head of UNESCO, the UN organization based in Paris. Recall that in mid-October, the organization's 58-member executive council decided, by 55 votes out of 57 presents, to "recommend" his candidacy. This decision was awaiting validation at the 41st session of UNESCO. This is today done. Concurring sources agree that Audrey Azoulay's re-election enshrines the strategy of depoliticizing the institution that she wanted from her election. It should be noted that the Director-General took up her duties in a deteriorated context, due to the departure of the United States and Israel. Both countries accused the institution of a pro-Palestinian bias. These tensions have now subsided, which precedes the return of these two countries to the organization in the medium term.

Audrey Azoulay born 4 August 1972 is a French civil servant and politician who has been serving as the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific

and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization. She previously served as France's Minister of Culture in the government of Prime Minister Manuel Valls from 2016 to 2017.

She was born in Paris to a Moroccan Jewish family from Essaouira. Her father, André Azoulay, is former adviser to the king of Morocco Hassan II from 1991 to 1999, then the current adviser to king Mohammed VI of Morocco. Her mother, Katia Brami, is a Moroccan writer.

Note:

According to the human technology foundation, "UNESCO has considerable assets to keep the debate on new technologies alive and is based above all on its universal vocation to the within the multilateral system of the United Nations." The organization is establishing a bridge between multiple stakeholders including civil societies organizations and offers them a platform for exchange and debate.

Today as noticed during the last general congress in Paris, the prospects offered by new technologies, and in particular artificial intelligence, are also revolutionizing all areas of the mandate of the Organization. His multidisciplinary expertise guarantees him an understanding of complete range of issues.



UNESCO IN CENTRAL AFRICA: THESE WOMEN AT THE HEART OF THE ACTION ...

Since the arrival in Cameroon at the end of 2018 of Salah Khaled, UNESCO Regional Director for Central Africa, the sub-region has established itself in the chessboard of action to improve the living conditions of populations so that peace is built in the minds of men and women. To accompany him in this mission, which has never been easy in a rigid multilateral environment, a few strong women. For Femmes d'Afrique

Magazine, these women are at the heart of the action for inclusive leadership.

Mabel Mwangi Dubois

Hailing from French nationalized Uganda is the lady of the solution. If UNESCO in Central Africa has entered the top 5 regions of the organization, it will have been necessary to count on the combination of professionalism and humanism. At the heart of

the administrative and financial machine, its simplicity equals its professional rigor. Nothing escapes her, she is so keen to ensure that the rules and procedures are respected. The organization's administration and human resources logbook, including the mercurial, she masters them by heart.

Dr. Chiara Dezzi,

Executive Officer more African than Italian, she remains the



jockey to coordinate actions and facilitate the mobilization of resources. The experienced “little lady” masters all agreements and conventions with the tips of her fingers, not only of the Culture Sector, but also of the organization as a whole. The short interim at the head of the Culture Sector has awakened and restored hope to artists who were almost silenced by COVID19 in the shadow of despair. The multiple meetings do not prevent the culture specialist from monitoring the decisions taken for the proper functioning of the organization.

Yvonne Matuturu,

Its portfolio is not the least in terms of the socio-economic

and cultural context of the sub-region. But she knows how to draw on her smile and her closeness to youth, civil society organizations, but also her diplomacy to advance issues of peace, living together and social cohesion in Central Africa. The Luanda Biennale and its involvement thanks to the cross-border project of the Young Weavers of Peace have made it possible to fully appreciate the oh so important role that young people, women and others would play in the culture of peace in Africa.

Dr Annie-Claude NSOM

His humility has certainly confused many. But his accuracy in implementing what

must have always proved him right. As the head of the Exact Sciences Sector until the date of publication of this issue will earn him due respect. The Exact Science Sector has so far been a sector that surprises more than one. This is the area that allows the organization to tap into the realities of climate change, the protection of the environment as well as specific components of the hard sciences. One of his big hits: the famous “solar mamas” from Cameroon to Senegal, including India and France.

Obviously alongside these lurk dozens of others who are called in the corridors, the quiet forces. They are programme managers, assistants, secretary, executive assistants or even consultants etc. in each of the five sectors.

Note:

UNESCO with its five sectors represents practically five agencies of the United Nations gathered into one. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is constituted of the sectors of Education (ED), Exact Sciences (SC), Human and Social Sciences (SHS), Culture (CLT) and Communication and Information Sector (CI) a sector whose missions are reinforced by the new Communication and Public Engagement Division (CPE) formerly called Public Information (PI).







Rene Bissohong

RENE BISSOHONG

ENTREPRENEUR, FOUNDER OF “THE NUBIAN PRINCESSES” DOLLS LONDON, UK

Ms. Rene Bissohong started as a broadcast journalist and filmmaker. Now, she is the entrepreneur who conceived and designed The Nubian Princesses dolls. She is also manufacturing them.

A multi-talented Cameroonian, Ms. Bissohong began her career as a news reporter and producer at Vox Africa TV in London, UK. She reported on a range of stories including protests, art and culture, the African and Afro-Caribbean diaspora in the UK. Then, she spearheaded the production of the entertainment after show of ‘The Voice Afrique Francophone’ (a franchise of The Voice).

She had studied Film and TV production in college and University which led her into making short films and documentaries. That passion took her to Nepal in 2013 to make her first documentary, ‘Women in The World of Gods’ on Women mountain climbers with which she won the scoop of the year at the Salford Journalist Awards and had it featured in a national festival.

She later went to BBC where she works at the World Service from radio to TV News. She is a producer, reporter, and presenter for an International Emmy Award nominated Teenager News program ‘What’s New’. She describes herself as a Panafricanist, passionate about the condition of black people around the world, determined to use her voice to bring to the world stories about the real Africa. That passion led her to create The Princesses Nubian dolls, a promising endeavor, a timely offer that fills a long-awaited need.



<https://thenubianprincesses.com/>

RENE BISSOHONG ENTREPRENEUR, FOUNDER OF “THE NUBIAN PRINCESSES”

What is your goal in launching “The Nubian Princesses,” a collection of black-looking dolls?

My goal and vision are to give pride to every little black girl out there. To show that her hopes, aspirations, and dreams matter. To reinforce self-love and reacquaint her to who she is, reconnecting her with her past. We have a sense of obligation to help foster the new generation of black girls to self-determination and power. To remove the sense of alienation, to awaken their curiosity within what is already inside themselves and help them on a journey to self-discovery.

What is your background? How did it influence you to become a manufacturer of dolls?

My background in media production and broadcast journalism certainly did not predispose me to become a doll manufacturer. However, one afternoon my friend and I, accompanied with his 4-year-old daughter, visited a work colleague who had just given birth to a mixed heritage baby. The 4-year-old, who is black, commented after seeing the baby that the baby was beautiful and that she wished she had the same light skin color and hair texture.

While reassuring her of her own beauty, inside I was heartbroken by her comments. That night I could not sleep, as I was so disturbed by what I heard the little girl had said. There was no sense of self-confidence in her own identity. I felt something needed to be done about this, how the girl felt and our woman of tomorrow.

A role model was needed. The next day as I was thinking what we could do to change this I came up with the idea of creating a doll that would reflect the different beauty, something that represented black girls, something they could be proud of.

From that moment on I was compelled to develop this idea and grow the opportunity

to demonstrate my love and respect to all the little girls I have met and who continue to inspire me to do this.

I describe it as my love, a love letter to all the black girls in the world. You are beautiful and perfect just the way you are.

How long did it take from the initial idea to the dolls you are marketing now? What were the main obstacles you met? How did you overcome them?

It took me seven years from the moment I had the idea to the materialization of my creation. The main obstacles were finance and that we could not find a factory to create it in Africa, so we were forced to go to China for now. In China most factories were trying to steer me away from my original ideas. It took months to find the right factory which understood exactly what we were trying to do and help us manufacture our doll. Fortunately, I found an African developer, who helped with drawing creation and design.

Why the name “Nubian princesses?” Also, please, could you tell us more about the dolls’ names?

I was sitting in a cafe in Hanoi, Vietnam thinking about a name that would represent what we would do, something steeped within African culture, something that referred to blackness. When you say Nubian, everyone knows you are referring

to Africa and its ancient history. Princesses to all the little black girls whom I have met and continue to inspire me to do this. I wanted to refer back to my culture as I am a great believer in finding answers within. With the Nubian Princesses, Kiraa, is our first doll from West African which means the way, the passage, and the voice in many West African languages. She also has a unique face which was developed to reflect a collaboration of facial features from West Africa.

How large is the market you are targeting? Do you have competitors there?

The Nubian Princesses was created for black girls all around the world and I believe what we have is specific to that target. At present the market is not that large. It is also often not represented very well. For example, some businesses create black dolls by just coloring the skin dark of existing white dolls keeping the features the same. There needs to be much more offered to black girls and their parents to help create positive role models to help develop a proud and unique belief in themselves.

Designing the dolls and their dresses is an artistic job. Who does it? What are your requirements for that job? What inspires you?

When I decided I wanted to do this, I was very clear I wanted to create something that looks like us, something that when a child sees it, they can connect because it reminds her of herself. Something aspirational and unique away from caricatures. I teamed up with some brilliant artists in Cameroon who understood exactly what I was trying to create and that's how I gathered drawings and a collection of facial features to end up with a doll representative of West Africa. My inspiration also came from the clothing for the region that helped me create a fusion of traditional and contemporary styles.

The Nubian Princesses are «a love letter to all the Black girls in the world.»

For a long time, black parents have routinely been offering their girls white-looking dolls. Will you also market The Nubian Princesses to white parents?

The Nubian Princesses pay homage to all the little black girls out there. It was created to inspire and reinforce black girl confidence in themselves and tell them they are beautiful and perfect just the way they are and to encourage black parents to see this in their children. This is the main purpose of my vision and main market and will redress a balance in society.

Potential buyers of The Nubian Princesses live all over the world. How can they order the dolls?

They can find us through our website 'The Nubian Princesses Dolls' and on Amazon, we may also start selling from our website soon, and I will also be attending schools and events.

Do you have other lines of businesses to develop from The Nubian Princesses concept?

'The Nubian Princesses' are not just dolls, this is only a beginning, we are in the process of publishing a reading and coloring book on 'Kiraá', with a set of these stories being developed. More dolls will follow from different African regions and more books and educational material and supporting accessories. Further into the future I would like to influence the educational curriculum of young black girls through schooling.

How do you see The Nubian Princesses in the coming five years?

As I have already mentioned my future thoughts are that I can influence the educational curriculum of black girls and their understanding of who they are. There is so much missing from history, tradition and self-belief that needs learning. Personally, I would want to concentrate all my time and efforts into the Nubian Princesses. Through this I hope that my products can be made accessible, both financially and practically to all black girls from around the world who want inspiration and seek answers to who they are.



<https://thenubianprincesses.com/>



A pharmacy in Nigeria

AFRICAN WOMEN HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY TO ADVANCE THE CONTINENT TOWARD PHARMACEUTICAL INDEPENDENCE

This article is the fourth and last of the series that Femmes d'Afrique Magazine has devoted to women in leadership positions in the African pharmaceutical sector. The previous ones appeared respectively in last year's January, May, and September issues.

The current article focuses on technology. How do leading African women leverage technology to provide Africans with the medicines and healthcare services that they need? To answer that question, we interviewed two women representatives: Ms. Precious Matsoso and Ms. Hellen Njenga, respectively from South Africa and Kenya.

The former South African Director-General of Health, Ms. Matsoso has over a quarter-century of executive management experience at top strategic positions at both the national and

international levels on public health policy and programs. Apart from having been her country's Director-General of Health for nine and a half years, she also served among others at the following high functions: Head of the Medicine's Regulatory agency in South Africa for over six and a half years; Chair of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on e-Health; Chair of the Technical National Health Council; Chair of the Policy Review Committee of the South African National Aids Council; Director of Public Health Innovation and Intellectual Property at the World Health Organization (WHO); Chairperson of the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee (IOAC) of the WHO's Emergencies Program of which she continues to be a member.

She is also a member of the Lancet Global Health Commission on High-Quality Health Systems, UNITAID Board and the Director of the Health Regulatory

Science Platform, a Division of Wits Health Consortium at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. She has also been a member of a UN High-Level Panel on Access to Health Technologies, which brings together some of the world's best experts to advise the UN Secretary-General on that topic.

Ms. Hellen Njenga is a chemical engineer. She is a member of the Kenya Chemical Society, the Environmental Institute of Kenya, and the Institute of Packaging Professionals of Kenya. She has been a Project Leader in a UNIDO-sponsored project that involved the transfer of ethanol manufacturing technology from Brazil to Kenya.

Ms. Njenga has been teaching chemical engineering particularly in the fields of mass and energy balances, fluid mechanics, heat and mass transfer unit operations, mechanical separations, chemical processes, wastewater chemistry, and industrial management.

She has served as a consultant specializing in feasibility studies for a chemical manufacturing company, and quality improvement for a flower-processing company. Her expertise in technology has been useful in some critical issues, for instance in a fraud investigation that unearthed a scheme of the theft of raw materials. She has also participated in technical committees of regulatory bodies such as the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) and the Kenya National Accreditation Services.

"There are several factors that enable the local pharmaceutical firms to grow technologically in Kenya", Ms. Njenga answered when asked how Kenya was keeping up with technology advancements that make the

pharmaceutical industry a highly competitive business, with companies permanently on alert. "The Kenyan government has developed sufficient laws and policies to create an enabling environment for the pharmaceutical industry and business in general." She cited measures the Kenyan government implemented to assist pharmaceutical companies. Among them, "tax incentives, public procurement-related incentives, lower electricity tariffs, protection of intellectual property (IP) and IP rights, anti-

There is the need to accelerate the use of technology in the South African pharmaceutical production.

counterfeit goods, ethics and anticorruption practices."

On her part, Ms. Matsoso underscored the need to accelerate the use of technology in the South African pharmaceutical production. She was even more emphatic considering the devastating impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on Africa. "Absolutely," she exclaimed, South Africa, and more generally Africa needs to accelerate the use of technology "through leapfrogging. [That is] what is needed."

Ms. Matsoso referenced South Africa's achievements in the fight against HIV-AIDS during her

tenure as Director-General of Health to demonstrate that the country can meet the challenges of technological leapfrogging. "We tested 10 million people annually and put more than 5 million on treatment," she says. What made that achievement possible? "This would not have been possible if we did not advocate for access and technology transfer, and voluntary licensing for production of antiretrovirals. The same should apply to vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics, tech transfer, and local production."

Ms. Matsoso's last sentence is an alarm bell today, amid African countries' desperate struggle to get vaccines against covid-19. It stressed the importance, the urgency, for Africans to leapfrog, to quickly acquire vaccine production technologies. For Africa, it is a question of survival. The figures show a huge global imbalance, which is at the continent's detriment. As of early December 2021, "56.1% of the world population has received at least one dose of a covid-19 vaccine," one reads on the webpage of Our World in Data (OWD). According to ECA, only about 7 percent of the African population has been vaccinated to date even though the continent had funds to purchase vaccines. It is well known that export bans on pharmaceutical companies in their respective countries led to Africa and other lower to middle incomes countries (LMICs) being left at the end of the queue. Consequently, this led to vaccine inequity that most African countries are talking about thereby putting the region and the rest of the world at risk because of COVID-19 mutations. To solve a problem, the first step is to figure out its most



A pharmacy in Kenya

accurate representation. Often, quantitative data offers the best representation. “To tell truth from fiction, start with quantitative thinking,” advised the 11 September 2017 *Quanta* magazine article featuring the American mathematician Professor Rebecca Goldin. “If we don’t have the ability to process quantitative information, we can often make decisions that are more based on our beliefs and our fears than on reality,” says Prof. Goldin. “On an individual level, if we have the ability to think quantitatively, based on data, we can make better decisions about our own health, about our own choices with regards to risk, about our own lifestyles. It’s very empowering to not be scared or bullied into doing things one way or another.” She adds: “The more we can get people to understand how to view the world in a quantitative way, the more successful we can be at getting past biases and beliefs and prejudices.”

Prof. Goldin’s observation for the individual level is even truer at the collective one, i.e., a country, a continent, even the

world. The covid-19 vaccine statistics provide that truth. They are a representation of the blatant pharmaceutical inequality that puts Africa at the world’s most subordinate stage regarding vaccines. Yet, vaccines are primarily, a pharmaceutical technology problem, which is this current article’s topic .

That problem stems from Africa’s weak capacity to produce vaccines. Thus, Ms. Matsoso’s alarm bell is a reminder that should sound loud in Africa’s leaders’, scientists’, and business people’s ears. That bell urges them to create in Africa, the

It is necessary to create in Africa the technological capacities to produce medicines and vaccines.

technological capacities to produce medicines in general, and vaccines in particular. Indeed, if, as already seen, 56.1% of the world population has received at least one dose of a covid-19 vaccine, meaning that “8.51 billion doses have been administered globally, and 35.6 million are now administered each day,” what are those figures in Africa?

Before answering, one can note, as the OWD informs that, “7.2% of people in low-income countries have received at least one dose.” The disparity is already large between the world average of 56.1% and the low-income countries’ 7.2%. The disparity becomes yawning when one considers Africa’s figures, as the following graph shows:

Trailing the world in the COVID-19 vaccination’s rates, African countries represented in the above graph, Tanzania, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Egypt, South Africa are the last in ranking, with respectively the vaccination rates of 2.6%, 3.7%, 7.6%, 9.8%, 28%, and 31%. What explains the large gap between African countries and some of

the best performing countries in term of vaccination? For example, why Tanzania rate is 2.6% while Cuba's is 90%? Why does Nigeria have a vaccination rate of 3.7% while the United Arab Emirates' rate is 99%? Those are two major oil-producing countries. Even if one readjusts in terms of population's size, the Nigeria-United Arab Emirates' gap is still gigantic.

If, as said, Africa's challenges to provide COVID-19 vaccines are primarily, a pharmaceutical technology one, the gap is too large thereby indicating bigger issues relating to manufacturing of pharmaceuticals, IPR, TRIPS, related infrastructure, finance leadership, etc. They are also political, perhaps geopolitical, reflecting Africa's extremely weak position in world's affairs. It is known that the United Arab Emirates do not have the technology to produce vaccines. Therefore, their vaccination rate should be similar to Africa's, if possessing technology were the sole determinant of that rate. The difference between the two rates shows that other determinants are at play. This is where global geopolitics comes in. Here, Prof. Goldin's warning against fears, prejudices, and biases comes into play. And against anger, when the dose of injustice becomes too heavy for a person to take.

President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, ordinarily known for his diplomatic and good manners, surprised the world when he furiously exploded in Dakar, Senegal, on December 6, 2021, during his speech at the Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security. President Ramaphosa raised his eyes from his notes on the pulpit, stared at the attending international leaders,

some of whom included high officials of the European Union, whose president, Charles Michel spoke at that conference too. The US and Canadian governments' representatives were present along with delegations of other rich countries. Still looking not at his notes but at the audience, President Ramaphosa paused before saying in a very distinctive voice:

"In the approach that the rich countries have taken on the issue of vaccines, firstly they hoarded vaccines, they ordered more vaccines than their populations

Waive the Intellectual Property Rights to enable Africa to manufacture the covid vaccines.

required. And when we wanted vaccines, they just kept, you know, giving us the crumbs from their table. And the greed that they demonstrated is something that is quite, quite [President Ramaphosa's insistence] disappointing indeed."

As the Africans in attendance applauded, the South African president continued this time exposing the hypocrisy: "they say they are our partners, because our lives in Africa are just as important as their lives in Europe, North America and all over. Now, all that India and South Africa propose is that just waive, waive [President Ramaphosa's

insistence] this requirement at the WTO for a while, to enable countries that have the capability on the African continent to manufacture these vaccines, and up till now, up till now [President Ramaphosa's insistence] they are refusing to do so. And this is disappointing."

It is to tackle problems such as the one infuriating President Ramaphosa, that ECA (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) had organized a forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia two years ago, on May 23-24, 2019, focusing on the African pharmaceutical industry. The forum's results combined with, on the one hand, ECA's "mandate to deliver on Agenda 2063, the SDGs and operationalization of the African Continental Free Area (AfCFTA) by translating ideas into action in the health sector," and on the other hand, ECA's "commitment to ensure that the private and public sectors dialogue yields tangible outcomes," pushed the Commission to "conceptualize an AfCFTA-anchored Pharmaceutical Project and joined forces with its partners AUC, IGAD, AUDA-NEPAD, WHO, UNIDO and other respective UN Family Agencies and selected Small Islands States represented by Seychelles in rolling it out."

With its series of articles on African women leaders in the pharmaceutical industry, Femmes d'Afrique Magazine has been informing global leaders on the AfCFTA-anchored Pharmaceutical Initiative, stressing what the public usually does not get to know: the irreplaceable role that female leadership is playing in the African pharmaceutical sector.



A pharmacy in South Africa.

A role that will increase in the coming years.

Women leaders play their role efficiently, as demonstrated by women interviewed in the four articles above stated, and as you can see by reading Ms. Matsoso's and Ms. Njenga's interviews in the following pages. The African women leaders in the pharmaceutical industry act in a spirit of collaboration and solidarity. "[They] provide a blueprint for developing and deploying better policies going forward." Contributing to the African response to covid-19, they "[leverage] on the unstoppable surge in the use of digital technologies" that are game changers in the production, distribution, and delivery of medicines and vaccines. Those technologies include artificial intelligence, machine learning, digital applications.

As Ms. Matsoso and Ms. Njenga show, in Africa as elsewhere in the world, technology will facilitate pharmaceutical research, accelerating discoveries that will lead to more efficient drugs. Technology will also reduce the

screening time and make the testing of new drugs more precise and rapid.

To fully profit from the advantages that technology offers, and to give themselves the resources they need to produce that technology, Africans must unite their efforts under the umbrella of the AfCFTA (African Continental Free Trade Area) and African Medicines Agency (AMA). Securing and guaranteeing quality assurance of pharmaceuticals by manufacturing companies to a market of 1.7 billion people

The African women leaders in the pharmaceutical industry act in a spirit of collaboration and solidarity.

in 2030, and 2.3 billion by 2050, will save African lives and livelihoods and ensure Africa-based companies will produce competitively for the single African market and the world.

In addition, African governments need to create an enabling environment for the private sector to produce competitively but to make profit and channel some of their resources into addressing other developmental challenges within the continent. This will in turn ensure that African pharmaceutical researchers, engineers, businesspeople, of whom a substantial percentage are women, have jobs, are able to earn an income, as well as be able to utilize technology to positively impact their families and communities. Provided with enabling environment, African private sector can produce quality assured medicines, vaccines, and be more generally pharmaceutical independence, cooling down President Ramaphosa's angst which is also that of many Africans who applaud his Dakar's speech.



Precious Matsoso

PRECIOUS MATSOSO

FORMER DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH; HEALTH DIPLOMAT SOUTH AFRICA

“People do not have to stand in queues anymore to collect medicines they can use ATM Pharmacy. Patients can monitor their blood pressure and blood glucose from the comfort of their homes and electronically share results with their clinicians.”

How has the covid-19 pandemic impacted the use of technology in the South African pharmaceutical production?

The COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed the inequities in the supply and distribution of vaccines and other medical supplies such as diagnostics and therapeutics. South Africa had a late start and had to catch up with countries of the same level of development. I am glad that we rose to the challenge as a country with the increase in the vaccination rates, to address the enormous need.

The increase in vaccinations and tests should be across the whole continent, not only in a handful of countries including mine. The virus knows no borders and variants are not friendly to any country. We must move in unison and thwart the variants, reduce transmissions, and end the pandemic.

What we experienced regarding this Pandemic is of great concern, but it is also a wake-up call to all of us. During this crucial moment when the continent had insufficient supplies to meet demands, we witnessed how 3D printing was galvanized to produce PPEs, using computer-aided designs to produce face shields. We have also witnessed how gene sequencing was led by some of our institutions to detect variants. High complex biotechnologically derived products can be produced in our continent, innovative capacity exists in pockets of academic excellence and research institutions.

Given the diagnostic capacity constraints in rolling out the test, isolate and treat strategy, we have no reason why we cannot produce the self-test kits that are validated. We have highly-rated institutions and the AU has designated centres of excellence that must be put to good use.

From now on, can one expect the acceleration of the use of technology in the South African pharmaceutical production?

Absolutely the acceleration through leapfrogging is what is needed.

We have demonstrated that we can ramp up our capacity to test and treat. We did it with HIV and AIDS when I was the Director General, we tested 10 million people annually and put more than 5 million on treatment. This would not have been possible if we did not advocate for access and technology transfer, and voluntary licensing to produce antiretrovirals. The same should apply to vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics, tech transfer, and local production.

Recent developments of a consortium, hold promise to vaccine manufacturing. This will level the playing field and address the imbalance in the global production of vaccines and other medical supplies. We have witnessed this with COVID that we can respond and meet targets that we set ourselves.

We were behind with our vaccine supplies with initial false starts. There was a scarcity of supplies and gross inequities of COVID vaccines and diagnostics. We rose to the occasion. We now have 25 million vaccinations and over 19 million tests conducted. We have seen diagnostic capabilities from our research institutions and the sequencing of data and capabilities in bioinformatics. This is confirmation that we are no longer at the crossroads but beginning phases of a growth path as we follow an integrated approach to vaccine research and development, manufacturing,



and distribution.

The list of new technologies is long. It keeps widening. It includes for instance artificial intelligence, machine learning, augmented reality, virtual reality, 3D printers. What are the types of new technologies that pharmaceutical firms operating in South Africa

mostly use to produce medicines and vaccines?

Manufacturing vaccines and pharmaceuticals is not new to our industries. We now operate in a different environment of biotechnologically derived products. We have to produce small and large molecules alike and ensure appropriate technologies are used for this

purpose. There is a plethora of initiatives underway that have been catapulted by the pandemic both upstream and downstream. Our institutions involved in research and development have been focusing on the development of innovative tools to support the response. During peace times the technological capabilities have to be ramped up and expanded to other disease areas.

3D printing to produce PPEs can be expanded for other medical devices like prostheses. We have witnessed an acceleration of data analytics in genomic sequencing and bioinformatics from our centers of excellence. The use of artificial intelligence in facilitating access through ATM pharmacy and robotics has expanded and we now have people who can readily access their medicines without having to stand in long queues. The use of telemedicine is now receiving attention because of COVID isolation and the need for remote medical treatment. All this has to happen within the context of a digital health strategy and a digital health ecosystem which have been developed and are being implemented.

In South Africa, what is the state of collaboration between pharmaceutical firms and the academic and research world? Does the government encourage that collaboration? If yes, how?

The collaboration between the public sector, academia, research institutions, is at an all-time high. A development that must be applauded and embraced and should continue to grow. The Department of Science and Innovation has been

leading in creating platforms for collaboration. The health sector learnt from our partnerships when we created Health Patient Registration System that partnerships work. We also created such partnerships when we conducted the HIV/AIDS test and treat campaign. It was a partnership that produced results. We are seeing collaborative actions with COVID which must be sustained.

The production capacity that has always been concentrated

Africa will reduce her dependency and work of technology transfer.

in a few regions, will be expanded and will include the African region. The creation of the Consortium has the full support of government and has marshalled our institutions and the private sector under the leadership of the Department of Science and Innovation. There will be increased capacity to close the gap and eliminate inequities. We are a young continent with potential. South Africa and other countries on the African Continent will reduce the dependency and work on technology transfer in partnership with others to produce diagnostics,

therapeutics, and vaccines.

A common feature of the new technologies is digitalization. How is that feature affecting the South African pharmaceutical production? Who are the South African leaders in that digitalization?

The digitization revolution has hit various sectors, not only the pharmaceutical sector. It has expanded to the medical device industry. People do not have to stand in queues anymore to collect medicines they can use ATM Pharmacy. Patients can monitor their blood pressure and blood glucose from the comfort of their homes and electronically share results with their clinicians. Wearable technologies are promoting self-care and their well-being. This has been unprecedented.

In the South African pharmaceutical production, what is the level of women's technological contribution? Are you satisfied with that level? Are the government and the industry acting to improve that level? What would you recommend them to do?

There are still gaps regarding the pharmaceutical sector, medical device, and diagnostic industry when it comes to women's technological contribution. The gaps are not only with women they are also with youth. We have a lot of unemployed youth with biomedical science degrees. We are a young continent full of potential. Let us invest in women and let us invest in youth. It is my fervent hope and wish that we can address these gaps. We have no reason not to.



NJENGA HELLEN

CHEMICAL ENGINEER MEMBER OF THE KENYA CHEMICAL SOCIETY, AND OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE OF KENYA

“Kenya is currently the leading producer of pharmaceutical products in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region and the 3rd largest exporter of pharmaceuticals in Africa.”

The increasing availability of technological innovation in the pharmaceutical industry creates a competitive edge. How does Kenya keep up with technological necessities?

There are several factors that enable the local pharmaceutical firms to grow technologically. Kenya government has developed sufficient laws and policies to create an enabling environment for the pharmaceutical industry and business in general. The government has also given the pharmaceutical industry, tax incentives, public procurement-related incentives, lower electricity tariffs, protection of intellectual property (IP) and IP rights, anticounterfeit goods, ethics and anticorruption practices, environmental protection, and land use. The industry is integrated to a robust support base in the form of professional and trade associations that keep up with changing trends in the industry, locally and globally. These include the Kenya Pharmaceutical Association, Kenya Association of Pharmaceutical Industry, and the Federation of Kenya Pharmaceutical Manufacturers.

The last two are affiliated to the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers. The industry is also serviced by Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), a government world-class R&D institute that provides advice on various aspects of healthcare, national disease surveillance and rapid response for disease outbreaks. KEMRI has a wide range of international collaborators and recently participated in clinical trials for AstraZeneca vaccine.

The quality of education is another positive factor.

For pharmaceutical firms, the use of data is critical. For instance, they rely on data to identify patterns, test theories, and assess the efficacy of pharmaceutical treatments. How do Kenyan pharmaceutical firms obtain their data? What technological systems do they prefer for data management? Do they share data among themselves and with the university and research centers? What is the Kenyan government's role regarding data storage and management in the pharmaceutical sector?

The main source of demographic data is the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. For efficacy assessment, pharmaceutical suppliers generally depend on interactions with doctors

and pharmacists. Epidemiological data are traditionally submitted to local health centres for transmission to county and national centres for storage and use by investigators. Kenya Association of Pharmaceutical Industry has a pharmacovigilance and medical affairs committee focused on pharmacovigilance systems. In the majority of health facilities, paper-based storage and retrieval of medical information have been digitized which makes it easier to manage and share clinical data in the health service.

Pharmaceutical firms will now be able to get data more readily from the newly established Centre for Epidemiological Modelling and Analysis (CEMA) at the University of Nairobi. The multidisciplinary consortium of epidemiologists, infectious disease specialists, clinicians, mathematicians, statisticians, computer scientists and data scientists use data-driven approaches to control infectious diseases and improve health in Kenya and the African Continent.

The Kenya government on its part is providing an integrated information management system Kenya Health Information Services Integrated Framework (KHISIF). The system has interoperability capabilities through linking existing health information systems for shared use. The system includes the National Integrated Data Analytics Framework for use by investigators to formulate health questions, analyse data and make evidence-based decisions.

Kenya government has developed sufficient laws and policies to create an enabling environment for the pharmaceutical industry and business in general.

What is the size of Kenya's involvement in digital healthcare and healthcare technology? What are the main problems that digital healthcare and technology in pharmaceuticals solve in Kenya for the people to live healthy and quality lives?

The Kenyan health system is currently struggling to cope with the rising cost and demand for quality health care services, against the backdrop of a shortage of skilled health care professionals. There are limiting barriers such as cost, location, and opportunities to access healthcare. The Covid-19 pandemic created a barrier that affected the entire population. The vision of the national e-Health Strategy is to develop efficient healthcare services enabled by ICT. Strategic areas of implementation include Telemedicine, Health Information Systems, Information for Citizens, M-Health and E-Learning. Lessons from Covid-19 pandemic have provided the impetus for the use of digital healthcare and healthcare technologies. Mobile channels used by Kenyans for decades to access financial services have now become a prerequisite for healthcare. The use of digital apps is reducing overall health costs for both patients and providers while increasing convenience for users and facilitating data collection. When COVID-19 was reported in Kenya, the number of people going to hospitals reduced due to fear of contamination. The Kenya Medical, Pharmacy, and Dentists Council started issuing licenses to health facilities to offer telemedicine services, within the EHealth regulatory framework. Many doctors are now practising telemedicine. An online pharmacy MYDAWA offers medicine and supplements on the premises of privacy, convenience, affordability, and quality guarantee. Patients interact online or by phone with pharmaceutical technologists and pharmacists and they get the products with a tamper-proof guarantee. These are examples of the many digital healthcare initiatives and products in the market.

What technological lessons has the covid-19 taught the Kenyan pharmaceutical production? What resources are needed to implement those



lessons? Who should provide those resources?

Kenya imports most of her drug formulations from India and bulk drugs from China. When Covid-19 hit globally, some pharmaceutical API exporting countries such as India banned exports so as to cushion themselves from domestic shortages. Prices went up and shortages were experienced. Cross-border Covid-19 restrictions affected exports to the region. The major lesson learned is that the country is vulnerable due to reliance on imported active pharmaceutical ingredients, vaccines, medicine, and other health products. However, our local medical scientists have developed a capability for vaccine development and collaborative clinical trials. The establishment of Kenya Biovax Ltd has begun and is set to be completed by 2024. The government has undertaken many studies focusing on how to strengthen the pharmaceutical industry. We need to initiate local production of some pharmaceutical APIs and excipients. The industry with the help of the government needs to build capacity for technology transfer and compliance noting that a skilled workforce is lacking. The academic institutions should embark on training pharmaceutical manufacturing technologists.

Different types of new technologies exist: artificial intelligence, digital apps,

internet of things, machine learning, augmented reality, virtual reality, 3D printers, etc. In what types is Kenya strong? In what types is she weak? What must be done, by whom, to improve the overall situation?

Of the above technologies, digital apps, 3D printing, artificial intelligence and internet of things are fairly in use. In the health sector, mHealth Kenya offers solutions that include lab results transmission, automated patient appointment system, health worker communication, and training system, medical products and logistics system, emergency alert and response system. Kenya Fab Lab, University of Nairobi introduced 3D into the country and this technology has spread to various sectors of Kenyan economy.

A medical start-up, Kijenzi Meditech, is using 3D printing technology to provide medical components to remote rural clinics. AI has been applied in some business enterprises. It is being used in combination with digital microscopy to study rapid and effective cervical screening in rural locations. The potential of adopting Blockchain and AI in government and manufacturing was a subject of a task force set up in 2018 by the Ministry of ICT. Internet of things is generally used by individuals for fitness purposes. I could not get any information on the use of the other technologies.

To improve the use of these disruptive technologies in Kenya, regulatory

and legislative frameworks need to be developed by relevant government authorities.

Technology in the pharmaceutical sector requires highly qualified human resources. What is Kenya's policy in that regard? What is the percentage of women among those resources? What must be done to increase that percentage?

The 2012 National Pharmaceutical Policy noted among other things, the historical mistake of placing Pharmacy under the Directorate of Medical Services. This led pharmacy to be perceived as a medical support service for supplying and dispensing medicine, clinical pharmacy grew while industrial pharmacy failed to take off. The policy has rectified this by putting into motion the establishment of the Kenya Food and Drug Authority. The policy also noted that the complexity of pharmaceutical issues cuts across all sectors and levels of healthcare, requiring a broad skills mix to identify, analyze and appropriately address emerging issues.

However, Kenya has a limited pool of specialized pharmaceutical personnel to meet the needs of the manufacturing industry. In 2016, the training capacity for pharmacists and pharmaceutical technologists per year was estimated at 220 and 820 respectively (Kenya Health Workforce Report 2015). A good number of pharmacists migrate to North America and Europe. This worsens the human resource problem.

The workforce development should cover technical skills that keep up with evolving manufacturing technologies, regulatory compliance, drug research and development (R&D).

In 2019 the female enrolment to university was 41.3% (The National Policy on Gender and Development). For Science, Mathematics, and Engineering (STEM), this percentage ranges between 20 and 40% depending on the degree programme and academic level. The gender policy advocates for equality and affirmative measures to redress gender equality. One of these measures has been to admit females to university with one grade point lower than the males. Science, Innovation and Technology



Policy advocates for gender parity.

How do you see the Kenyan and more generally the African pharmaceutical firms' technological performance in the coming five years? How competitive will they be vis-à-vis the rest of the world?

Kenya is currently the leading producer of pharmaceutical products in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region and the 3rd largest exporter of pharmaceuticals in Africa. The pharmaceutical industry in Kenya supplies approximately one-quarter of the local market. Two of the Big Four Kenya government agenda are manufacturing and affordable healthcare. Government policy supports a minimum of 15% market share for the local manufacturers. The industry is actively promoting Universal Health Coverage. To maintain this market leadership, Kenyan pharmaceutical firms have to improve their technological performance and compliance with the Harmonized Technical Documents for Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for the East African Community Medicines Regulatory Harmonization approved in 2014.

The government has singled out the pharmaceutical industry as the driver of the industrialization agenda and will offer it top-level opportunities to engage the government and to demonstrate

achievements. The government intends to offer incentives to firms that attain WHO or similar prequalification. I forecast a significant growth due to all these factors.

The African Continental Free Area (AfCFTA) has brought on board a market of 1.3 billion and a combined GDP of \$3.4 trillion. This will in no doubt motivate local, regional, and foreign investors to establish the state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities for active pharmaceutical ingredients and drug products. When the African Medicines Agency (AMA) comes into force, it will strengthen and secure supply chains. Centers of excellence for pharmaceutical research and development will be established.

The development of requisite human capital to support manufacturing, validation and regulatory affairs, regional and continental harmonization will make the industry sustainable and profitable, the pooled market and a bigger voice in the global pharmaceutical industry will give the industry a competitive edge.

As a consequence of improved market share and technological performance, I foresee an increase in the number of Kenyan and African pharmaceutical firms meeting WHO prequalification status as suppliers of some essential medicines. This will usher them into the global market.



Stella Chinyelu Okoli

STELLA CHINYELU OKOLI CEO AND FOUNDER OF EMZOR PHARMACEUTICALS NIGERIA

What brought you to found Emzor Pharmaceuticals? What barriers did you face? How did you overcome them?

I trained and worked as a pharmacist in the UK so when I returned to Nigeria I started Emzor Chemist as a single retail outlet 44 years ago. I first expanded into the importation of finished pharmaceutical products and then thought that we can and should be making these products ourselves. coincidentally, there was a call from the Federal Government of Nigeria for entrepreneurs to enter the manufacturing sector including pharmaceuticals. Back then, the majority of pharmaceutical imports we coming in from the UK.

We then expanded into the manufacturing of pharmaceutical products with our flagship product, Emzor Paracetamol as well as forming Emzor Pharmaceutical Industries Limited. The company has since expanded into 4 separate factory sites that manufacture a range of over 200 different SKUs across 26 therapeutic ranges with over 1,500 employees and growing.

There can be many barriers when you want to start any sort of enterprise, especially if it on unfamiliar terrain. You have people doubting whether it could be done and even if it should be done, access to affordable capital is always a challenge, along with the intricacies of operating a business in Africa.

At Emzor, we practice a 'can-do' culture and overcame these obstacles the way we continue to overcome all challenges and that is by believing in what's right, not taking no for an answer, always pushing through and convincing people that the journey is not only the right one but that it is our duty to make that journey. Ultimately it is through faith in God and the belief that He will always come through that is my inner strength and I continue to give thanks to the Lord for all He has done for what He continues to do.

Is Emzor specialized in a particular type of drugs? Why?

Emzor believes in a principle we call "Wellocracy" which means that essential

drugs should be made available to all and affordable by all. We manufacture multiple products in 26 or so therapeutic classes including Analgesics, Antibiotics, Antimalarials, Anti-infective, Vitamins, Anti-hypertensive, Anti-diarrhoea, Oral rehydration salts, Cardiovascular, Anti-diabetic etc.

At Emzor, we make it a priority to be responsive to emerging guidelines for the treatment of the leading causes of Maternal and Child mortality. Accordingly, we have invested in plants and machinery to enable us deliver on the local production of recommended therapy such as dispersible amoxicillin for pneumonia, Chlorhexidine gel for cord infections, Oral Rehydration Salts(ORS) for diarrhoea and various presentations of combination therapy for Malaria. We also invested in and recently commissioned a dedicated manufacturing suite for the production of Misoprostol which is essential for the prevention of post-partum bleeding.

We will continue to give strategic attention to the main disease burdens that plague the African subcontinent, both in the area of communicable and non-communicable diseases. We manufacture anti-retrovirals products for the management of HIV infections as well as molecules for the treatment of the opportunistic infections that are experienced by persons living with HIV.

We began the manufacture of hand sanitizing gel during the 2014 Ebola crisis And scaled up production to support efforts to combat this current COVID-19 pandemic.

What are Emzor Pharmaceuticals' annual production volume, revenues, and number of employees? How would those figures evolve in the coming five years?

As a private company we do not disclose either our production volume or revenues but I can say that we are the largest indigenous manufacturer in Nigeria. We continue to expand and have very ambitious growth plans that in 5

years will certainly see our range of products double to around 400+ with many new therapeutic classes amongst which will be some firsts for locally produced drugs in Nigeria. As for revenues as long as we continue to do the right thing and provide what is needed by the Nigerian and African population, that is products of high quality, readily available and affordable, our revenues will equally grow.

As a woman leading a Nigerian and African pharmaceutical firm, how do you see the status of women today at leadership positions in the

I was blessed to be raised by a father who made it his business to ensure that the equal value of the girl-child was recognized and harnessed.

African pharmaceutical industry? What can be done, by who, to strengthen that status?

I was blessed to be raised by a father who made it his business to ensure that the equal value of the girl-child was recognized and harnessed. There are many strong women today in leadership positions in many different sectors and the Pharma industry should be no exception. Whilst we have come along way a lot more can and should be done. Globally and in Africa particularly , it has been the traditional role of women to look after and nurture the family so therefore when it comes to organising health and welfare, women do and should play a leading role in this. Many women are material contributors to the family or

are the ultimate breadwinners. Many SME's are Women led and owned which shows that they are great entrepreneurs who should receive every required support.

The way to approach this should not be about the roles of women and men, it should simply be about nurturing talent because it is the nurturing of talent that will lift Africa and Africans to greater heights. Nobody should be left behind as utilising only a portion of the available potential in terms of manpower and skills in a country is not the way to go. I strongly believe that a healthy and educated people supported by good governance is what this continent really needs to progress.

Do you interact with the Nigerian public authorities to help Nigeria reach the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the African Union Agenda 2063's goals?

Yes I do interact a lot with the Nigerian authorities and agencies towards achieving the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals, it is part of some of the advocacy work that I do. In an official capacity I have served as president of the Pharmaceutical manufacturers association of Nigeria (PMG-MAN) as well as on the ExCo of the parent body the Manufacturers association of Nigeria (MAN) as well as the Presidential Council on Industry Trade and Competitiveness. Emzor is also involved in supporting the attainment of the government SDG targets through the timely provision of drugs that consistently meet the quality standards as well as hospital equipment and consumables through one of our subsidiaries Emzor Hesco. This is a vital endeavour and we must all come together to help to achieve his goals for the good of our people across the continent.

What do you think of the "AfCFTA-anchored Pharma Initiative" that UNECA has launched? What must UNECA, the African governments, and the African women leaders in the pharmaceutical industry do to make



ANDEME

BINDANG TUNG

GENERAL MANAGER OF HOTEL 3 AGOSTO
MALABO - EQUATORIAL GUINEA

“Hotel 3 Agosto is the perfect hotel for business or leisure stays”

Could you please explain the name, “3 Agosto,” of the hotel of which you are the General Manager? How important is that name to the Equatorial Guinean people?

This name is a reference to the freedom coup that took place on August 3, 1979.

The 3 Agosto Hotel is located in Malabo, the capital of Equatorial Guinea, on Bioko Island in the Atlantic Ocean. What are the advantages of this situation for tourism?

The hotel is located on Avenue Hassan II in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

How is tourism doing in Malabo, and in Equatorial Guinea in general?

Because of covid 19, tourism has suffered a lot around the world.

The covid 19 pandemic has been hitting the whole world for almost two years. How has that pandemic impacted the activities of Hotel 3 Agosto, in particular the occupancy rate?

Occupancy rates have been very low since March 2020.

What strategies are you pursuing today to attract new customers and get out of the crisis that covid 19 has caused?

We have reduced the prices of all services and created different packages especially for weekends.

Before returning to Equatorial Guinea, you worked at renowned hotels in Washington, D.C., the capital of the USA, notably at the Sofitel and the Marriott, Renaissance Mayflower. What memories do you keep of that time? What did you learn from working in those hotels?

I have fond memories of working at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel and the Marriott. Marriott is actually one of the best companies I've worked for. I started out as a housekeeper. During the nine years I worked there, I held different positions because they believe in promotion and giving recognition to employees.

How was your return to Africa? How does your American experience help you in your work at Hotel 3 Agosto?

There is an old saying: "No place like home" which means nothing better than being at home. Returning home was at first a challenge, like any drastic change. But I am very happy to have returned to the country. My work ethics and American experience as well as my love for hospitality play an important role in my success as General Manager of Hotel 3 Agosto.

What message do you send to those who read this interview to encourage them to come to Hotel 3 Agosto?

The 3 Agosto Hotel is welcoming, located in the heart of the city of Malabo. The staff are welcoming and friendly. The bedrooms are large. There are a swimming pool, gyms, private presidential villas. The food is excellent. The hotel is 10 minutes from the airport, 5 minutes from shops and banks; 3 minutes from all department stores. The Director General is very attentive. Hotel 3 Agosto is the perfect hotel for business or leisure stays.



SOJOURNER TRUTH

BRIGHT LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF A VERY GREAT AFRICAN WOMAN - PART ONE

On November 26, 1883, Sojourner Truth died in Battle Creek, Michigan, in the USA, African American abolitionist, author and advocate for women's and men's rights, Sojourner Truth is one of the most important heroines in the history of the United States of America. She is also one of the all-time Greatest African Women.

Why is she not known as she deserves in Africa? Isn't it a shame that over 130 years after her death, African schools' curricula and history books continue to ignore Sojourner Truth? It is an unacceptable injustice. An unforgivable moral fault.

For its part, faithful to its mission of information, and when needed, homage, to today's and yesterday's daughters and sons of Africa, those from Africa or elsewhere in the world, your magazine, Femmes d'Afrique Magazine, pays tribute to Sojourner Truth in the present issue that is released two months after the 138th anniversary of her death. Glory to you, Mama Sojourner Truth!

Sojourner Truth was born a slave, under the name Isabelle Baumfree, around 1797 in Swartekill, New York. In 1826, this indomitable lioness had the courage to escape slavery with her baby, a daughter. Two years later, she had the audacity to win the case against the slave master who was holding her son. The proofs she produced, and her remarkable eloquence convinced the judges. Thus, she became the first black woman to win such a

lawsuit against a white man.

In 1843, she gave up her slave name for the new one she gave herself: Sojourner Truth. A new life began, a life of combat for human dignity. Her feat in court was remarkable because until her death, she lived in a country where the Supreme Court, the master of all courts, remained the accomplice, catalyst, inspirer, and insurer of racism against Black peoples. A month before her death, on October 15, 1883, she saw the Supreme Court declaring unconstitutional, the Civil Rights Act of 1875 by which Congress had granted various rights to black Americans, after the end in 1865 of American Civil War. In its ruling, the Court said, among other oddities, that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits states, but not citizens from discriminating against Blacks. Therefore, Whites were allowed to keep discriminating.

Proposed by the Senate, adopted by Congress on June 13, 1866, and ratified on July 9, 1868, the 14th Amendment extended to former slaves, the freedoms and rights the Bill of Rights had been granted the white society. Its First Section states: "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

The Supreme Court ruling encouraged racism against blacks.

The white society welcomed the ruling. Racists acted without delay. Violence against blacks exploded. On November 3, 1883, less than three weeks after the ruling, a group of whites from Danville, Virginia, forcibly seized the city government and terrorized Blacks, murdering four of them.

No less than 50 blacks were lynched in 1883. The lynching continued the following years.

The United States Supreme Court's ruling of October 15, 1883, echoed the super-racist decision it took sixteen years earlier. Some American scholars consider that decision is the most infamous of all the Supreme Court's decisions. Indeed, on March 6, 1857, in the Dred Scott vs. John F. A. Sandford case, the Supreme Court ordered: one, a fugitive slave found in a free state or territory of the USA, that is, a place which has abolished slavery, has no right to liberty; two, an African American cannot and never will become a citizen of the United States; three, is unconstitutional, the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which declared free all territories west of Missouri and north of latitude 36 ° 30'. Four, the US Supreme Court said when the US Constitution was adopted, Blacks were "regarded as beings of an inferior order," with "no rights which the white man was bound to respect." Since nothing has changed since the Constitution, Blacks, particularly Dred Scott, still have no rights which any white man is bound to respect.

In recent years, issues of Hommes



Washington, DC, Congress of the USA, April 28, 2009. Unveiling of Sojourner Truth's bust.

d'Afrique Magazine have paid tribute to Dred Scott and his fight for freedom. See for example, issue 63 of March 2014. It details the Dred Scott case that can be summarized as follows:

Born circa 1799 in Southampton County, Virginia, Dred Scott was a slave that John Emerson, a serviceman in the state of Missouri, owned. Emerson took Scott with him from Missouri, a slave state, to the non-slave state of Illinois where he was posted in 1833. They would later move to Wisconsin, a free territory. During those trips, Scott married Harriet Robinson. In 1840, Emerson and his wife whom he had married two years earlier, returned with the Scott couple to Missouri where Emerson died in 1843.

Several times, Dred Scott offered widow Emerson to pay her for his freedom and his wife's. The widow kept refusing. He turned to anti-slavery lawyers who filed a lawsuit for the Scott couple's freedom in the Missouri state court in the city of St. Louis. The lawyers' argument was that having resided in a free state and territory, the Scott couple was now free. Widow Emerson didn't understand it that way. She opposed

that argument.

In 1850, the Missouri state court ruled that the Scott couple was free. Two years later, in 1852, the Supreme Court of the same State reversed that ruling, rejecting the "once free, always free" doctrine that Missouri had hitherto practiced.

Widow Emerson moved from Missouri, leaving control of the Missouri property to her brother John F. A. Sandford, who lived in New York, and for that reason could not be tried in Missouri. In another attempt to secure the Scott couple's freedom, Scott's lawyers attacked Sandford in the New York City federal court. The latter decided against Scott, in favor of Sandford. Lawyers did not give up. They brought the case to the US Supreme Court. As seen above, by a majority of 7 to 2, it decided on March 6, 1857, against Scott. The seven majority judges were Roger B. Taney, Robert C. Grier, James W. Wayne, John Catron, John A. Campbell, Peter V. Daniel, and Samuel Nelson. Judges Benjamin R. Curtis and John McLean dissented.

Roger B. Taney (1777-1864) was the one his peers commissioned to write the Supreme Court's decision.

He wrote, to repeat, that at the time of the adoption of the American Constitution in 1787, Blacks had no rights which the white man was bound to respect. Taney continues his argument by writing that any law that excludes slaves from the territories violates the Fifth Amendment prohibiting the seizure of any property without a fair trial. The slaves, especially Scott and his wife, being a property, to free them is, according to Justice Taney, to improperly seize the property of that slave's owner, in this case, Sandford.

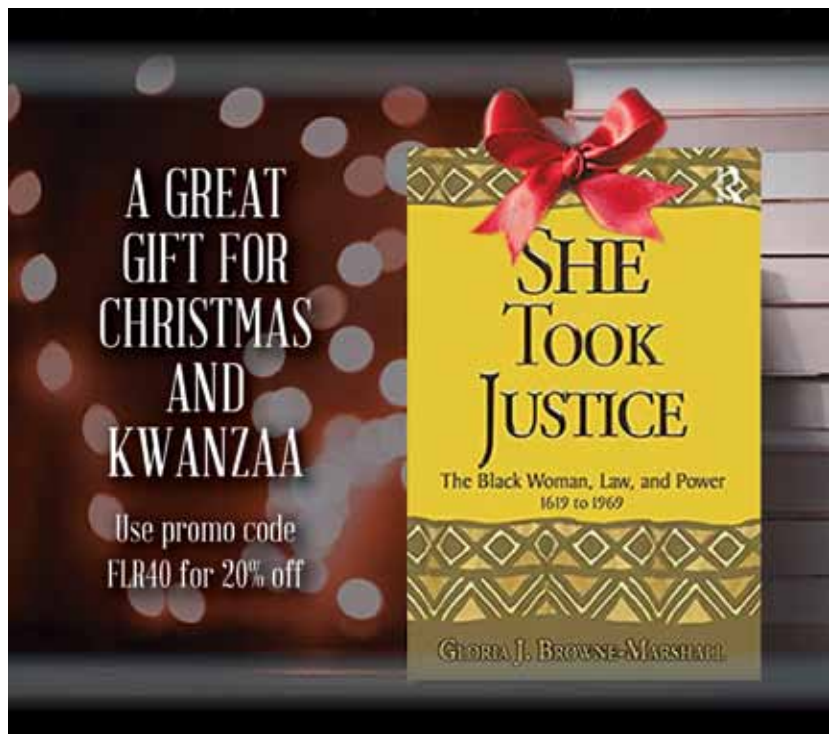
It is in an America where the Supreme Court, the country's highest jurisdiction, denies citizenship to Blacks, that Sojourner Truth fights. The United States of America whose Supreme Court describes the Black people as sub-humans. That is the land of cruelties Sojourner Truth will confront her whole life. From the moment she escaped slavery in 1826, up to her death in 1883, Sojourner Truth relentlessly carried out a triple mission that she considered divine: mission for the truth, for the humanity that is denied to her people, and for equality between men and women.

AN EXCERPT DEALING WITH SOJOURNER TRUTH, OF PROFESSOR GLORIA J. BROWNE-MARSHALL'S BOOK "SHE TOOK JUSTICE: THE BLACK WOMAN, LAW, AND POWER"

"Arrested, verbally abused, and relentless in her fight for equal rights, Sojourner Truth challenged legal segregation at every stage. The state of Indiana passed a law to prevent people of African descent from crossing its borders. No Black person could migrate into Indiana. Sojourner Truth traveled to Indiana. She challenged this law prohibiting Blacks from entering the State. On tour with her book, she was charged with the crime of being of African descent in Indiana. The trial ended when the White attorneys, who appeared to be drunk, abdicated their case and returned to the tavern from which they had come. Until her death in 1883, Sojourner Truth preached and advocated for justice for Blacks as well as women. Her reputation as an outspoken opponent of slavery is renowned. Unfortunately, these daring legal cases of which she was a part have not achieved their rightful place in American history.

"Sojourner Truth became known for a speech on suffrage for women. However, the speech was given to an audience of White suffragettes who had turned their backs on Black women. Then, as now, the racial division between women was most visible in common areas of concern. It is said that Truth was the only woman of color in the crowded room of suffragettes speaking of rights and male domination. These women fought for a freedom that they would deny The Black Woman and man. It was 1851.

"Referred to as Truth's "Ain't I a Woman" speech, there is controversy surrounding whether Truth uttered the words "ain't I a woman" at the Woman's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio on May 29, 1851. But the sentiment for equal rights remains the same. Sadly, the later April 23, 1863, speech purporting to carry the refrain depicted Truth, an illiterate,



speaking in broken English.

"Truth was known to be a clear, blunt but articulate woman. The early version of her famous speech was written June 21, 1851, less than a month after the convention. In it, she states:

"You need not be afraid to give us our rights for fear we will take too much, for we cant take more than our pint'll hold. The poor men seem to be all in confusion, and dont know what to do. Why children, if you have woman's rights, give it to her and you will feel better. You will have your own rights, and they wont be so much trouble. I cant read, but I can hear. I have heard the bible and have learned that Eve caused man to sin. Well if woman upset the world, do give her a chance to set it right side up again."

"The 1863 speech then says she dramatically bared her breast to prove to the audience of White women that

she was indeed a woman. Frances Dana Gage reconstructed the speech and incident nearly twelve years after the convention and published it in the New York Independent.

"However, there is no dispute Sojourner Truth demanded respect as a woman and person of color. Real consequences, legal and otherwise, were a consequence for anyone who chose to defy Truth's vision of herself even in an American society with racial and gender oppression. She understood that there must be consequences for criminal behavior against oppressed people. Impunity breeds only further impunity. Two centuries of cruelty subscribed of slavery bred an arrogant abuser of the basest kind. This Black woman confronted these men who were vested in law and imbued with absolute power."

SOJOURNER TRUTH: AMAZING BLACK WOMAN

Sojourner Truth - her name speaks for itself. Born enslaved, Truth would change her circumstances and American history. Isabella Baumfree was her name at birth in 1797. She was one of twelve children born enslaved to James and Elizabeth Baumfree on a farm in upstate New York. An enslaved child must work their entire life, without pay, under a brutal system that rewards free will with the lash. In this case, the lash belonged to John Dumont, a white slaveholder. He had promised the Baumfrees liberty and then refused to keep his word.

Young Isabella grew to be tall and strong. Dumont worked her as hard as a man. An enslaved woman's life meant back-breaking fieldwork by day and fending off sexual assault each night. Dumont was known for "treating his slaves with all the consideration he did his other animals." That quote is from my book "She Took Justice: The Black Woman, Law, and Power" in which the lives of courageous women like Truth are documented.

Arrogantly, Dumont ignored the New York law that allowed enslaved people to gain freedom. Isabella had her own ideas and decided she had worked for free long enough and left his farm to start a life of her own. "No, I did not run away," she said, later. "I left by broad daylight." She took her baby, Peter, and sought work, for pay, from the Van Wagener family not far from Dumont. He came looking, with threats of death. This did not deter Isabella, a headstrong young woman. She refused to return. Finally, her new employers paid off Dumont. Isabella was free. She even changed her name to Isabella Van Wagener.

But physical freedom was not enough. Life offered more. Isabella had a mind



Professor Gloria J. Browne-Marshall

or her own about slavery, women's rights, and unfair laws. She felt the call to preach the Bible. Preaching was a man's calling. They laughed. She didn't care. Isabella became a fiery preacher who soon had her own growing congregation of Black and White followers. It was after one of her particularly intense sermons that

Isabella Baumfree said the Lord told her to change her name.

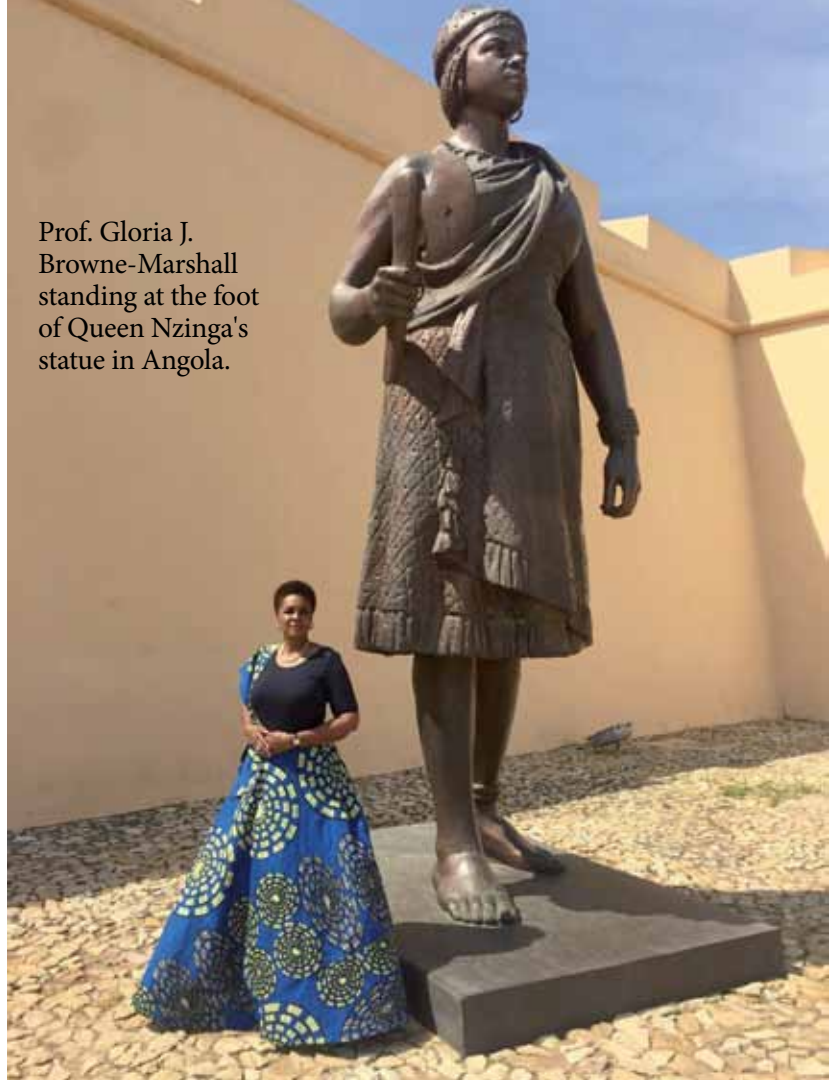
In 1843, Isabella became Sojourner Truth. Sojourner Truth preached the Bible across New York. At the same time, White women planned a meeting to fight for woman's equal rights. In 1848, white women and one Black man, the orator Frederick

Douglass, held a meeting in Seneca Falls, NY. Truth was not invited. No Black women were invited.

The early women's movement turned their backs on the plight of Black enslaved and free Black women who also wanted equality. Sojourner Truth faced them down in 1851, at a women's rights convention in Ohio that refused to include Black women. White women had created a declaration of their rights; but kept Black women out of their campaign for equality with men. Truth, a fiery preacher, gave a speech about white female hypocrisy that resounds to this day. It's titled "Ain't I A Woman?" Truth saw the law as a culprit in inequality and oppression. Although she could barely read and write, Truth brought four successful lawsuits. Her five-year-old son Peter was kidnapped and sold into slavery down south. Truth walked for miles, searching for her son. She finally found clues to the criminal who had taken him. With the assistance of abolitionists, she hired a lawyer. Remarkably, Sojourner Truth, formerly enslaved, sued Solomon Gedney, a slaveholder, for the return of her son. At first, the boy denied Truth was his mother out of fear of more beatings by Gedney. But in the end, mother and son were united. Gedney was forced to pay money damages for the harm he had caused.

Sojourner Truth was a force that would not be denied. In 1865, Washington, DC, Truth tried to ride the streetcar. Laws desegregated public transportation. But, racist practices persisted. The conductor took off while she was entering the door, dragging her. The conductor and White passengers pushed, injuring her shoulder, spit on Truth and told her to ride with the horses. Truth refused to let go. Instead, she called the police and had the conductor arrested for assault and battery. She won the case. He lost his

Prof. Gloria J. Browne-Marshall standing at the foot of Queen Nzinga's statue in Angola.



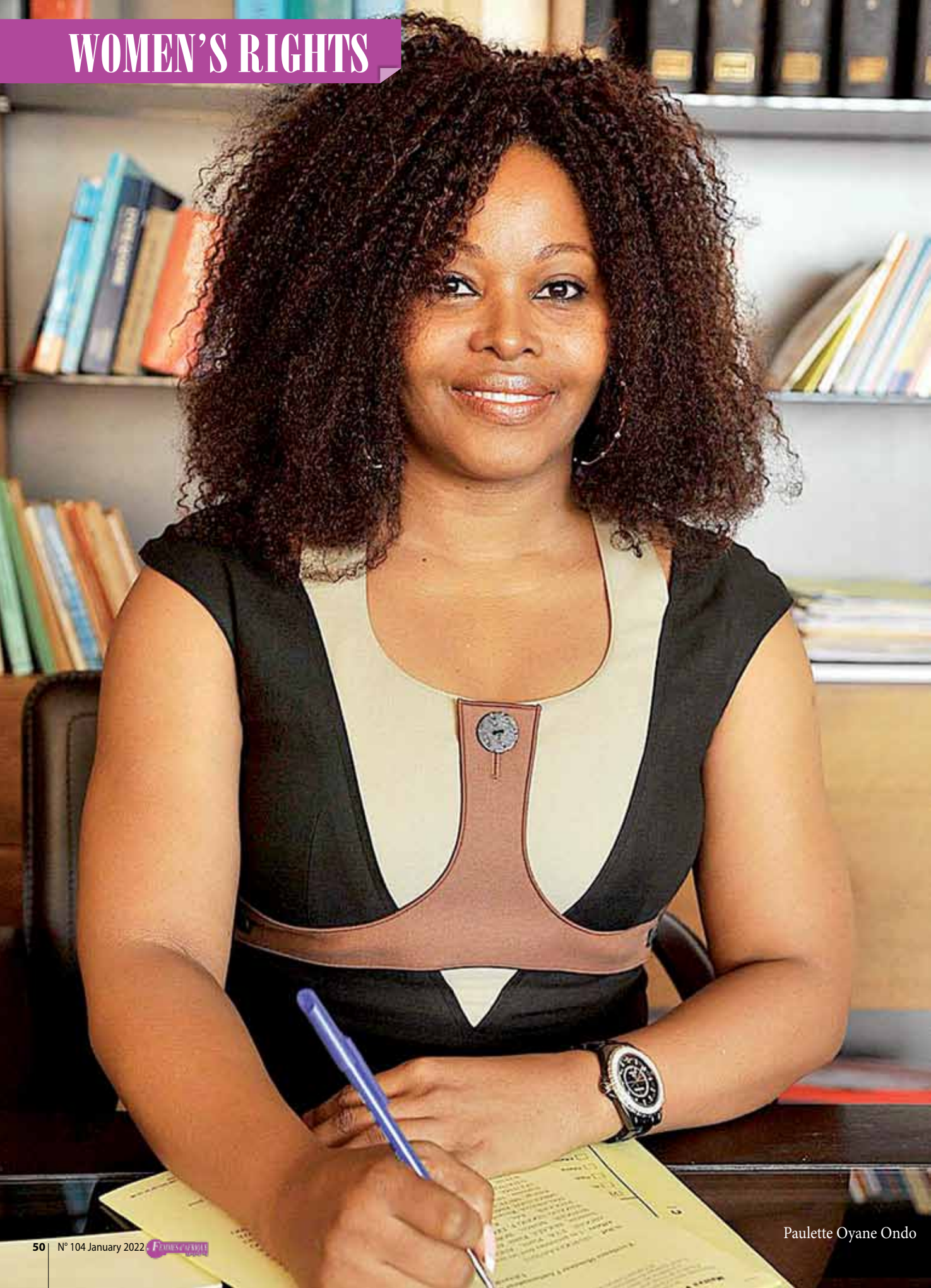
job.

Sojourner Truth left a legacy of taking justice for women, Black people and the oppressed. She fought for her freedom and to life to the fullest. She

was born enslaved and carved out her own destiny by name and by action. Truth said of getting equal rights for women that "if women want more rights than they got, then they got to just take them, and not be talking about it." Say her name – Sojourner Truth.

Sojourner Truth left a legacy of taking justice for women, Black people and the oppressed.

Gloria J. Browne-Marshall is the author of "She Took Justice: The Black Woman, Law, and Power" and a playwright, and writer of the films "Dreams of Emmett Till" and "SHOT: Caught A Soul." Gloria is a professor of constitutional law at John Jay College (CUNY). Visit Prof. Browne-Marshall's byline in which she mentioned "Dreams of Emmett Till" at <https://www.dreamsofemmettill-play.com/>. Also, watch "SHOT: Caught A Soul" at: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=9UdcQI73COI>.



MASTER PAULETTE OYANE ONDO LAWYER AT THE GABONESE BAR

She has dedicated her life to the defense of human rights. Lawyer Paulette Oyane-Ondo created the Center for the Promotion of Democracy and the Defense of Human Rights (CDDH), which is the first human rights NGO in Gabon.

In Africa, defending human rights can get you into trouble. Paulette Oyane Ondo says that on November 1, 2011, the Gabonese state destroyed her house, broke, and profaned her father's grave in his native village called Adzap Nye, 32 km from the city of Oyem on the road to Bitam, capital of the Woleu-Ntem province.

In 2012, she was ranked by Front Line Defenders as one of the hundred most endangered human rights defenders in the world. The Pan-African Network of Human Rights Defenders awarded her in 2013, the human rights prize for Central Africa. That same year, the Gabonese press elected her woman of the year.

Inscribed on the list of the Councils of the African Court of Human and Peoples' rights (The African Court), she belongs to the first generation of human rights defenders formed by the African Court called "The Pioneers."

Maitre Paulette Oyane-Ondo was a candidate in the election of Commissioners at the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) (see Femmes d'Afrique Magazine, N°93, November 2019). For the February 2020 elections in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. To her surprise, four days before the election, in February 2020 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Gabonese State withdrew her candidacy. To date, that State has given no explanation for the withdrawal.

Paulette Oyane Ondo is currently the international representative of the International Alliance of Women (AIF) to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

MASTER PAULETTE OYANE ONDO LAWYER AT THE GABONESE BAR

“My goal is to make human rights accessible, clear, easy, simple, and understandable by everyone. »

You have created a human rights magazine called “La Chronique des droits humains” which has just been published and is currently available on the market. This is a first in French-speaking Africa. What motivated you?

When I was a young human rights defender, I always asked myself the question: why is there no medium that explains human rights very clearly? You had to be a human rights technician to understand them. Of course, on human rights, there are declarations, charters, covenants, conventions, protocols, guidelines, etc. Of course, there are many manuals on human rights. But there are few or no books that popularize them to make them accessible to non-lawyers.

It did not seem fair to me that human rights, while they are inherent in the very fact of being a human being, are understandable only to a very small elite. And then one day I came across a sentence from the huge Toni Morrison that said: if you want to read a story that no one has ever written before,



write it yourself. After reading this thought by Toni Morrison, I conceived “La Chronique des Droits Humains” (The Chronicle of Human Rights).

Please, could you tell us more about The Human Rights Chronicle?

The purpose of “La Chronique

des Droits Humains” is to explain human rights in a practical way. My goal is to make human rights accessible, clear, easy, simple, and understandable by everyone. I intend to publish two books a year. I intend to deal with each fundamental right until the subject is exhausted.



Lawyer Paulette Oyane Ondo

The first topic on which I have chosen to write concerns the right to adequate food. Food directly participates in life itself, in the fact of staying alive. And food is also directly related to the health and dignity of each of us as human beings. So, I started by explaining and clarifying the very concept of the right to adequate food. Next, I will explain and determine the conditions for its fulfillment and the States' obligations. In the third paper, I will highlight the violations of the right to food against populations, and the last paper in this series will talk about how some States have managed to realize the right to adequate food in their countries, since not all States martyrize their populations. The first paper that has just been published explains very clearly and very simply the concept of the right to adequate food. I have already started writing the

second booklet where I will talk about the rights and obligations of states on the right to adequate food. So, I'm going to talk about this topic on all those facets. Then I would deal with another fundamental right like the right to health by following the same protocol. That will be the case with all fundamental rights.

What does the right to adequate food mean exactly?

The right to adequate food and by implication the duty to feed oneself is a right that is inherent in every woman, every man, and every child. Everyone has, by necessity, the right to always have access, sustainably, physically, and economically to food that contains sufficient nutrients in quality and quantity. That is, every man, woman, and child, has the right to have access to food that can meet the needs of his organism and preserve his health.

Who are you working for? What is your target audience?

The Chronicle of Human Rights is intended to be educational (science and conscience) for the rulers, the students, and the populations. At the same time, "La Chronique des Droits Humains" aims to provide readers with content that is easy and enjoyable to read. It is enough to know how to read to appropriate "La Chronique des Droits Humains" and the reader will no longer be able to do without it.

Is the right to adequate food a reality under other skies, in Europe, in the West for example?

Human rights are universal. They are inherent in any human being. Every person needs to eat properly to live while being healthy. The conditions and the place of birth do not change this human reality in any way.



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION'S APOLOGY TO PEOPLE OF COLOR

THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION'S APOLOGY TO PEOPLE OF COLOR: A LONG TIME IN COMING

It was in the midst of the crack epidemic, in the 1980s and the 1990s, that I began to search for a way to help my people, a severely wounded people at the time. The use of crack cocaine surged in major cities across the United States; and I, a high school teacher working in upstate NY, was traumatized by the death and destruction that crack cocaine brought to my students and their families. Teaching in a high school with over three thousand students, the daily drive-by shootings, deaths, and dysfunctional families as a result of crack addiction became more than I could bare. As I looked at empty seats and desks, major casualties of this destructive drug, I yearned for a way to help my people. So, I quit teaching and returned to the University.

As an avid reader of Psychology journals, I took the route of becoming a Psychoanalyst. I had great respect for Psychoanalytic Theory and the great pioneers in the field such as Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, and Carl Jung. So, I enrolled in a program that gave me a master's degree in Psychoanalytic Studies and upon its completion entered the Object Relations Institute of Psychotherapy, in New York City, for clinical training. The only African American in the program, at that time, and the only person who had not spent decades on therapists' couches my insistence on African-based or culturally based therapy for African

Americans was met with criticism. Eventually, as I became ostracized by my peers it was deemed that I was psychologically stuck on Africa. Thus, I quit after my second year from a three-year program and began to look towards Africa. It made sense to me that as Africa was at the center of who we were as descendants of African slaves that the answers to our mental health issues had to be somewhere in Africa. In Africa the traditional priests were all things, a healer, teacher, psychologist, and spiritual leader. My hunch was, if I could study them, I could find help for my people.

Conventional Psychology in America has rarely been a friend to people of color. Instead, it has often denigrated us or mostly misdiagnosed us. Robert C. Schwartz and David M. Blankenship (2014), in a literature review spanning 24 years, Racial disparities in psychotic disorder diagnosis: A review of empirical literature, revealed a clear and pervasive pattern wherein African Americans were misdiagnosed three to four times higher than Euro-Americans. Latino Americans fared no better and were also disproportionately diagnosed with psychotic disorders on average approximately three times higher compared to that of Euro-Americans. Rutgers University (2019) in their study, A Naturalistic Study of Racial Disparities in Diagnoses at an Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic concluded that African Americans with severe depression were more likely to be misdiagnosed as having schizophrenia. However, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Men and women of color in the field have recognized

the inadequacies of conventional psychology for decades trying to heal in spite of it. While those like myself simply gave up and looked for alternatives.

So, on October 29, 2021, when the resolution adopted by the American Psychological Association's (APA) Council of Representatives flashed across my computer screen, I almost fell from my chair. It was an apology to People of Color for APA's role in promoting, perpetuating, and failing to challenge racism, racial discrimination, and human hierarchy in the United States. Well, I'll be! I am pretty certain that these admissions and apology will shake the very foundations of the psychological/psychiatric community locally as well as internationally. It opens wide the way for alternative methods of therapy and psychological diagnosis for African Americans and People of Color in general.

My research examines the viability of African traditional medicine for the healing of mental disease in African Americans. I have witnessed its healing affects. However, the scientific proof is what I must systematically reveal through avid research. But, at least with the APA's new admissions and apology for its inadequacies in reference to the treatment of African Americans with mental health issues and disease, perhaps my findings will be taken more seriously.

By Vanessa L. Perry (a.k.a. Mamiwata Priestess)

Washington, D.C.
November 3, 2021



Lynching in America

THE APOLOGY OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION TO BLACK PEOPLE

Thunderbolt in the United States of America on October 29, 2021: The American Psychological Association (APA) wrote its “Apology to People of Color for APA’s Role in Promoting, Perpetuating, and Failing to Challenge Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Human Hierarchy in United States”. It’s unprecedented!

For more than a century, African Americans have been waiting for that apology from the APA, a university and medical organization created in 1892, twenty-seven years after the abolition of slavery. Up to this day, APA is the reference in its discipline, not only in the USA, but also in the entire Western world. With 121,000 members who are researchers, educators, clinicians, students, consultants, APA is the largest scientific and professional psychologists’ organization in the United States, perhaps in the world.

Future issues of *Hommes d’Afrique Magazine* will return to the full text of the apology, which is a turning point in the history of the anti-racism fight in the academy, with direct repercussions in the U.S. society.

Apologizing is a positive for the APA, which comes out morally grown. This apology is also a big positive for African Americans: hitherto neglected, their lament about the lingering traumas of slavery is now validated by the most respectable association of psychologists in the Americas. Long after the official end of slavery, anti-black racism reached new heights. For example, in crimes of lynching. Here is how APA defines the word “lynching”: “An instance of a group or mob of vigilantes killing a person, especially by hanging. The lynch mob often justifies its actions by claiming that the victim is guilty of some crime and the group is administering an appropriate punishment. Most lynchings in the United States were racially motivated acts of violence perpetrated by White Americans against African Americans. The first documented U.S. lynching

occurred in 1882; by 1950, lynch mobs had killed more than 3,000 people.”

Since its creation in 1892, what has APA done against lynchings? Our search did not yield any conclusive results. A height of anti-black racism, lynchings continued in the United States from 1882, as the APA notes, until the 1930s, half a century later, and for at least three more decades.

Here are some sundry facts on a lynching in the USA. In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA, a mob lynched a Black man. Banal event then. It was on July 19, 1935. A mob of masked white men. The victim’s name was Rubin Stacy. He was 32.

Marion Jones, a white woman, had filed a complaint against Stacy, accusing him of having “attacked” her. The mob rushed to forcibly extract Stacy from the sheriff’s office where he was being held. They hung him. A New York Times investigation revealed the falsity of the accusation. Stacy hadn’t attacked Jones, never hurt her.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt had been President of the United States for three years. Black people had hoped that this Democratic president would act against lynching. More than any other president, Roosevelt used his constitutional powers, for four successive terms, but never for anti-lynching legislation. The only American president to have served more than two terms, Roosevelt opposed not only anti-lynching legislation, but most actions favorable to Blacks. Many of his supporters, especially on the left, adore Roosevelt as a semi-god. For them, he is the savior of humanity. He saved capitalism. He rescued the Western world from the 1929 crisis.

During his numerous terms, that savior signed no less than 3,721 “executive orders.” (<https://share.america.gov/how-u-s-presidents-have-used-executive-orders/> - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_executive_actions_by_Franklin_D._Roosevelt). None was intended to improve Black people’s lot or to counter racism. Yet, it was a time when

for nothing, yes for absolutely nothing, as in Rubin Stacy’s case, a Black man was lynched.

The so-called “Black Codes,” “Jim Crow” or “sun-down laws” continued to terrorize Blacks. In American cities or towns, the “sun-down laws,” prohibited Blacks from being present in certain areas after sunset. Being there past sunset was a sufficient reason to be lynched. The APA knew about the lynching binge but remained silent. Some APA’s leaders were even complicit, as the text introducing the APA apology acknowledges:

“The American Psychological Association failed in its role leading the discipline of psychology, was complicit in contributing to systemic inequities, and hurt many through racism, racial discrimination, and denigration of people of color, thereby falling short on its mission to benefit society and improve lives. APA is profoundly sorry, accepts responsibility for, and owns the actions and inactions of APA itself, the discipline of psychology, and individual psychologists who stood as leaders for the organization and field.

“The governing body within APA should have apologized to people of color before today. APA, and many in psychology, have long considered such an apology, but failed to accept responsibility. APA previously engaged in unsuccessful efforts to issue apologies in the past, including an apology to Indigenous peoples.”

Global Africans, outside Africa and in Africa: the APA’s apology concerns you too! Take the time to read it. Share it. Is that apology the first in a series to come? A necessarily long series of apologies that the professions which, over the past five centuries have systematically attacked, degraded, discriminated, against Black people, sometimes murdering, lynching them, owe you.

The future will tell. *Hommes d’Afrique Magazine* will talk again about the APA apology. For now, you can read the APA apology statement on APA’s website: <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/racism-apology>.



Désirée Bognini Djomand

SANAE BENAHDİ

FOUNDER OF L'OR D'ORIENT, A MOROCCAN COSMETICS FIRM

“Africa is the new Eldorado of beauty products and the microcosm of well-being.”

In the recent years, the African cosmetics sector has boomed considerably. The beauty market is growing 10% in Africa against 5% in the rest of the world. And the demand is still increasing. Several factors explain this enthusiastic phenomenon.

Discover below, with Ms. Sanae Benhadi, founder of L'OR D'ORIENT, the various reasons why it is worth investing in African natural cosmetics.

What is the Moroccan cosmetic

industry's outlook?

Identified as one of the sectors with high potential under the Industrial Acceleration Plan, the cosmetics sector in Morocco bodes well for a bright future.

Undeniably, with a constantly evolving market due to increasing urbanization, the development of the modern distribution, and strong export potentials, the Moroccan cosmetics industry has a bright future.

Begun in the early 2000s, the Moroccan companies'

expansion on the continent is accelerating. Do you plan to set up a production unit there?

It is obvious. Africa is the new Eldorado for beauty products thanks to the evolution of her middle-class consumers of cosmetics from African and international brands.

Consumers are on the lookout for new products combining quality, know-how and prestige. Demand for volume does exist. Price is no longer a drag if quality and efficiency keep their promise.

L'OR D'ORIENT is already present in Africa through healthy and quality products. Our brands have the advantage of being close to their target market. Also, we offer natural products that want African female consumers who are increasingly demanding and even more alert.

We are delighted with the more than fruitful results because we have been able to integrate the changing profile of French-speaking African consumers on the continent.

Morocco's trade with African countries has grown significantly over the past decade, reflecting efforts to diversify and strengthen trade relations with southern countries.

There is a reinforced Moroccan presence in Africa thanks to the reintegration of the Kingdom into the Pan-African organization in 2017, and the commitment of His Majesty King Mohammed VI to make Africa a national priority.

And it is in this momentum

that L'OR D'ORIENT intends to set up production units in Africa knowing that by 2030, around 14% of all business opportunities in the health, cosmetics and well-being in the world will be in Africa, in second place behind North America with 21%. This is a huge opportunity for the private sector.

In 2030, Africa will be the world's second market in cosmetics, health, and well-being, behind North America.

What is the profile of the African consumer of cosmetic products?

In view of our experience in the African market, we have discovered that purchasing power is not necessarily a problem for the African female consumer if the product or service offered to her solves her problem and if it is geographically accessible.

Yes, of course, all is not rosy in this market. But precisely, instead of taking all these elements as constraints to start or to develop, we must see them as they are: that is to say,

opportunities.

We can no longer stay with the prejudices of a consumer who does not know what she wants, who has no purchasing power and who buys counterfeit products.

In your experience, what are the beauty segments that African women are most interested in?

The cosmetics market in Africa concerns all hygiene, beauty products, body and hair care, in particular: makeup, creams, serums and oils, scrubs and exfoliators, shower gels, soaps, shampoos and perfumes.

Can the beauty sector create jobs on the African continent?

According to a recent report from the consultancy firm Setalmaa, the cosmetics market in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa has reached 5 billion euros, for the year 2020. It is expected to weigh 9 billion euros in 2025.

The potential is therefore very high. The emergence of a middle class, population growth, available raw materials, but also the emergence of movements promoting natural beauty are helping to boost the demand for beauty products upwards. The big names in the cosmetics market have already understood this, but more and more brands made in Africa are emerging hoping to succeed. This means that structuring the sector will undoubtedly help create jobs on the continent.





Rosana Largo Rodriguez

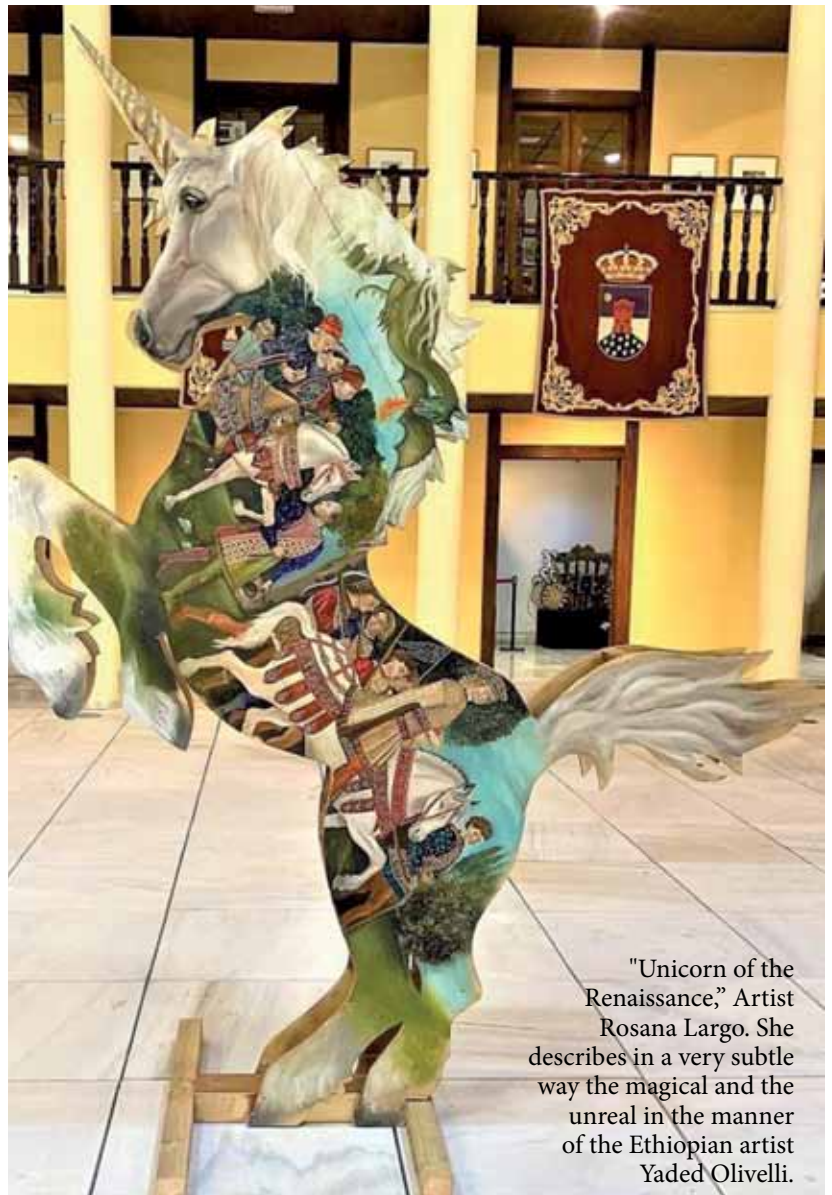
ROSANA LARGO RODRÍGUEZ, THE REALITY MAGICIAN

INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED SPANISH PAINTER

Rosana Largo Rodríguez (Valladolid, Spain, 1979) is one of the most prominent painters in Spain. Her works have won some of the world's most prestigious art prizes in international competitions. To name but a few: the international prizes "Michelangelo" (2019, Rome), "Frida Kahlo" (2020, Milan), "Leonardo da Vinci" (2020, Florence), and the international prize "Dante Alighieri" (2021, Padua). On October 24, 2021, she exhibited at the Carrousel du Louvre, in Paris. From there she went to the Qatar International Fair, where he won the first prize for the best artistic fashion design. Selected, for the second time, for the Leonardo da Vinci Prize, in Florence, Rosana Largo will represent Spain at the "Salon International d'Art Contemporain" (International Contemporary Art Fair).

What were your last artistic projects?

A macro-project, such as the creation of a museum in Paredes de Nava (Palencia) cradle of the Spanish Renaissance. Similarly, the poet Jorge Manrique was born there. He is famous, among other creations, for the "Coplas at the death of his father." On the other hand, attending arts events in places like Qatar, Dubai, Carrousel du Louvre, in Paris, strengthened me in one idea:



"Unicorn of the Renaissance," Artist Rosana Largo. She describes in a very subtle way the magical and the unreal in the manner of the Ethiopian artist Yaded Olivelli.

to come back. In Spain, I focus on exhibitions of volumetric structures related to themes that require social awareness, gender equality, child science.

African art has been essential in inspiring abstract painting, Cubism, and jazz. Is there also an African influence in your work?

Yes, I identify, for example, with

Yared Olivelli (Addis Ababa, 1985) in particular with his allegorical work on the horse, where he describes in a very subtle way the magical and the unreal through the softness of his tones. I am particularly interested in the details that are reflected in their work. Also, in the Arab countries, with Zaahirah Zabeen Muthy, one of the most prominent personalities in the culture of the United Arab Emirates. She is the one who selected my work to represent Spain, as a woman and an artist, in Dubai on March 8th, the International Women's Day.

You have exhibited several times in New York, of which Harlem, the birthplace of Afro-American Renaissance art (Harlem Renaissance). What characteristics do you think best define African art?

I think what defines it best is symbolism and a collective feeling. Technically, African artists introduce earthy colors with primitive references, in conjunction with bright colors. Stylized figures abound. As an alternative art, the most impressive is Samoa (Jean Michel Basquiat) who died prematurely at the age of twenty-seven. He shows his social nonconformity in dark figures such as skulls, which he endows with greater impressionism, if possible, than the one they inherently have, with repetition of lines to accentuate the effect.

You are a world pioneer of the interaction between painting and literature of beautiful stories for children. Does this step open new horizons of fusion between "African art" and "European tradition"?



Artist Rosana Largo standing in front of her painting: «Woman paints woman, international day of woman».

It would be desirable, but not only artistically. Recently, we have witnessed the distribution of Covid vaccines around the world.

In many African countries, at best, they have vaccinated twenty percent of the population, according to WHO statements. These imbalances are not understood in a globalized world. An artist needs a comparison with other influences, a permanent learning. This usually requires financial resources.

In your pictorial work, miscegenation is well

recognized. Perhaps is art a vehicle to overcome social barriers between the world's nations?

Without a doubt. Moreover, the artistic message, especially among children, is obviously a more conscientious instrument than many "ad hoc" talks, because pictorial work is more direct, it does not require so much treatment at the intellectual level- in short, it is easier to remember, and it is integrated earlier into our consciousness as a positive value.

One of your most beautiful



«Innocence,» by Rosana Largo painted.



«Innocence.» Painting by Rosana Largo painted on a small pebble.



“Long live life. Tribute to Frida Kahlo,” by Rosana Largo.

paintings is the portrait of a black child that you painted on a pitcher. Can you tell us about that work?

It is a material that I use sporadically as a pictorial resource. It really presents additional difficulties: degree of porosity, morphology, etc. In the figure, I mean to associate naivety and beauty. That, I think I understand him mostly through his gaze. It is currently on display in the Italian city of Padua.

At a recent exhibition, you met with Nigerian Princess, Moradeun Ogunlana. She so much loves your paintings that she asked you to paint her portrait.

Yes, it was in Qatar, a fascinating place, by the sea, where the headquarters that hosted the event was located, within the Qatar International Art Fair.

We agreed at a dinner that the Organization offered after the pictorial exhibition, which ended with ethnic dances, mainly of Hindu origin. Moradeun Ogunlana is a woman advocate for African women's rights in

the United States and the rest of the world. She is also an ambassador for culture and peace. She has accomplished many humanitarian tasks. She hosts the annual Global Woman Empowerment. As President of the INC, a participating member of the United Nations Global Compact Global Summit, she participates in innovative research and training programs,

It's not so much about stopping the lion from roaring, it's about creating a different cultural universe.

through which she has provided a permanent forum for the empowerment of African women through the World Council of Women for Development. For me, it was an honor to paint her portrait.

Would you like to exhibit soon in any African country?

Of course. Few artists paint for themselves. Any artistic work aims to create a community around it.

Could Equatorial Guinea, Africa's only Spanish-speaking country, be the first?

The language was “created” to communicate with us, not as a sizing tool. With Equatorial Guinea, Spain, because of its colonial past, has language as the main instrument to understand our wishes and convey our mutual concerns. And if, moreover, it's a brushstroke, all the better.

Can we talk about the universality of art?

I think art is, by definition,

original. Originality is not exclusive to anyone. It is time to think of Africa as a hopeful future, and not as an “exotic cultural reserve,” although we recognize her idiosyncrasy. In the “pan-miscegenation” is the solution. One of my works would complete the essential that unites us as such in my painting.

Women play an essential role in African society. But, both in Europe and in Africa, do you believe that there is real equality between women and men?

The defining “resource,” when in a manly mind there are no other convincing ways, has been physical strength which, due to its masculine condition, men obviously possess a higher degree. It’s not so much about stopping the lion from roaring, it’s about creating a different cultural universe. It is rare to see, with exceptions related to dementia, that a mother takes the life of her child. This collective awareness, then, of something socially abominable, would be desirable in cases of gender abuse. The problem will cease when we will manage together that the potential stalker, before committing an execrable act, realizes that what he thought he was performing is of such magnitude that his mind determines him to say: no! To do this, we must heal consciences and create canons, or categories so accepted by all, that they become indisputable.

In your opinion, what are the values that African women contribute to achieving this goal of real equality and freedom?



Rosana Largo Rodriguez

The fact of having a fresh mentality, which contributes without complexes, which seeks equality because it is fair. I believe that she is not yet immersed in “militant associationism,” which often sees man as a different species.

What artistic projects could provide a meeting point between African and European women?

It would be important to have an involvement, either institutional or under the patronage of entities, that would seek not only exhibitions but also meetings, visits, etc.

In your opinion, what are

the main values that African women can bring to the world society?

Those of really believe in our possibilities. In the centuries that have preceded us, the consideration of women in Europe can be experienced, for example, through their appearance among the mass of authors of the paintings exhibited at the Prado Museum (in Madrid). The number of women artists is practically insignificant. Today, the reality is much different. What was the trigger? Certainly, her greatest social and personal recognition. This is the “pre-conquest” for a more in-depth reflection in the artistic field.



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