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The Life and Time of Babu: The Age of Revolution and Liberation [1]

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Abstract
This article explores the age of national liberation and revolution through the life and work of Babu. Babu belonged to the first generation of African Marxists and participated in the struggle for independence, liberation and people's revolution.

Keywords: Babu, Nationalism, Independence, People's Revolution, Africa, Marxist

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This is a **Refereed article** published on 19 December 2001.
Citation: Shivji I, 'The Life and Time of Babu: The Age of Revolution and Liberation', *Law,*

Social Justice & Global Development (LGD), 2001 (2)
<http://elj.warwick.ac.uk/global/issue/2001-2/shivji.html>

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1. Introduction

Babu lived in the age of national liberation and revolution. The period after the Second World War to the defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam in 1975 was characterised by what, the then Chinese Communist Party, described as, 'Countries want Independence, Nations want Liberation and People want Revolution'. Babu belonged to the first generation of African Marxists who participated in the struggle for independence, national liberation, and people's revolution[2].

This was also the age of great intellectual and ideological ferment. Every revolution and liberation struggle had its theoreticians, its thinkers, its arsenal of articulated ideas, not just arsenal of weapons. Young activists and cadres began by mastering the 'Weapon of Theory', to use Amilcar Cabral's phrase, before turning to theories of weapons (Cabral, 1969). The clarion call of our journal, *Cheche* , produced by the University Students African Revolutionary Front (USARF) was: 'Struggle to Learn, Learn to Struggle'. Political leaders of liberation movements and revolutions were giant intellectuals and thinkers in their own right. Nehru's prison letters to his daughter constituted a tome called *Glimpses of World History*. Nkrumah wrote the influential *Neo-colonialism, the Last Stage of Imperialism* (Nkrumah, 1968). Frantz Fanon combined in him a professional psychiatrist, a revolutionary activist and the author of the great *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 1967), whose mastery was a necessary entry qualification to our Sunday Ideological Classes at the Hill (see generally Shivji, 1995). Babu's own *African Socialism or Socialist Africa?* was written in Ukonga prison in Dar es Salaam and the manuscript smuggled out for 'ruthless criticism', (to use Marx's phrase from a well-know quote), by young comrades and the young comrades ruthlessly criticised it without regard to the fact that this was a manuscript of an older, much more experienced, comrade. As a matter of fact, the youthful critics so overdid their, rather dogmatic, criticism, that Babu was moved to retort:

The writer of the manuscript is once again very grateful for the trouble you have taken to deal with this matter. He has only one adverse comment to make. The tone of the 'comments' smacks of intellectual arrogance, which is un-Marxist. It leaves a bad taste in the mouth. He wanted to quote the old Russian saying (immortalised by Lenin) which says: 'God save us from our friends; from our enemies we can defend ourselves', but he has been scared of the likely response, i.e. religious-counter-revolutionary, revisionism, etc. etc. and so he has quickly withdrawn it.

I would like to underline in this episode the phrase 'young' because Babu, just as his ideas, never got old. He dedicated his book to the 'Youth of Africa'. He could have as well said: 'Dedicated to us, the Youth of Africa'! I would also like to underscore the total absence of intellectual hierarchy in the relationship and Babu's joyful chiding of his young sceptics. The first issue of *Cheche* carried articles by professors and second year students alike, yet, you could not tell either from the content or from appellations as to 'who was who'. Every one was a comrade and as a comrade every one was a fair game for 'ruthless criticism'. Rodney subjected his manuscript *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Rodney, 1972), which was to become a celebrated volume the world over, to two young comrades who at the time were final year students. The acknowledgement in Rodney's *Preface* well captures the flavour of the time.

Special thanks must go to comrades Karim Hirji and Henry Mapolu of the University of Dar

es Salaam, who read the manuscript in a spirit of constructive criticism. But, contrary to the fashion in most prefaces, I will not add that 'all mistakes and shortcomings are entirely my responsibility'. That is sheer bourgeois subjectivism. Responsibility in matters of these sorts is always collective, especially with regard to the remedying of shortcomings.

I find these instances particularly interesting when you juxtapose them against our current intellectual culture, if a culture we can call it. Young lecturers today would feel particularly insulted if a student did not attach an accurate appellation of a 'Dr' or a Professor to his/her name. But I am jumping ahead of my story. The present can wait a little, while we reminiscence on the past.

2. Political Leadership and Intellectual Activism

Political leaders and intellectual activists of the time were not only political thinkers but also knowledgeable commentators on art and culture, on science and philosophy, on history and technology, because, as the truism of the day went, 'The Truth is the Whole'. Mwalimu Nyerere wrote beautiful *shairi* (poems) and translated Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* into Kiswahili. Just before he died, he completed the translation of Plato's *Republic* into Kiswahili. Our reading list for the Sunday Ideological Classes, besides the 'standard texts' of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao, Fanon, Nkrumah, Odinga, and others contained authors on anthropology like Childe (*Man Makes Himself*), Snow on Chinese Civilisation, Joan Robinson, Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy on economics, J. D. Bernal on Science, Rodinson on 'Islam and Capitalism', Rene Dumont on agrarian issues and many works of art and literature of which, of course, Gorky's *Mother*, Tressel's *Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Soyinka's *The Man Died,* Ngugi's *Petals of Blood,* Sembene Ousmane's *Gods Bits of Wood* and Shafi Adam Shafi's *Kuli* were 'compulsory readings' marked with red asterisk.

No doubt, this intellectual ferment, this 'insurrection of ideas', was world-wide but, it is important to recall for the benefit of our young students and modern-day market-driven institutional transformers at this University, that the Hill was the African hotbed of this intellectual ferment. It is this which put the Hill on the intellectual world map, which no amount of computer systems and internet cafe, however modern, can do, notwithstanding the paternalising flattery of the American *Chronicle for Higher Education* (April 6, 2001) describing the University of Dar es Salaam as one of the few African success stories in one of the most poor countries which have been:

'winning praise - and increased financial support from the West, for their efforts to transform themselves'.

Transform ourselves, we indeed have, and not only at this University but also in the country as a whole, nay, globally. The comment I have just quoted, if made then, would have raised eyebrows and resulted in soul-searching: 'If you have been praised by the imperialist press, then there is something wrong with you,' the argument would go. Today, we receive such comments as a compliment. It is photocopied and circulated to every member of staff. But why blame a University administrator who feels flattered when complimented by the American *Chronicle* when our state leaders cite the pronouncement of an American ambassador as proof beyond reasonable doubt that, for example, the elections were free and fair or that we are credit worthy and therefore eligible to become more indebted and so on.

3. Global Transformation?

The global transformation from the third quarter of the twentieth century to its last quarter is pervasive, whether or not it is deep is a different matter. The transformation that I want to speak to - and which was dear to Babu's heart - is of course from the age of liberation and

revolution, in which the forces of reaction generally, and imperialism particularly, were on the defensive, to the current period when even the uttering of the word 'imperialism' would earn you a place among intellectual dinosaurs, that is, if you are lucky enough not to be placed on the identification parade of so-called 'terrorists'. How does one explain the transformation of the utterly, and almost universally, vilified imperialism to the respected, feared and universally acclaimed 'international community' within such a short historical period? In other words, the central question we need to address is how did imperialism rehabilitate and legitimise itself to the extent that the former British Secretary of State, Douglas Hurd, could say with satisfaction in 1990 that:

'we are slowly putting behind us a period of history when the West was unable to express a legitimate interest in the developing world without being accused of 'neo-colonialism' (Furedi, 1994, 99).

Perhaps the most illustrative, informative and symbolic comparison between the two periods is the Ten-Year Vietnamese War (1965-75) with The Ten-Year Gulf War (1991-2001). (The latter, of course, is not quite over and may even dovetail into another devastating Afghan War for, God knows, how long[3]). The Vietnam War was horrendous as was the Gulf War. Three million people are estimated to have perished during the Vietnam War, mostly civilians - presumably in, what American commanders heartlessly call, 'collateral damage' (Pilger, 1998, 555). Half the forests were destroyed and the genetic damage done to the countryside through defoliants has yet to be fully worked out. A quarter of a million people perished in the Gulf War and half a million children have died since as a result of sanctions (ibid, 29-30, Arnove 2000, passim). Still worse, the scientific, technological and medical infrastructure of Iraq, which is acknowledged to have been one of the most modern in the Third World, has been virtually bombed out of existence. It is said that US aircraft alone dropped 88,000 tons of explosives on Iraq, the equivalent of five Hiroshima nuclear blasts (Arnove op. cit., 115). But it is not the similarity of horror and the inherently war-mongering nature of imperialism which I wish to emphasise, important as it is. It is the difference that I want to draw attention to. And this is the global anti-war movement generated by the Vietnam War and the moral devastation of imperialism resulting from it compared to the relative absence of both in the case of Gulf War. This needs to be explained. True, US imperialism was militarily defeated in Vietnam but this was not because of its military weakness. In my view, the military defeat was the tail end of the process of defeat. US imperialism was defeated in the hearts and minds of world opinion before it was defeated on the battlefield. The broad anti-imperialist movement that Vietnam generated across countries and peoples, in which Africa, including Babu's country, was prominent, is what is most remarkable. During the Gulf War, on the other hand, there has hardly been any official reaction from this part of the world and the Hill, if at all, has even forgotten that such a thing exists. In a sense, the Gulf War marks the beginning of the 'moral rehabilitation of imperialism', to use Furedi's phrase (ibid).

I want to suggest that in this rehabilitation, the transformation of the intellectual culture and discourse played and continues to play a vanguard role.

I am quite conscious that assigning such a prominent role to Ideas and Intellectuals sits rather uncomfortably with Marxists. Had it been the 1960s, I would have been promptly denounced as a petty bourgeois idealist. We of course devotedly declared that 'Masses move Mountains' but at the same time subtly recognised that 'Insurrection of Ideas precedes Insurrection of Arms'. In other words, masses have to be moved by ideas before they can move mountains. Whether arrogantly, as with Lenin, or more modestly, as with Mao, Marxist ideologues gave similar prominence to Ideas and Intellectuals. Lenin summed

it up politically when he said that the working class on its own is only capable of trade union consciousness; political consciousness has to be introduced from outside - presumably by petty bourgeois intellectuals. Gramsci provided a theory for the intellectual's role by propounding the concept of the 'organic intellectual' and Mao supplied a populist rendering of the intellectual's role when he stated, 'We must give back to the masses systematically, what we receive from them confusedly'. We, presumably, refers to 'We, the Intellectuals'! Amilcar Cabral made it comfortable for the petty bourgeois intellectual to assume leadership of the revolution provided he or she committed class suicide. And 'our own' Wamba seriously and sincerely flatters the people when he says, 'People Think' (Wamba, 1991). He could have perhaps added, 'We, the Intellectuals, Think with the People' (hopefully not *for* the people!).

Be that as it may, I simply want to argue that the intellectual discourse or the 'insurrection of ideas' of the age of liberation and revolution was as important in delegitimising imperialism as the suppression of ideas and decimation of the intellectual body has been in rehabilitating it. Let me illustrate this, in a few broad strokes, by the transformation of the intellectual discourse and the metamorphosis of the Intellectual at the Hill[4].

I have already indicated the intellectual ferment, the Golden Age, so to speak, of intellectualism at the Hill. It was all-pervasive as we read voraciously and debated profusely. Every publication was an event; every return from a field trip was an occasion for reflection, every seminar was a forum for ideological struggle, which, admittedly, we sometimes overdid. Many of our comrades who occupy state positions or are employed by respectable universities overseas or have become much sought after consultants, (or are state presidents and commander-in-chiefs), have either outright disavowed that period or feel embarrassed to talk about it. Nonetheless, I believe it was a great period imbued with unfaltering commitment to the cause of *the wretched of the earth.* And that was its greatest strength. Some other strengths may also be mentioned.

First, the basic premise of that discourse was that the Truth is the Whole and that knowledge cannot, and ought not to be divided and compartmentalised. Bourgeois compartmentalisation of knowledge was roundly condemned and De Castro's dictum in his *The Geography of Hunger* was ravishly quoted:

… Narrowness of outlook is characteristic of Western civilisation. Since the middle of the nineteenth century a kind of university instruction has developed which is no longer interested in transmitting a unified image of the world, but rather in isolating, and mutilating, facets of reality, in the supposed interest of science. The tremendous impact of scientific progress produced a fragmentation of culture and pulverised it into little grains of learning. Each scientific specialist seized his granule and turned it over and over beneath the powerful lens of his microscope striving to penetrate its microcosm, with a marvellous indifference to and towering ignorance of everything around him. Recently in Europe and the United States an extreme development of this type of University education has created within the culture a sort of civilisation *sui generis* - a specialists' civilisation - directed by men whose scientific outlook is rigorous but who suffer from a deplorable cultural and political myopia.

That holistic premise gave rise to the interdisciplinary course called *Social and Economic Problems of East Africa* taught in the first year in law. It developed into the *Common Course* co-ordinated by Lionel Cliffe and eventually became the *Institute of Development Studies* (for student struggles at the Hill see Peter & Mvungi, 1986). Today, development studies courses themselves are divided up and revised to make them more market-oriented and acceptable.

Second, the intellectual debate was guided by grand social theories and inspired by epochal visions of social emancipation of all humankind. We saw ourselves as part of a great historical movement of liberation and revolution. Marxist theories of capitalism and imperialism, its various offshoots such as the theories of development of underdevelopment, were subject of study and discussion. Analysis of material life, modes of production and relations of production were seriously undertaken for, it was believed, social transformation cannot simply be wished and be brought about by human will, but must be scientifically understood because human will too is historically and socially determined. True, both the scientism and marxism were occasionally overdone as marxist-leninist texts were scrutinised to the last comma to denounce non-conformists (for an illustration of this see Tandon ed, 1982). It was this perhaps which once prompted Nyerere to say that he wouldn't want to see the apes of the East or the apes of the West in 'his' University. One wonders, if he were alive today, what would he have said when confronted with the puppets of the West in many an African state on his continent.

Inspired, we certainly were, by Western socialist theories and practices of liberation and revolution in the world, particularly in the Third World. But there was considerable amount of imagination and choosing even in aping. More important, we firmly held to our commitment to the **Rest**, *the wretched of the earth,* while learning from the East and the West. There was an unwavering loyalty to universal emancipation ('Workers of the World Unite'), but this did not detract from our emphatic understanding that not only the 'Truth is the Whole' but also that the 'Truth is Concrete': we must make a concrete analysis of concrete conditions. The *Cheche* banner proclaimed: 'Oppressed of the World Unite!'

'Concrete analysis of concrete conditions' and 'No investigation, no right to speak' were taken seriously. And that was the *third* strength of that discourse. Grand social theories were backed by basic research. Discoveries made in the field were presented in seminars and hotly debated. Adhu Awiti (1972) spent months and years in Iringa villages scrupulously documenting peasant differentiation in the ownership of the means of production to produce his 'Class Struggles in Rural Society of Tanzania'. Von Freyhold (1979) spent months in Tanga ujamaa villages to give us a concrete understanding of ujamaa on the ground and Marjorie Mbilinyi (1974) did similar work to identify embryonic capitalism in rural Tanzania. Henry Mapolu (1973) studied tobacco farms in Tabora and Ben Ndulu (1973) researched villages of the Rufiji basin (yes, in case you are wondering, I'm referring to the same Ben Ndulu who is now the World Bank representative to his country!).

4. Institutional Transformation

In this period of institutional transformation, which has earned us a US $3.5 million grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, basic research has all but died down. We have metamorphosed from intellectual researchers of yesterday to policy consultants of today. The truth of course is that we are neither consulted nor recommend policy. Policy is set elsewhere by those who hold the purse strings while, we the local counter-parts, as we are called, mount stage shows organising national workshops of 'stake-holders'. No one pretends that consultancy generate knowledge, much less that the consultant is an organic intellectual of the *the wretched of the earth.* We all know, and admit it in private, that we are neither organic to anything nor intellectuals. We are simply paid juniors, euphemistically called 'counter-parts', of Western consultants paid by the West, leaving us little time to care about the Rest. In this game of euphemisms, Western paymasters are called development partners; consultancy, whose only source of scientific data is 'rapid rural appraisals' and other consultancy reports, is called development work ,which development work is dutifully executed by a Western team leader called 'development practitioner'. If all this sounds like

Orwell's 'double-speak', well then, it is!

I want to suggest that it is the amazing double-speak of imperial consultants and propagandists, which has been at the heart of decimating the body of Intellectual Thought that provided the theoretical foundation and ideological inspiration for the age of liberation and revolution. The double-speak is aimed at three targets. One, at rehabilitating imperialism morally by demonising Third World nationalism and delegitimising Third World states (particularly in Africa) as no more than a coterie of ethnic groups out to loot poor, ignorant populations who need to be saved from their own rulers by the humanitarian interventions of the international community (Furedi op.cit. passim). An editorial in the *US News and World Report* (28th December 1992) declared Third World nationalism as a great delusion:

In the Third World, there had been grand ideas of new states and social contracts among the communities, post-colonial dreams of what men and women could do on their own. There were exalted notions of Indian nationalism, Pan-Arabism and the like. Ethnicity hid, draped in the colors of modern nationalism, hoping to keep the ancestors - and the troubles - at bay. But the delusions would not last. What was India? The India of its secular founders - or the 'Hindu Raj' of the militant fundamentalists? What exactly did the compact communities of Iraq - the Kurds, the Sunnis and the Shia - have in common? The masks have fallen, the tribes have stepped to the fore (quoted in Furedi op. cit. 102).

Humanitarian interventions to save the Third World people from themselves then is presented as the motif of numerous military and economic interventions by the 'international community' from Serbia to Somalia. These interventions are not only begged for by our political leaders themselves but also justified by our intellectuals. Statements like those quoted are presented as matter-of-fact not requiring any further proof. They are neither ideological statements and nor do they require historical or theoretical justification since, it is said with Fukuyama, all ideologies and history have ended. In the post-cold war period we do not have any clashes of ideas or ideological struggles but the 'clash of civilisations', as Samuel Huntigton, the intellectual think-tank of the US state department, proclaims. The clash is supposedly between the Western civilisation and Islamic and Confucian civilisations, between the Good and Evil, between the Values of the Free World, and the prejudices of the Rest, between People and non -people (see generally articles in the *Third World Quarterly*, March 1995).

Of course, the clash of civilisations had to be invented. How else would one justify the expanding military machine of imperialism while at the same time proclaim 'end of ideology' after the Cold War? We all know, but can hardly say, particularly if you happen to be from Africa, that there have been more wars, more destruction of life, more arms sales by the West in the last ten years *after* the Cold War than any time during the so-called Cold War.

The second big onslaught has been to make the ideology of human rights, and its related offshoots such as rule of law, good governance, poverty alleviation etc., all pervasive. Again human rights is of course not presented as an ideology but an immortal, all time truth. Its unquestioning pervasiveness and acceptance among our own intellectuals is remarkable. When I wrote my *The Concept of Human Rights in Africa* (1989) arguing that it was an ideology of domination and that we needed to reconceptualise it and turn it on its head to make it an ideology of resistance, it was simply ignored and brushed aside as demagogic. Perhaps demagogic it is, but pales before the demagogy of human rights and yet the double-speak in that ideology is so blatant.

There is not much time to go into the analysis of human rights as an ideology except to point out that it has, at least in the short run and in this part of the world, been pretty

effective in displacing grand social theories and vision of human emancipation. Former marxists, activists and even rightwing propagandists have all jumped on the human rights bandwagon. (My friend Haroub Othman here and his friend Issa Shivji have all become human rights activists). Human rights discourse has succeeded in marginalising concrete analysis of our society. Human rights ideology is the ideology of the *status quo*, not change. Documentation of human rights abuses, although important in its own right, by itself does not help us to understand the social and political relations in our society. It is not surprising that given the absence of political economy context and theoretical framework, much of our writings on human rights, rule of law, constitution etc. uncritically reiterate or assume neo-liberal precepts. Human rights is not a theoretical tool of understanding social and political relations. At best, it can only be a means of exposing a form of oppression and, therefore, perhaps, an ideology of resistance. If not carefully handled, it cannot even serve that purpose (see, generally, Shivji 1993).

The third target of imperial ideological onslaught has been the organisational expression of people's struggles. Traditional and historically well tested forms of organisation like parties, trade unions and mass movements are placed on the same footing as non-governmental organisations, NGOs. As a matter of fact, it is the various human rights NGOs which occupy the centre stage because they are the best funded by the donor community and whose importance is blown out of all proportion to their real capacity for change.

The very concept of NGO has drained the people of the organisational expression of their struggles. NGOs are supposed to be non-political, non-partisan and non-membership, formed by activists, usually from outside the social group that they are advocating for, without any constituency, accountable only to themselves and the funder. Their function, as they see it themselves, is awareness raising and advocacy in which the people are passive, ignorant subjects or victims, incapable of struggling for their rights. Under the demagogic precept of 'action not words', even well-intentioned individuals in NGOs willy-nilly end up supporting the status quo because they have no theoretical tools or ideological stand to guide them. In the world of NGOs, theory and ideology are swear words. They are despised. In other words, we are told to act, not to think.

As part of the process of delegitimising Third World states, which are daily decried as corrupt and inefficient, donor funds are channelled to NGOs. NGOs are encouraged to think of themselves as development partners equally with the state and 'international community', not as pressure groups exposing the misdeeds of their states and imperialism, which is what they are in the West. In many ways, NGOs have provided both the state and the 'international community' a convenient alibi from shouldering and accounting for their own responsibility. The so-called NGO activity has diverted the energy of the people from demanding structural reforms to attending rights awareness seminars and workshops. And these seminars and workshops are generously funded when normal schools and institutions of higher learning would find very difficult to raise funds to carry on their normal activities as sites of knowledge. Today it would be easier to get funds for the Faculty of Commerce to mount a seminar for women *mandazi* (bun) sellers to attend a short course on enterpreneurship than to establish a trade union college to train shop stewards who can fight, not only for the rights of workers but also understand and impart the knowledge on why and how privatisation and market lead to redundancy!

5. Demonisation of Third World Nationalism

The demonisation of Third World nationalism, the propagandising of human rights and the boosting of thousands of NGOs as **the** expression of civil society has simultaneously done several things. One, it has denigrated the ideologies and visions of liberation. Second, it has

delegitimised, particularly, African states and turned them into nothing more than 'veranda boys' of the 'international community'. Thirdly, it has taken away the right of the people of these countries to wage their own struggles, and thereby generate their own organisations and mass movements. Fourthly, it has reduced the oppressed masses and exploited classes from a revolutionary agency to supplicants for aid, classified as the most poor and vulnerable and therefore qualified to receive handouts from poverty alleviation funds. Fifthly, it has robbed the masses of its organic intellectuals and thinkers. Our universities have been transformed from being sites of knowledge to corporations, busy advertising their wares on the market, the chief among them being our consultants with Ph.D.s. The primary research of these erstwhile consultants is confined to 'rapid rural appraisals' to produce policy papers which are then submitted for endorsement by stake-holders - a motley of academics, bureaucrats, NGO activists, foreign consultants and development practitioners. Rural people cannot possibly be stakeholders because they cannot have a stake in the system that oppresses and exploits them every hour of the day. Nor can the consultant-researcher on rapid rural appraisal develop any organic link with workers and peasants. He or she is probably busy categorising and classifying them as poor, less poor, most poor, most vulnerable and so on to enable him or her to draft a policy paper on Poverty Reduction Strategy or for identifying the target group for the next NGO project.

To sum up the intellectual discourse and concepts of the 60s and 70s with that of the current one, let me just juxtapose the two. At that time the young radical intellectual committed to the cause of the Wretched of the Earth saw the world divided into three worlds. The Third World was undoubtedly the oppressed and exploited while the First World was undoubtedly the home of oppressor states. He or she debated on the social and political character of the Second World meanwhile sharpening his theoretical tools to understand the world so as to change it. The third world had within it colonial and neo-colonial countries and oppressed nations and nationalities whose liberation from the coloniser or the imperial neo-coloniser was on the historical agenda. Imperialism was explained, with Lenin and Nkrumah, as a stage in the development of worldwide capitalism headed by the North and living and sustaining itself by the draining of surplus from the South. Within these countries you had classes; comprador classes siding with imperialism and exploited and oppressed classes and peoples and patriotic groups objectively poised as the agency of liberation. The task of the radical intellectual was to understand the system of enslavement and build and organise the forces of revolution against imperialism and capitalism so as to construct democratic and socialist societies which would answer to the needs and aspirations of the masses. Our radical intellectual believed that social change and transformation does not come as a manna from a messiah but is the result of the struggle of the people in which they constitute themselves as people to regain their humanity. He or she did not make a distinction between 'political' and 'civil', between 'non-governmental' and 'governmental' but rather preached and practised the dictum that, 'Politics is the concentrated form of economics' (Lenin) and that 'the state is the table of contents' (Marx) of civil society and class struggles.

Today, the world is presented as a global village which is being inexorably villagised by the forces of globalisation. It consists of the international community and others. The composition of the international community is flexible but rogue-states are definitely not part of it. No one, we are told, has control over the processes of globalisation because it is controlled by the invisible hand of the market, which incidentally, is a very competent distributor of resources. We, in the Third World, do not have much of a choice in this globalised world. Our leaders tell us that we either adapt to globalisation or perish. The

globalisation experts tell us, and our political leaders repeat it parrot-like, that globalisation offers opportunities and challenges. To be able to make use of these opportunities, among other things, we need to behave ourselves; enforce the civilisation values of freedom, individualism, good governance, and human rights. We must of course put in place an enabling environment to attract development funds by making available at no cost our state, sovereignty, land, labour, minerals, water and air and space to investors. For this we need appropriate sectoral policies and the international community would always consider our applications for funds to hire consultants to draft such policies for us.

All this sounds like a caricature and double-speak of the most blatant kind. We all know that there is no community of interest in the international community; that globalisation is just another name for imperialism; that the global village embodies in it global pillage; that all cards are staked on one side in stake-holders workshops; that good governance is another name for legitimising economically despotic system for, governance is not a question of morality but a contest of power. Yet, it is amazing how often this farce is re-enacted and the most we can allow ourselves is to make a few sarcastic remarks, which is good entertainment, while business continues as usual.

6. Conclusion

To conclude: it needs hardly to be said that we are in the trough of the world revolution but I do not believe that all is lost. The forces of progress may have been defeated but certainly not destroyed. Wherever there is oppression, there is bound to be resistance. There is a silver lining and we are already witnessing it: Seattle, Prague, Gottenberg, Genoa are dress rehearsals. Before South Africa's liberation, Babu used to say, half-seriously, that within Tanzania,. Zanzibar is the centre of the African revolution; within East Africa, it is Tanzania and within Africa it is South Africa. If he were alive today, he would have perhaps reassessed as to where the centre of gravity of the revolution lies. He would have been a little disappointed that Zanzibar is not quite central, but he would have been certainly heartened by the fact that there has been Genoa and Gottenberg and would have certainly applauded the fact that we are able to hold an international conference on this Campus, and in this Lecture Theatre to which he, and many of us, have sentimental attachment. He would have certainly advised his young comrades not to turn cynics. He would have reminded them that democracy is more important to revolutionaries than to the bourgeoisie. Learn from the fact that it is still possible in this country to hold a conference on **Babu, the Tanzanian Revolutionary** .

'Comrades,' he would have said, 'do not fritter away this opening. Use it'.

He would have been happy that we are using it and we are also using him and letting him continue making his contribution from the grave. That is the greatest tribute we can pay to a revolutionary.

Endnotes

1. This is a revised paper which was first presented as a Keynote Address at the International Conference to celebrate the Life of Comrade Abdulrahman Mohamed Babu: 21-22 September 2001, University of Dar es Salaam

2. For snapshots of Babu see a book of tributes, H. Othman ed. (2001)

3. This was written just after September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and before the USA invaded Afghanistan.

4. For an influential piece on the transformation o the Latin American intellectual see Petras 1989.

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