

55 Years of My African Education

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Introduction

My African education can be divided into four parts. It began 55 years ago when I was an undergraduate student at Swarthmore College outside Philadelphia in Pennsylvania and was exposed first-hand to issues of development in Africa by students from different parts of the continent. It continued between 1962 and 1974 first hand when I began to live, work and travel in Africa, first as a research associate at the East African Institute of Social Research [EAISR], then as a senior research associate at the new Makerere Institute for Social Research [MISR] and finally Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Dar es Salaam [UDSM]. This was followed in the next 17 years, 1974 to 1991, by a sojourn in Oceania, after I was recruited to Papua New Guinea to be the foundation Professor and Director of Educational Research at the new University there [UPNG], but surprisingly, as you will see, my African education continued during those years. Then I returned to Africa in late 1991, and my African education still continues. Tanzania and Dar es Salaam occupies a central part in my journey. My first night in Africa (South of the Sahara) in April 1962 was spent at USA, or Usa River between Moshi and Arusha (I'd driven there immediately after my arrival in Mombasa on the *M/V Europa* to visit a Lutheran development worker). The trail there and the mud of Usa River left a lasting impression, as did an essential introduction to all the contradictions involved in development and change. It was not yet a year since Saba Saba [7th of July, founding day of the Tanganyika National African Union or TANU] and there was a sense of urgency and overwhelming possibilities in the air. It was only ten years after I'd first met Julius Nyerere when I was a student at the University of Edinburgh (1951-1952). Soon I was back in Tanzania, this time flying from Entebbe on special reduced six-day roundtrips, this time staying in the cheapest “hotels” in Dar and spending my time working with Swapo. I came to Dar frequently after that. We would discuss theory and tactics sitting in a circle and sharing a meagre meal of ugali and sauce eaten with out fingers.

Another decade later, in August 1972, I was back in Tanzania as a refugee from Amin's Uganda. The University of Dar es Salaam hired me as Associate Professor of Sociology. They needed me to teach the compulsory third year course in sociology of organizations (all UDSM graduates became bureaucrats, so why not learn about institutions before working in them) and to help the department launch a masters in sociology by course work (one of the first masters programmes at UDSM).

It wasn't easy getting here in 1972. Amin tried to take me and my first two daughters off the plane leaving Entebbe for Nairobi. We'd shipped our car and possessions out by train earlier and they were waiting for us in Nairobi. We managed to get out of Uganda (the pilot stopped at the end of the runway, walked back to us at the rear of the plane and asked us if we wanted to get off the plane—when we said “No”, he then replied, “We are now in international airspace” and took off). On arrival in Nairobi we found we were to be deported to London—not allowed to leave the airport, denied transit to Tanzania, even though we had all the correct papers with us. I asked if I could make one phone call, and fortunately reached the Editor of the *Daily Nation*, Hillary Ngweno, who dropped everything and came out to the airport. He got us one week in Kenya, which was enough time to sort out our affairs. But it was another lesson in how dictators work in cahoots with each other and the importance of maintaining networks.

So Tanzania and UDSM became our sanctuary. A welcome one, but also a challenging one, as I was hired on local terms with no external sponsorship and the shortages caused by the sudden rise in the cost of a barrel of oil were soon up on us. Life was hard for everyone in Tanzania then.

I have been back to Dar at different times since 1972. I was an official visitor to the UDSM in 1986 at the height of another fuel crisis (the university called me in Nairobi and said could I come a day later as there was no petrol available to meet our plane). I had the pleasure to serve as External Examiner for Education between 1998 and 2001 (but always from a distance). I was here again in December 2001, as part of a Khulisa survey for SADC to identify a centre of specialization for EPSI. In the end, against competition, we recommended UDSM and it was selected.

It is a pleasure to be back again for Saches 2005.

Quest for knowledge and transformation in four parts

I — 1950 to 1962 The Formative Years

At Swarthmore I majored in psychology (they did not teach sociology then). There was very little offered in any form of international studies, except in history, so I minored in the past. Swarthmore then had very few African American students. Oddly the college in 1950 (my sophomore year) accepted into their small engineering programme three students from Nigeria on British Government scholarships. Two of them became very close friends, and would spend their holidays with me in Brooklyn, New York and at the family farm in the Berkshires, Massachusetts: Obi Atuanya and Layiwola Shoyinka. They were followed by another in 1951, Chucks Umeadi. Then in May 1953 I met Eric Getzen a.k.a Mburumba Kerina when he gave a talk about conditions in South West Africa at the Friends Meeting House at Swarthmore. Afterwards we asked him if he wanted to stay and study at Lincoln University (a magnet because Nkrumah and Azikwe had gone there) or be deported—the US supported South Africa because it was seen as anti-Communist

and he could be thrown out if they requested. Thus a long friendship began with one of the founding fathers of Swapo and Namibia. Later, in 1960, Jacob Kuhangua, the second Namibian to get out (travelling on a visa to enter the United States acquired in Dar es Salaam and put on the back of a telegram from the United Nations inviting him to address the 4th Committee on Non-self-governing Territories). Jacob Kuhangua became Secretary General of Swapo. This history has been recorded elsewhere, but for me the events eventually led back to Dar es Salaam in 1962.

During these years we also got to know well a number of Kenyans who had come to study in the States on the Mboya Airlift. The thrust of what was learned related to the nature of underdevelopment, the misuse of formal education, and the abuses perpetuated in the name of education in the colonies. The academic year 1951-1952 I spent at the University of Edinburgh. Though I lived in digs, one of my roommates was from Calabar, Nigeria, and another from Istanbul, Turkey. At Edinburgh I could begin my formal studies about Africa, working with a number of anthropologists who had done their fieldwork there, including Kenneth Little (The Mendi of Sierra Leone). During the 1950s the thrust of our involvement was to help work for national independence by supporting independence movements in Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and South West Africa (Namibia). Julius Nyerere was also a student at the University of Edinburgh then. During the northern summer holidays of 1952 I used my seamen's papers again to get free passage from Genoa to Karachi, Pakistan, where I participated in an SCI international workcamp at Lalukhet in the desert teaching refugees (a million people had crossed borders each way) how to build houses (we had a number of days at Alexandria and I went to Cairo where I witnessed the coordinated bombings of British targets in the city that helped tip the country towards independence). From Karachi I went overland on to the Simla Hills in Northern India to another SCI workcamp that was building a hospital.

I continued being exposed and to learn between 1954 and 1959 when I worked for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in New York City and was responsible for running UN Seminars to expose American and international students to a variety of issues related to the world situation and possible approaches to solving problems. During those years we also worked closely with Mburumba Kerina and the process of his being the lone petitioner from South West Africa (along with Reverend Michael Scott from England). It was Liberia, Egypt and Ethiopia, supported by India, Uruguay, Yugoslavia and others against South Africa. We got to know the delegates. Other activities over those five years with the AFSC included weekend workcamps and institutional service units. We established a base in East Harlem and volunteers spent time on the wards at Manhattan State Mental Hospital across a footbridge on Wards Island. We produced a manual for working in psychiatric institutions. The workcamps were mainly in East Harlem too, and led to the creation of the Friends Neighbourhood Group at 94 East 111th Street, East Harlem Schools, and the Sheffield Projects (Inc not-for-profit) summer workcamp and then a boarding school for

dropouts in Sheffield, Massachusetts. The thread that went through these activities was a confrontation of issues facing majority world peoples who were marginalized in New York City (see: “My Life as a Friend and Fellow Traveller”, a talk I gave on 11 April 2004, Moriija, Lesotho published in ***Southern Africa Quaker News***, Winter, 2004, 41-58).

From 1950 on I was seen as a student activist and labelled a Marxian-Socialist. I learned from foreign students from Africa and Asia (mainly China, India and South Korea). There were many formative experiences, including in 1950 attending the International Union of Students gathering in Prague, Czechoslovakia. One was spied on by the authorities and as a consequence I eventually lost the right to travel between 1952-1959. This was at the height of McCarthyism, a time of “witch hunts” and when concentration camps were built to house 100,000 “reds”, 400,000 “pinks”. Oddly the FBI cleared my seamen’s papers so I could have travelled, but I was unable to obtain a passport again (one of about 25 Americans) until the Supreme Court made it a right, instead of a privilege, in 1959. I had refused to sign various oaths requested of me.

In 1959-1960 I completed a masters in education at the Putney Graduate School of Teacher Education in Vermont (now part of Antioch New England) and from there went to Harvard University to continue my studies towards a doctorate in sociology of education. When asked in 1960 in my initial interview for admission to Harvard what research I would carry out for my thesis, I said I wished to do a sociological case study of a day secondary school in Kenya—Chavakali at Kakamega. Harvard University was to become my base over the next decade, 1960 to 1969.

It was at Harvard that I was introduced both to the comparative method and to comparative education. In the beginning I started attending the annual conferences of the African Studies Association and ones related to sociology. I became a member of the Comparative Education Society in the early 1960s when at Harvard. Professor G. Z. F. Bereday was on a sabbatical at Harvard and we attended his seminars. When his book on comparative education methods came out I was the “young Turk” who challenged him about deficiencies in his “comparative method” (a logical fallacy in the way he isolated and compared variables), that stimulated him to propose the change in name from Comparative Education Society to CIES, adding the word “international” to adequately reflect Bereday’s approach and interests.

My focus in all my courses between 1960 and early 1962, was on what I could learn to facilitate my studies for my doctorate. To progress from course work to being approved to embark on thesis research a student in the doctorate of education programme had to write a special research project. Mine was a long and involved examination of the contradictions in the development on education in British African colonies and protectorates. I also summarized some of my concerns for access, wastage, equity, expansion, and overcoming gender and urban rural divides, agricultural education and community development, standards, status of teachers, increasing

tertiary opportunities, etc in **Africa Today** ('New Africa's Most Pressing Problem: Education For The Millions', May 1962, 7-10). Part of it, with revisions, was published by Columbia University, Teachers College Press, as "**Divergence in Educational Development: The Case of Kenya and Uganda**" (1967). I will say more about this monograph soon.

I was fortunate to be awarded a Ford Foundation Foreign Area Training Fellowship (one of three in education) that would cover all my costs over the next three years. I began writing scholarly book reviews for **Africa Today** in 1961 and when an article would appear in an issue under my name the reviews were by "Sasa Majuma". A feature I wrote for the **Progressive Magazine** under the pseudonym "Sheridan Griswold" ("An American observer who has watched the struggle of South West Africa before the United Nations at a close range") appeared as 'Africa's Southwest Hell', March 1961, 31-34).

Then a major hurdle appeared: the British did not want me to live and work in Kenya. The refusal to grant me a visa was never explained, but I was obviously perceived as a threat to their colonial ambitions. The links between intelligence agencies existed back then too and the British knew my political activism from their American allies. Fortunately, for me, my applications had been made through the East African Institute of Social Research (EAISR) at Makerere University College in Kampala, Uganda for affiliation. Within EAISR a small Educational Research Unit (ERU) had been established to work on problems of educational development in Uganda. Researchers like Jonathan Silvey, Tony Somerset, Edward Maleche and Brian Phipps were based there. EAISR wrote me that though I could not conduct my research in Kenya, Uganda now had self-government and the British could not prevent me from living and working in Uganda. They invited me to carry out my study of a day secondary school in Kampala and join the ERU team as a Research Associate. I accepted.

II — 1962 to 1974 Living and Working in Africa

We arrived in Kampala overland from Mombassa, travelling via Kenya to Tanzania and then back through Kenya to the border from Eldoret leading to Tororo, Uganda. What was unusual in these three crossings was the total absence of any customs or immigration controls. There was just a shelter, like an isolated phone booth, in which you wrote your name and licence plate number. We had given from Mombassa to a lift to a young Swiss "farmer" who had a plantation on the slopes of Mt Elgon west of Kitale. So we stopped there on the way. This was a sharp lesson in the social realities concerning land issues in Kenya and helped to accentuate a personal concern for rural development. This immediate hands-on learning was associated with extensive reading and the writing of dozens and dozens of book reviews for different journals during the 1960s [to become an academic reviewer of other scholars' endeavours is a good route for an aspiring doctoral student to follow—they should be reading widely; to be a critical reviewer is just one step further ahead].

EASIR is set in a corner at Makerere near the main gate. We were allocated a family flat there. It was a short walk to the main offices and library. The world of academia was exciting and challenging. I soon found a day high school where I was welcome to carry out my research, but it was in Mengo, the Kabaka's royal city, the contrasting twin to the imperial city of Kampala. I was so fascinated by learning about both, and the dozens of hills of greater Kampala, that I soon had written and published an article about them in **Africa Today** ('Kamala—Profile of a City', October, 1962, 6-8). The Lubiri Secondary School, where I was given an office in a new building, was within the Kabaka's compound on Lubiri Hill. To be more than a researcher, I also taught two courses to Form Three that were not on the syllabus and were not examinable: comparative religions (the city was our resource) and the economic development of Uganda (Professor Elkin had just published a book with this title). Contrary to the expectations of the head and teachers, I had full classes (40 students) in each and they did the work, wrote reports and were examined—but not on the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate.

I soon was so enmeshed in the multiplicity of problems faced by students at both private and public secondary schools that the Ministry of Education invited me to extend my study to cover a dozen schools in greater Kampala. Following self-government and then independence on 9th of October 1962 (where I was asked to explode the fireworks because of my link to 1776), the mushrooming of secondary schools in greater Kampala created a situation where the twin cities served a catchment area that was nationwide. The system of selection into Form One did not address this problem. The majority of students ended up renting cheap rooms in depressed areas. The wider study was later published in a new **Journal of Developing Areas** ('Are Hostels Necessary?' Vol. 1, No. 3, 1967, 357-374).

Applied reports on the research were submitted to the Ministry of Education (e.g. two preliminary reports, one on the Lubiri, another on the 'role of minority students' presented at an EASIR conference in Dar es Salaam in January, 1963; and 'A social survey of African day secondary pupils at selected senior secondary schools in Greater Kampala', October 1963). The Ministry of Education established a committee to consider my reports and they eventually acted on most of the recommendations, including half fares on public buses for students, altered selection procedures so that students from great distances (up to 600 km away) would be admitted into boarding schools, provision of study centres with electricity in slum communities in Kampala and Mengo, introduction of breakfast and lunches at the day high schools, allowing for the selection of students who had completed Form Two in private schools into Form Three in public schools (to fill vacancies created by wastage) and the construction of hostels for day students at a number of the new government secondary schools. The process, over nearly two years, was a powerful lesson in applied research, the value of participant involvement and working closely with decision makers in government.

I made a field trip around Africa in January and February 1963, ostensibly to gather data on educational planning in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Kenya and Tanzania (also with stops in Addis Ababa, Khartoum and Cairo). In Europe I went to London, Oslo and Stockholm. The other objective was to meet with South West Africans/Namibians who had left to study in the different countries. In Uganda the Ministry of Education spearheaded the process of offering scholarships to students from SWA. This eventually led to the United Nations Scholarship programme for students from South West Africa. In Dar es Salaam, with Jacob Kuhangua and other Swapo members in exile, we worked to develop a sense of human resource planning (so that not everyone was studying philosophy and religion, the soft subjects). We also created institutions like the National Union of South West African Workers that would be umbrella organizations to assist in the movement of Namibians to other countries on full scholarships (both to the West and to the East). NUSWAW Officers like Paul Helmuth went to Moscow to study.

In Kampala in 1962 I was fortunate to be able to attend the first all African writer's conference and get to know a number of the first generation of great African writers and realize the power of using their creations as teaching tools in education (Chinua Achebe, Es'kia Mphahlele, Lewis Nkosi, Christopher Okigbo, Wole Soyinka, John Pepper Clark and others). I also wrote and had published profiles of the lives of some of the students at Lubiri Secondary School (see: **Africa Today**, 'To School with Love: The autobiography of a Ugandan school boy', September 1963, 4-12).

Over these two years in East Africa I was a stringer for the **Christian Science Monitor** and wrote about a dozen articles using the pen name "Sheridan Griswold". One, on the failure of the East African Federation, based on inside sources, was a scoop the **CSM** sat on for many months and when it finally came out it was still a scoop ('East Africa to Federate?', Tuesday 10 September 1963). In Uganda I also became involved with Rajat Neogy, Editor of **Transition**, and wrote various articles and reviews for his journal.

During this time I also developed an intense interest in the role of the community school in Africa. This had begun in my research for my special paper at Harvard and continued through to my time in Papua New Guinea where they'd changed the name of their primary schools to "community schools" before independence (see: **Community School in Africa: Is There a Lesson for Papua New Guinea?** ERU Report No. 15. February, 1975, 31 pp).

From 1964 to 1969 I was back at Harvard based in the Centre for Studies in Education and Development (CSED) that was directed by Adam Curle. Harvard nurtured my development. They also enabled me to return to Africa to do further research. The first trip back to Uganda in 1965 allowed me to do follow-up research on the problems of day high schools and to visit Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zambia, Malawi and Nigeria again. Another data gathering expedition was carried out in 1968 when I did a study of comprehensive high schools in Nigeria and then reported

on it at the East African Social Science Conference in Kampala (see: 'Innovation in Education: Comprehensive High Schools in the Western State, Nigeria. A Preliminary Report' in **Sociology Conference Papers**. 1968-1969 Social Science Council Conference. Kampala. Makerere Institute of Social Science. 1970, 493-512). The USAID-Harvard University, Comprehensive High School at Aiyetoro west of Abeokuta (another “Haven of Peace”) had many amazing lessons to provide as to how: money was often not the solution to all problems; a curriculum development project was subverted by exigencies that forced developers to teach instead of create; “comprehensive” was diverted into elitism; and how 20 feeder schools in greater Aiyetoro were perverted so that the national elite from across all of Nigeria could get their children into what they perceived to be the best secondary school in Nigeria.

In 1965 when I returned to Harvard from East Africa I was given a book to review that had been sent to Harvard by one of the newspapers in Boston. It was Nelson Mandela’s “No Easy Walk to Freedom” and appeared on their editorial page as one of the editorials on 15th of November 1965. When I got my Freedom of Information Act file in the early 1980s, it began with a copy of that book review—nothing from the 1950s. The review had been clipped and inserted in my agency file, suggesting they believed that: Mandela is a communist, I reviewed his book positively, therefore I must be ... Later in **Africa Today** I wrote a scathing research report on Bantu Education in South Africa.

Also in 1968 I visited Mexico City and had a strong lesson in how legitimate grievances can be dealt with by establishments that label them radical and unacceptable. The student protests before the Olympics had resulted in over 60 deaths. They were written off as “communist” inspired, but after a letter I wrote was published in the **New York Times** journalists began listing all the legitimate grievances the students had—instead of writing “expatriate lore” from bar stools (see; Sheldon G. Weeks, “Mexican Students’ Demands,” *New York Times*, 11 Aug. 1968).

In 1969 I returned to Uganda as a Senior Research Fellow at the Makerere Institute of Social Research (the old EAISR had now become MISR) and then later Senior Lecturer in Sociology. From MISR we launched the Uganda Youth Survey (with financial support from the Ministry of Overseas Development, London). The report on the survey was finally published in 1975 [see: with T. Wallace, **Success or Failure in Rural Uganda: A Study of Young People**. Kampala, Makerere Institute of Social Research. February, 1975, 94 pp], though there were a variety of other papers that came out before then [see box below]

A major contribution at this time came from the Uganda Youth Survey and the theoretical sights it provided into the comparative advantages of rural versus urban living in Africa and the role of the informal sector in the generation of wealth and sustainable economic activities. Following T. Wallace’s presentations, these insights were taken up by the ILO and incorporated later into

Richard Jolly's groundbreaking studies.

We worked closely with the new National Research body on establishing priorities and funding research projects; we thus organized three major research projects (but they were not staffed locally, instead went to doctoral students from the University of Chicago—but at least the research projects belonged to Uganda, having been identified and funded by Uganda). I also taught a seminar to third year students in sociology on sociology of education and ran a fortnightly seminar on educational development that was open to the public. They were exiting times until the 25th of January 1971. This is when General Idi Amid staged his coup while Obote was in Singapore. I have written about this period in a long article elsewhere [see: 'Uganda Under Military Rule' **Africa Today**. Vol. 20, No. 2, Spring, 1973, 11-31.] It was a difficult time that was traumatic for all involved. As mentioned in the introduction, I was able to leave Uganda and transfer to Dar es Salaam only 18 months after the coup—though I was one of the first foreign academics able to leave.

Articles 1974-1969 (going backwards)

'Access to Education: a Selected Bibliography' **Rural Africana** No. 25. Fall, 1974, 107-127.

'What is Debureaucratization' (in both) **Maji Maji** and **Taamuli**. (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania) 1974.

'Where are all the jobs? The Informal Sector in Bugisu' **African Review**. Vol. 3, No. 1, 1973, 111-132.

'Youth and the Transition to Adult Status' **Journal of Youth and Adolescence**. Vol. 2, No. 3, 1973, 259-270.

edited article 'Education, Culture and Personal Conflict' In. S.H. Irvine and J.T. Saunders, eds. **Cultural Adaptation within Modern Africa**. New York. Teachers College. Press. 1972, 5-14.

with T. Wallace. 'How to Operationalize Concepts of Social Stratification' **Manpower and Unemployment Research In Africa**. Vol. 7, No. 4, 1974.

with T. Wallace. 'A Research Note' **East African Journal of Rural Development**. Vol. 4, No. 2, 1971, 105-108.

with T. Wallace. 'Youth in Uganda: Some Theoretical Perspectives' **International Social Science Journal**. Vol. 24, No. 2, 1974, 354-365.

with T. Wallace. 'A Survey of Research on Education in Uganda' **East African Journal of Education**. Vol. 1, No. 2, 1970, 57-67.

'Blight or Blessing? Fact and Fantasy on School Leavers in Uganda: A Position Paper for Policy Makers. **Manpower and Unemployment Research In Africa**. Vol. 5, No. 1, April, 1972, 38-38.

'Kujitegemea and Ujamaa in Tanzania' **Africa Today**. Vol. 17, No. 1, 1970, 12-15.

'Agricultural Education in Africa' **Rural Africana**. No. 9, 1969, 49-61.

Other papers

'Student Evaluation of Courses' Dar es Salaam. Sociology Department. Occasional Paper. April, 1973.

ed, Uganda Youth Survey. **Nabugabo Conference Papers**. Kampala, Makerere Institute of Social Research. June, 1970.

'The Methodology of the Uganda Youth Survey' **Conference Papers, Youth Sessions**. 7th World Congress of Sociology Varna, Bulgaria. 1970

Finally I was established at the University of Dar es Salaam in the Department of Sociology in August 1972. The commitments were heavy, both in teaching undergraduate courses and sustaining tutorials. In 1973-1974 we launched the first masters' programme by course work plus dissertation in sociology. I taught advanced sociological theories and industrial sociology besides helping to administer the programme. Its success is marked by the careers of the first graduates who have gone on to become professors and researchers in their own right.

The Department of Sociology also conducted a major research project during this time on Ujamaa. With 24 university students we studied twelve ujamaa villages in different parts of Tanga Region. This was an eye opener. Only one of the ujamaa villages was really economically viable, the rest being various forms of "institutionalized poverty" or rural *underdevelopment*. The UDSM was an

exciting place to be during these years because the intellectual ferment was intense and challenging. A lot has been written about this period by many of the key actors who were there then.

I was fortunate to be invited by Philip Mbithi (then head of department) in 1971-1972 to be External Examiner, Sociology, at the University of Nairobi. This meant examining approximately 900 students, a dozen masters and a doctoral thesis. I learned a great deal through this process and one memory that stands out concerns the teaching problems faced by Kenyans who had spent decades in America after the Mboya airlift. Some of them were still stuck in the past.

During this period, 1969-1974, I also helped teach (during holidays and weekends from Kampala), at the Friends World College that was then based at Kaptagat—the old country inn, or “Arms”—in Kenya. This was a revelation in some of the problems of alternative education transferred to a majority world situation. There were not enough East Africans participating and too many of the Americans were drifting through, not really being challenged and benefiting from the experiences (I called them “warm bodies” passing time in Africa).

In Dar in 1973, I wanted to get back into educational research and had funding and approval from both the UDSM, the Ministry of Education and the Research Council to carry out an in depth survey of the organizational climate of senior secondary schools in Tanzania with special reference to the implementation of self-reliance or “Biases” (a World Bank project intended to integrate practical courses with academic in target schools). I had begun the preliminary field work for this study when I was recruited to Papua New Guinea as the Foundation Professor and Director of the University of Papua New Guinea’s Educational Research Unit.

III— 1974 to 1991 based in Papua New Guinea

This was out of Africa, but not away from Africa. My African education had not ceased. Life is lived at four crosscutting levels: 1, personal; 2, family and social; 3, academic (teaching and research); and 4, engagement (political and social action, community service). In this talk I have focussed only on the third and a bit on the fourth. They are all inter-related and cannot really be separated out.

I began my 17 years in Oceania with an investigation of how research centres were organized in Africa with a trip to Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda (first time back since Amin’s forces tried to block our leaving in August 1972—but have not been back to Uganda since 1974), Kenya and Tanzania. This was most revealing. I arrived in Port Moresby in time for a national workshop on educational research priorities (such a gathering had never been held before). The results were quickly published and disseminated.

Over the years I had many contacts, exchanges, international conferences, staff movement from

Africa to PNG (some of my colleagues from East Africa joined me to teach at UPNG). Many of the research themes we pursued were relevant to Africa too: Community Schools, NFE, DVET, adapted secondary schools, educational innovations, vernacular preschools, school-based curriculum development, educational planning, decentralization, North Solomons Educational Research Project, Oro Research Project, and so on [see the list of books and monographs in the box below for some of the topics]. We even faced issues of civil war in Bougainville (the 1992 study). We worked closely with politicians, both national and the nineteen Provincial Ministers of Education, and others.

It was a productive time for the Educational Research Unit—between 1974 and 1990, eighty reports were published (including Working Papers and Occasional Papers). Seventy of these were under my editorial responsibility. They were all applied reports with multiple objectives, from the local beneficiaries through to senior policy makers in government, both central and the nineteen provincial governments. Most of the studies were carried out at the request of different bodies, and as time went on increasingly at the behest of provincial governments. The research work covered all levels and aspects of the formal and informal education system, out-of-school youth and community development.

“If education is the answer, what is the question?” was the title of my professorial inaugural address at UPNG on 16 March 1976. A revised version was presented as a presidential keynote address in Windhoek, Namibia in 2000, at the annual Saches Conference held at the Hotel Safari. I have always been surprised how many people accessed this obscure document from nearly thirty years ago. It explores various models for educational change, the concept of stages of development and a number of examples of disappointing panaceas in educational planning.

In Papua New Guinea an applied research project that had extensive ramifications was the Viles Tok Ples Skul programme in North Solomons Province. This was replicated through programmes in Oro and Enga Provinces (and in Enga had direct funding from the World Bank). The various research studies demonstrated that children who learn to read and write in their mother tongue in preschools before Grade One transfer those skills to primary schools and have a headstart.

The Central Government in PNG was concerned with national and provincial development planning. We tried to shift the foci of planning and decision making to the school, community, sub-district and district, instead of just provincial and national. In time we were successful in this—as is reflected in some of the publications. We also were trying to promote school-based planning from the bottom up. There was also a method of involvement and workshops in the field, training and participation at local levels, even in the process of writing the plans as in Enga. So it wasn't just researchers-as-parachutists! One of the last examples of this was a planning workshop in Buka in 1991, while the civil war in the North Solomons was still going on. The National Research Institute

also published it in 1992.

We worked closely with people in government, maintaining constructive and positive ties, running fortnightly educational research seminars at the University and at the Ministry of Education, and serving on a wide variety of government committees either as members or consultants. In 1978 I was a member of the Committee to Review the national Five Year Education Plan (and wrote two of the chapters). In 1979 I represented the Ministry of Education at a Unesco Meeting in Bangalore, India. I was a member of the National Department of Education's Research Committee and the Higher Education Research Group. I also served on the Steering Committee of the Community Schools Agricultural Pilot Project and the National Development Group for Unesco. The Educational Research Unit was active in the evaluation of educational innovations. A notable innovation that was studied for over twelve years was the Secondary Schools Community Extension Project (SSCEP). As in Uganda, we gathered other researchers to assist in the process, and a number earned their doctorates from it, including Michael Crossley and Graham Vulliamy. This research culminated in the production of a video, **Education Working: Curriculum Extension in Papua New Guinea**. Extensive educational research and monitoring assistance was also provided to provinces in response to their requests. The intention was to design a unified education system that gave all students the gift of choice (instead of one divided into rigid hierarchies and with programmes labelled "superior" and "inferior").

Fundraising was another aspect of our work. Over the seventeen years we raised at least one million US dollars to support educational research in Papua New Guinea. Funds for research came from the UPNG Research Committee, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Finance Office of Project Coordination, the Department of Primary Industry, the Adenauer Foundation, the Foundation for the People of the South Pacific, Unesco, Unicef, Bernard van Leer Foundation, CUSO, International Human Assistance Programme, British Council, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. In addition many provinces in Papua New Guinea who sponsored research, made contributions to the cost of the research.

I had a weekly column "Education Guidelines" in the **Times of Papua New Guinea** and helped write monthly educational supplements. The ministers told others to clip them and keep a scrapbook. The spin off of effective journalism that is made possible by extensive fieldtrips, where most journalists do not even have the resources to go, is also a good experience for the young academic. I found that if I took undergraduate journalism students and graduate students with me on field trips they could spin off special investigation features on a topic in the communities where we stayed, and I had challenging company with me to keep me on my toes. Sometimes there were no "takers" on such trips, like one for a few weeks in a canoe going down the Sepik River and up side tributaries to visit remote schools as part of an evaluation of an East Sepik Rural

Development Project that had been funded by the Asian Development Bank.

To promote South-to-South I was able to encourage Papua New Guineans to study in other majority world nations for their graduate study instead of going to Europe or North America. Four graduate students took advantage of this initiative and went to UDSM, Kenyatta University, University of the West Indies and the University of Malaysia. International ties were also sustained through conference participation and serving on the editorial boards of journals such as **Yagl-Ambu**, the **PNG Journal of Education**, and **Africa Today**.

I was able to make one trip back to Kenya and Tanzania in 1986 [I gave talks at UDSM and Kenyatta University] and was the guest of the university here. It was a welcome return to East Africa. When the Vice Chancellor of the University of Papua New Guinea “abolished” the ERU on the grounds that we did not teach, and therefore were not required as part of the University, all the staff received letters terminating their contracts. Support rallied behind the ERU and in January 1988 the Unit was moved by an “Act of Parliament” to help form the new National Institute of Research. The University instead of saving money in their budget lost all the resources that had been allocated to the ERU. This demonstrated the perception that was held in many quarters that the work of the ERU met national interests.

Books and Monographs while in Oceania

- with N Ahai (eds), **Education and Reconstruction in North Solomons Province**, DER Special Report, No. 7 National Research Institute, 1992, 186 pp. [50 percent] Also wrote four chapters as full author.
- BEST Evaluation: 1987-1991**. DER Report, National Research Institute, 1991, 43 pp.
- Review of Vocational Centre Training in New Ireland Province**. DER Report No. 66, National Research Institute, 1991, 78 pp.
- with others, **Enga Six Year Education Plan 1992 - 1997**, DER Report, National Research Institute, 1991, 113 pp.
- with N. Ahai, **Non-Formal Education in Papua New Guinea**, DER Report, National Research Institute, 1991, 110 pp.
- with M. Gibson, **Improving Education in Western Province**, DER Report 64, National Research Institute, 1990, 193 pp.
- with J. Waninara, **A Review of The Education System in East New Britain**, ERU Report No. 60, 1988, 140 pp.
- Educational Research in Oro Province 1983-1988: A Briefing Report to the Province**. Division of Educational Research, National Research Institute and Oro Provincial Government, 1988, 34 pp.
- with D. Knox, eds, **Learning From China: Report of The 1987 Educational Research Study Tour**. ERU Special Report No. 4, 1987, 81 pp.
- with M. Crossley and J. Sukwianomb, eds, **Pacific Perspectives on Non-Formal Education** Suva, Institute for Pacific Studies and Waigani, University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1987, 247 pp.
- Education and Change in Pangia, Southern Highlands Province** ERU Report No. 56, 1987, 196 pp.
- ed, **Papua New Guinea: A National Inventory of Educational Innovations**. ERU Report No. 52. 1985, 140 pp. (also wrote eleven of 32 chapters in the study)
- Community School Expansion in The Eastern Highlands Province**. ERU Special Report, 1985, 74 pp.
- with J. Kelly and J. Moipu, **A West Sepik Education Strategy**. ERU Report No. 40. 1982, 220 pp.
- ed, **Oksapmin: Development and Change**. ERU Occasional Paper No. 7. 1981, 236 pp. (wrote chapters 1 and 7).
- ed, with P. Smith, **Teachers and Teaching**. UPNG Faculty of Education, Extraordinary Meeting Report. 1981, 248 pp.
- with C. Runawery, **Towards an Enga Education Strategy: Education and Rural Development in Enga**. ERU Working Paper No. 3. October, 1980, 136. pp.
- ed, **The 'Foster Fallacy' in Educational Planning**. ERU Occasional Paper No. 6. December, 1978. (wrote chapter three).
- ed, **Youth in Their Village**. ERU Report No. 24. March, 1978, 192 pp. (wrote chapters 1 and 2).
- The Social Background of Tertiary Students in Papua New Guinea**. ERU Report No. 22, 1977, 121 pp.
- ed, **The Story of My Education**. ERU Occasional Paper No. 5. 1977, 134 pp.
- ed, **Education and Independence 1975: A Resource Book on Documents and Issues in Education**. ERU Occasional Paper No. 4. 1976, 336 pp.
- National Service and Community Involvement as Seen by Tertiary Students**. ERU Report No. 21 October, 1976, 48 pp.

The Problem of Primary School Leavers in a Developing Country. ERU Occasional Paper No. 1. June, 1975, 28 pp.

Some consultancy reports

Consultant on Education to the Enga Rural Development Study and the West Sepik Integrated Rural Development Study.

Consultant Evaluator, Agriculture and Nutrition Education sub-project of the Asian Development Bank in the East Sepik, 1982-1983.

Consultant in 1987 to the East New Britain Provincial

Government to carry out a review of their educational system.

Consultant in 1987 to the Southern Highlands Province Government to supervise a study of standards in Tari and Koroba Districts.

Consultant to Manus Provincial Government on High School Education for All, 1988.

Consultant to Western Province on educational standards, 1988-1989.

Consultant to the Western Highlands Province on technical high schools, 1989.

Consultant to the National Capital District on educational planning, 1989.

Consultant to New Ireland Province on vocational centre training, 1991.

Consultant to National Department of Education on Non-Formal Education, 1991

Consultant to CUSO on BEST evaluation, 1991.

Consultant to Enga Province on educational planning and development, 1991

IV— 1991 to now Return to Africa

In mid-1991 I was invited from Port Moresby to Zomba, Malawi to be interviewed for the position of Foundation director of CERT (Centre for Educational Research and Training at the University of Malawi). I went to Zomba and stayed a few days longer to consult on the form and structure CERT could take. The University of Malawi interview panel wanted me, but I had not “cleaned” my CV to remove all references to my work as a journalist. At that time in Malawi no journalist from abroad was permitted to live and work in the country. In the end I did not get the job at Zomba.

Soon after, I applied for the position of Director, Graduate Studies and Research in Education at the University of Botswana. I had trained a number of Papua New Guineas to take over from me in Port Moresby at the NIR. After seventeen years I was ready to return to Africa. For family reasons a place free from Malaria and crime (relatively) was attractive. I was hired without an interview (stepping down after being a full professor for seventeen years to “Associate Professor” because that was the level the post was pegged at). I served in that position until April 1996 when I became the Foundation Dean, School of Graduate Studies at the University of Botswana. I worked as Dean for the next six years until I “retired” in July 2002.

I arrived back in Africa too late in 1991 to be part of the inaugural Saches conference, but Professor Vanqa directed me to the 2nd one and we attended it together in 1992 at Broderstrom west of Pretoria. It feels like I haven’t looked back since then. These have been exciting years, with many levels of involvement, both within and outside Botswana. Gaborone proved to be a good base to work from to serve needs in other SADC countries and the University of Botswana a supportive and understanding institution. Once settled in Botswana I was soon involved with Professor Mautle on a study of Teacher Incentives and one on structure of the education system; then with Taka Mudariki a study and vocationalization of secondary schooling. All three were

reported on to the 2nd National Education Commission, integrated into the report, and published.

The first external request from outside Botswana was to assist as a Consultant to the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands in Pretoria on an Evaluation SACHED (1993). There followed a series of honorary positions as External Examiner at the University of Zimbabwe, University of Swaziland and most recently the University of Dar es Salaam for four years. There were also many one-off thesis and dissertation examinations from various universities in South Africa, Australia and elsewhere. A common deficiency in nearly all of the graduate students work lay in their literature reviews, a deficiency that often reflected insufficient access to international journals, or research studies from elsewhere in Africa, even neighbouring countries. Books, usually dated, were drawn on from Europe and North America and usually cited without establishing the context and why they were relevant to the theme of the dissertation. This reflected a general inability to deal with comparative materials.

Over the twelve years at the University of Botswana I worked closely with the Botswana Educational Research Association. We had a "CEIG" or Comparative Education Interest Group. We tried to enthuse staff concerning the injection of comparative perspectives into their teaching. I helped edit a report of a workshop on comparative education. We produced a regular issue of the **BERA News** and included information on comparative and history of education in it. Saches 1994 (the nine best papers were published with the assistance of Debswana in a book jointly edited with P. T. M. Marope) was held in Botswana and Saches 2001 returned to Gaborone, for a large integrated (merged) conference with Boleswa, Kenton, EASA and SASE.

The list of publications below is like the tip of an iceberg, as throughout my career the emphasis on applied reports of use to decision makers was paramount. Most of these are never published or belong to the agency requesting and paying for the consultancy. For example, I returned a number of times after 1991 to PNG to do studies for the National Institute of Research, the Papua New Guinea Higher Education Project of the Commission on Higher Education on Teacher Education Coordination. I also made a report to the Vice Chancellor, University of Papua New Guinea, on planning for a 3rd University in the highlands of the country.

Being resident in Botswana also made possible some involvement again in Namibia. My first ever visit there was in mid-1992 for a workshop on research priorities. Since then I have been back often and have been slowly working on a biographical study that would build on my personal experiences starting in 1952.

The Ministry of Education in Gaborone never approved a study that a group of us carried out in 2003 for Unicef on education for children in remote communities in Botswana. It had 54 recommendations. Concerned about the silence imposed on us, a few of us decided to rewrite the recommendations into a series of 700 word weekly columns for a local newspaper, called "Issues

in Education” in **The Mmegi/Monitor**. These began in May 2004 and by April 2008 up to 194 columns will have been published, with Dorcas Molefe and Owen Pansiri, based on research and employing a comparative perspective. Some of them (unfortunately not all) can be accessed on the web. As in Papua New Guinea, the judicious use of the press constitutes a valid means to communicate about educational research and related issues to the public.

Books and Monographs from Botswana

- Weeks, Sheldon G. with A. Mogwe, D. Molefe, K. Motshabi, S. Ndzinge, and O. Pansiri. (2003) **Basic Education for the Children of the RADS**. Gaborone, Unicef and Ministry of Education, 110 pages.
- with T. Mudariki, S. Ndzinge and G. Tsayang, **Evaluation of Tirelo Setshaba: Final Report**, November, 1997. Gaborone.
- with T. Mudariki, K. Motshabi and D.M. Malikongwa, **Survey of Private Vocational Training Institutions in Botswana**, February, 1997. Gaborone, Government Printer, ISBN 99912-1-226-4
- with P.T.M. Marope, co-editor, **Education and National Development in Southern Africa**, CEIG, Botswana Educational Research Association and Southern African Association of Comparative and History of Education [1996].
- with L. Mafela, co-editor, special issue of, **Mosenodi: Journal of the Botswana Educational Research Association**, Vol. 3, No. 1 and 2, 1995, 1 to 103. [

Chapters and Articles

- Weeks, Sheldon G. (2005) *Pre-vocational secondary education in Botswana*. In Lauglo J. and R. Maclean (eds.) **Vocationalisation of Secondary Education Revisited**. Dordrecht, Netherlands, Springer. pp. 93-147 [published for the World Bank and UNEVOC].
- Weeks, Sheldon G. (2004) *Higher education in Botswana*. In Teferra, D. and P. Altbach (eds.) **Higher Education in Africa: An International Reference Book**. Richmond, Indiana: University of Indiana Press. pp. 182-194.
- with Molefe, Dorcas (2001) 'National Service — Is it a Thirteenth Year of Education? The Rise and Fall of an Innovation in Botswana', **Africa Today**.
- 'Search for Quality and Equality: The case of Papua New Guinea', in Welch, Anthony ed. **Quality and Equality in Third World Education**. New York, Garland Press, 2000, pp. 223-250.
- 'Raising the Quality of Teacher Preparation: Recent Trends in Teacher Development'. In Yandila, C. D. et. al. (eds.). **Improving Education Quality for Effective Learning: The Teacher's Dilemma**. Gaborone: Ministry of Education, 1998, pp. 57-61.
- with Molefe, Dorcas; Mudariki, Taka and Tsayang, Gabatshwane (1997) 'Maximising Learning Opportunities for Tirelo Setshaba [Botswana's unique non-military national service]'. **Journal of Post-Compulsory Education**. Volume 2, Number 1, 1997, 69-81.
- 'The Crisis in NGOs in South Africa: a Case Study of SACHED'. In Lynch, James and C. and S. Modgil (eds.). **Educational Development, Volume Four: Non-Formal and Non-Governmental Approaches**. London: Cassells, 1997, 214-222.
- 'Anti-vocational Education and Training for Senior Secondary School Students—A Botswana Case Study'. In Watson, Keith and C. and S. Modgil (eds.). **Educational Dilemmas: Diversity and Debate. Volume Four: Quality in Education**. London, Cassells, 1997, 365-374.
- with Mautle, Gaontatlhe, 'Teacher Incentives in Botswana: The Debate—Pro and Con'. In Watson, Keith and C. and S. Modgil (eds.). **Educational Dilemmas: Diversity and Debate. Volume One: Teachers, Teacher Education and Training**. London: Cassells, 1997, 278-289 [an earlier version of this appears in Charakupa, R.; J. Odharo and M. Rathedi (eds.). **Botswana's Challenge for Quality Education into the 21st Century**. Gaborone: Ministry of Education, 1996, 74-86].
- 'Course Syllabus EMC601: Integrated Foundations of Education'. In Ballentine, J.; F. M Hammack; E. King; C. H. Persellm, and T. C. Wagenaar (eds.). **Teaching the Sociology of Education: Syllabi and Instructional Materials**. Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association, 1996, 333-337.
- 'Educational Research Policy and Planning: A Third World Perspective', in Burchfield, Shirley, ed. **Research for Educational Policy and Planning** Macmillan Botswana, Gaborone, 1995, 32-39.
- with T. Mudariki, 'Vocationalisation of Senior Secondary Education.', in **Reports and Policy Studies of the National Commission on Education 1992-1993: Annexes - Volume 2**. Gaborone: Government Printer, 1994. A12—1-52.
- with G. Mautle, "The State and the Teaching Profession: Teacher Incentives in Botswana", **International Journal of Educational Development**, Vol. 14, No. 3, July 1994, 339-347.
- Papua New Guinea 1973-1993—the late development effect? **Comparative Education**, 1993, 261-274.
- 'Building Educational Research Capacity in Botswana', **BERA Newsletter**, 1993, 5-11.
- with G. Mautle, 'Implications of Educational Structures', **Mosenodi: Journal of the Botswana Educational Research Association**, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1993, 3-12. [50 percent]
- 'Who Decides Educational Research Priorities', In Prah, Kwesi, ed. **Social Science Research Priorities in Namibia**. University of Namibia, Windhoek, 1993 .

V— Conclusion

Mine has been an unusual journey, and it is not yet over. The many other aspects of it that are left out of this short talk would take days to recount. I have tried to touch on some highlights in relation to comparative education and research and how many concerns enriched my life. Certain core values have been sustained throughout, for example, the concerns for self-determination, self-reliance, use of mother tongue, the recognition of diversity (instead of homogeneity), liberty and equality across all dimensions (gender, location, ethnic background, and so on), integration across subjects, the importance of context and the analysis of who benefits from policies and actions.

Having joined CIES around 1962, I have also gone on to become a member of BAICE, ANZCIES and now Saches, BERA and NERA. For BERA I was chair of the “Comparative Education Interest Group” and edited one volume on comparative education. I have attended all of Saches’s annual meetings, beginning with the second in 1992. I served as President of Saches for two terms, as allowed by the constitution. I also have edited Saches’s journal **SARE with EWP** (1998-2004), produced their electronic **eNEWS** and been liaison person for SADC’s Joint Education Research Project. I am still a member of the SACHES executive today. I was also involved in the consultancy to South Africa, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe that helped to select centres of specialization for SADC (2001 and 2002).

My first World Council of Comparative Education Societies Congress was in Prague in 1992 (though I had sponsored staff from Papua New Guinea to participate in prior congresses, I had not gone myself, even after a delegation had come to Waigani from Japan to invite me). Since then I have been able to go to all the other World Congresses that have followed. For three Congresses I chaired the Commission on Lifelong Learning (and handed on to others after Chungbuk). I was able to attend a number of CIES conferences in the 1980s and 1990s, the last three being Toronto in 1999, San Antonio in 2000, and Washington, DC in 2001. As President of SACHES I attended WCCES Executive Meetings where and when possible between 1998 and 2002.

Any overriding concern through all these endeavours has been to promote the value of sound comparative and historical research, and teach that the two go together. There is a need to be flexible and open to new knowledge and approaches. When I attended an “All-African” comparative education conference in Nairobi in June 1994, I was distressed over how many of the papers were still caught in a time warp that went back to when they did their graduate studies. For various reasons many academics had failed to keep learning. The challenge before us all now is to find ways to keep on at the cutting edge of our disciplines and concerns as comparativists.

It is good to be back in Dar again.



Sheldon G. Weeks giving talk in Nkrumah Hall, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 18 September 2005