

THE CHALLENGE OF AFRICA

K. A. Busia

K. A. BUSIA ON AFRICA



K. A. BUSIA ON AFRICA

Volume 1

THE CHALLENGE
OF AFRICA



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

THE CHALLENGE OF AFRICA

K. A. BUSIA

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

 **B F I**
BUSIA FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

Published in cooperation with
BFI in celebration of its silver anniversary

First published in 1962 by Frederick A. Praeger, Inc.

This edition first published in 2023

by Routledge

4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge

605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an
informa business*

© 1962 Frederick A. Praeger, Inc.

© 2023 Busia Foundation International

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-032-32672-6 (Set)

ISBN: 978-1-032-24793-9 (Volume 1) (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-24851-6 (Volume 1) (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-28040-8 (Volume 1) (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003280408

Publisher's Note

The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original copies may be apparent.

Disclaimer

The publisher has made every effort to trace copyright holders and would welcome correspondence from those they have been unable to trace.

New Introduction to the Reissue of 2023

From August 9-13, 1954, the School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University organised a conference on “Contemporary Africa” in Washington. The conference was attended by over 700 experts from Britain, Africa and America. The closing banquet was chaired by Mr Ralph Bunche of the United Nations, and Dr K. A. Busia was one of the principal speakers.

His address on that occasion was so moving that it brought tears into the eyes of many in the audience. Mr Ralph Bunche shook Busia by the hand as soon as he had finished speaking, and the audience cheered for over ten minutes. The full text of the speech is reproduced below:

I would first of all like to take this opportunity to express on behalf of those of us who have been guests at this conference our thanks to the School of Advanced International Studies for organising it.

I am specially grateful, too, that the main theme of the conference has been “Contemporary Africa”. The increasing interest which the United States is taking in our continent fills us with hope for the future.

As Mr. Nitze has said, the papers and discussions we have had during the last few days have revealed how extremely complex are the problems which face us in Africa today. Even the most optimistic may well ask if we have any reasonable cause for hope.

I think we have cause for hope. My confidence is based on the belief that the potentiality of Africa, what will ultimately shape her future, does not lie in her material resources, but in the unpredictable mystery of her human resources. This unpredictable but determining factor of man himself is often ignored in our analysis.

In my view, there are two challenges that face mankind in the twentieth century. There is the challenge presented by the atom bomb, the latest symbol of man's ever widening conquest of nature, which nevertheless threatens mankind with annihilation.

There have been two strands in man's quest for knowledge and truth; the first which was predominant in the heyday of Greece, and for a long time after, was the quest for the understanding of man himself; his nature, his society, his goals, and the meaning of his earthly existence.

The second strand is the one with which Europe and America have been largely pre-occupied for the last two hundred years or so: the search for the understanding and conquest of nature.

The second challenge of the twentieth century derives from the quest for the understanding of man himself. That challenge does not offer the possibility of annihilation but of survival.

The discovery made from the long and arduous quest along tortuous paths of learning for the understanding of the nature of man and society does not appear to be startling or revolutionary. It is merely the apparently commonplace discovery that mankind is one species, and that we all share a common humanity; or as John Masefield would put it: We are: "Brothers akin, questing awhile in the rooms of a beautiful inn."

Commonplace as this may seem, it does really present the nobler challenge of our time. We are apt to divide men into primitive and civilized, superior and inferior, and so find justification for injustice, or selfish greed, or the exercise of

power, or benevolent paternalism. But the stark fact is that the earth is inhabited by Man. There is no Primitive man or Civilized man. Some men live in primitive conditions, and others in civilised conditions, but there is only one species of man on the earth.

I think this both important and relevant to the problems we have been discussing this week. The conditions of life in Africa are harsh and primitive; but the inhabitants of Africa have the intelligence, the spirit, and the capabilities of Contemporary Man. Therein lies our ground for optimism.

Why must America take an interest in Africa? Various good reasons have been given: for self-preservation, in the interest of peace, to secure strategic bases, for the interchange of goods and services, to secure Africa against communism, to help raise the standards of living of the African. Laudable as these reasons are, they stem from either a negative or materialistic approach to the problem.

I think international questions might be approached by focusing much greater attention on man himself than on the conditions of his life.

I would plead with you in America and Europe to help us in Africa first of all by expressing your faith in us as belonging like yourself to the "old proud pageant of man"

Show by your actions towards us, whether in the New World or the Old, that you accept and believe in the fact that we all share a common humanity. That this can be done, and glimpses of what it could achieve, have been shown at this conference.

We in Africa can and will respond to the outstretched hand, our hearts can beat in tune to the warmth of friendship, our hands can turn to new skills, our minds are open to new ideas.

This human approach does indeed involve practical tasks; but they will be rightly directed towards the achievement of a true and positive goal.

I believe that the positive goal we must aim at is the creation of a world community of free men, bound by ties of friendship and mutual respect, united by fundamental agreement in the democratic way of life, and by faith in the equality and dignity of man, freely co-operating for the enrichment of human life by the unhindered interchange of our diverse gifts.

To aid in this common purpose we in Africa offer our richest potential – the unpredictable mystery of our manhood and womanhood

“Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom’d caves of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air”

We ask you to help us through the communication of ideas and skills, and the interchange of goods and services, on the basis of our common humanity, to develop our human potential; we shall then together solve not only the problems of Africa, but also through the links of friendship, indeed of brotherhood, that we shall thus forge, we may discover a new way of creating a world society in which Homo Sapiens may live a richer, fuller life, free from war, and from the haunting fear of annihilation.

We in Africa contemplate the future with hope, because we believe mankind will rise to the challenge of our time, by recognising our common humanity and by shouldering the responsibilities that that recognition entails. We are happy to have evidence that America, this great nation that has won for herself the leadership of the world, intends to play a leading role in this heroic adventure of building a world community of free men freely associated for the realization of man’s highest aspirations.

A Note on *K.A. Busia on Africa*: An Anniversary Set

The idea for the establishment of the Busia Foundation was conceived of by Mrs. Naa Morkor Abrefa Busia (1924–2010) to honour and perpetuate the memory of her late husband Professor Kofi Abrefa Busia (1913–1978) and remind his communities of his ideas and ideals. Busia had an enthusiastic commitment to democracy as the “moral language” of all humanity and to equality of all persons. It has been observed that Busia’s ideas have survived the radical populism of the 1960s, the militarism of the 1970s and the 1980s and emerged vindicated in the 1990s. It was to honour these ideas and ideals, and the way he tried to put them into practice over his short term of office as Prime Minister of the Second Republic that the Busia Foundation was established. The Busia Foundation was formally launched in July 1998 in commemoration of Busia’s 85th birthday, with Busia Foundation International established three years later. Among the aims and objectives of the Foundations are to preserve and disseminate Busia’s ideas and ideals widely by promoting and fostering his concerns for human rights, and the basic needs of people and civic education through a celebration of their vibrant culture. An anchoring task of this aspiration is to establish and maintain a library and resource center and to publish or assist in the publication of his books, little-known articles and unpublished papers, an aspiration started by the republication of the three books of this set.

Prof. Busia published five books in his lifetime, the first his revised doctoral dissertation *The Position of The Chief in The Modern Political System of Ashanti* (1951) remains today a classic, still in print seventy years after first being published. *Urban Churches in Britain: A Question of Relevance* (1966) is remarkable for being the first sociological study by an African scholar of the British rather than the other way around as it had been for centuries. Commissioned by The World Council of Churches as a part of his World Studies of churches in mission, though it is a model in its approach, and its critique of its subject courageously honest, it remains a study of its time and place. Busia's other three books that comprise this set, though also of their time and place, concern an Africa in the throes of dynamic change and retain a relevance that make them worthy of consideration that republication will bring.

The Challenge of Africa (1962), *A Purposeful Education for Africa* (1964) and *Africa in Search of Democracy* (1967) between them are a comprehensive view into Prof. Busia's concerns published in an incredibly productive five-year period. The three books are together a wonderful reflection of Prof. Busia's work and thinking about the rapidly changing Africa of his day. His was the Africa new to independence, undergoing a thorough going soul searching on how to create the institutions that will craft new complex nations out of old equally complex societies. They have proved prescient in their articulation of the issues we are still facing to establish security and stability for ourselves and control our own natural and human resources. Busia's commitment to understanding how to pass on the heritage of the past, to cope with the present, and prepare for the future remains a constant thread throughout these works, all of which raise questions that remain with us. In dedicating his life to establishing viable liberal democracies on the African continent where each person was "his brother's keeper" Busia showed his firm conviction that liberal democracies are not an invention of ancient

Greece, but a reformulation of traditional ideas of communal caring and governance by consensus, writ large on a more complicated sense of collectivity.

Busia Foundation International is pleased to present this set *K. A. Busia on Africa* bringing these seminal works together in commemoration of the 110th anniversary of his birth and in celebration of the establishment of the Foundation. The studies are published in their entirety, but each of them with new introductions. *Where A Purposeful Education for Africa* is given another introduction by the series editor his daughter H.E. Professor Abena P.A. Busia, we are pleased to present *The Challenge of Africa* and *Africa in Search of Democracy* with new introductions which are the works of Prof. Busia himself. The on-going process of organizing the Busia archives led to the discovery of two scarcely known public presentations by Busia which now serve as wonderful introductions in his own words to the concerns of those two books. Shortly after Busia became the first African Professor at the University of Ghana in 1954, he attended the School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University conference on "Contemporary Africa". The address he gave as the principal speaker at the closing banquet is published here for the first time as the new introduction to *The Challenge of Africa*. This talk, given eight years before the publication of that volume, reveals how early in his career he started grappling with the issues the book covers. A decade after that dinner-time address, Busia's reputation as a fighter for democracy was firmly established. That Prof. Busia, at the time leader of Ghana's opposition in exile, was honoured to be asked, by the society for individual freedom, to speak at Runnymede on 15 June 1965 in commemoration of the seven hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta, makes this clear. That address now serves as the introduction to *Africa in Search of Democracy*. We hope that the republication of these works, making his own words more readily accessible will encourage the serious study of

his ideas which must be the basis on which his legacy is built.

Abena P.A. Busia
Brasilia, Brazil October 2022
For Busia Foundation International
Akosua G. Busia, President

The CHALLENGE
of AFRICA

K. A. Busia

BOOKS THAT MATTER

Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher

64 University Place, New York 3, N. Y., U. S. A.

77-79 Charlotte Street, London W. 1, England

First published in the United States of America in 1962 by

Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., Publisher

Second printing, 1964

© 1962 by Frederick A. Praeger, Inc.

All rights reserved

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 62-21607

Manufactured in the United States of America

To My Wife



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>