

SIX AFRICAN PARAGRAPHS

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Here I am, where I ought to be.

Isak Dinesen (Karen Blixen)

Out of Africa

Blessed are the humble, and the teachable who, like the Shepherds, know they know nothing, or like the Wise Men who know they do not know everything.

Fulton Sheen



Somewhere in the Sahara at the turn of the millennium, at dusk.

1

“Nothing is equal to nothing, because nothing represents nothing.”, as the Brazilian philosopher Olavo de Carvalho (1947-2022), whom I had the pleasure of meeting in the 1990s, once said. *Persona non grata* in the short-sighted eyes of the Mainstream Brazilian Media and, obviously,

detested by Her Majesty the Political Correctness, Olavo, as usual, was right in his description of nothingness, that is, of that which is not and cannot be known or expressed, as the pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides of Elea had already made sufficiently clear two and a half millennia before him. In any case, in geographical terms, nothingness does not fail to find a certain identity in desert nature, since silence usually reigns there, with few or no visual attractions at all – always taking into account that the eyes are our most powerful sense in terms of apprehending external reality, with the ears coming in second place.



Timbuktu, in the centre of Mali, for centuries a key city in the African slave trade.

2

Africa contains the largest of all deserts on Earth: the Sahara, the desert par excellence, as the name suggests, since that is what the Arabic word *sahara* means. Stretched out like tentacles, its sands spread across eleven countries (Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Western Sahara, Sudan and Tunisia) and, carried by the African winds, reach South America, through the so-called “transatlantic transport”.



Orthodox wedding in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia

3

Founded in 330, at the time of the Christianization of the ancient Kingdom of Axum, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (in Amharic, የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን) has tens of millions of faithful and belongs to the sextet of the Oriental Orthodox churches (i.e., the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church). A closed state, therefore, with no access to any ocean or sea, Ethiopia is part of the Horn of Africa (together with Somalia, Eritrea and Djibouti), a peninsula that almost touches the already Asian Arabia and points towards the ultra-Asian India, a country in which one finds the whole faces of the Asian continent; India is, in fact, an authentic East of the East itself.



Outskirts of Windhoek, capital of Namibia: Martha Muulya, one of the founders of the association called Penduka.

4

I was in Namibia in 2001, and one of the best memories I have of that country is my meeting with Miss Martha Muulya, who showed me the headquarters of the Namibian association called “Penduka”, a word that, in local language, stems from the phrase Jesus said to the paralytic: “Get up and walk!” (Jo 5,8-10). Founded in 1992 by two women, the Dutch Christien Roos and the Namibian Martha Muulyau, Penduka brings together disabled women who are willing to achieve individual, social and economic emancipation through the practice of craftwork. It is, undoubtedly, an example to be followed in Africa as a whole.



Somewhere in Central Africa in 2011: the relentless African fight against communicable diseases.

5

In Africa, dangers tend to increase in the opposite proportion to the size of the beasts, which are always lurking. “In Africa, the insect is more dangerous than the beast, and the microbe even more so than the insect.”, says Pierre Bertaux. This may be the reason why African statuary has so often a gruesome aspect. Situated between two oceans (the Atlantic and the Indian) and having the shape of a question mark put exactly in the centre of the emerged landmasses, Africa, the second largest of all continents, is like a huge island with two great deserts (one in the North, the other in the South); its coast, although very extensive, is inhospitable for navigation and the formation of ports. No wonder, Africa has always been so isolated from the rest of the world: “Deserts in the North and in the South, savannas and forests in between.”, is how Leo Frobenius sums up the situation.



Somewhere in Tanzania in mid-2001

6

Loosely translated, the Swahili phrase on the gigantic poster means that, wherever someone is, there will always be a bottle of Coca-Cola waiting for him, and in the right size (read: large). Consumerism and mass culture – both strategies of the New World Order – have, as we can see, already reached Africa (the continent in which our species was born) and put down their roots. Concluding these six African paragraphs, I make my own the words of Giovanni da Salara: “The Orwellian nightmare described in the book entitled *1984* has become reality: human race is now enslaved by a central power, which is the NWO. Let us remember that the Earth has always been the natural home for millions of different species; today it is dominated by only one: ours (cf. Stephen Emmott. *10 Billion*, Londres, Penguin Books, 2013). The planet will certainly survive human folly, just as it survived the natural catastrophes that occurred at the end of the Palaeozoic and Mesozoic eras several million years ago. The main question is

another: will we survive ourselves?" (*Inverno global. A Nova Ordem Mundial: ordem nova, ideia antiga*, Rio de Janeiro, Benedictus, 2022).



The water seller in Marrakesh, with the North African Moon as his companion.