

## WHITHER AFRICAN FREEDOM?

**EACH AND EVERY** African country has a national day. In the beginning National Days were full of pomp and pageantry, and leaders would beat their chests and wax lyrical about national pride. But it is all subdued now. National Days are still public holidays, maybe parade, maybe broadcast by the leader. And you don't need an opinion poll to determine that the majority of the population do not connect National Day with the momentous occasion when African countries began life as independent nations.

All National Days on the continent of Africa started off as Independence Days. So all National Days mark the day when modern African nations took off, so to speak. But how? Some say it was the day when the nations *shook off* their colonial masters: Some call it *achieving* independence. Others say the countries were *liberated* from colonialism. So the countries must have existed before the first National Day. True. So what about the general *feeling* that the National Day marked the birth of the country? So when were the countries actually born? Answer: **1884 - Africa's Annus Horribilis!** Really!

But how many Africans today are aware of this horrible year when the destiny of Africa and African peoples was hijacked and bastardised - *literally*!?

Africa was transformed: "*The transformation was rained on our people. A transformation that would disfigure us permanently. A transformation that would fuel revolution without evolution. The transformation has no father. It has no mother either. Yet the transformation is compelling us. It is propelling us! And it is going to impale us. A nasty, bastard transformation!*" - Yunhouse Principal Character, Cyril Naikule, writes in his memoirs, *Something To Write Home*

**The Yunhouse Story** is about Africans who totally reject everything about the Berlin Conference of 1884: the ridiculousness of Europeans gathering around a map of Africa to slice to up an entire continent, the absurdity that they can claim the slices as colonial possessions, the inhumanity that they can take possession of the portions together with the inhabitants who were to be humiliatingly coerced into becoming citizens of some of sort by a process called the pacification of the natives. Yunhouse residents form themselves into the [Berliner Cult](#) (see tale). Yunhouse war cry: ***We shall never be pacified!***

Ghana was the first African country to break the colonial yoke on 6 March 1957. Kwame Nkrumah told the other Africans, "Ghana's independence is meaningless unless the whole of Africa is liberated from colonialism".

Forty years later Julius Nyerere of Tanzania reminded Africans ([Africa Must Unite](#)): "Forty years ago we recognised Ghana's independence as the first triumph in Africa's struggle for freedom and dignity. It was the first success of our demand for the international respect which is accorded free peoples....For centuries we had been oppressed and humiliated as Africans. The humiliation of Africans became the glorification of the others. So we felt our African-ness. We knew that we

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were one people, and that we had one destiny regardless of the artificial boundaries which colonialist had invented. Since we were humiliated as Africans we had to be liberated as Africans”



Readers of **The Yunhouse Story** say the novel’s characters resemble real life African freedom fighters, such as Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere. Naturally, recent African history is definitely the source of inspiration. But there are critical differences in experiencing these characters. The novel is an excuse to dream without boundaries: if it can be imagined, the characters will feel it, say it and do it. Not quite the same as when one sits in a live audience and hears Kwame Nkrumah say: “Seek ye first the political kingdom and the rest shall be added unto thee”. And what if we took the wrong steps in this political kingdom?, a member of the audience could ask. Don’t worry, says Kwame Nkrumah, most important is that “We have the right to govern, and even misgovern ourselves”.

What do we do now?, we ask these our inspiring leaders. Julius Nyerere answers: *“A new generation of self-respecting Africans should spit in the face of anybody who suggests that our continent should remain divided in the shame of colonialism...Unity will not end our weakness, but until we unite, we cannot even begin to end that weakness...The second phase of the liberation of Africa is going to be much harder than the first. But it can be done. It must be done. Empower Africa through unity, and Africa shall be free, strong and prosperous...My generation led Africa to political freedom. The current generation of leaders and peoples of Africa must pick up the flickering torch of African freedom, refuel it with their enthusiasm and determination, and carry it forward”*



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