Abstract

This paper provides a biographical sketch of Pan African activist-scholar David L. Horne and chronicling over forty years of Pan African organizing and scholarly contributions. In addition, the paper explores the significance of his experiences via the Sixth Pan African Congress in Tanzania in 1974, his active participation in the All African People’s Revolutionary Party, and his contribution in organizing the African Diaspora as the Sixth Region of the African Union. Horne has chaired the Pan African Studies Department at California State University at Northridge, served as editor of the Journal of Pan African Studies of the Department of Africana Studies at California State University at Northridge, and the Journal of African Studies.

Pan-Africanism is a practical, achievable and valid objective, but it will be and must be accomplished through an accumulation of small-scale and large-scale interventions rather than as one big ceremonious event.¹

Leadership should be respected, but to be maintained, such respect must be consistently earned; and mutual respect between leadership and the constituency must be practiced relentlessly.²

¹ Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies, vol.11, no.8, June 2018
Preface

I met David L. Horne soon after finishing my master’s degree while working at a community college. I began to “sit at his feet” to learn from and work with him because he is a senior and seasoned Pan African scholar-activist. I have also worked with and presented on panels with him on a few local efforts. In this work, I draw upon our numerous conversations, my work with him, and my reading of his works concerning the life and experiences of a Pan African scholar-activist. Horne has attempted to implement the works of notable Pan Africanists such as Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. DuBois, and Kwame Nkrumah. Hence, I explore his major experiences such as the significance of the Sixth Pan African Congress in Tanzania in 1974, participation in the All African People’s Revolutionary Party, and his contribution in organizing the African Diaspora as the Sixth Region of the African Union.

Introduction

From Gainesville, Florida to establishing his base in Los Angeles, California in the mid-1970s, Horne has shown commitment and dedication to African people, and their descendants in his professional, community, and international work. Horne demonstrates his commitment to the improvement of the material quality of life for African people and the increase of human respect and dignity through his work as a scholar-activist, chairing the Pan African Studies Department at California State University at Northridge and serving as editor of the Journal of the Pan African Studies and Journal of African Studies at the university. In addition, he founded Reparations United Front (RUF), a coalition organization of reparations organizations in Southern California. He also founded the Sixth Region Diaspora Caucus (SRDC), a coalition organization of Pan African oriented organizations working to accept the call from the African Union to join the African Union as the Sixth Region.

Exploring Horne’s life and contributions requires an examination of his work as a Pan African thinker, leader, and activist. This paper begins with a brief discussion of Horne’s views on Pan Africanism and leadership, followed by an exploration of notable contributions he has made as a Pan African scholar-activist leader.

Conceptualizing Pan Africanism

Horne’s mother constantly reaffirmed her children in their African heritage. This was nurtured even further at the University of Florida in his senior year when he enrolled in three African history courses. Here, the seeds of Horne’s views and connection to Africa and Pan Africanism began to germinate. As a Pan Africanist, Horne is sincere in his commitment to continue the work of Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. DuBois, and Kwame Nkrumah.
Horne conceptualizes Pan Africanism as a broad and “intellectually substantive concept”. He understands Pan Africanism as a paradigm and worldview in line with Ubuntu, or togetherness/collectiveness. In addition, he says that it is a set of theories linking African people across time, place, and space. Furthermore, he views Pan Africanism as a set of methodological and analytical approaches. Commenting on the vastness of Pan Africanism, Horne clearly states, “Pan-Africanism is not now, and never has been, a simple, one-dimensional concept”. In an effort to make Pan Africanism operational and functional, he contends, Pan-Africanism is a practical, achievable and valid objective, but it will be, and must be accomplished through an accumulation of small-scale and large-scale interventions rather than as one big ceremonious event.

Horne challenges Pan Africanists to link their conceptual ideas with pragmatic work, thus, he clearly values and finds relevance in Pan Africanism in the broadest sense by linking theory and praxis. He conceives Pan Africanism broadly, but measures its appropriateness and usefulness by its tangible and realistic effect. Horne posits that activist pan-Africanism is about combining ideological and analytical, which is applied pan-Africanism, a pan-Africanism in action in the real world.

Applied Pan Africanism, then, links theory and praxis, and therefore it is the positive and intentional effort, in thought and action, which he advocates. Horne recognizes diverse ideological strands, but he also values reasoned and sound judgement. To this end, the application of Pan Africanism in real world situations is observable and tangible. Horne argues that “One’s pan-Africanism should only be measured by one’s consistent work as a pan-Africanist: it is what one does that determines one’s pan-Africanist commitment, not merely what one says.”

Horne values scholarship, critical thinking, logic, analysis, and publishing. As a scholar, reasoned and informed analysis is essential. And in regards to critical thinking, he states in his 2005 book Straight to the Point, that “Critical thinking does not necessarily mean thinking and decision-making that is always correct; instead, it simply means thinking and decision-making based on reasoned judgment and choices made based on the best available information at the time.”

Horne does not expect Pan African activists to make the right decision in every situation. He does expect, however, sound, reasoned and logical analysis, assessment, and evaluation. On this basis, ‘Applied Pan Africanism’ is useful because the plan and strategy developed should be well informed and thought-out. In addition, critically thinking Pan African activists should not merely rehearse and recite Pan African lexicon and canonized thinkers, although they offer insight, guidance, and resources; not the gospel truth. For Horne, ‘Applied Pan Africanism’ requires knowledgeable, committed, and lucid servants of the people who are logical in their analysis.
Horne offers a conceptualization of Applied Pan Africanism requiring functional, pragmatic, and useful action that necessitates more than words on paper or from a podium. Applied Pan Africanism involves organizing and work. That is, establishing, forming, and shaping Pan African ideas, concepts, and strategies towards improving the material conditions and quality of life of African people and their descendants. In addition, Applied Pan Africanism increases human respect and dignity for African people and their descendants in a tangible way. Therefore, ‘Applied Pan Africanism’ must be noticeable, measurable, and palpable. And the focus on ‘Applied Pan Africanism’ raises at least two questions. First, has Horne conceptualized Applied Pan Africanism in such a way to justify his lack of scholarly publications as compared to some of his peers to value his activist contribution? And alternatively, is Horne really committed and does he value work over words whether written or spoken? An examination into how Horne views leadership and his leadership experiences provides answers to these questions.

**Leadership and Leadership Philosophy**

As a Pan African activist scholar, Horne has conceptualized, committed, and actualized ethical leadership and responsibility to African people and their descendants. He has routinely advocated for mutual respect, transparency, and the use of “common sense and mother wit”. Horne believes that community/group members should hold leaders accountable while leaders are accountable to their constituencies. In addition, those leaders, including himself, are evaluated based on their deeds and their ability and commitment to follow through as voices, advocates, and servants for their constituents. To this end, I evaluate David L. Horne in the context of his own ideas and concepts.

It is difficult to chronicle Horne's experiences and contribution as a Pan African scholar activist because he rarely discusses his contributions to the struggle in the first person or with a focus on his singular contributions. I believe this to be a long-standing deliberate attempt at keeping the focus on the struggle and the constituency, and not on himself. He watched his mother participate in teachers unions in his youth as well as observing and valuing the hard work and dedication of SNCC workers in the early ‘60s. Both taught him the value of group centered leadership and sacrifice. In addition, he has witnessed and grown leery and weary of leader-centered approaches to organizing and struggle as the leader takes center stage oftentimes with the struggle becoming more about the leader than the issues at hand. In addition, he is mindful of egotism that derails movements and organizations. On this point, Horne offers “General Principles of African American Leadership for the 21st Century” in his 2004 book entitled *Meeting Ma’at: The African Centered Handbook for Conducting Meetings*. For example:

> Any leader whose ambition for ego gratification, personal aggrandizement, and/or personal glorification supersedes the priorities of his/her constituent’s agenda must be held to account and either corrected or respectfully replaced.
In this principle, Horne cautions those in leadership positions to self-assess why they are in leadership positions. He reminds us that the leader’s desires and ambitions should not supplant the will of the people. Lastly, if the leadership is not supporting the agenda of the constituents, he places a challenge and responsibility on the constituents to address the misguided leadership. This is a valuable principle of focusing the objectives and responsibilities of the people she or he serves. It is consistent with the group-centered leadership he observed and valued in his youth.

Another example of a principle Horne offers towards ethical leadership in the 21st century is,

Any leader who benefits financially or famously from his/her leadership must in turn share such largess with the organization’s constituency and should expect to be held to account for this obligation.\textsuperscript{14}

Horne is not naïve to the fact that a degree of celebrity status and financial rewards may come with one’s leadership position. The question for Horne is: what does this mean for the people the leader serves? Horne does not expect the leader to live in squalor, but he does expect that the organization and/or constituency will also benefit. This is a valuable principle because, if the leader does not extend attention and resources to the group, then the leader ceases to be the leader and becomes a leech using the people’s plight to exploit and harvest attention and reward.

In addition to sharing these principles in his book, I have heard Horne routinely discuss his involvement in activism and organizing from Gainsville to Los Angeles, and around the world in the collective. It is more common to hear Horne refer to his scholar-activist involvements and contributions as being achieved by “we”. He is aware of the seductiveness of academia and how enticing self-centered leadership can be especially in a hyper-individualistic society such as the United States. Horne has adopted values and is mindful of pitfalls in an effort to avoid the trappings of leader-centeredness contributing to a long career dedicated to service.

Horne has served in numerous Pan African oriented leadership positions. In 2015-2016, Congresswoman Karen Bass nominated Horne to serve as the American Ambassador to the African Union.\textsuperscript{15} He has also been invited to and attended every African Union Technical Workshops on negotiating the African Union relationship with the African Diaspora from 2007 until 2016. In addition, he participated in writing and preparing the core document for the AU Global Diaspora Conference, 2012, in Sandton situated within the Johannesburg Municipality, Gauteng, in South Africa. He is currently the International Organizer for the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL). In 2005, the Los Angeles Wave Newspaper voted Horne as one of the 25 most influential Black leaders in Los Angeles.
Horne was also included in a recent book entitled, *Contemporary African Diaspora Leaders* recognizing him as an important late 20th early twenty-first century leader in the African Diaspora. I have also witnessed and spoken to people who faithfully read his columns, listen to his internet radio broadcasts, and attend the many local events, forums, panels, and/ or organizations to which Horne contributes. This illustrates that others view Horne as a leader. But how does Horne view leadership? In his book *Leadership Ma' at*, he briefly discusses African American leadership, explaining and illustrating his position that those who accept the responsibility of leadership are:

… held accountable for accurately representing, interpreting and articulating the interests of their constituency. The continuing responsibility and obligation of all effective Black leadership in those past eras was to maintain the integrity of the connection between the leader and the led. Debates, disagreements, disputes over philosophies, tactics and strategies of getting to ‘the Promised Land,’ never dissolved the affirmed imperative that leadership must always remember itself as a function solely of the interests of the constituency it speaks for, and never allow itself, or be allowed, to become a vehicle for personal vendettas and personal agendas. Credible leadership in the Black community was neither intended nor tolerated to lead itself. The violation of that principle and the non-correction of it in a timely fashion virtually always resulted in a de-legitimization of that leadership and the reduction to irrelevancy of the interests of the constituency.16

This quotation reveals that Horne values principled leadership with mutually respectful interactions between leadership and constituency. Ultimately, leadership is a moral and ethical servant of the people. He draws upon his knowledge and understanding of Black history to inform his analysis, and he also acknowledges disagreement and diversity of thought. Nevertheless, a group-centered leader remains focused on the will and desire of the people. Moreover, he cautions that historically, Black people have and will not tolerate ego driven self-centered leadership. For Horne, ‘Applied Pan African’ activists, scholar-activists, and leadership must be committed to the people and principled in thought and action. He values group-centered leadership, and cautions against leader-centered leadership. However, how does this reveal itself in Horne’s scholar-activist activities? Below, I explore a sample of Horne’s noteworthy contributions to African people and their descendants.
Becoming a Scholar-Activist

Coming out of Civil Rights organizing in Florida as an undergraduate and graduate student, Horne brought knowledge, skills, and organizational experiences to Los Angeles where he would pursue his doctorate. Horne was launched into organizing the Sixth Pan African Congress (6 PAC) of June 1974 while a doctoral student in African Economic History at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He was the Southern California chairman of the 6 PAC steering committee, the West Coast National Representative, and a member of the national executive committee for 6 PAC. Horne assisted in preparing the delegates from Southern California and ensured that the southern California group was well informed by providing them readings as well as bringing in guest speakers who had lived in Tanzania.17

To prepare the delegation, Horne drew upon his experiences in Florida where he was exposed to African history and intellectuals such as Kwame Nkrumah, the first Prime Minister and President of Ghana and British Historian Basil Davidson and his work on Africa. Earning his master’s degree in African Studies under the tutelage of Hunt Davis, Horne was encouraged to stay in the library and read. Years of study and absorbing information about Africa set Horne apart from many others. He intended to leave his activism in Florida and continue his development as a scholar in Los Angeles. However, once he arrived he resumed his role as an activist.

While attempting to stay focused on his studies at UCLA, Horne joined the African Activist Association and soon became its chair largely because of his background in African history and affairs; and with Jimmy Garrett and others already organizing for 6 PAC, as head of the African Activist Association, he was soon given the task of organizing again, based on his background and experiences in Florida. Thus, Horne asked the delegates with whom he worked to do the necessary homework before attending the congress. He learned as an activist in Florida to read, study, and analyze before speaking, advocating, and working on behalf of constituents. As the leader of the delegates who would speak, rightly or wrongly, for people of African descent in the United States in general and in Southern California more specifically, it was important for Horne that the delegates were competent and confident in the knowledge and understanding of African history and affairs.18 This reveals Horne’s commitment as a Pan African scholar-activist to the long, tedious, and dedicated study required to represent one’s constituency. Furthermore, he extended that expectation to those who work with him.

This commitment is further revealed when Horne joins the All African People’s Revolutionary Party (AAPRP). As head of the African Activist Association at UCLA, he became aware of a community meeting regarding the AAPRP. Interested in how they understood and used the thoughts and ideas of Kwame Nkrumah, Horne attended the meeting. What he soon discovered was that the meeting was about forming an AAPRP chapter in Los Angeles.
Horne, then, was among the first cadre of AAPRP members in Los Angeles. Upon receiving the AAPRP reading list, Horne saw that he had already read and engaged six of the thirteen books, with Nkrumah’s *Consciencism* being among the most influential. Horne was interested in Nkrumah’s (and other thinkers’) thoughts and ideas about African unity and self-reliance. Essentially, Horne had become a Pan African Unitarian, that is he advocated for and worked towards a fully functional and sovereign Africa. That is, *all* of Africa must be free.

Horne coveted reading, studying, engaging, and dialoguing about the works of different thinkers, issues, and movements. However, Horne was discouraged and ultimately left the AAPRP. He felt they were too dogmatic in the reading of canonized texts, resulting in their criticism of him for critiquing the likes of Nkrumah and others. For Horne, the readings presented information and arguments for consideration requiring critical thinking on the reader’s part. As an instructor in critical thinking, Horne asserts,

> The primary purpose of argument evaluation and critiquing is to determine the validity and credibility (soundness) of claims made and claims supported, what makes them so, and what weakens or strengthens them.

After the reading has been comprehended, analysis and assessment of the information, an argument must follow. Critical thinkers and (for the purpose here) activist Pan Africanists, must not blindly accept and adopt the arguments. Serious assessment of arguments is necessary for moving Africa and African people forward. For Horne, activist Pan Africanists must critically analyze texts, arguments, reports, proposals, etc. for cogency and integrity, not for parroting flawed and/or outdated strategies and approaches. Critical thinking, assessment, and when necessary counter-arguments are necessary. He continues,

> Counterexamples always aim at weakening an original argument, and counterarguments aim at destroying or nullifying an original argument. However, the end result can be one of three options: both counterexamples and counterarguments can weaken (dilute), wipe out (devastate or destroy), or have virtually no impact on original arguments.

This quote illustrates the complexity of critical thinking, logic, and argumentation. It provides insight into how Horne views and approaches analysis and argumentation. In his formative years as a Pan African scholar-activist, it is clear that, although Horne values action, he more importantly advocates for informed action. It is not enough to read a couple of authors, quote what they say, and now appear informed.
Horne advocates reading and studying broadly and thoroughly while being aware of both historic and contemporary issues affecting the topic or phenomena at hand. Evaluate the logic of the arguments, and from there, and only after careful consideration of the issues, a strategy and tactics is developed.

Over the years, I have heard Horne passionately comment on the lost art and skill of critical thinking and logical reasoning. The perils of blindly reading and accepting arguments, strategies, and positions of even some of the greatest thinkers is an option that African people and their descendants do not have. Consequently, Horne desires critical and reasoned exchange over important readings, issues, and concerns. Later, he writes a textbook on critical thinking contributing to the, hopefully, resurgence of critical thinking.

Pan African Leader Scholar-Activist

From August 31 until September 8 2001, Horne attended the “World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance” in Durban, South Africa. The Durban conference led to the Global Diaspora Conference in Barbados in 2002 at which Horne was a delegate. Seven hundred fifty African Americans, Afro-Canadians, and Caribbean contingents attended the conference. With tensions arising within the Global African Congress that formed in Barbados, Horne and others continued their Pan African efforts with a Pan African Diasporan Conference in Ghana, West Africa in 2007.23

After giving a presentation on Pan Africanism in Nigeria in 2005, Horne had a conversation with former general Ishola Williams from the Nigerian military and had decided to go into philanthropic work. Williams was then head of the Pan African Strategic and Policy Research Group (PANAFSTRAG). He shared with Horne his organizing work, his desire to have representation on the West Coast of the United States, and information on the African Union’s recent invitation to the African Diaspora to organize itself to become members of the African Union. Upon returning to the United States, Horne called a meeting for a new Pan African initiative.24

After an initial meeting in New York, Horne and others decided to organize a national conference to educate the West Coast on the news of the African Union's constitution. Article 3Q invited the Diaspora to come and join the African Union's efforts to form a Union of African States. The African Union is divided into five regions (North, South, East, West, and Central). The African Diaspora, the Sixth Region, would have to organize itself to accept the invitation and have a place in the African Union. Ultimately, Horne invited people from Nigeria, Tanzania, New York, the Caribbean, South America, et cetera. Many people from all over the world were able to meet in Los Angeles, and form the Sixth Region Diaspora Caucus (SRDC) in 2006.25

Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies, vol.11, no.8, June 2018
The main goal was to accept the African Union’s invitation and work towards the creation of the Union of African States. Beginning in Los Angeles, SRDC has established chapters in the Caribbean, Canada, the Netherlands, Israel, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Belize. In addition, SRDC established Memoranda of Understandings with other Pan African oriented organizations such as the Universal Negro Improvement Association in an effort to unify. The theme was “Unity Without Uniformity” and the objective was to connect organizations that were already established doing Pan African oriented work. SRDC sought a group effort, a collective effort, toward helping the African Union accomplish its goal and to get the Diaspora into the African Union. Since 2006, Horne attended most of the African Union meetings focused on the Diaspora as a delegate. As part of SRDC, Horne has been able to consistently work to organize the African diaspora. In addition, Horne and his colleagues continue to educate others, and support efforts for African Liberation Day (May 25\textsuperscript{th}), as well as All Africa Day.\textsuperscript{26}

The African Union set aside twenty seats in the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) of the African Union for the delegates from the 6\textsuperscript{th} Region. Charged with electing representatives from the Diaspora, SRDC developed a methodology for electing representatives from around the African Diaspora and has employed this methodology throughout the African Diaspora demonstrating its usefulness and effectiveness. SRDC has insisted that there must be an election holding town hall meetings to establish a Community Council of Elders in that respective community. Next, they would then post and publicize elections widely, so people can come, nominate, and elect those from the community who are known for doing work in and connected to Africa. At the time of this paper, the twenty seats have not been filled and SRDC is waiting for formal approval of their methodology from the African Union.\textsuperscript{27}

In addition to the Critical Thinking textbook and course discussed earlier; over the past several years, Horne has worked with and prepared students in the Department of Africana Studies at California State University at Northridge to attend the Annual Model African Union Conference. At the conference, students are able to participate in simulated African Union debates and exchanges learning about African Union structures, activities, and issues. For Horne, this is an effort to train youth to take leadership roles so they can be comfortable, competent, and confident in their knowledge, ability, and skills. This is consistent with another one of Horne’s principles of ethical leadership where he asserts that “leadership must train and instruct replacements and reinforcements.”\textsuperscript{28}

With this in mind, Horne and others organized and established the first Model African Union Diplomacia Parliamentary Honors Society (MAUDPHS) student organization, as an international body to train youth and community members in debate and diplomacy at California State University at Northridge in 2015.\textsuperscript{29} Horne shares that, “MAUDPHS members are sent to Africana Studies departments across the country and into community town halls to debate and educate others on the African Union’s “Agenda 2063”, and other Pan African topics”.\textsuperscript{30}
For Horne, this Pan African struggle must be passed on to subsequent generations to carry the proverbial torch, and continue the work. In time, they will train their own replacements to continue the Pan African struggle. This is consistent with Horne’s value of group-centered leadership. As he is engaging in group-centered leadership to accept the call of the African Union and assist in forming the Sixth Region of the African Union, he is actively training a new cadre of Applied Pan Africanists.

**Pan Africanism: Charging Forward**

Pan Africanism is not a finished product. There is still work to be done to improve the quality of life as well as increase the human respect and dignity of African people, and their descendants. David L. Horne has, and continues to, contribute to these efforts. As a Pan African leader and scholar-activist, he has modeled the long arduous hours of passion, study, and commitment necessary to be steadfast and consistent over four decades of struggle for Africa, African people, and their descendants. He has worked with and trained others interested and committed to join in the work as competent, analytical, and coherent servants of Africa and African people throughout the world. This glimpse into the life of a current Pan African leader scholar-activist only introduces the man and his life’s work. To be clear, his accomplishments came with certain sacrifices that are beyond the scope of this work including but not limited to scholarship and family. Nevertheless, what this glimpse does show is the commitment, dedication, perseverance, and work that Horne and other committed individuals have given to Africa, African people, and their descendants.

In my youth, we would commonly say, “Don’t talk about it, be about it!” when people would complain about issues. That is David L. Horne. In my experience learning from and working with him, he “talks the talk and walks the walk!” It is appropriate to end here with guidance, suggestions, and a charge from Horne towards the accomplishment and Pan African objectives:

*Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol.11, no.8, June 2018
If you claim to be a pan-Africanist and you are working for government, then you should be promoting, assisting and advocating some aspect of the AU’s multidimensional approach to pan-Africanism. If you are working with, or are otherwise involved with an NGO, you should focus some important energy on making sure the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional integrations, among other necessary African interconnected links, actually work (currently there are major problems left unattended, such as, for example, the refusal to exchange one another’s currencies for equivalencies, continuing to demand visas or their equivalents for country to country travel, and so on). If you are an artist, musician or craftsman, you should include in your daily work stringent efforts to promote, advocate and/or organize pan-African cultural integration events and combined country exhibits, concerts and the like. Pan-African cultural arts are an extremely valuable part of the equation and should not be lightly regarded. Pan-Africanism is not all politics and economics. If you are a student, demand that your instructors include pan-African courses in your curriculum and ensure there are pan-African books and research materials in your school library. Initiate pan-African clubs whenever and wherever you can. Hold African multicultural parties, panel discussions, and so on. Confront and challenge any attempts to denigrate Africa and its people. In other words, there is no limit to the Pan-African activities and creative projects in which one can get involved. It will be the accumulation of all these small tasks that will eventually lead to the huge accomplishment of real pan-Africanism in the current and future world.31
Notes


15 At the time of this paper, the nomination is still pending.


Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies, vol.11, no.8, June 2018


29 David L. Horne, interview by M. Keith Claybrook, Jr., 23 September 2016
