Learning from and Teaching Africans

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By

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE BOOK

I am in love with Africa, with the people, their languages, and their attitude to life. The "mazingira" – the environment, the colours, the food and the art. I have worked in Africa for extended periods of my life and am still involved in research together with PhD students at the University of Dar es Salaam. I have worked for longer periods in Tanzania, South Africa, Namibia and Kenya. I have also made consultancies in Senegal, Niger, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mali, Madagascar, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Ethiopia.

The first edition of this book, which appeared in 2021, was not written to reach a larger academic public. It was written for Norwegian and international friends. It was a hard-back book printed in 100 copies (98 have now been given away). I got about 40 enthusiastic letters from people who had read the book. The letters were written both in Norwegian, in English, in German and in Kiswahili. Several of the writers encouraged me to make a second edition more aimed at college students, academic staff and people working with development as consultants or in development agencies. I should add my encounter with Julius Nyerere and my involvement in the CERM-ESA programme with Moi University in Kenya as the host institution. I might make a comparison between the North-South projects I had been a part of. In order to fulfil this wish, I had to cut out some parts, which had been included in the first edition.

This second edition is aimed at college students with an interest in African countries, their languages, their way of looking at life. It dismantles the myth of the thousands of African languages and shows that many of them have millions of speakers and all of them are cross-border languages. Africans are not "anglophone", "francophone" or "lusophone". They are afrophone. It shows the harm many missionaries have done to Africa by transcribing African languages the way the languages sounded to them, making different written languages out of very close dialects. It shows how the organisation CASAS in Cape Town works with African linguists to harmonise the written forms of languages, which have been written differently through rivalry between missionaries who speak different

European languages. This harmonisation works as a macro strategy. Teachers in Africa, who run into the same problem in class-rooms where children speak rather different languages, use strategies at the micro level like code-switching and translanguaging. Such strategies are discussed towards the end of the book. In this book I also show some of the lessons I have learnt from some of my many consultancies in Africa.

The book should be easy to read as it is full of stories from my many years working with Africans. It shows the different time concept of many Africans, the importance of greetings. It tells about fruitful networks that have been built up between Nordic researchers and researchers in the South. I also discuss projects that aim at cooperation between universities in the North and the South. Why did two of the projects I have been involved in, LOITASA and CERM-ESA, succeed so well and a third one, TRANSLED, fail? What are the lessons learnt through such cooperation?

I have learnt a lot in Africa. I am grateful to some NORAD officers, like the late Dr. Sissel Volan, who helped my transition from the University of Oslo to the University of Dar es Salaam and also started my work as a development consultant. I am grateful to former colleagues at the UDSM like Prof. Abel Ishumi, Dr. Mwajuma Vuzo, Dr. Asaveli Lwaitama, Prof. Mwajabu Possi, Prof. Martha Qorro, Prof. Justinian Galabawa and colleagues at SUZA like M.A. Ameir Makame and Dr. Maryam Jaffar Ismail. I have also had fruitful cooperation in South Africa with Prof. Zubeida Desai, Prof. Harold Herman and Prof. Vuyokazi Nomlomo, all from the University of the Western Cape and with Prof. Leketi Malekela from the University of the Witwaterstrand.

The UNESCO Institute of Education (now of Lifelong Learning) in Hamburg has given me inspiration and tranquillity for my writing on Africa. I am especially grateful to the former Director of the Institute, Dr. Adama Ouane, from Mali and two of the editors of the journal *International Review of Education*, Dr. Christopher McIntosh and Dr. Stephen Roche.

The first of the readers of my earlier abridged edition of this book who encouraged me to expand on several subjects in that book and make it into a textbook for students interested in cross-cultural communication and education and development, was my former student Torill Aagot Halvorsen. As I describe in this book, Torill did great work in the NETREED project and later took her doctorate on the LOITASA project. We have spent so many wonderful days together in Tanzania. She is now a professor, herself

teaching master students and looking for suitable literature. I want to thank her for her encouragement to rewrite the first book in a more academic version. She also encouraged me to keep many of my stories from working in Africa.

Most of all I want to thank my partner, Tore Bjerkum, who has been my great support over the last six years. He has been with me to Tanzania three times and met several of my best friends there. He also attended many of my lectures. He has read several drafts of this new edition of the book, proof-read and given me good advice. He has also been able to turn my many colour pictures to black-white pictures – a wish from the publisher.

The best teachers on African ways of thinking that I have had have often formally been my students, either in Norway or in Africa. I have learnt so much from them.

LEARNING FROM AND TEACHING AFRICANS

The first encounter with Africa

The first time I came to Africa was in the fall of 1976. It was in connection with a UNESCO conference taking place in Nairobi, which I had helped plan when I was working in the planning section of the Ministry of Education in Oslo. Being in Nairobi, I wanted also to learn something about education in Kenya and asked the Norwegian Embassy to arrange a couple of visits for me to different teacher colleges.

These visits represented a head start into what became a life-time interest in Education in Africa. The first visit went to Nairobi Science Teacher Training College, a very modern looking college in Nairobi, built with generous development aid from Sweden. There were lots of signs of Swedish craftsmanship in the building. The language of instruction was English and most of the textbooks were from the US. When some of the staff noticed that I had a master degree in education from the University of Illinois, where some of the authors of the textbooks they used, were employed, they were interested in hiring me. I actually got an offer when they learnt that I was experienced in micro teaching. But I started wondering: How relevant was what these students learnt for their work as teachers in rural Kenya? What language would their prospective pupils speak?

I was fortunately also given the direction to another Teachers' College located in the country-side. It took me three hours to drive to the place. Much of the teaching was outdoors. The student teachers were engaged in carpentry, in gardening, in making fuel out of cow dung. They were performing a song and dance for me. The text was in Kiswahili and the instruments were traditional instruments and made by the teacher students themselves. I watched them making some of these instruments and noticed that the students spoke with each other and also the teacher in a local language. I was fascinated by what I saw and would have loved to have been at that college for several months to learn. Here I was not asked to teach and I would have been a misfit. At that point I did not even speak Kiswahili.

We had a young peace-corps friend who worked in an area around Mount Kenya. After the UNESCO conference was over, we drove to visit him. He had many local friends and spoke enough Kiswahili to get by. He told us that one of his best friends was a male teacher married to two women, the youngest also being a teacher. He had children with them both. I said I would love to meet them since I wondered what it was like for two women living together and sharing the same man. I would have thought there would be a lot of jealousy. So we went to meet them.

There were two spacious bed-rooms in the hut. The cooking was done outside. The husband shared the bed-room with the woman who was the least pregnant. They both had several small children walking about or being breast-fed. The youngest of the wives, Grace, spoke English quite well so I could converse with her. I asked her what it was like to share a husband. Was she not jealous when he slept with the other woman next-door? She said that on the contrary, she was happy when he was with the other one and let her have her sleep in peace. When she saw that I had difficulty believing this, she said: "You know, we are both cut, so sexual intercourse is very painful." At this point I knew hardly anything about clitoridectomy[1].I asked her why this custom was still going on. She answered: "Don't you know that? It is to take the sex away. Hawa (the name of the first wife) and I do not have any pleasure from sex. On the contrary; it hurts. We have recently agreed that we would be happy if our husband would take another wife. It would give us some relief." During our conversation Grace sat breast-feeding a baby boy. She remarked that she was happy that she recently had given birth to a boy because he would not be subjected to the mutilation that the girls went through. But I saw that there were a couple of young girls running around in the hut too. I asked her what would happen to her daughters when they were at the age when the clitoridectomy normally was performed. Then she looked at me with tears in her eyes and said: "This is the great dilemma I am thinking about day and night. If my daughters get cut, they will experience the same pains I go through both menstruating, having sex and giving birth. But cutting is part of our culture. If they are not cut, no Kikuyu[2] man will marry them".

[1] clitoridectomy is the surgical removal, reduction, or partial removal of the clitoris. It was at that time practised in all tribes in Kenya except the Luo tribe. It was not practised in Tanzania except among the Masai

[2] The Kikuyus are a group of Bantu people inhabiting East Africa. They are the largest ethnic group in Kenya (22%) and speak the Bantu Kikuyu language as a mother tongue. Their own name for themselves is Gikuyu, or Agikuyu. They live on

More than twenty years later when I had initiated a master programme in comparative and international education at the University of Oslo I happened to have a bright young male student from Somalia in my class. Both he and his mother were fluent speakers of both Norwegian and English, apart from Somali. They were both against female genital mutilation (FGM), which was, at the time, also practised in Somalia. I learnt that his mother organised Somali women living in Norway against this practice and succeeded in preventing many of them from going back to Somalia with their daughters to have this ritual performed.

Back to Norway

Not long after I came back to Norway I was appointed an Ass.Prof. at the University of Oslo, Institute for Educational Research, a position I held from 1977 to 2008, when I was forced to leave my tenured job because of the age discrimination in Norway. The Institute had split into two and I had been recruited to the "social education study alternative", which had mainly been created by radical students in opposition to the testing regime and in favour of using Marxist theories and qualitative research methods (Brock-Utne, 2009a). In 1981 I was asked by the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) to be a researcher at their Institute and take on a couple of jobs they had promised several organizations to fulfil. One of them was to write a background paper for a UNESCO conference to be held in New Delhi, India (Brock-Utne, 1981, l982). With a leave of absence from the University of Oslo I spent the year 1981/82 at PRIO together with researchers from all over the world. I developed a life-long friendship with the Chilean researcher, Ines Vargas, and the Afro-American researcher Julianne Traylor. Ines was the only woman in Salvador Allende's government. She was the Deputy Minister of Justice and had to leave the country. I was offered another two years at PRIO, which would have been enough for me to finish my doctorate. But the students at the University of Oslo wanted me back.

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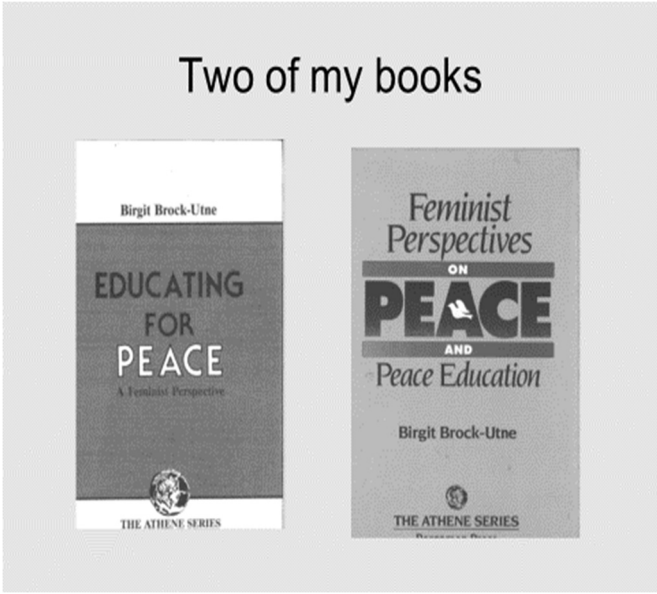
the whole territory of Kenya. However, the highest concentration can be found in Central Kenya, near Mount Kenya



The book *Educating for Peace – a Feminist Perspective* (Brock-Utne, 1985) started with the paper written for the UNESCO conference in New Delhi in 1981. I wrote the book in English. It was translated into Korean in 1986, into Norwegian in1987 and Italian in 1989. It became a textbook in several universities in the US. It was used a lot in the peace movement, both in the US and in Norway and Sweden. It was reprinted in the US in 1987 and 1989. I was invited twice to Korea to give lectures connected to topics in the book. I was also invited several times to the US to discuss with students who had my book as required reading. At Indiana University there were male professors in criminology and theology who had their classes read the book. The discussions with their students were heated and inspiring. They gave me food for thought for the doctoral thesis and my next book in peace education.

The book entitled*: Feminist Perspectives on Peace and Peace Education* (Brock-Utne, 1989) builds on my doctoral thesis from 1988. Though the title is rather similar, the content is very different. So is the writing style. *Feminist Perspectives* is a more academic book, where I also argue against my thesis so prominent in *Educating for Peace* that women are inherently more peaceful than men. I give examples of women who have been violent and war-mongers. I end up with more of a doubt about the peacefulness of women than in *Educating for Peace*.

I did not get any more leave from my Institute at the University of Oslo after the summer of 1982. On the contrary; when I returned to my tenured job at the UiO, I was made the study director. I had to postpone finishing my doctoral thesis until it, in 1987, was my turn to have a sabbatical year.

I became aware of the fact that a Tanzanian scholar, Prof. Abel Ishumi, the Head of the Department of Education at the University of Dar es Salaam, had spent his sabbatical (1981/82) at my institute while I was at PRIO. Apart from working on his own research "The unemployed population in urban areas in East Africa - the case of Tanzania, 1978 -81" (Ishumi, 1984), he had been teaching a class called "Cultural and community issues in development in Africa and Tanzania".

I was able to attend one of Ishumi's lectures. I remember him talking about Nyerere's "Education for Self-Reliance" (Nyerere, 1967). I got hold of that booklet after Ishumi's lecture. It has been my Bible since. In Education for Self-Reliance he criticises the view that people who have not gone to school are not "educated."

I was especially fascinated by Nyerere's wish to make an education for the majority of Tanzanian youngsters. What are the skills they will need in their future life? I quote from his Education for Self-Reliance:

> The purpose is not to provide an inferior education to that given at present. The purpose is to provide a different education – one realistically designed to fulfil the common purposes of education in the particular society of Tanzania. The object of the teaching must be the provision of knowledge, skills and attitudes which will serve the student when he or she lives and works in a developing and changing socialist state (Nyerere, 1968: 63 -64).

Being a teacher and student himself he knew that what is measured in examinations really becomes the curriculum, even if the stated aims say something else. He criticised the examinations which were in use in Tanzania at the time. These examinations were geared to an international (or rather British) standard and practice, which had been developed regardless of the particular problems and needs of Tanzania.

> What we need to do now is to think first about the education we want to provide, and when that thinking is completed, think about whether some form of examination is an appropriate way of closing an education phase. Then such an examination should be designed to fit the education which has been provided (Nyerere, 1968:63).

Years later I read an article by two World Bank education officers. They write: "Logic dictates that if the poor cannot afford schooling, then by definition they are less educated" (Burnett and Patrinos, 1996: 275).

When I read this statement, I remembered a passage from Nyerere's *Education for Self-Reliance:*

> The fact that pre-colonial Africa did not have "schools" — except for short periods of initiation in some tribes — did not mean that the children were not educated. They learned by living and doing. In the homes and on the farms they were taught the skills of the society and the behaviour expected by its members. Education was thus "informal". Every adult was a teacher to a greater or lesser degree. But this lack of formality did not mean that there was no education, nor did it affect its importance to the society. Indeed, it may have made the education more directly relevant to the society in which the child was growing up (Nyerere, 1968: 43).

The statement of the World Bank writers, equating schooling with education, begs the question: Whose logic are they talking about? Whose education? Built on whose frame of reference? (Brock-Utne, 2000).

Talking with Ishumi and reading Nyerere made me want to come to Tanzania and work there. I was at that time not aware of the fact that eight years later I should be sitting next to Julius Nyerere and talking with him in Kiswahili.

A Professor married to an Ambassador – a conflict of roles

My late husband, Gunnar Garbo, worked in the Foreign Ministry in Norway. He was not a typical diplomat. He had been a member of Parliament and

was a socially and politically engaged person. He was also, like me, very interested in spending some years in Tanzania (Garbo, 1993). The job he wanted was the job of an Ambassador. He had the credentials to get it, but had to wait until the post was vacant, which was from the beginning of 1987. The Head of the Education Division in NORAD, the late Dr. Sissel Volan, a woman with bureaucratic imagination, contacted the University of Oslo and offered them a deal to enable me to have my professorship at the UiO transferred to the UDSM. I was freed from my teaching obligations at the University of Oslo and was asked to teach at the UDSM instead. I kept my salary from the University of Oslo. The deal was first for a two-year period (from January 1988 to January 1990) but was then prolonged for another two-year period (from January 1990 to January 1992). Prof.Ishumi facilitated my transfer. He also helped my daughter, Siri G. Brock-Utne, to get enrolled at the University of Dar es Salaam as a student. My son, Gunnar G. Brock-Utne, (Gunnar jr.) was first enrolled in the Swedish elementary school and then at IST (International School of Tanganyika).

Gunnar went to Tanzania with Siri and Gunnar jr. in the beginning of January 1987 because Gunnar jr. had to start schooling in the Swedish school after their Christmas break. They stayed at the house of the head of the NORAD representation, Mr. Olav Myklebust, a good friend from our time in the same political party in Norway.

Siri helped Gunnar jr. settle down. Above Siri and Gunnar jr. are baking a chocolate cake on a Sunday in the kitchen of our residence. On Sundays the servants had a day off.

I remained in Norway until Gunnar came back and picked me up. On the 28th of January 1987 we flew first class to Tanzania. This was his official entry into the country that was to be our home for the next five years. Earlier the same day we had been to the graveyard with 25 roses for my eldest son, Karsten Brock-Utne (28.1.1962 – 20.08. 1983). He should have turned 25 years that day, had he not been killed in a car accident in the Canary Islands on the 20ieth of August 1983.

In Tanzania I was helped to think about Karsten not as an "Mfu" (a dead person) but as an "Mzimu" (a spirit or rather a person the living have a memory picture of). He lives in me and in everybody who knew him and love him. This makes sense. It is only when there is no person living who has a memory picture of the deceased in them anymore that the person is an "Mfu" – really dead. When I started teaching at the University of Dar es Salaam I started to learn more from my students about the role of the deceased in the lives of the living.

The first year we were in Tanzania I had a sabbatical from the University of Oslo to finish writing my doctoral thesis. I made one of the large rooms in the residence of the Ambassador into my office. Below is a picture from my study in our residence and my lap-top. Gunnar jr. demonstrates for the children of our cook how it works.

I told our servants, the cook, Mr. Adamsen, and the houseman, Saidi, that I would be working on my laptop in my office from the time my husband left for his office in the Embassy in the morning until he came back. In that period I did not want to be interrupted. I would have a tea-break from 11.30 to 12. If there was something they needed to discuss with me, they could do so in that break. Our servants had never seen a lap-top before. Gunnar jr. showed some of the children of Adamsen how one could also play computer games on my lap-top. I installed the printer in the hallway. One day Adamsen came running into my office calling: “Uchauwi, uchauwi” (witchcraft). He had noticed a machine in the hallway that was writing by itself. There was no person there, but the machine wrote words and whole sentences.

I was, to begin with, not fully aware of the fact that there was a role of the "wife of the Ambassador" waiting for me. I protested against that role from the beginning. I did not want to have a diplomatic passport, a fact which made programme officers in the Foreign Ministry in Norway so upset that one of them called me at home in Oslo and urged me to have one. "How else can I protect you?" he asked. I told him that he had never protected me before and I had been travelling all over the world. But to ease his pain I accepted having a diplomatic passport, as long as I was allowed to retain my own.

I knew that on the 17th of May – our national holiday, it was expected that there would be a reception for all the Norwegians in Tanzania (they were about 400 spread over the whole country) in our garden. The Ambassador was expected to give a speech, something Gunnar did very well each year. His speech was always more appreciated by the peace corps volunteers than by the so-called "experts". On that day each year I was really the Ambassador's wife, dressed in the national costume from Utne, the part of Norway my father comes from. The costume is made out of wool and in the heat of Dar es Salaam it was tough to wear. I always felt that I made a sacrifice for my country on that day. Below is a picture of Gunnar and me from one of the many times we, on the 17th of May, invited the 400 Norwegians in Tanzania to the garden of our residence.

It did take a couple of months to teach the servants that when I said I did not want to be interrupted in my work, I meant so. Our cook, Mr. Adamsen, came to my office to tell me that: "The fisherman is here". He expected me to come and choose the fish he should cook for our dinner. That is what the former Ambassador's wife had done. But she had no other job. I told Adamsen that I trusted his judgement and expertise. *He* was the cook. Several times our "houseman", Saidi, came into my office and said that the wife of the Ambassador from one of the sixty countries with Embassies in Dar es Salaam would be coming at 11 a.m. next day to pay me a courtesy call. I told him to answer such phone calls by saying that I was working and did not have time for courtesy calls. I found it incorrect that the University of Oslo should pay me salary for my research while I went to lunches with women I did not know and often had little in common with. I was not familiar with the institution of courtesy calls before we became part of the diplomatic corps. It functions this way: When new Ambassadors arrive, they are expected to pay a courtesy call, normally having a lunch with, each of the Ambassadors in the city where they are stationed. Then the new Ambassador is expected to invite the other Ambassador back to his residence for another courtesy call. This means in Dar es Salaam at least 120 courtesy calls during the first year. There are also important organizations like UNDP, UNICEF and so on with their own directors, who are also part of the courtesy call regime.

There may be some sense in this institution for the Ambassadors. But it is expected that their wives do the same and in addition participate in the Ambassadors' wives club. I told my husband that I did not have time to receive or go to courtesy calls to the wives of the other Ambassadors, nor to participate in the Ambassadors' wives club.

Three of the four Nordic Ambassadors had wives who did not want to play the traditonal role of Ambassador's wife and had their own professions. The wife of the Swedish Ambassador, Karin Oljelund, was a Minister and worked in the Christian Refugee Service, a job she had secured before they came to Tanzania. She also gave sermons in the Nordic church. Like me, she did not have time for courtesy calls.

Gunnar tells in his book (Garbo, 1993:35) that he was aware of the fact that invitation cards to cocktail-parties and dinners from an Ambassador would look this way: "The Norwegian Ambassador, Ola Nordmann and Mrs.Kari Nordmann, have the pleasure…". He had the feeling I would not like this description of us. He therefore, without mentioning it to me, had hundreds of invitation cards printed with this text: "The Norwegian Ambassador and

Mrs. Birgit Brock-Utne have the pleasure…" I got furious when I saw it and said: "You do not send out a single one of those cards. Firstly, your name is not there. People may think your last name is Brock-Utne. Secondly, if you have your title, I want mine." He knew I would not have been in Tanzania did I not have my own job. So the cards we lastly sent out had this title: "The Norwegian Ambassador, Mr. Gunnar Garbo and Professor Birgit Brock-Utne, have the pleasure…" On the invitation card the Swedish couple sent out to Embassy dinners Karin Oljelund had insisted to have her title "Reverend" before her name and not Mrs. The Reverend Karin Oljelund had had a similar discussion with her husband as I had had with Gunnar and was so happy when she saw our invitation card. It created a bond between us right away.

It is interesting to note that now, thirty-five years after my struggle to have my own profession and my academic title on our invitation cards, the wife of the President of the United States, Jill Biden, has some of the same struggle. She has continued in her profession. She has had a very difficult time getting her Dr. title accepted by the public (she has a Ph.D in education). She has insisted that she be called: "Dr. Biden" and not just "Mrs.Biden". She has received a lot of pushback from the US press and the public**.** It's unfortunately pretty universal still that women with high status partners like ambassadors are expected to play traditional roles of the helper and supporter.

The wife of the Finnish Ambassador was a specialized nurse in great demand in Finland and just came to Tanzania for prolonged holidays. The wife of the Danish Ambassador was from Egypt and was a more traditional Ambassador' s wife than the rest of us. But she defended us when we were criticized for not participating in courtesy calls or the ambassadors' wives club. Once when I, in 1990, had a consultancy in Senegal and had to work in French, I called her and asked her to go through some of the documents I had to work with and discuss them with me in French. She gave me excellent help. As I was about to leave, I gave her one of my books in gratitude for the time she had spent with me. Then she said: "You did not need to give me anything. You could have regarded this as your courtesy call."

Gunnar and I have always loved to give big parties. Now we also had a budget for it. We used three times the budget we had. We decided from the start that we would not give a single party where less than half of the guests were Tanzanians. On the 21st of February 1987 we gave our first Embassy party on the occasion of an official visit from the University of Bergen, including their Vice Chancellor.

Already at that party more than half of the guests were Tanzanians. Among them was the Vice Chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam, Nicholas Kuhanga. He gave a very nice speech and said that what was impressive when it came to the new Norwegian Ambassador to Tanzania, was the fact that he brought with him both a Professor and a student to Kuhanga's university, the University of Dar es Salaam. I gave a small welcoming speech in Kiswahili, using the few words we had up to that time learnt from our Kiswahili teacher, Faraji.

Above is a picture of Vice Chancellor Nicholas Kuhanga with his new student, Siri. We did not know when we gave her that name that "siri" means "secret" in Kiswahili. When she introduced herself and said that her name was: "Siri", people would ask why her name was a secret. Prof. Abel Ishumi, whom I had heard lecture at my institute in Oslo and his wife, Martha Ishumi, who had studied in Norway, when they lived there, were also among our guests in that first party.

When I started working full-time at the UDSM, I got many wonderful Tanzanian colleagues, whom we invited to the Embassy parties. I noticed that the Ambassadors were very eager to speak with my colleagues. They

did not meet many academic Tanzanians. They mostly met their servants, with whom they could hardly speak, and some bureaucrats in the Ministries. They often invited colleagues of mine they had met at our parties to have a lunch with them.

Above is a picture of me, Professor Birgit Brock-Utne, and my late husband, the Ambassador of Norway, Gunnar Garbo, waiting to welcome guests to one of our big dinner parties in the garden.

Our servants were delighted with our high social activity level. When we gave big parties, we needed more cooks and more servants. It was the job of Saidi and Adamsen to call in this extra help from the other Embassies. That gave them a power they cherished. We paid both Saidi and Adamsen, and the extra hands, handsomely.

We several times had some of the best bands in Tanzania play in our garden. We danced a lot. Our son, Gunnar jr., played the guitar and on several occasions, he played with the band. The band leader would on these occasions announce: “It was Gunnar junior on the guitar”.

Gunnar junior (11) on the guitar. He had a very nice guitar teacher, David, from Malawi who taught him a lot. Below is a picture of the guitar teacher and his student.

We went to many cocktail parties each week. After I learnt to speak Kiswahili, I enjoyed these cocktail parties very much. Gunnar and I drove our own car to the parties. When we came into the garden, we always split up and walked to different groups. I went to Tanzanian groups, mostly politicians, and spoke with them. Gunnar talked to the other Ambassadors and programme officers in the Ministries. In our car on the way back home we exchanged notes. This we both learnt a good deal from. We would normally just drink tonic or club soda with ice and lemon.

A conversation with Julius Nyerere

One of the benefits of being married to the Norwegian Ambassador was the privilege of being able to invite high profile people to our residence. On the 6th of September 1990 we had the Norwegian parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs for a dinner party in our residence. MP Gro Harlem Brundtland (labour party) led the committee. On that occasion, we also invited the first president of independent Tanzania, Julius Kambarage Nyerere. Julius Nyerere was the first Prime Minister of independent Tanganyika from 1961 to 1962 and the President of Tanganyika from 1962 to 1964. In that year a union between Tanganyika and the island outside of Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, was formed. The union was called Tanzania. Nyerere was elected the first president of Tanzania, a position he held until 1985, when he decided to step down.

When I met him, he had stepped down from the presidency, but still enjoyed high prestige as a leading statesman in Africa. In Tanzania he was called "baba ya taifa" – the father of the nation. During the dinner, I had a most

interesting conversation in Kiswahili with Nyerere. He sat in the middle between MP Gro Harlem Brundtland and me. He switched between talking Kiswahili with me and English with Gro. Nyerere and I talked about the status of Kiswahili in Tanzania. He was trained as a teacher, first at Makerere University in Uganda, and then at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. He also worked as a teacher ("mwalimu" in Kiswahili) before he made politics his career. He was often called "mwalimu", which he regarded as an honorary title, since he saw teaching as a most valuable profession. His work "Education for Self-Reliance" (Nyerere, 1967) gives his educational philosophy and should be read by everyone interested in education in developing countries.

Nyerere was proud of the national language Kiswahili, and said that it contributed a lot to keep Tanzania together as a nation. I knew that he had himself translated two of Shakespeares plays into Kiswahili. He published his first translation of Julius Cesar already in 1963, a year after he became president of Tanganyika. (He later translated also the Merchant of Venice). David Matthew Chacha (2002) wrote in *African Journal of International Affairs* about Julius Nyerere and Kiswahili. He called Nyerere "the Intellectual Pan-Africanist".

> Tanzania illustrates the potential for ethnic harmony in a racially diverse setting. With an estimated 120 ethnic groups, it has avoided all ethnic conflict or political appeal to linguistic units. National unity cuts across ethnic boundaries, leading to a widespread rejection of tribalism. This outcome can be attributed to former president Julius Nyerere's integrative political efforts and his government's promotion of Swahili as a common language (Chacha, 2002: 21).

Nyerere died in London on the 14.October 1999. With his Pan-Africanist view he would have been very happy about a resolution passed by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) twenty years after his death. On Friday 30. August 2019 the 16 southern African heads met in Tanzania and adopted Kiswahili as the fourth official language of SADC. The three other official languages of SADC are: English, Portuguese and French – the languages of the former colonizers. Kiswahili was already an official language, not only in Tanzania, but also in Kenya and Rwanda, and of the African Union. President John Magufuli, chairman of SADC, made his speech in Kiswahili at the summit, appealing to the heads of state to fast-track the adoption of the language. According to a summit communiqué, the leaders approved Kiswahili as the fourth SADC official working language, in recognition of the contribution of Julius Nyerere's role in the liberation struggle of southern Africa (Brock-Utne and Vuzo, 2022, Brock-Utne 2022, 2021a).

Nyerere told me in that dinner party in 1990 that he hoped Kiswahili would soon become a pan-African language. It was aready spoken in so many countries in eastern and southern Africa. I asked him why Kiswahili was not the language of instruction in secondary school. He said he thought it would be soon, but one had to take one step at the time. It was important to get more daily newspapers in Kiswahili, more books translated. I also asked him about the ethnic community languages in Tanzania, which some people said were under threat from Kiswahili. He said he did not feel that they were under threat. They were still strong and would be living on as oral languages. Many of the terms from these languages would be incorporated into Kiswahili and make Kiswahili a richer language. He menioned that his own local language, Kizanaki, had given several words to Kiswahili, like "ngatuka" (stepping down, retire).

Above is a picture of M.P. Gro Harlem Brundtland, the Chair of the Norwegian Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. She became our Prime Minister in November of the same year, me, Julius Nyerere and M.P. Kirsti Kolle Grøndahl (also from the labour party). She was the Minister of

Education from 1986 to 1988, and the Minister of Development from 1988 to 89. She was also the first female President of Parliament (1993-2001). Julius Nyerere talked English with the Norwegian MPs, a language he commanded to perfection, having studied in Edinburgh for three years and having lived and worked in London for extended periods.

Working at the University of Dar es Salaam

I started working full-time at the University of Dar es Salaam in January 1988. I was given the responsibility of teaching and advising a group of 12 master students in social psychology. I met with them for a whole day (six hours) once a week. I also taught an undergraduate course in educational psychology for about 350 students for two hours twice a week. I had studied social psychology myself, both in the US and in Norway, and had brought with me some of my social psychology textbooks to Tanzania. Having a closer look at the books with Africa in mind, I wondered how relevant they would be for my students. I started out by telling my master students that we had to build up this study together. Social psychology had to deal with their culture, with their lives, with their worldview, the thinking among the villagers, where they had grown up. I suggested they go to the villages and talk with the elders, gather folklore, sayings and wisdom from their neighbourhoods. My students first protested. They thought that with a scholar, coming from Europe, they would be taught theories. What could the elders tell them that they did not already know? I said that theories had to be built on experiences, on an environment and on practices. At this point, I did not even know the language they communicated in. Neither did I know the cultural practices.

I had just been surprised that there was no timetable at the bus stop telling when the buses from the university would go. I was told that the buses went

when they were full. The buses would stop anywhere somebody wanted to get on the bus. Back in Norway I remember one of my Tanzanian students who took the bus from the ferry boat that had taken him to the peninsula where I live. He was the only passenger on that bus. When the driver was about to start, my student went to him and asked him how he could start driving with just one passenger on board. Should he not wait until the bus filled up? The driver presented him with a timetable, showing that in three minutes, he had to be at the next bus stop, in six minutes at a second bus stop and so on. My student exclaimed: "Poor man, you are totally driven by the clock".

Our wonderful Kiswahili teacher, Faraji, normally turned up 15 to 20 minutes too late in relation to the appointment we had made with him. He would greet us with a big smile and never excused himself. He did not see the point of being on time. I remember our farewell dinner, which started at 6.p.m with cocktails. I had said to Faraji that he did not need to be on the dot, when it came to that cocktail party. But he *had* to be there at 7 p.m, when we were going to be seated for dinner. I told him that I was going to give my farewell speech in Kiswahili, the first speech I had made all by myself and he had not gone through. Well, he did not turn up at 7.p.m., not at 8.p.m. either. My husband had held his speech. He came to me, and said that if I wanted to give my speech, I had to do it now, because we soon had to serve the desert. Therefore, I gave it without Faraji being present. Just as I had finished, he came with a big smile and a new beautiful woman. I was so furious that I did not greet him with any of the nice Kiswahili greetings but just said: "Umechelewa"- (you have come too late). He looked around and saw that the food had not yet been taken out. He answered: "Hata, chakula kipo" (not at all, there is still food). All my Tanzanian friends laughed and probably thought he was right. If there was still food there, he had not come too late. Being on time or listening to a speech could not be that important.

When I started teaching international students in Norway, we often noticed that the African students came late. We excused them and called their late coming: "African time".

I told my master degree students at the University of Dar es Salaam that we had to build up the curriculum in social psychology together. The books I had brought with me, mostly from the US, were not relevant. But I knew how to gather data, to systematize and to analyse. I could help them with that. After some discussion, the students really went into their own environments and came back with very rich data for us all to discuss,