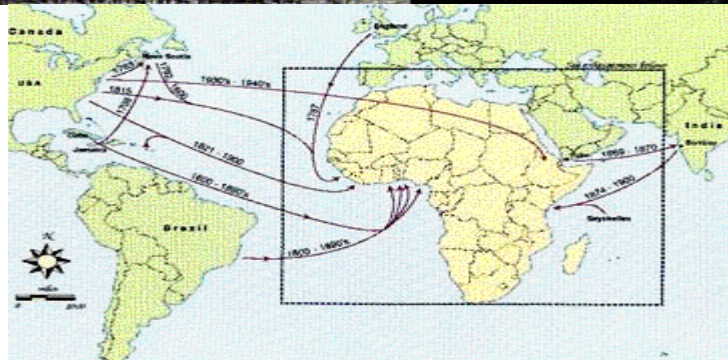
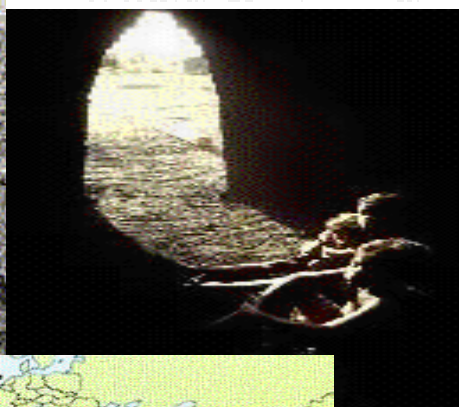
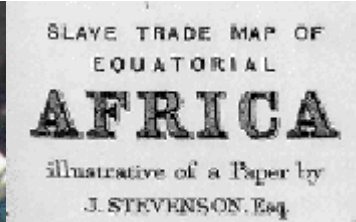


# FILM AND HISTORY IN AFRICA

(AFST 328)

## Asientos: Silence and Ignorance of Slavery



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"In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Spanish State entrusted the organization of the Black slave trade to the new powers represented by the financial and the tracking companies in the form of **Asientos**, or licenses. An **Asientos** is a contract in public law between the king and a contractor. It is a unilateral concession granted by the king for a delivery of a specified amount of Negroes to the colonies in return for a certain service. The first Negro- Asiento in 1528 was granted to 2 Germans, Eygerand Saylor, employed in the household of Charles V. They received a monopoly of 4,000 blacks to be delivered in 4 years at 40 ducats per head, in return for 20,000 ducats to be paid to the Treasury. They sold the license to the Portuguese".

**Asientos by Francois Woukoache**

## **I. Introduction**

In this assignment I have transcribed the movie, "Asientos" as an attachment for the readers of this essay to provide vivid document of my study of the film. This assignment was given in the Fall Semester of 2000 by Dr. Mbye. Cham in the class, "FILM AND HISTORY IN AFRICA". This is an Essay on the film Asientos by Francois Woukoache presented by Dr. Mbye Cham. This essay is entitled, "Asientos: Silence and Ignorance of Slavery". In this essay my point is to talk about silence and ignorance of slavery. Also the symbols and affects of slavery on Black/African people. This essay will also deal with or elaborate on white supremacy and hidden unspoken denial of slavery that is implied in the movie. I have also provided definitions at the end of the essay. (See definitions) I chose Asientos as my topic because as a Blacologist is my obligation and duty to oppose Black/African slavery wherever it shows its face. I want to take this opportunity expressive my opposition against Slavery in Sudan and Mauritania. It is also my intention to elaborate on the silence and ignorance, which is the affect of slavery that is wall between the reunification of Black/Africans in Africa and the Diaspora. It is also my determination to release from my heart and soul the silence and ignorance that Francois Woukoache talks about in Asientos. This is a condition that all Black/African people must depart with. In affect I am unloading this burden from my soul, so that I might grow towards redemption and cultural development.

I must first state my philosophy and position in analyzing this film. My philosophy and position is that I believe that Black/African people, must acknowledge their own body of knowledge that is self-reliant and operatively ours. In analyzing this movie I am utilizing my philosophy of Blacology. Blacology may also consist of its own Cultural Linguistics or Ebonics. In addition, it is not restricted to the Euro-centric Language Arts. This give Blacology its own significant identifiable writing form. It is the utilization of the ideals, philosophies, theories and Beliefs of Black/African scholars and ancestors of the past and present. Based on my cultural and spiritual beliefs I cannot write from a sociological perspective, a psychological perspective or any Eurocentric ideology. When I write, I mostly write from a Blacological perspective. What am I talking about? I am talking about a logic that is of, from, by, for, and about Black/African experiences and culture.

Asiéntos takes me back into my own life as a foster child or ward of the state of Illinois in the City of Chicago. It brought back some of the feelings of being separated from my family. Asiéntos also forces me to deal with the feelings on displacement and ignorance with what was a part of being denied the freedom and right to pursue happiness. To be held against your will is something that is the experience of my life. It is impossible for me to look at movies that are about slavery without reflecting on the experience of fosterhood. I was free to work and go to school but I was not free to be with my family. I was always wondering if my brothers and sister were concerned about me. I was sad about the fact that I could not see my mother and father. I did not know who my cousins, aunts or uncles were. I know not who my grandparents were. I was in a captive and bondage experience.

## **II. Asientos: The Movies Transcribed**

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Spanish State entrusted the organization of the Black slave trade to the new powers represented by the financial and the tracking companies in the form of Asientos, or licenses. An Asientos is a contract in public law between the king and a contractor. It is a unilateral concession granted by the king for a delivery of a specified amount of Negroes to the colonies in return for a certain service. The first Negro- Asiento in 1528 was granted to 2 Germans, Eygerand Saylor, employed in the household of Charles V. They received a monopoly of 4,000 blacks to be delivered in 4 years at 40 ducats per head, in return for 20,000 ducats to be paid to the Treasury. They sold the license to the Portuguese.

The first time we met, I didn't understand what he wanted. I had never been to Africa. I didn't know what the land was like nor the African people either. I listen to him talking. Too many pictures, here in Europe, he said. Too many pictures – important pictures. It's hard to fill up the empty space in your memory. Looking at the information under the picture on the wall in a museum written in French. He studies in France, but his body stayed over there. His body is over there. His body is racked by suffering for not having access to the past, which terrifies him. Over there he says when people have a bad experience, they don't talk about it. The serious things remain unspoken. He needs to remember. But how can you remember what doesn't exist anywhere? He's afraid. He's afraid that it's starting again somewhere else.

-- here – it's now actually starting again.

Why do people want to keep taking up the past? Children are born, children play, is not that enough? I agree to help him fill up the empty spaces of his memory. To put a name to the dead souls of the deceased. Where I suffer, he says, there is nothing for suffering. Nothing, either, to endure that suffering.

How do you reach the place where that suffering occurred? How do you know what's happened? There is nothing to show. There is nothing so much blocking my memory. In my memory there are lagoons. They are covered with skulls. They are not covered with water lilies. In my memory there are lagoons stretched out on the shore; there are no women's loincloths. My memory is surrounded by blood. My memory is ringed with corpses!

My body has closed up over its wounds. My body has to lose the weight of so many centuries. The centuries that separate us from you. For centuries, my brothers, your ancestors have been crying out and nobody hears. They have disappeared into history. You can't believe it, you don't want to believe it.

You're afraid. You swallow the scraps of your childhood, which no longer protects you.

Listen.

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In 1492 Christopher Columbus reached America. Afterward the Spanish, the French and the English gradually occupied all the islands of the American continent. The American Indian population was approximately 6 million. Around the 1900's there were no more than 250,000 Indians. The extermination of the Indians was to give rise to the transportation of millions of Africans to provide labor on sugar cane and cotton plantations in America from north to the south and from the east to west, in the Atlantic ports and elsewhere. The old continent was filtering out its ships for a sinister trade. Never before had the European thrown themselves into a slave hunt on such a huge scale. It was a thoroughly systematic hunt; undertaken for the sole purpose of procuring slaves.

The upstanding citizens of Bordeaux, Bristol, Copenhagen and Lisbon invested in this trade and insisted on being called traders, not merchants because they dealt wholesale, not retail; you understand? Our Lady of Hope, our Lady of Mercy, the Duke of Burgundy, nothing marks out the ships of the slave trade from other trading ships because the slaves used vessels already worn out by years of transport.

Jesus – Mary - Joseph, Saint Charles, two sisters, only son. The trade in Black slaves lasted for centuries. For four centuries. Africa was emptied of its sturdiest children. It was a demographic blood-letting unprecedented event in the history of humanity. The political map of Africa underwent profound changes. In Djolot, in Cayor, in Songhai, traditional power was destabilized. Profits from slave trade were bigger from those yielded by trade in cola nuts, ivory and cattle in the Congo, Koortoat, Segov, Abomey and Ashanti.

Ambition and the lure of money set chieftains up against each other. Wars proliferated, whole populations were captured and sold. For four centuries pillaging, theft, rape, and raid for humans and cattle. The destruction of moral and spiritual values.

Social equilibrium was destroyed. The pressure of Europe's demand for slaves destroyed the social equilibrium. Everyday I came here, every day I wait for you. I wanted to talk to you. Where were you? You are not looking. You are not listening? You're playing. You are young. It is as if you never been born. You don't even know I existed. What do you want? Leave me alone. You won't get anything out of me. I'm dead. You can't get inside death.

Your ancestors, my brothers. I can see them. Their limbs are severed. Their eyes are gouged out. My brothers, I can see them slowly come out of the shadows as if in a shipwreck. Their skin is a shroud. Their body wraps them in silence. I can see them. They are there! Mere merchandise transporting other merchandise.

In processing moving forward along pathways, lashed with whips, the men are chained together in groups of ten or twenty. Around the neck they wear iron collars linked together with padlocked chains. Anyone who resists has his hands tied together behind his back and a piece of wood through his mouth.

Sometimes to let a mother carry ivory, which has a higher price than an infant, her child is taken from her and is run through with a lance or its skull is crushed against a tree. Yes, I can see them. Captive in groups near to the shore. In slave camps waiting to be sold.

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You have grown up without knowing. You have read to many books. You have seen and compared so many sets of figures. You have traced the routes of the slave ships. But still you do not know why the sea does not cough these corpses back up.

Listen!

You can enter history but you can not leave it. You can not dis-enter the dead. Neither the cries nor their rebellions, nor their wounds. I am dead and you were not born.

I will die without having left you anything. An orphan of those who have left, and not returned. Your ancestors, my brothers.

You want to visit? To see? Go on watch.

You will see walls and stones placed one on top of the other. You will see the wind and the sea. The sand which you tread underfoot and which warms your feet.

It is a market. As in any market, you have to know how to choose.

The surgeon begins his physical examination.

Above all, not an old man, close-cropped and shaven with wrinkled skin, his testicles dropping and shriveled. Tall cretins looking eminent Negroes with limp stomachs smelling badly. For women – neither pert nipples with no breasts nor pendulous and floppy bosoms. What is most highly prized is a good breeder. Good pelvic and chest development is particularly well-rated. Women must have breast that "stand proud". A muscular young man of around twenty years old, with sound teeth and a little plump is a "treasure" and he is sold for a high price. The lack of one single tooth or a mere marking of the eye counts as a defect in a top quality slave.

I was naked, speechless, handed over to the invaders. My body was lost in a shipwreck. I rejoined my nameless brothers crammed into history's crannies. I no longer exist. Do something for me. Remember. Remember the death-throes of my brother, your ancestors. Remember the anguish and the lies, the loneliness and the cold. The violence and the cruelty. Remember the tongues cut out, the hamstringing and men's chests run through with steel lances. Remember the stench of death!

The captives are separated into lots. Branded with irons, their heads shaved. To be branded with an iron is to have the status of slave written in your flesh forever. Under 66 pounds in weight, the captives were declared "temporarily unfit. He was placed in a special unit in order to be fattened up. If a captive refused to eat, his mouth was opened with a special tool; the speculum oris. The speculum oris was on sale in shops in Nantes and Liverpool.

Men and women died.

Epidemics brought devastation. Epidemics of dysentery and yellow fever, scurvy and small pox were fatal. Children died.. Epidemics brought devastation. Epidemics of dysentery and yellow

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fever. Men and women died. Scurvy and small pox were fatal. Epidemics brought devastation. Children died. Epidemics of dysentery and yellow fever.

Branded with iron. Their heads shaved.

To be branded with an iron is to have the status of slave written in your flesh forever.

All night long she was mourning. Mourning for millions who dies without burial. The death of yesterday and today. All night long she cried out names. Names lost forever in the crannies of history.

Listen, a dog is barking. A child is crying. Day turns into night.

It is the dances of the vultures.

Somebody cries. Somebody crosses the ocean

Ten million people cross the ocean. May be twenty? Of fifty? No one knows precisely. And Tomba? Who remembers Tomba?

He fermented a rebellion on one of the ships with a woman for an accomplice. Tomba was killed? The captain ordered two of his companions to eat his head and liver and that she should be hung by the thumbs. That she should be whipped. That she should be slashed with knives until she died. Tomba the Mandyaka. Who remembers you? May be you were Yoruba or Bombara? No one knows. And the woman? Was she Bararo or Fulah? Maybe Tukulor?

How can we know? Who will tell us? Dead souls remain silent.

The earth is charred. The earth is staked with blood. The earth is bathed in tears. Gestures and words have no meaning. Silence has blotted out the songs and dances. Someone cries, someone is suffering. It is the suffering of whom ever is nameless. They are the fears of a people who have no tombstones. So much blood in my memory! In my memory there are lagoons. They are covered with skulls. They are not covered with water lilies. In my memory there are lagoons. Stretch out onto the shore. There are no women in loincloths. My memory is surrounded with blood. My memory is ringed with "corpses"!

We have kept ourselves at a distance from the horror. Refusing to face up to our crimes. It is so easy to believe that it did not happen. This manufactures oblivion.

I can hear him speaking.

Time erases, he says. Time pushes back into the shadows. Time take no account of our misfortunes. But these bodies, how can we forget them? These decades' bodies riddled with bullets. The bodies hacked into pieces. How can we forget while still today, these people are marching towards their deaths? And these images supply a trade in which we are the consumers? These people are Black like me. Yes I know. You are white, he is telling me.

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I wonder. How love can disappear. Why the indifference that kills? More cruelty. I watch this century as it tears itself apart, as history repeats itself, and I am afraid. I would like to come closer. I would like to come closer and sit down. Say nothing. Yes, say nothing, he says. Listen to the silence.

Learn once more to watch; to see the unspeakable. One day perhaps.

### **III. ESSAY: Asientos; Silence and Ignorance of Slavery**

Asientos makes me think about modern day slavery in the Sudan and Mauritania. It is obvious that in Africa there is slavery on the continent today. As one who is a victim and a survivor of slavery, it is difficult for me to see all the symbolism that is present in Asientos. The victim of slavery only sees the wickedness and dehumanization. Slavery is not a symbol to the sons and daughters of slaves, it is devastation and hardship. The symbolism of young women, young men and elders on the beach awaiting the return of the capture. Is symbolic of the young and the old awaiting the return of their loved one. It is also symbolic of the past and the present struggle of separation of a people divided by the inhuman injustice of captivity.

Slavery is a term that does not define what has actually taken place in the construct of this phenomenon of separation. As a Blackological scholar, I do not recognize the term slavery to define the disposition of Black bondage. Because it gives a numerical and economic justification to the injustice of kidnapping or being taken against your will. Slavery also places the responsibility of one's disadvantage in the hands of those who were in captivity. I have learned that no one can make you a slave unless you allow them to do so. Slavery is a capitalistic term, it instills individual profit and security as a . . . justification for this inhumanity.

Blackologically speaking, anything that a Black/African has to say about slavery is relevant to slavery and is an asset to our growth and development in our culture and to our own redemption as a people. What I am saying when I say Blackological, I am talking from a perspective that is operatively Black. One that comes out of the experience of a Black person, primarily myself who was raised, grew up in this indoctrinated colonialised mis-educated culture or environment. One who has been affected by slavery and is a living example of what slavery has done to Black people and is still doing.

One who is a living example and has experiences as one whose great, great, great grandparents, even my forefathers to go back further were captives in the slave trade. They were not slaves, they were captives in the slave trade and I don't look at the period of captivity as slavery because slavery has the connotation of making one think that it was something that was acceptable and the people that were enslaved cooperated and went along with, they obeyed the

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law and that's how they lived and survived. So I don't really accept slavery as a term that is justifiable and truly defines what happened to my people. I really don't accept that term. So as one who is a living example and one who is a living witness to what happened and who is a survivor of that devastating tragedy. I cannot accept the term slavery as something that is righteous and truthful nor honorable and with all that I was taught as a Colored child, a Negro, a Blackman, African-American, and a Black/African. This is the evolution of the reality my chronological existence. My vision of the world and life is developed through the philosophical idem of this manifestation. The metamorphous is complete. I am, who I am. I can not be changed. I can only see the world and life in the ways of my reality, through the knowledge of my people. That reality has evolved into a Black/African Cultural sphere. One whose forefathers were captives in the slave trade, I can't see slavery as the definition of what happened to them nor can I accept it.

What I want to do is with Asiéntos, is. I want to tell it like I see it, like I feel it, and the way that I experienced it. I don't want to tell it with a jargon that has been given to me. In the articles that I've read explaining it in a way that the authors who I read explained the situation in the literature. In the article from the social identity volume 6 number 32000. I don't want to explain it like that. I want to be able to explain it from my own heart-felt emotions, from my own experience. I want to explain it as a Blacological interdisciplinary scientist. I don't want to explain it as no sociological theorist. I want to explain it as a Blacological theorist.

In the article by Jude Akadenobe and he does a critique from a sociological or a Euro-centric perspective that is utilized by an African individual. His analogy is very much in terms of utilizing words that would be more appropriate and symbolic of what the European would think is appropriate. That's not something I'm trying to do. I am not trying to be convincing to the European so that he can read what I'm trying to write. I'm trying to develop once again an analogy that is of some, by, for, and about Black African experiences and one that is in Diaspora. I do believe that an experience of the Motherland rests in my soul and also in my analogy. I am not without the spirit of my ancestors. They are with me in my analogy. I have to begin to challenge the feelings that I get when I am talking to my brothers and sisters who were born on the continent of Africa. When they insinuate verbally and emotionally to make Black/Africans born in the Diaspora feel as though we don't really know anything about Africa because we weren't born there. This is what Asientos brings out in me. It makes me recognized that my spirit, which is my heart, mind, and soul was born in Acubuland (Africa). Although my physical body was born in the ex-slave culture a product of the injustice of Black Captivity of the Atlantic Slave Trade. I challenge them because I am a Black/African. I was just born in this land and the spirit of my Black ancestors has not left me. The language has eluded me but it has not left me. I have been tricked, manipulated, outwitted, led amuck, bamboozled, out of that language, but it is with me and it can come out again. I can speak it again and I learn it again. Once my vocal cords are messaged with the rhythms, pronunciations, and sound of the of my cultural tongue the words will flow from my lips and mouth. Once a captive is familiar with his/her natural cultural linguistics then there ethnic conscious awakened.

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Asientos lets me know that no one can take from me the legacy, heritage, and struggle of my birthrights nor my rites of passage as a Black/African. All the experiences that have been cast upon the Black captives are acceptable in the history of our struggle and the evolution of our people. This is the unspoken silence that Woukoache talks about in the movies. It is time to eliminate the artificial barriers that divide us from our cultural solidarity.

In Asientos the waiting by the sea is symbolic of barrier between the need for Blacks to come together as a people. It symbolizes that Black/Africans know that there is a longing for reunion of wholeness and completeness. It is also symbolic of the unfinished business of righting the roughs' of injustice. It represents the lies that were told to our people about when their loved ones would return. The most important aspect it shows is the faith of Black/Africans in the power of the creator and the ancestor to bring us together again. As Black/Africans we all know that we will be united again.

As I said about Asiéntos, the point that strike a cord and pricked my soul was to know that there were Black/Africans waiting across the sea for our return. That was the most enlightening of all symbols to me. That was the most encouraging of all things to me to know that my longing for the knowledge of who I was and where I came from was not in vain because on the other end of sea, there were those who were longing for me and where I was. I must be able to acknowledge that. Now they say a picture is worth a thousand words, indeed this is true. When you pick the picture up and you analyze it, you may not use but only one word. You might not even have a complete sentence. Although some people may be able get a whole book out of it. For you, each individual, his own analogy of the picture may be different. What I see in Asiéntos was encouragement to think from a Blacological perspective. These are some of the words that flowed to my heart, mind, and my soul. So I have to be able to think about what Asiéntos meant to me as a Black/African born in this land (United States). Seeing that my African brothers and sisters are still awaiting my return. I know that Africa is in turmoil due to colonial trickery, inspiration, manipulation and finance. I also know that my people have had disagreements since the beginning of time. I am still encouraged about the knowledge that there are those who await the return of the captives of slavery. I also know that there were rebellions against those who sent us away. Injustice does not go without the application of justice, whether it be vengeance or righteousness. Where there's injustice, something has to be done to correct it. Yes, Black people had something to do with the injustice of slavery and the captivity of our people into bondage. They also paid for those injustices with lives. Some of them, not all of them, you can't make a broad statement about them.

What the movie did for me as a Black/African born in this land. Seeing a picture about slavery that was produced by Black/Africans who were born on the continent and how slavery affected them. For me it was good to see a picture that reflected the Black/African perspective about slavery and their perspective being a perspective that reflected slavery as a loss, not as some economic or political gain of some politician or someone seeking exploitive gains. To see Asiéntos reflected to me something that was stored in the back of my mind. It brought out

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something that was there in my subconscious that I would think about in times of reflection but really never gave a second thought to the overt conscious as a Black/African who was not institutionalized and not colonized. I really know nothing about Africans and their feelings about slavery at all. But as an educated Black/African who has study and research on slavery and Africa, I knew that there existed those who had experienced loss and depression from the loss just as I was depressed from the captivity. Watching *Asiéntos* made for me a point of clarity. It cleared for me what it was in the back of my mind, that was there but was not obvious. It brought the kind of justification even for the concept of Blacology that in my adulthood became a prevalent mission for me. *Asiéntos*, even more so, encourages me to be inspired to develop Blacology because it shows me that there is a need for utilizing the gifts or the presents that are wrapped up inside of me. That's a point that I feel is really important, that's significant as a Black/African. Another thing that I feel is significant is, that *Asiéntos* brought out the connection, the bridge that needs to be built between Blacks in the Diaspora and in Africa. Right now specifically, I can really talk about the United States. The bridge of the Black/Africans born in the United States because, this experience I know well. Because, its from my life and when I see *Asiéntos*, I don't get the same type of symbolism others received. The fact that Black/Africans are waiting the return of those who are captured in the slave trade is symbolic to me. That may seem a bit far-fetched and somewhat unrealistic to those who are living today who might think that going in the past is a waste of time. But the symbol of the lite and Black/African people waiting for your return is a welcoming mat for myself to return home. That may not be something that a lot a people want to do and I might not even have the right mindset. But, it's the symbolism that there exists a reality for the feeling with in my soul. Even the symbol that Black men can return to Africa is our greatest dream. I know that, that isn't everyone but the most important thing to me *Asiéntos* does is, it says "Black man, you can come home and we await your return".

*Asiéntos* also bring out in my mind that no longer are there physical chains that keep us from going back, but there are mental chains. There is the forschage or the psychological barriers that keep us from going back to Africa. You know when I saw that, I said what's keeping us from going back? When I saw the movie, I asked myself how come we can't get back to Africa? Why don't we get on the ships or planes and go back to Africa? Well, the economists would say it was an economical problem, we couldn't go back because of the economy and we don't have the money. The Eurocentric philosophers would say that philosophically we couldn't understand. The sociologists would say that we are not socialized for that environment. Sociologically we couldn't make it. But as a Blacologist, I say that it is an idea whose time has come and we must acknowledge the time. When I saw the movie, I didn't acknowledge a lot of the symbolism's, because, I wasn't educated about what those symbols mean. The symbolism that stood out to me was the waiting of Black people for the return of their captives. The families that were waiting for their members to return home from the journey of captivity. Not those who were involved in the slave trade but the most significant ones of all were those who had lost their loved ones and awaited their return. That symbol to me was the reigning cry, the loudest symbol that I heard. It was like an instrument in a band; the symbol of the waiting of the return of Black/African people to the land of Acubuland.

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When we talk about history, *Asientos* made me think about our Black History, how it was told to me by my mother and father and my school teachers and professors and how it was handed down by our ancestors. It made me think about our history and the truths that were told. Were they really truths? What was significant and what was really the whole truth about how we came to this country and where we stand as a people. It made me reflect on the prophecy with it. Who was the father of Negro History Day which evolved into Negro History Week and ultimately Black History Month. Yes, it made me think about what really happened to us historically. It took me back to slavery. As I was taught by Alex Haley and "Roots" and the movie, "Slaves". It also made me ask the question "Why it was never taught in class"? We really never got into slavery in class. We would talk about Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois. We would talk about that relationship when we got to college. But, we really didn't hear a lot about W.E.B. DuBois until high school. But, in grammar school we heard about Booker T. Washington, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglas. We had a selective history that was taught to us. It was taught to us in a way so that we would not be angry or mad about what had happened to us. Not only that, we would not be angry. Also, that we wouldn't be hurt and still hurt anyone because it was such a vicious and violent act (slavery). This thinking would have to be given to us so our parents and our educators picked out everything that was nice to tell and everything that white folks thought was acceptable. That's the aspect of what *Asientos* brought out to me in terms of history. It made me question the history that was taught to me. Was that history really true? It brought me to a point where I said "Man, this is really what happened", Black folks really care about us over there. It's not true that all Black/African people can't get along. There is in *Asientos* a symbol of power in reunion. Think about what the Blacologist Malcolm X said, "If you want to know the truth, you have to read and study for yourself to find the truth". Because what we were told and what our children are being told today is not the truth but fragments of some niceties that will be acceptable to the Europeans.

*Asientos* again brings out the question. Why we have to have symbolism that tells the truth of what we really feel and think? Why can't we just come out and say it? Why don't we just lay it on the line? Why don't we just give the whole truth, nothing but the truth, so help us God? Why do we have to say the sun is lit up and the sky is rising, the water is representative of the gap between those in captivity and those in colonialism, or those at home and those who have been dispersed? Why do we have to say it like that? Why don't we just tell the truth? Why can't we just come out and say that we came from African as captives and we were never to returned? It seemed like we would never go home. We were taken from our people and they're waiting for us to come home. Why couldn't we just say that? We were taken from Africa and our people were waiting for us to come home and we wanted to go back. All this symbolism and beating around the bush instead of telling the truth. Does not make the problem go away.

The movie *Asientos* talks about how serious tragedies remain unspoken. This to me is also symbolic of the way my experience was in the foster home and it is also symbolic of the way that Black African people in the United States view slavery. It seems to be something that is a part of the way that slavery has affected Black/African people. It is a curse for you to say, "due to the inhumanity of slavery". This is a way of adapting to the blocking out all of the injustices and the

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conditions of slavery. Let the truth be told, that white supremacy is a sickness acquired by the affects of the injustices of slave captivity and the practice of human bondage.

As Black/African people, we have tried to imagine that the pain and the suffering that was with our ancestors, that is in our souls, our hearts, and our minds doesn't exist. We have tried to wish it away, imagine it away, as though it was not a reality. But over and over again, it resurfaces and reminds us of the mission that is before us. We want to say that it happened but we also must say to ourselves, never again. Then we must prepare ourselves for the tasks of making it never happen again. We must deal in the reality that slavery is still with us today, that it has started somewhere else. It has never departed from Africa. In the Sudan and Mauritania there are sales of our people who are being enslaved by the Arabs and under the auspices of Islam. Slavery for Black/African people has never left us. The revolution that we claim we have had did not exist. Because, only revolution suffered in the end will discourage Black slavery. The battle must be fought. Lives must be given so that the freedom of Black/African people will never be hindered again. To retrogress into the past because we have not learned the lessons that the past has for us is our fate when there is no agitation against slavery today.

In Asiéntos, picking up the past is a task that must be done. It is something we must realize that we have to learn from the past so that we may be prepared to go on to the future. In the time that has gone by in the slave trade it is over a thousand years on the African continent and in the Diaspora. Slavery began in Africa with the Arab Slave trade in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century. Subjugation, oppression, second-class citizenship and mis-education has been going on for thousands of years. As Black/African people we must learn the lessons of the past to prepare us so that as the Jews has said,( European Jews) never again. We must prepare ourselves so that it will never happen again. Asientos also asked the questions or makes the statement, "Children play and children are born, isn't that enough?" Ignorance is never enough. In the cultural science of Blacology, there is, "The Way of Blacology". There is a statement about slavery and how it affects Black/African people. It is written like this:

"When I was a slave, I acted as a slave, I thought as a slave, I dreamed as a slave, so when I became emancipated and free, I gave up that slave mentality". (Brief Introduction to Blacology)

The only way we can give up that mentality is that we have to educate ourselves about our history, about the pain, the suffering that is within us. Children are ignorant to the ways of the world. It is our task to educate them about the true reality of our struggle and about how they must be uncompromising in the struggle to keep us from being slaves anymore. They must be taught to put an end to slavery everywhere in this universe.

Asiéntos also talks about the empty spaces. That is very symbolic of how we are as Black/African people today. We live with our minds empty, unfulfilled with the knowledge of who we are. Because of that our children are born to play games all their lives. Our children go out in the world of white supremacy with no coping skills. We must teach our children to be creative, articulate, and use the talents that God has given them to construct a culture that will provide us with the ability to never allow others to stand over us, to control us or to enslave us. The empty spaces must be filled with the knowledge of our uncompromising struggle for freedom.

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We must put a name with the dead souls who gave their lives and sacrificed that we might be here and continue to suffer in violence because there is no reward for suffering. Through the movie *Asientos* it talks about when one suffers, where we suffer, there is nothing for suffering and this is something that we must stop. We must stop the suffering and begin living. We know that we must go back to Goree Island. We know that we must go back to the places where our ancestors were kept. We must follow the trail as one does who is a private investigator or one who is a detective looking for clues to the crime so that we may be able to come to the conclusion and determine what it is that we must do. We must have a conviction and we must be convicted so that we can discontinue. Put an end to the suffering and fill the empty spaces. We must pass down the information to the next generation that we find. The information that we know the knowledge that we received must be passed on from generation to generation. Each child must know, each adult must know the stories of each family that has brought us to this point where we are. We must teach ourselves the ideas, philosophies, theories, beliefs, and notions of our culture. It is symbolic in *Asientos* that the time has come to develop an interdisciplinary cultural science from the wisdom of our ancestors who sacrificed for us. When we come to the point where there are empty spaces, we must fill them with storytelling. We must not leave a rock unturned. We must not leave one space anywhere. We must connect everything with what we think may have occurred. If we don't have anything we must create stories to connect where there is nothing.

The bodies being dumped into the graves, there is this silence that is as deadly and as devastating as the bodies being dumped into the graves. This is the silence that is the curse of our people and the effect of slavery on our people. This silence must be filled with details of our culture and the uncompromising struggle of our people. This violence is the silence of fear and ignorance. The prophecy of the wickedness and the evil that has been forced upon us for millennia. The time has come to fulfill this void in the hearts and the minds of our people. For every body that was dumped, there must be a story that we can fill this void with. This is our mission. This is the symbol that I see in the movie *Asientos*.

To fill the void in the hearts and our minds and our souls, to begin to speak to the brothers and sisters in Africa and across the waters. As I have said in *Blacology*, a poem that I wrote, I have a vision and I'm just going to say some of it.

"I have a vision. It is a vision deeply rooted in the Black culture. I have a vision that one day in the Black culture all over the world and throughout the universe that the sons of former slaves, freed Blacks, and native Africans will be proud of their culture and we'll be able to live together as brothers and sisters. I have a vision that one day in Black African culture, the cultural science of *Blacology* will become real and Black culture will roll down like waters and our history like a mighty stream". (Brief Introduction to *Blacology*)

Our catastrophe is not just something for the Europeans to put in their museums as some interesting, picture that shows us in decay or as a savage, uncivilized, destroyed culture and a people without a culture, but as a destroyed people. We must fill that void, we must fill it with the Cultural Science of *Blacology*. It is time that our culture become real and our ideas become that which fills the void and the silence of our ignorance.

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There is a boy running on the beach to see if the return of the captives were forthcoming. The animals waiting on the beach for the return of the captives. The Black African people standing looking to the ocean awaiting the return of their loved ones. It is symbolic that our return to the motherland is welcomed by all man and the animals and even the trees. The wind blowing to the land is symbolic that even the wind is ready to take us home.

Asiéntos shows us the door of no return. This is symbolic that even in the long suffering that door of no return does not stop the people from waiting for the return of their loved ones. Even the narrator talks about how his body has closed up the wounds and that they are ready for the return of their loved ones. As the elders look out into the ocean for the return of those who were taken from them. Will we be people anticipating the return, are we going to be able to build a bridge that will connect us back to those who long for our return? We must fill the void of silence with communication. We have been divided by the silence. We must begin to communicate and acknowledge that both on the continent and in the Diaspora in the back of our minds and the depths of our hearts and our souls that we both have been yearning, crying out for our loved ones. We must stop ignoring the voice within our souls so that we may be able to go forward. We must go back to go forward so that we can heal the wounds and the illnesses that we have. We must stop thinking that what has happened to us, the struggle, the division, those we love have disappeared because, they have not disappeared. We must acknowledge and proclaim our struggle and affirm that we are connected. That is the key to our success. That is the key to our solidarity. That is the first stone in the bridge to our unification. We must believe it to be true so if a man belief it, so it is. We must create the reality of our humanity. We must create the bridges that draw us together. We must believe it. We must not be afraid. We cannot be afraid, we shall not be afraid. We must believe that we are one.

This is possible and the possibility of redevelopment is one of waiting in the night, the lighted flames at the end of the beach awaiting the return of those who were taken or stolen. This is symbolic once again of the unspeakable that one day Black/Africa would come together. The sons of freed subjects in the Diaspora and the Africans also the ex-slaves will come together once again as brothers and sisters. That is the unspeakable. Return to the place called Acubaland or Africa and become a people that will change the world the day after tomorrow. Some day in this world humanity will return.

#### **IV. DEFINITIONS:**

6. Black Cultural approach - To approach a ideal or program form the perspective of Black culture.
7. Black Cultural Knowledge - The information provided by the heritage and traditions Black People both oral and written for the perpetuation and utilization for advancement and survival.
8. Blacology - the scientific study of the evolution of Black/African people and their culture, the perpetuation of the ideas, philosophies, theories, beliefs, concepts, notions of the past and present. The Affirmation of Black/African thinking and culture. The utilization of oral, visual, and written the knowledge of the ancestors, elders, and present scholars as an interdisciplinary behavioral cultural science.
9. Blacologist-Those who perpetuate the Science of Blacology or Black culture.
10. Blacks - the dark race, the native people of Africa, the people from the land of the Gods, the people of the first civilization, the descendants of African Slave trade, the people of Ancient Egyptian, Ethiopia, Carthage, and the Descendant of Ancient Black Civilization.
11. Blacological - the logic of Black/African, from the experience, the struggle, logic that is based on the chronology and evolution of their thinking, logic that is of, from, by, for, and about the survival and advancement of Black people past and present both oral and written.
12. Black/Africans - an evolutionary identity in the chronology of Black people, a specific way to identify the descendent or the original people of Africa, the dark skin people.
13. Black/African Culture - Black represents a time without cultural consciousness only color consciousness. African represents the acknowledgement of kinship, locality and cultural connection and consciousness. (look in Blacological thoughts). Chronological evoluational acknowledgement of your ethnical orientation, and cultural development. (spiritual substance and ethnicity)
14. Blacological Method - A Method of determining and analyzing data and information, developed by Black scholars and scientist use by the different extended cultures or as means of survival or to accomplish a goal.
15. Blacologically Speaking - To speak from a perspective that is operatively Black, from the Black/African experience and way of life. To speak from the logic of what is customary and advantageous to Black people.
16. Cultural development - The process of evolving in spiritual solidarity in both individual and collective, toward cultural perfection.

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17. Ebonics - as an Black/African language, and how does it present itself in the African American's behavior and culture? Axiology refers to the good and the beautiful as well as to the combination that gives us right conduct within the context of African culture. This is a value issue.<sup>1</sup> Referring to rhythms and pronunciation of words by Black/Africans of European or any language that is not the original African speech or language.
18. Miseducated - To be taught the whites are better than blacks, black are inferior to white, white are superior to black,(i.e. if you are white you rights, if you are brown stick around, if you are yellow you are mellow, if you are Black get back.) Black are not intelligent, white are intelligent; everything good is white, everything bad, is black; white school are better than Black Schools

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