Decolonial Turns and Development Discourse in Africa: Reflections on Masculinity and Pan-Africanism

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ABSTRACT

The Euro-American hegemonic control of epistemology has produced the current modern and patriarchal world order underpinned by a Manichean outlook in which Africa is considered a site of inferior people enveloped by lack of development. This article deploys the concept of decolonial turns to understand how Euro-American thought has produced ideas of development within which Africa emerges as lacking development. It posits that Euro-American discourse of development has continued to inform those processes that resulted in the impoverishment of the African continent. The discourse was articulated in the guise of modernization theory of the 1960s and now exists in the current Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers that have currently replaced the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the 1980s and 1990s. The challenging question from a decolonial perspective for this article is whether pan-Africanism of the 21st century is able to provide the intellectual counter-weight to Euro-American epistemological domination. The article also delves deeper into question of masculinity and patriarchy that also contribute to poverty in Africa.

Keywords: decolonial turn, development discourse, epistemology, masculinities, pan-Africanism

1.   INTRODUCTION

The decolonial turn in development discourse necessitates not only shifting the locus of enunciation of knowledge from Europe and America as privileged epistemic sites to the Global South and Africa in particular, but new modes of thought and action in Africa are imperative. Nothing less than a fundamental epistemic rupture or intellectual revolution is required on the part of the masses of African people and progressive African thinkers. It requires a revolution in praxis that is reflexive, that engages in a constant dialogue with theory and practice that connects with the lives of ordinary Africans and actively conscientises them.

In the African context decolonial turns must be premised on the necessity for a cultural, psychological and intellectual revolution in thought, vision, values and action that seeks to awaken a comatose African people from the deep-seated impact of enslavement, colonisation

and neo-colonialism disconnecting African people and continues to alienate them from their historical memory and potential. It will be an unfolding and complex struggle waged on many sites: political, social, cultural, spiritual, psychological, between African men forging new definitions of African masculinities against the prevailing patriarchal order, alongside African women. It will require struggles on the sites of religion – traditional, Christian and Islamic – that seeks to preserve outmoded customs, traditions and norms under the guise of religion or tradition itself. In short, the intellectual rupture with Euro-American hegemonic paradigms requires Africans to complete the aborted revolution of the 1960s in order to bring genuine liberation to all African peoples.

This task is seemingly overwhelming 'for the establishment of hegemony requires the silencing or marginalizing not only of other ideas, but also of other ways and other processes of thinking' (Gibson 2011: 107). As Depelchin (2005: 1) points out, 'the cultural environment of imperialism imposes ways of seeing, thinking and reasoning which do not need to be articulated because, so to speak, they go without saying'. Hence, in constructing and implementing new paradigms one must initially be prepared to be marginalized, often in the academy, among colleagues and within the larger society until hearts and minds are won over to new paradigmatic perspectives. It is necessary to recognise, as Grosfoguel points out, that 'we always speak from a particular location in the power structures. Nobody escapes the class, sexual, gender, spiritual, linguistic, geographical, and racial hierarchies of the modern/colonial/capitalist/patriarchal world-system' (2007: 213). Therefore in confronting European intellectual hegemony one must recognise that 'the subject that speaks is always hidden, concealed, erased from the analysis' (ibid.: 213).

Grosfoguel argues: 'One of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to the decolonization of the world. This led to the myth of a "postcolonial" world. The heterogeneous and multiple global structures put in place over a period of 450 years did not evaporate with the juridical-political decolonization of the periphery over the past 50 years. We continue to live under the same 'colonial power matrix' (ibid.: 219). Furthermore, 'the mythology about the "decolonization of the world" obscures the continuities between the colonial past and current colonial/racial hierarchies and contributes to the invisibility of "coloniality" today' (ibid.: 220).

Kwame Nkrumah referred to these 'continuities' or 'coloniality' as far back as April 1958 at the Conference of Independence states in Accra, as new perilous forms of subordination and in 1965 he wrote his classic book, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism.* In this seminal work he argues that the countries of the North continued to have vested economic interests in the continued balkanisation of Africa for the natural resources to be exploited and creation of clientele states through military bases leased by neo-colonial African elites to the former metropolitan powers. Nkrumah advocates that Pan-Africanism was the panacea for Africa's myriad socio-economic neo-colonial problems. The position of this author is that Pan-Africanism that is people-led and shorn of its patriarchal domination, continues to be the solution to many of Africa's current predicaments.

This article interrogates the implications of 'decolonial turns' in the context of Africa at the following interlocking levels: political determination and economic development, environmental justice, the psychological chains of enslavement and gender relations. They are examined in no

order of priority, however it should be emphasized that they are dialectically interrelated and the solution – that is building Pan-Africanism – requires cognisance of this fact.

2. POLITICAL DETERMINANTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The intellectual hegemony of Europe and America extends to sections of the European left, who also consider they have total ownership of 'the truth'. Too often sections of the European left and the feminist movement in the West have arrogated themselves the right to dictate the direction of the struggles in Africa and in the rest of the South in insidious paternalistic and racist attitudes that are integral to the continuing oppression of Africans.

For the last twenty years, particularly since the demise of the Eastern bloc and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the mantra of 'multi-partyism' and a particular Western model of liberal political democracy (i.e. the Westminster or Presidential system) has been imposed on African societies and has also given rise to a discourse on democracy in Africa. Since the latter part of the 1990s, funds from the IMF, World Bank and the international donor community have been made conditional on the adoption of a commitment to both 'multiparty democracy' and Western notions of 'human rights' by African governments (Mutua 2002; Shivji 1989). The term currently employed by policymakers, politicians, multilateral institutions in both Africa and the developed world, is the seemingly benign and often unquestioned concept of 'good governance'. As Ha-Joon (2002: 69) points out: 'The issue of institutional development, under the slogan of "good governance", has recently come to occupy the centre stage of development policy debate.' When critically deconstructed the term is not only value laden, connoting that a particular set of policies are desirable, beneficial, and ethical, but highly prescriptive in the contents of 'good governance' which entails, 'a clean and efficient bureaucracy and judiciary; strong protection of (private) property rights, including intellectual property rights; good corporate governance institutions, especially information disclosure requirements and bankruptcy law; and well-developed financial institutions'. (Ha-Joon 2002: 69–70).

During the fifty years of Africa's so-called independence it remains the case that 'the problem is not so much that development has failed as that it was never really on the agenda in the first place'. (Ake 1996: 1). Furthermore, as the Nigerian political scientist, Ake contends, 'by all indications, political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediment to development' (ibid.: 1). 'Development' has proven to be a mirage for Africans; it was an attractive idea in seeking to cohere disparate groups around common socio-economic objectives while enabling the African nationalist elite to reproduce its domination, simultaneously colluding with foreign patrons to whom was given the responsibility for development (ibid.: 7). In addition to this, as Ake points out, 'The development paradigm suffered greatly from being indifferent to the institutional framework of development. There was little concern about how the political structures and practices, the administrative system, or even social institutions of a country might affect its possibility of development' (ibid.: 13). Similarly, culture has been ignored in the development paradigm imposed by the developed world on other parts of the world or at its worst 'the development paradigm tends to have a negative view of the people and their culture; it cannot accept them on their own terms' (ibid.: 15). Fifty years on and with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 'the world's most powerful and violent "ism" is not

Islamism but "liberalism"' (Pilger: 2012). As Pilger points out, that Western liberalism 'claims to be non-ideological, neither left nor right' is more perilous on account of the fact that it perceives itself without an ideological rival and therefore triumphant. Neoliberalism, and particularly liberal capitalist political democracy, is in denial of its own fundamentalism and evangelical mission to universalize its values and thereby increasing greater global social inequality and human degradation (Harvey: 2005).

While Claude Ake's book, *Social Science as Imperialism: The Theory of Political Development*, was published in 1979, its central thesis remains enormously relevant to current progressive African forces seeking to overturn the Euro-American epistemic hegemony in the intellectual production of knowledge. Ake contends that underpinning the Western social sciences of political theory, sociology and economics is an imperialist agenda that subscribes to capitalist values, bequeathed not only in the colonial education system that African countries inherited but on attainment of formal independence since the 1960s, the majority of Africa's educated elite consciously or unconsciously subscribed to imperialist and capitalist ideology and continue to do so. Embedded in Western social science is 'teleological thinking' (Ake 1979: 125) in which European thinkers viewed all societies as moving through stages from 'a less desirable state of being to a more desirable one' (ibid.: 125). Such thinking also concealed ideological biases as well as influenced methodological approaches. In short, European social scientists 'give the impression that the ultimate purpose of all other societies is to be like the West' (ibid.: 126). Consequently, 'following in this tradition the scholarship on Third World countries was impregnated with telelogism' (ibid.: 127). Hence in political theory it was conceptualised that 'tribes' would evolve into nation-states; sociological theory devised the concept of 'gemeinshaftlich' and 'traditional societies', which were characterised by ascriptive roles and would evolve towards meritocratic values of Western societies. Ingrained in these paradigms was the moral inferiority of the 'other' and the moral superiority of European societies and values. Grosfoguel illustrates the Manichean order integral to European knowledge formation:

> The epistemic strategy has been crucial for Western global designs. By hiding the location of the subject of enunciation, European/Euro-American colonial expansion and domination was able to construct a hierarchy of superior and inferior knowledge and, thus, of superior and inferior people around the world. We went from sixteenth century characterization of "people without writing" to eighteenth and nineteenth century characterization of 'people without history,' to the twentieth century characterization of "people without development" and more recently, to the early twenty-first century of "people without democracy."

Depelchin (2005: 6–21) similarly argues that 'the syndrome of discovery and abolition' continues in reconfigured forms within African history and the social sciences. The abolitionist syndrome is based on the distortion of historical facts. In short, during slavery the enslaved resisted both mentally and physically from the moment of physical capture to the legal ending of slavery throughout the European colonies. Their resistance was a historical fact long before European abolitionists became morally outraged by enslavement and commenced their propaganda campaign, which claimed it was abolitionist efforts and conscience that led to the abolition of slavery. Their denial of the myriad slave revolts relegates the agency of the enslaved to onlookers in history rather than agents of history. The 'discovery' of the enslaved by the European

abolitionist reproduces the syndrome of nothing exists unless it is discovered by the white man or what Depelchin (2005, 9) terms the 'abolitionist syndrome', which reproduces 'relations of domination and silences' in African history.

In the 1960s the ideological duel between the Monrovia and Casablanca blocs over how African unity should be attained was reflected in two polar positions: economic cooperation and gradualism versus political union. Kwame Nkrumah (1965: 30), the champion of the latter, articulated his belief that: 'Economic unity to be effective must be accompanied by political unity. The two are inseparable, each necessary for the future greatness of our continent, and the full development of our resources.' Julius Nyerere was the proponent of the gradualist approach. It remains the case today that politics is inseparable from economics. To illustrate the salience of this argument one needs critically examine the substance and ramifications of the 'colonial pact' that exists between the twelve former Francophone African states in addition to Guinea-Bissau and Equatorial Guinea (colonised by Portugal and Spain, respectively).

The West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) comprises the following eight west African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) comprises six central African countries: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. The Banque Centrale des Etats d l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO) issues the CFA franc for the countries comprising WAEMU while the Banque des Etats de l'Afrique Central (BEAC) issues the CFA franc for the CEMAC countries. Originally the CFA franc was pegged at 100 CFA for each French franc but was fixed at 6.65957 French franc to one Euro when France joined the Euro zone around 1995. The implications of this monetary policy are profound. Firstly, the terms of the agreement obliges each African country to maintain at least 65% of its foreign exchange reserves with the French treasury and another 20% to address financial liabilities.

The ramifications of such an arrangement ensures that each individual African country has access to only 15% of its own money for national development in a given year. Secondly, the French Treasury invests the money belonging to these African countries on the Paris stock exchange. It is this money, the 65% belonging to each African country in the French treasury, that those African countries will have to borrow from, at commercial rates, if and when they are in need of additional revenue. Third, the manifest implication of this suicidal economic policy is that France maintains absolute control of the economies of these fourteen African countries; therefore these countries cannot regulate their own monetary policy and hence their economic policies. Furthermore, this colonial pact extends to a special presence for France in the commercial and defence sectors of these countries. Each African country is obliged to award government contracts to French companies in the first instance. Concealed behind the support of Alassane Ouatara and the military dislodging of former Ivorian president, Laurent Gbagbo, was Gbagbo's desire to review the colonial pact with his former colonial master. His government sought to build a third major bridge in Cote d'Ivoire. According to the colonial pact, the contract immediately went to a French company, which quoted an exorbitant fee to be paid in US dollars or Euros (*New African* February 2011: 13). Chinese investors offered to build the bridge for half the price to the chagrin of the French.

Other grave economic disagreements between the French and Gbagbo fuelled French justifications to eliminate him. For example, 'Gbagbo favoured non-European and non-US oil companies to explore in the newly discovered oil fields at the border with Ghana and off the coast of the Gulf of Guinea' (ROAPE 2011: 363). His government had encouraged diversification of commercial interests in oil exploration, particularly, Chinese, Indian and Russian companies. In addition, he refused to make a payment of US$2.3 billion on Cote d'Ivoire's dollar bonds to foreign investors, to pay the interest on the country's foreign debt. This impacted on the value of euro bonds that had fallen to 62.875 cents to the dollar before the election in 2011, to 16.646 after the election (ROAPE, 2011: 363).

Hence, it is a myth that France was the neutral and even-handed arbiter and peacekeeper during the Ivorian conflict of 2010–2011. In essence, Gbagbo had antagonised French geo-strategic and economic interests in Cote d'Ivoire and therefore he had to be removed. The French, US and the UN were not interested in seeking another election or that the Supreme Court of Cote d'Ivoire declared Gbagbo the winner of the November 2010 presidential elections. Instead, Alassane Ouatara, compliant with French commercial interests in the country and militarily backed by the former colonial power, was heralded the winner. The UN along with the 2 500 French soldiers in the country led the assault on Gbagbo's presidential residence and arrested him in April 2011 while the African Union (AU) remained divided and therefore on the sidelines of this African affair.

Another dangerous aspect of the colonial pact is the permanent French military presence and access to military bases, in not only Cote d'Ivoire, but all the former Francophone African countries. These bases and military facilities in Africa are run by the French.

Similarly France was eager to remove Colonel Muammar Qadaffi from power when he opposed French North African colonial ambitions in the form of the Mediterranean Basin Alliance in 2008. According to Lehman (2012: 207):

> The reason why Libya opposed the Mediterranean Alliance was that it would have split, rather than united, African nations. Rather than establishing one more "zone" like the CFA Region in Northern Africa, Qaddafi and Libya were lobbying the African Union to abandon the CFA treaties with France, and to establish a Pan-African, gold-backed currency, which would end the usury, the robbery of African nations' resources, the enslavement of an entire continent's population.

In essence, the colonial pact illustrates the intricate neo-colonial dependency and continued inferiority complex of African leaders, civil servants, and ministers as well as a neo-colonial African intelligentsia who subscribe to this economic and military paradigm of subservience. It is mirrored in varying degrees of subordination in the remaining African countries in their relations with international donors, aid agencies, the IMF and World Bank. It is also mirrored in the dangerous existence of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), which African civil society forces have opposed, while a myriad neo-colonial African governments have secretly engaged in military training exercises with American troops under the auspices of AFRICOM as well as permitting American forces to have military bases in the Horn of Africa.

A decolonial turn must first understand the iniquity of this complex political, military and economic system on an intellectual level in order to then fundamentally dismantle it and establish an equitable economic and political system. 'That our planners approach Africa not as a jumble of disconnected sovereign states, but as a unified field' (Armah 2010: 12) is predicated on the correct diagnosis of the nature of the problems confronting the continent.

3.   ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE VERSUS ECO-IMPERIALISM

Western global designs also extend to control over the entire discourse on climate change including the physical planet of the earth. The emergence of capitalism, its ruthless search for raw materials in Africa and elsewhere, its needs for cheap sources of energy and markets, has given rise to the pillage and plunder of the scarce resources of the planet (e.g. biodiversity in plant and animal life and water pollution), the burden of which has been imposed on the people of Africa and the rest of the South while at the same time the highest consumption patterns of this non-sustainable system benefits the people of the developed world. The industrialised globalised economy was founded on slavery and colonization to enrich the countries of the North. The developing world continues to under-develop the South in environmental imperialism or what Shiva (2008: 15) conceptualises as 'eco-imperialism'. She contends:

> Eco-imperialism is a complex dynamic. It includes the control over the economies of the world through corporate globalization and transforms the resources and ecosystems of the world into feedstock for an industrialised globalized economy. It contains the oil wars being fought in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa and the new land and food wars triggered by the emergence of industrial biofuels. Eco-imperialism also characterises the control over foreign policy and strategic security policy of countries like India through the recent US-India nuclear agreement.

In short it is the poor of Africa and the rest of the South who have contributed least to the rape of the planet and who sacrifice the most. Furthermore, as Shiva (2008: 15) argues: 'Eco-imperialism is intolerant of the freedom and sovereignty of the other, be it other communities, other countries, or other species. In the contemporary context of globalization, peak oil, and climate change, eco-imperialist responses do not solve the problem of climate chaos. Rather, they allow corporations and rich countries to take over the resources and policy spaces of the poor.' The paradox is that the same paradigm of rape and pillage that produced climate change, desertification, carbon emissions, the depletion of the ozone layer, is being imposed on the rest of the world as 'development'. Yet, 'The dominant model of development and globalization is inherently violent because it deprives the poor of their fundamental right to food, land and livelihoods' (Shiva 2008: 4). Both Shiva and Bassey critique the false solutions proffered by the Kyoto Protocol to climate change and advocate a fundamental overhaul of the industrial capitalist system that is the cause of destruction of the planet (Shiva 2008: 17–24; Bassey 2012: 100–117).

Globalized capitalism in its current ruthless mode is a threat to Africans and other peoples of the South, for not only does it advocate that African countries must industrialize to attain economic growth but it is grievously undermining self-sufficiency in agriculture by encouraging land grabs

by countries such as Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and India, to lease thousands of hectares of land in Africa for bio-fuel (i.e. the production of jatropha) and food production. In short, Africans must continue to feed others, while they jeopardize their own food security and go hungry.

Environmental imperialism of the developed countries against the countries of the South co-exists with the 'scars of enslavement' (Akbar 1996: 3) and colonisation in the mental and social lives of African people. It is to this mental disfigurement that we now turn.

4.   THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHAINS OF ENSLAVEMENT AND COLONIZATION

In the context of Africa and in the Diaspora, the pervasive impact of enslavement and colonisation continues to survive in the psychological, cultural and aesthetic impact of white supremacy, white privilege, norms and values that exist in the world. While people of colour are the majority in the world, they continue to live in the shadow of white supremacy (i.e. racism) that extends not only to the domains of intellectual thought but also manifests itself psychologically in what recent and various authors have characterised as 'post traumatic slavery disorder' (Reid, Mims and Higginbottom 2005), 'the chains of psychological slavery' (Akbar 1996), and 'post traumatic slave syndrome' (Degruy Leary 2005).

Frantz Fanon and Steve Bantu Biko were forerunners in addressing how under colonial and settler colonial subordination blackness sustained attack and denigration from within and without on the psyche of Africans and on people of African descent towards a malignant internalised anti-black racism that produces low self-esteem, self-confidence and self-hatred as a consequence of the European racial ideology and hierarchy that globally prevail. In short, whether in Africa, South America, the USA, Europe, India or the Caribbean, a pigmentocracy exists in which the lighter one is the more attractive an individual is considered. In this supremacist order, it is the African woman who is judged, valued and devalued (i.e. discriminated against) based on these Eurocentric values. The impact of what some also call 'colorism' (Herring et al. 2004) is profound. For example, the Egyptian feminist and writer, Nawal El Saadawi (1999: 9) writes:

> When I was a child I was told to hide my brown complexion under a coating of white power. I was born in the early thirties and at that time Egypt was under the rule of the British and the royal family descendants of the Albanian Turk Mohammed Ali who overthrew the Mameluke dynasty. At that time, a white skin meant that one came from the upper classes, for both the British and the Turks had fair complexions. *Beauty was therefore to have white skin. To be brown or dark-skinned was ugly, related to the lower, poorer classes of society* (my italics).

Hunter (2004: 22) contends: 'Discussion of skin colour hierarchies have frequently been swept under the rug and avoided by public speakers and scholars for years.' It is an issue that needs to be addressed, on the basis that the legacy of racism continues to corrosively damage the self-worth and self-confidence of African people and people of African descent as it has reconfigured itself in more covert and no less equally damaging manifestations.

The details of the historical origins of this pigmentocracy need not detain us here; however, Akbar (1996: 30–31) succinctly emphasizes that:

> The process of enslavement was not simply the brute force of overcoming people who were militarily weaker and forcing them to operate under your influence. It was not simply the outcome of barbaric treatment of captives by assault, brutality, restricted movement and activity. *The process of human slavery is ultimately a psychological process by which the mind of a people is gradually brought under the control of their captors and they become imprisoned by the loss of consciousness (awareness) of themselves.*

In essence, slavery and colonisation created a racist ideological belief system that served to morally and rationally justify enslavement and colonisation and this belief system has been internalized, that is, accepted by African people to varying degrees. The concomitant aesthetic emerged with the equation of black skin with ugliness, inferiority, savagery and white skin with superiority, rationality and beauty.

Today, black skins and white masks are the desires of elements of the wretched of the earth who engage in self-loathing by hair straightening; wearing wigs; blue and green contact lenses; weaves; false eyelashes; false nails and skin bleach in order not to look like themselves. Black is no longer beautiful – as it was in the decade of the late 1960s and 1970s.

When asked during the 1970s to explain the maxim – 'black is beautiful', Biko (1978: 104) claims:

> I think that slogan has meant to serve and I think is serving a very important aspect of our attempt to get at humanity. You are challenging the very deep roots of the Black man's belief about himself. When you say "black is beautiful" what in fact you are saying to him is: man, you are okay as you are, begin to look upon yourself as a human being; now in African life especially it also has certain connotations; it is the connotations on *the way women prepare themselves for viewing by society, in other words the way they dream, the way they make up and so on, which tends to be a negation of their true state and in a sense a running away from their colour; they use lightening creams, they use straightening devices for their hair* and so on. They sort of believe I think that their natural state which is *a black state is not synonymous with beauty and beauty can only be approximated by them if the skin is made as light as possible and the lips are made as red as possible, and their nails are made as pink as possible and so on*. So in a sense the term "black is beautiful" challenges exactly that belief which makes someone negate himself. (my italics)

Biko's masculinist language problematically subsumes the 'Black woman' in the term 'Black Man'. This aside, Biko is likely to have understood that it is the same mentality of inferiority, rejection of self, desiring whiteness that is manifested in some African men who equally reinforce such negative self-images in desiring Europeanized African looking women, as it is African women who denigrate themselves and engage in this European imitation and aspiration. The paradigm of Western beauty that has been internalised by a people once enslaved and colonized remains in the psyche of such people, particularly as the dominant images of beauty powerfully propagated by a global media denigrates blackness and the black body while also being simultaneously obsessed with it.

What would Biko and Fanon make of some black South African women and their counterparts elsewhere in Africa and the Diaspora today, who continue to negate themselves in the Brazilian and Indian hair they use to conceal their own natural hair? To paraphrase Depelchin (2005: 3),

since physicists have means to detect persisting echoes of the big bang, how can Africans and people of African descent emancipate themselves from the 'vibrating echoes' of psychological trauma and the disfigurement of enslavement and colonisation?

As Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2012) states: 'In Africa, Europe and America, skin lightening technology and services is a huge industry. In short, a multi-billion industry in the world is built around the erasure of blackness; and its biggest clients are the affluent middle class in Africa and the world. But the negativity manifests itself in other ways.' The colonization of the lands of Africa extended also to control over how Africans would be (mis)-represented in the world; as well as 'the minds and bodies of the unsuspecting black masses' (Biko 1978: 50). In urban areas of Africa, it is not only the middle class African who aspires to such European standards of beauty but working class Africans. Elements in the rural areas who seek to migrate to urban areas for a better life are unlikely to escape the negative influence of these Western images and aspirations.

As Ngugi (2012) contends:

> The perception and self-perception of blackness as negative is spread and intensified in the images of the everyday: in the West, TV clips to illustrate famine, violent crimes, and ethnic warfare, tend to involve dark faces. In commercials, TV dramas, in the cinema, *one hardly ever sees a really dark person portraying beauty and positivity. A concession to blackness stops at various shades of lighter skin* (my italics).

The flip side to internalised inferiority on the part of some Africans is the continuation of white supremacist racist presuppositions that led to the deaths of Ahmadou Diallo on 5 February 1999; Sean Bell on 25 November 2006; Stephen Lawrence on 22 April 1993; Mark Duggan on 4 August 2011; Trayvon Martin on 26 February 2012 and numerous others. The racial supposition that the Harvard professor, Louis Gates, was a burglar who was arrested by a white police officer in his own home on 16 July 2009 surely reinforces the Du Bois declaration that the problem of the twentieth century continues to be the colour line in the twenty first century? As Ngugi (2012: 4) argues, underpinning these tragic circumstances is 'that self certainty can condemn anyone to death'. In the context of people of African descent and African people, 'race would seem to trump class. The certainty is based on a negative profile of blackness, taken so much for granted as normal that it no longer creates doubt.'

Umoja (2012: 48) succinctly argues: 'Once you convince someone to hate the reflection in their mirror, you can convince them of anything.' Consequently, the decolonial turn on the psychological level must address 'psychologically crippling' negative European cultural and aesthetic influences by challenging and embracing African beauty in all its manifestations (Akbar 1996: 66). Ngugi (2012: 41) claims, 'Africa has to reclaim the black body with all its blackness as the starting point in our plunge into and negotiations with the world.' Depelchin (2005: 71) emphasises that 'the survival of an individual depends on him or her loving every single part of his/her body regardless of what might be said about it.' This vital engagement in self-love must be extended to a community and societal level on which the embrace of the black body must be engaged with.

Akbar (1996: 33) poses that 'the primary objective to freeing the Black mind is to change the consciousness of Black people'. This can only come about through a people's reconnection with their historical memory; an awareness and knowledge of the dignity and determination of their ancestors; a fundamental understanding of their past in order to understand the present structures of domination and in order for them to determine the future (Rodney: 1981). Carruthers (1999: 4) poses that: 'When African people reunite with African history and culture, solutions to the other problems will be possible.' Furthermore, imperative to this process of genuine liberation 'from intellectual and cultural tyranny and genocide … [is] an African-centred curriculum' (Carruthers 1999: 16).

A pan-African curriculum must politically and culturally educate Africans both on the continent and in the Diaspora of their profoundly rich history, diverse cultures and languages. Such a curriculum would be assisted with the establishment of a continental pan-African satellite broadcasting station that provides educational programmes on aspects of African history and culture from Dakar to Mogadishu and from Cape Town to Cairo. This would help to address the fact that currently Africans know more about Europe than they do about their neighbours living across the artificially created borders imposed by the 1884 Berlin conference. In addition to this most Africans would opt for a holiday in Europe rather than elsewhere on the huge African continent. The cultivation of a pan-African consciousness must be planned and creative in order to create much needed understanding among all African people.

Breaking the mental chains of slavery and colonisation is by no means a simple or a brief process for 'the bottom line is that those who seek to get free are still dealt with severely and one should not take the decision to break the chains from your mind as a minor consideration. It will take courage' (Akbar 1996: 41–42). Decolonizing the mind is and will be a long conscious and radical process. Eradicating chauvinist values and the accompanying programmed mind-set is another struggle that requires courage and intellectual honesty.

5.   ERADICATING MASCULINITY

It is imperative that the decolonial turn challenges the entire European foundation of knowledge production and how it is male defined, conceptualised and dominated. This patriarchal domination of knowledge has its antecedents in the European male-led imperialist expansion and its intellectual expression in the Cartesian maxim, 'I think, therefore I am'. To think was wholly a male preserve. The gender of the 'I' was conceived as male, for European women were considered wholly incapable of thought, in the similar way that the European concept of 'citizen' was coded male until the early twentieth century when the suffragettes challenged male political dominance in Europe and won the right to the suffrage. These Eurocentric male concepts and thought patterns were imposed on African societies and embraced by African men as a direct consequence of the colonial encounter.

The generation of male African nationalist leaders, also gave rise to a generation of African male academics and public intellectuals. Many of them, such as Ake, Nkrumah, Fanon (and many others) implicitly subsumed women into their use of 'man' and 'he' in their writings. They assumed the gender neutrality of the use of 'man' and 'he'. This subsumption is itelf gendered. As the term 'gender' has erroneously come to refer to women only, the term 'masculinist' will

be used here to refer to socio-economic, and moral philosophies that are constructed on the connections and experiences of men and the supposition of male superiority over women. I wish to stress here that I recognise socio-economic differences among men – some are richer and poorer than others; some have greater access to power than other African men. There are also cultural and educational differences among African men, which may influence them to have more or less prejudiced/sexist/chauvinist views towards African women – in short to consciously or unconsciously think and act in ways in which they believe that they are superior to women or that African women are equal to men. Hence, just as we cannot homogenize all African women, neither can the same be done to all African men. However, in relation to the production of knowledge in Africa and in the developed world, men on the whole dominate this field as they control politics, the military and the conduct of war.

For example take the notion of an African intellectual and the academic. It is men who continue to be perceived and conceive of themselves as the predominant producers and custodians of knowledge and as public intellectuals. Zeleza (2003: 49) reinforces this thinking in his definition of an academic and an intellectual. He writes: 'An academic is a farmer – to use Jack Miles (1999) memorable metaphor – who has a field that *he* tries to cultivate well' (my italics). Zeleza fails to challenge the masculinist language of Miles who also conceives that 'to compliment a great scholar on *his* beautiful style is, in the usual case, as much a breach of decorum as complimenting *him* on *his* complexion' (Miles, cited in Zeleza 2003: 49; my italics).

While the upper echelons of academia and intellectual life across the African continent is being transformed with increasing numbers of African women, there is still a need to challenge popular stereotypes and thinking that intellect is embodied in the African male and African women cannot be intellectuals. There is also a need to challenge the practice and attitude among some male African academics who assume that lengthy public speaking and intellectual exchange is the preserve of men, and women should have less floor space. It is the old sexist adage of women should be seen but not heard – or not heard for too long for this is not expected of women. The hidden supposition is that men talk and women listen. In a patriarchically conceived order it is not the reverse for men to listen and for women to orally present ideas. There is also the tacit manner in which some African males in an intellectual exchange with a minority of African women will validate one another's argument and dismiss or undermine that of the woman/women on a misogynistic basis, especially if the woman is more educated, articulate and presents a more intelligent argument than her male counterparts. These are some of the subtle forms of patriarchical attitudes that manifest in the realm of social relations between African men and women that need to be challenged and eliminated. In addition, why some fields of knowledge in Africa remain consistently male dominated (philosophy, political science, economics, engineering, and the natural sciences) and the barriers to more women entering these fields needs to be seriously addressed.

A decolonial turn in relations between African women and men necessitates a fundamental rethinking of not only how male and female children in African societies are socialised but also that genuinely non-sexist male academics and particularly progressive male academics directly challenge and address the patriarchical attitudes of African men who hold such attitudes. Similarly, HIV/Aids in Africa will fail to be addressed in Africa if the sexual behaviour of men who play a significant role in disseminating the virus is not openly addressed (Uzodike & Isike

2012: 32). As the authors contend: 'There is a need for African men already involved in gender-equality advocacy work to forge collaborations and alliances between themselves and HIV-infected men, aimed specifically at encouraging other male colleagues to change their general attitudes and behaviour towards women' (ibid.: 50). In short, a decolonial turn in relations between African men and women must result in concrete changes in behaviour – action underpinned by a changed consciousness – rather than remain purely on an intellectual level of debate in which the structures of domination and discrimination remain fundamentally unaltered.

6.   CONCLUSION

> To proceed with the major question, How does Western social science scholarship on the Third World constitute imperialism? The general answer is that this scholarship is an important tool for controlling Third World perceptions of their world and their problems and eventually Third World behaviour (Ake 1979: 139).

Africa, as Ake contends, must seek to free itself from Euro-American tutelage, which manifests itself not only in Western social science but in economic aid and development paradigms that have continued and deepened Africa's dependence on the developed countries. It also comes in the form of research grants that turn African universities and particularly academics into 'consultancy hustlers and informal sector hawkers' dependent on outside sources for a livelihood (Zeleza 2003: 79). A reconfigured pan-Africanism of the twenty-first century must be the intellectual counterweight to Euro-American epistemological domination. Diop, Fanon, Nkrumah, Cabral, Sankara (and others) have laid the intellectual groundwork of this pan-Africanist paradigm. However, it must evolve to address the material circumstances of our present times.

Harnessing the intellectual, human, economic, technological and natural resources of Africa in the interests of Africans in a genuinely pan-Africanist programme for the twenty-first century is a herculean task. It may take decades if not generations to implement and impact concretely in the lives of the majority of African people. Fundamentally, what is required is a new mind-set on the part of African people that recognises the intersectionality of the problems to be addressed, that is: political determination and economic development, environmental justice, the psychological chains of enslavement and the creation of new relations between African men and women. The complex struggle to create a people-led pan-Africanism cannot avoid confronting the intellectual domination of Euro-America in the creation of a genuine egalitarian socio-economic order in Africa that is based on wholly democratic values, freedom, dignity and humanity for all women and men.

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