Beyond Western-Centric and Eurocentric Development: A Case for Decolonizing Development

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the analysis of the development discourse from the viewpoint of critical decolonial perspective informed by the work of scholars such as Walter Mignolo that privileges 'border thinking' and is predicated on the notions of 'I think from where I stand'. Its proposition is that there is a need for decolonization and 'Africanization' of the development discourse to reflect the core needs of the African peoples, particularly the poor. The paper starts off with a critique of mainstream development discourse and also proceeds to make a case for a new African development discourse that takes into account African historical experiences and indigenous African thought. This new African development discourse will put the African people first and be constructed from their core values, needs and demands.

Keywords: decolonial, modernity, coloniality, development

1.   INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on the analysis of the development discourse from a critical decolonial viewpoint. The paper exposes the Euro-American centric nature of the development discourse and argues that, as it currently understood, development is an imposition on the Africans, of a Euro-American 'truth' about the idea of development. By deploying concepts such as truth and ideology, including development, the article exposes the provinciality of the development discourse and its limits, and makes a case for the need to decolonize the development discourse in order to give a voice to the subalterns who find themselves marginalized in it.

The article is divided into three sections. The first section will focus on the socio-political – historiographical and philosophical analysis of 'development' and the discourse/s that have crystallized around it, herein referred as the development discourse, including exposing its darker side from a de-colonial perspective. What are highlighted here are issues of epistemic violence and racism, which are embedded in the development discourse and which continually promise development, and yet, reproduces poverty and underdevelopment for those who find themselves in the periphery of what Grosfoguel calls a Eurocentric, American-centric, Christian centric, sexist, patriarchal and hetero-normative power structure of the world system. The second part will make

a case about the significance of border thinking in the discourse, particularly for those who find themselves located in the zone of none being and the receiving end of poverty.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: TRUTH AND IDEOLOGY

My theoretical framework is predicated on Richard Rorty's definition of truth and Paul Ricoeur's notion of ideology. This theoretical framework is significant in several ways. Firstly, it will expose the relativity of truth and thus contest the ideas of its universality. Secondly, it will demonstrate how truth informs the idea of development, including how that truth is facilitated through ideology into the social organization of ordinary day to day living. In simple terms, this framework will demonstrate just how development discourse is predicated on a certain truth and ideology about development, which, notwithstanding its relativity, is universalized to the exclusion of other truths.

Rorty defines truth as a function of solidarity and therefore falls within the logic of a specific culture's conception. In other words, truth emerges from culturally informed 'meaning/s' attached to the metaphysical world and from which bonds of identity and solidarity are constructed in the sharing of such truths. Just as truth is dependent on its situatedness (space, culture), Danna Haraway (1988) argues that knowledge is also situated because of the dualism inherent in both truth and knowledge, and which co-construct each other.

While Rorty sees truth as a normative concept, he is sceptical about its utility. For Rorty, searching for truth gets in the way of conversation and leads to a dead end (Alcoff 2008). Therefore, Rorty repudiates the search for truth based on the metaphysical argument, which, according to Alcoff, is characterised by a relationship between thought and reality and cannot be explained without begging the question (Alcoff 2008). Nonetheless, his definition of truth is still useful and relevant, particularly in the context of development which I will get to at a later stage.

Linda Alcoff makes a convincing argument about the provinciality of truth. She pushes this argument by looking at how particularly the narrative of history as justification to claims of truth become normative depending on what the narratives decide to make visible or hide. This is particularly so in the context of Martin Bernal's *Black Athena: Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization* (1987), which provides a counter thesis to historical claims of civilization emerging from Europe. On the contrary, Bernal's work reveals the historical origins of Western civilization to be from outside Europe, in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, and ultimately in sub-Saharan Africa (Van Binsbergen 2011).

To justify this point (normativity of truth) even more, Alcoff also uses the example of Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit, where a single picture that has the same expression can be seen equally well as a duck or a rabbit. Therefore, seen in this light, *truth* should not be understood in universal terms and as objective, but rather as true only within the terms of each culture's self-definition, representation and reflexivity (Wynter 1991: 253).

For Ricoeur, *ideology* is defined not in Karl Mannheim's view where ideology is seen as representation of the interest of the dominant or ruling group, and as if it represents the common good of that group as 'the only valid and universal one'. Rather, he conceives of ideology as

serving a systematic function of reconciling and facilitating human action in the public space (Wynter 1991: 252). This is because, in the process of its legitimation, symbolic systems lay, which interpellate and orient behaviours, and provide frameworks for social organization and psychological processes (Wynter 1991: 252).

Using both Rorty's *truth* together with Ricoeur's systematic function of ideology as a facilitator of human action in the public space, we can then come to the following assumptions: Firstly, is that of a positive and mutually constitutive relation between truth and ideology. In other words, *truth* emerges only in a particular space/cultural context and is, therefore, constitutive of *ideology in that same space/cultural context,* and is then mediated and facilitated into human action in living that *truth* in that particular public space. Secondly, and most importantly, in the case of this work is that *truth* and ideology constitute development.

This is particularly so because logically the normativity of *truth* is derivable from a particular context in which jouissance is defined and realized. In sum, the point I'm trying to drive is that development is normative as it is constituted by the normativity of both 'truth' and "ideology" and therefore, conceptions of development should privilege the lived experience of peoples predicated on their subjectivities and derivable from their experiences of their situatedness, which is classified by race, gender, ethics, episteme, sex, ethics, aesthetics, or border thinking to borrow from Walter Mignolo (2007). What then is development?

3.   THEORY AND THE DISCOURSE OF DEVELOPMENT

Understanding development and the discourses around it in the context of normative truth and ideology allows us to conceive of 'development discourse' not as something which began only in the 14th century with Christian civilization and enlightenment, or during the emergence of the white European Cartesian subject in the 15th century, or the era of the Industrial revolution of the 17th century including capitalism in the 19th century, as it is often believed to be (Lushaba 2009: 26). Rather, it is a discourse that has been part of humanity ever since *truth* and *ideology and a search for jouissance* were part of mankind. In this context the search for development amounts to searching for jouissance.

I do not use jouissance in totalizing terms, as a complete achievement of 'a' particular ultimate pleasure and/or 'a' happiness that is definable; nor am I using this term to represent what Stewart calls positive change – the latter assumes the immanence of 'positiveness' in change; and nor am I contesting its (jouissance) achievability or unachievability as exposed already by both Frued (1930) and Lacan (1992). Rather, I use jouissance to represent an indefinite search for pleasure or happiness not only in the metaphysical world as understood and defined by Euro-American episteme, but opened to possibilities of different meanings and truths that could define it differently.

To understand the discourse of development in this way – as *truth* and as an old phenomenon including, as a search for jouissance – also affirms Dussels' (2002; 2005) assertion of 'trans'-modernity. That is, the belief in the existence of plural modernities, which ought to be ontologically predicated on different *truths* and mediated through different *ideologie*s in order to achieve jouissance/s. Dussel (2002; 2005) argues about the existentiality of multiple modernities.

This assertion is affirmed by ancient civilizations such as those of Chinese, Egyptian, Aztecs and Incas, which came long before European civilization. With particular reference to the Chinese civilization, Dussel (2002: 223) argues that in the old world, China had become the centre of world trade 150 before European civilization.

In agreement with Dussel, Sandra Harding in *Multiple Modernities: Postcolonial Standpoints* (2008), makes a convincing case about the pluriversality of modernity. While she shares similar views with Alcoff, that of technology serving an ideological function, in Ricoeur's terms, she also argues that the discourse of Western modernity depends on science and technology – believed to be within the realm of Europe – and the displacement of 'other' modernities as 'traditional' in oppositional terms as its 'Other' (Harding 2008: 179). However, she states, valuable elements of scientific knowledges and advancements of subaltern cultures have also informed western sciences, enabling the advancement of Western sciences. This is particularly emphasized in Martin Bernal's claim of the origins of Western civilization to be in ancient Egypt (Van Binsbergen 2011). In simple terms, claims to advances in science and technology to be originating in Europe are not entirely 'True'.

However, notwithstanding the pluriversality of modernities, with some having emerged much earlier than Euro-American ones, the former have become submerged by Eurocentrism, which is only less than 200 years as the centre of the world system Dussel (2002: 223). But what is more, is that this logic exposes the provinciality of the development discourse, which has now become 'the' universal development from which all humanity is to draw its reference. Now, how is development and its discourse provincial?

3.1. Modernity and the poetics of the 'Propters Nos'

The discourse of development in the academy today should be seen within the context of Euro American modernity and not within Harding's or Dussel's 'trans' modernity. This is because this discourse is predicated on a Eurocentric *truth* and *ideology*, which asserted itself forcefully onto the rest of the world through colonialism and continues to do so through coloniality (Grosfoguel 2011). Colonialism and coloniality are two different concepts. Maldonado-Torres (2007: 213) clarifies as follows:

> [W]hile (colonialism) denotes a political and economical relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such a nation and empire, (coloniality) instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration.

He further adds that coloniality survived colonialism.

The logic of this *truth* is anchored on what Wynter (1991, 254) calls "the Poetics Of the Propter Nos", that is, the supremacist European Christian belief that informed Colombus's voyage in 1492; that this world was made for us (European Christians) who inhabit the world under the grace of God, and who have the divine duty to civilize and to give souls to those who inhabit

the submerged world of barbarity (Maldonado-Torres 2010: 51; Wynter 1991: 255). At the time, Christianization was considered as development.

Confirming the superiority and supremacy of this European Christian logic that indeed this world was made for only for them, first, was Pico della Mirandola's Oration on the Dignity of Man (1463-1494), who writes:

> Now the highest Father, God the master-builder … took up man … and placing him at midpoint of the world … spoke to him as follows: "We have given to thee, Adam, no fixed seat, no form of thy very own, no gift peculiarly thine, that thou mayest feel as thine own, have as thine own, poses as thine own the seat, the form, the gift which thou thyself shalt desire. A limited nature in other creatures is confined within the laws written down by us. In conformity with thy free judgment, in whose hand I have placed thee, thou art confined by no bounds; and thou wilt fix limits of nature for thyself…Neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal have We made thee. Thou, like a jungle appointed for being honourable art the moulder and maker of thyself; though mayest sculpt thyself into whatever shape thou dos prefer. Thou canst grow downward into the lower natures which are brutes. Thou canst grow upward from thy soul's reason into the higher natures which are divine" (cited in Wynter 2003: 260).

The second affirmation of the Propter Nos was that of Columbus's First letter, written to the Spanish Sovereign, on his way back from the voyage of 1492:

> And the eternal God, (O)ur Lord, Who gives to all those who walk in His way victory over things which appear impossible, and this notable one. For although men have talked or written of these lands, all was conjecture, without getting a look at it, but amounted only to this, that those who heard for the most part listened and judged it more fable than that there was anything in it, however, small (Wynter 1991: 251).

This European Christian Truth, together with – not withstanding their differences – its counter truth, 'propter nos hominess', that is, God created the world for his own glory and for the sake of humankind Wynter (1991: 255), share fundamental similarities. The first is a theocentric perspective based on the cosmology of Christianity – the celestial and the terrestrial world – and need for Christianity to spread the word of God and to give souls to the soul-less.

The second similarity is about the centrality of Europe as the centre of the universe and as the only 'rational' holder of 'Truth' that is universal and, therefore, the only one with coordinates to jouissance (Escobar 2004; Dussel 2008; Maldonado-Torres 2006). The latter is affirmed even more in the following centuries by continental philosophers such as Descartes' *cogito*, Husserl's claims to Europe as the natural habitat of reason, and Hegel's argument of Europe as the end and the centre of history, including Heidegger's view that philosophy resides only in Greece and Germany (Maldonado-Torres 2006: 46).

However, with Columbus's voyage to save souls and in his discovery of the Americas in 1492, we learn that this European 'truth' becomes a totalitarian Truth, notwithstanding other truths predicated on realities contrary to European truth and reality Alcoff (2008), not only to the Americas but to the rest of the colonial world. What is worth highlighting here is that this Eurocentric Truth was not mediated through negotiation. It was brutally enforced not only

through violence (Grosfoguel 2011) but also through discourses, which not only orientalised the colonized and legitimized the imposition of Eurocentric truth on the conquered, but also produced what Maldonado-Torres (2007, 247) calls Manichean misanthropic scepticism; this is where the subalterns doubt their very natural humanity (Wynter 1996 and Mkandawire 2005).

Maldonado-Torres states that this Manichean misanthropic scepticism produces a form of doubt about the 'self' even on the most obvious things such as reasoning and making choices between right and wrong, or between good and bad. This sense of doubt about the ontological 'self' on the part of the conquered – the 'black skin' – is well captured in Fanon's *Black Skins White Masks* and explains why a black man has a neurotic compulsion of wanting to become white, as Fanon puts it. Maldonado-Torres states that this form of self-doubt is one which zombifies the conquered and opens up space for Cartesian 'truth' to fit in directly in a permanent structure.

In the face of Manichean misanthropic scepticism, Eurocentric *Truth* reigned supreme and interpellated on all sides of both the orient and the occident to become common sense. This means it became common sense that Europe was the centre of reason and, therefore, 'logically' the bandwagon to immanent truth leading to jouissance. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) also explains how the discourse of 'European development/modernity' fits perfectly in the scepticism of the conquered through discourses of lack/s. This is where the scepticism of the conquered about the 'self' becomes represented as a series of lacks (lacking substance, lacking rationality, lacking being, lacking souls, lacking history, lacking writing, lacking civilization lacking development, lacking democracy, and lacking human rights) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013).

It is therefore no surprise that Otto von Bismarck, the chancellor of Germany and chairman of The Berlin Conference in 1885, invited 14 major western powers to decide on the fate of 'irrational' peoples of Africa. Many scholars argue that this conference began a process of imperial domination, which was to open Africa, its peoples and natural recourses to untold exploitation and domination for years to come. The invitation letter to the conference read thus:

> The Conference Commission requests your immediate presence in Germany as a delegate to the Berlin Conference. You and your delegation, experts in the areas of economics, geography, ethics, military history, and international negotiations, have been appointed by your government to represent them in this process. Each nation present will be allowed to participate in a three-day review and deliberation to determine the fate of the African Continent.

> Your timely presence in Berlin by 15 November 1884 will allow your country to be heard. As Chairman of the Berlin Conference, I assure you that your task will be difficult, but of supreme importance to the future of Africa, Europe, and the entire world (Bismarck's Letter of Invitation 1884).

It is furthermore no surprise again that the rest of the colonial world became a replica of Europe not only politically and structurally, but also epistemologically, subjectively including spiritually as they too (colonized) followed the socio-economic and political evolutions in Europe throughout history. This means that the route to jouissance was through 'a' particular form of 'Truth', which was to be articulated through European ideology – modernity.

Now, what are these common characteristics that inform European modernity from the 15th century to the 20th century, and how does its darker side manifest and who does such manifestations affect the most?

4.   THE DARKER SIDE OF DEVELOPMENT

It must be noted that throughout the history of the New World with Europe as the centre of world systems, starting from the 15th century but more particularly in the 19th century, the discourse of development has been predicated on what Sartre calls bad faith. This is because in the logic of it all, the 'propter nos' in the 14th century came to emerge Descartes' Cartesian *cogito* in the 16th century, who replaced God and placed himself (cogito ego) as the authority of knowledge. Secondly, there emerged in the 18th century Ottoman von Bismarck's Berlin Conference to decide on the fate of Africa, and US President Truman's Point Four Programme in the 19th century.

While the mantra of the 15th century was to civilize and to enlighten the 'soul-less' subalterns and to rescue them from their barbarity – which from a European Christian perspective was seen as development – at the same time the worst form of barbaric acts were being committed to the colonized. In *The Wretched of the Earth,* Fanon depicts how the conquered were emptied out of their humanity and debased from their ontological identities and left to lavish in the torrid zone of non-being. Dussel (2002) also explains how traditions and cultures of the conquered were destroyed; families ripped apart through slavery; knowledge systems buried under the rubble of destroyed shrines (Dussel 2002; Cesaire 1972; Mbembe 2002). We learn also in the wake of the industrial revolution during the 17th -18th century, how Europe, particularly Britain became the wealthiest country in the world at the expense of the free labour of slaves harvested in the colonies.

It is no surprise that Kasongo-Lumumba (2011) claims that from 1884–1910, ten million Africans were murdered; marking what he calls the first genocide in world history. Dussel further explains how through the use of violence Europe became the centre of world systems. It is against this background that in Cesaire's *Discourses on Colonialism* (1972: 2), he speaks of the hypocrisy of this civilization, particularly how it uses trickery and deceit to promise life on the one hand (in Europe) but kills and enslaves on the other (in the colonies) – only to entrench itself. This trickery entrenched by the intersectionality of Manicheans scepticism and discourse of 'lacks' on the part of the conquered has led to Europe maintaining its hegemonic status and privilege, while the conquered remain stuck in hellish conditions of the zone of non-being in the colonies.

While colonialism and imperialism entrenched itself through 'Christianization' in the 16th century, where the conquered were to be given Christian souls; in the18th–19th century the imperial project continued through coloniality and the rhetoric of globalism or globalisation (Mbeki 2011), including talks of human rights, democracy, poverty eradication (Grosfoguel 2011). Particularly in the 1940s, the discourse of development becomes ethically unquestionable as it began to use seductive terms that evoke humanism, such as human rights and peace following a devastating post-war reality (Rist 1997).

This rhetorical spirit of world peace and development was visible in the US President Truman's inaugural speech in 1949, which articulated in point four the need for development. The time of the speech is considered a watershed moment in the history of development. Truman's speech reads as follows:

> We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of these people. The United States is pre-eminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques. The material resources which we can afford to use for assistance of other peoples are limited. But our imponderable resources in technical knowledge are constantly growing and are inexhaustible (Truman's Speech 1949).

Does this not sound more like the 'Poetics of the Propter Nos' that informed Colombus's voyage to give souls and to save the soul-lacking barbarians inhabiting the submerged world; and does it not read like Descartes Cartesian cogito and or sound more like the agenda of Otto Von Bismarck's Berlin Conference – to determine the fate of Africa? Truman's speech continues:

> With the cooperation of business, private capital, agriculture, and labour in this country, this program can greatly increase the industrial activity in other nations and can raise substantially their standards of living. Such new economic developments must be devised and controlled to the benefit of the peoples of the areas in which they are established. Guarantees to the investor must be balanced by guarantees in the interest of the people whose resources and whose labour go into these developments (Truman's speech 1949).

Rist (1997) states that this era of 'development', as articulated by Truman's point four and the UN Charter, commanded universal legitimacy and unparalleled acceptance. This is because following the devastating effects of a World War this epoch not only presented a positivist and a constructivist post-war era for hope for Europe, but also provided hope for the African continent as well.

For the latter, this is probably because the UN Charter provided for the very first time hope for the birth of sovereign African state, wherein all nations were to be seen as equals and mutually dependent because of globalization. For Mkandawire (2005), this epoch marked a watershed moment in the history of postcolonial African states as African economies entered a phase of greater foreign control than ever before.

Amid talks of democracy, human rights, poverty eradication, globalization and modernist thinking in full swing, Amina (in Von Trail 1993) and Wilber (1984 v) argue, this was a period starting in the 60s, of great shock. These scholars state that during this period postcolonial Africa experienced severe economic deterioration, social and infrastructure decay, ecological problems, and heightening of disaster, while political and social order and legitimacy gradually crumbled. The devastating effects of this particular era were at the centre of the anti-Structural Adjustment

Program (SAP) riots in Caracas in 1989, Tunis in January 1984, Nigeria in 1990, Morocco in 1990 and the Zapatista uprising of 1994 just to name a few (Leal in Cornwall 2010: 90). The following excerpt from the World Bank captures the situations poignantly as follows:

> Sub-Sahara Africa has now witnessed almost a decade of falling per capita incomes and accelerating degradation. Per capita food production first fell, then rose, but remains lower than in the 1980s. Africa has lost a substantial part of its share in the world market for its exports. Some African countries have surrendered some of the gains made earlier in human resources development …Open urban unemployment is a growing problem in many countries. In the past decade six countries Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, and Zambia – have slipped from the middle-income to low income group (Von Troil 1993: 15).

It is against this background, including the use of military force by NATO to enforce regime change, under the guise of human rights and war against terror, as was the case most recently in Libya and Iraq, that the trickery of development is further exposed. Now, what is the major critique about development discourse?

5. A CRITIQUE OF CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE

Until now, the general critique of the current world system in the humanities and social sciences and most particularly the development discourse borders on two schools of thought. These schools of thought are the post-colonial critique, which sees the current world system as governed by Eurocentric and American-centric cultures/truth/s, and secondly, the world systems analysis, which focuses on the political economy and capitalism at the world stage (Grosfoguel 2011).

While these analyses are indeed useful in exposing both the universalisation of Euro-American culture and the racialised exploitative workings of capitalism on a world scale, these schools of thought suffer major theoretical weaknesses. For example, they are reductionist in that they essentialize either culture (agency) on the part of the postcolonial and the political economy (structure) on the part the world system as their only unit of analyses. Typically, and particularly in the development discourse, we hear of approaches such as sustainable livelihoods, sustainable development, Local Economic Development, Rural development, Participatory Rural Appraisal, Basic needs, as possible instruments to bring about development. These approaches essentially zig-zag between a culturalist and a political economy critique and at best, sometimes take a hybrid form.

Such analyses tend to obscure the complexities and workings of coloniality and the colonial matrices of power, because colonialism brought was not only an imperial Eurocentric culture and the racialized exploitation of capitalism. Colonialism brought rather a complex world system (Grosfoguel 2011). He adds that what arrived to the colonies was a European, capitalist, military, Christian, Patriarchal, white, heterosexual male, who established simultaneously an entire civilization of entangled hierarchies – spiritual, spatial, sexual, global, epistemic, linguistic, aesthetics, pedagogical, age and ecological – which in a Manichean way rearranged social order in the colonies. It is on these bases, he insists, such a complex structure of coloniality cannot

be adequately challenged by a culturalist and/or a political economy analysis alone, including a nationalist or a third worldist fundamentalism.

6.   A DECOLONIAL TURN IN THE DISCOURSE

Decolonizing development requires a much braver and rigorous decoloniality approach that cannot come to bear only within the discipline itself.

- It requires shaking the very foundation of Euro-American epistemology and Truth/ideology and to shift the geographies of reason to privilege the Truth of the marginalized.

- It requires what Quijano calls socialization of power. That is not only privileging the state as the authority of power but ordinary people to adjudicate over their issues, to police themselves and to decide their fate including to give their own meaning to concepts such as development, democracy, human rights etc.

- It requires transformation of Eurocentric pedagogy which is structured in disciplinary terms and inhibits critical thinking beyond the limits of the disciplines themselves

- It requires dismantling simultaneously the multiple global hierarchies, which inferiorizes people based on their race, gender, sex, religion and spaces they live in (or occupy).

At the micro-level, decolonizing development requires a complex systematic process of dealing with the Manichean scepticism. This is because the Manichean structures work in a systematically complex manner, which co-constructs simultaneously both the subaltern and the oppressor's identities and subjectivities including the master-serf relations. This means that it is only through subjection of the subaltern to the inferior zone of none-being, which, in contrast to the oppressor who sits in the zone of being, that the oppressed facilitate the formation of the superior identity of the oppressor.

In these asymmetrical relations the oppressed cannot speak truth as Aristotle asserts. This is because the oppressed are naturalized fodder in the order of the hierarchized system for the sustenance and comfort of the oppressor. Therefore, speaking truths, is not only politically oppositional and potentially subversive to the oppressor's superiority and comfort, and consequently potentially also dangerous, but also, it destabilizes the very structure from which the oppressed are constructed.

It is against this background that I believe the Manichaean structure sits as a concert barrier for the oppressed to speak their Truth. Therefore, this permanent psychological barrier needs to be undone first in order to unlock the voices of the oppressed to enter into both vertical and horizontal conversations across all racial groups, religions, cultures, genders, sexes and ages in order for the oppressed to articulate their Truth free from any inferiority complex or scepticism about the self/selves.

For Biko (1978), speaking quite correctly in the context of South Africa, decolonization meant decolonizing the mind of the black man in order to overcome his inferiority complex so that he/she can articulate his truth. This is generally viewed as a supreme challenge since it locates

the struggle not necessarily in politics and the materialism that comes with power. Rather the struggle for the oppressed is located within the self (the oppressed themselves) and requires a psychological approach.

However, I think decolonizing the mind of a black man is not as complex as it is made out. The black man does not have much to lose. What is more challenging is decolonizing the mind of a white man from a false sense of superiority; to decolonize the patriarch from his false sense of self-importance; to decolonize the homophobe from his sexual insecurities; and the ageist from his sense of 'I know it all' including decolonizing the traditionalist from his fundamentalism.

This challenge, particularly with regards to decolonizing the white man is more complex. This is so because no matter how much we try to decolonize the racialised peoples of the world, without decolonizing the white man, the gaze of the supremacy of a heterosexual patriarchal white male will forever hang above radicalized peoples, homosexuals, women and children alike, reminding them of their inferiority and where they belong in the hierarchy of the world system.

Then, in the light of the above, we should then ask the following questions; is the white man ready to undergo de-colonization amidst what Mills (2007, 21) calls White Ignorance? – that is, on the one hand; white ignorance predicated on conscious racism and on the other hand, an unconscious white racism predicated on ignorance. In the case of the former, the racism is conscious because the subject consciously chooses to act in a racist manner, and in the case of the latter, the subject acts in a racist manner without being aware of it.

The second question is: what are the implications of decolonizing the white man? Is the white man able to or ready to forgo the socio-political and material privileges afforded to him by the aura of white supremacy that radiates around him?

In *Black Skins White Masks*, exposing the intensity of racism against black people and as a result their desperation of wanting to escape their condemnation by being white, Fanon speaks of how a mask, a white mask on a black face can restore a black man's humanity. In the same way, I think the Manichean structure can be overcome at least temporarily, first, by a white man also leaning to wear a mask, a black mask.

7.   CONCLUSION

This article has demonstrated that the concept 'development' and discourses around itare not innocent. It has been revealed that the development discourse is in fact predicated on a Euro-American totalitarian truth that universalized itself, first through colonialism and continues to do so to this day through coloniality. This paper has also further revealed that while development promises life, it also destroys particularly the lives of the racialised peoples of the world. As Aime Cesaire puts it, this discourse survives by deception and hypocrisy. It is against this background that this paper suggests decolonization of the discourse of development such that it allows the subalterns to speak their Truth without any doubt of the selves and to live it accordingly.

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