

FANON AND CABRAL ON CULTURE AND NATIONAL LIBERATION

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INTRODUCTION

The remark of Serequeberhan about the content of African philosophy is very germane. For him “it is the politico-existential crisis interior to the horizon of post-colonial Africa which brings forth the concerns and originates the theoretic space for the discourse of contemporary African philosophy”.¹ In other words, African philosophical discourse is a response to lived historicity of Africans especially in the post-colonial times. Something needs be said about colonial discourse, especially as it is being critiqued in some quarters. Anne McClintock, for instance, argues that too much emphasis on colonialism depicts a recentering of global history around the rubric of European time.² But such an argument, for me, presupposes that we can discuss the African predicament and development without reference to colonialism and its neo-colonial form. It takes, that is, the *post* in the “postcolonial” too much as if it signals much more than a superficial temporal marker. Reference to colonialism in discourses relating to Africa seems inescapable; any pretension about that fact presents an ahistorical conception of African sociology and politics.

The quest for national liberation on the African continent is not only a colonial but a post-colonial necessity. During the colonial period, the quest was focused on national independence and self-government. However, the politico-economic experience of post-independent African states made us realize that formal independence is not synonymous with genuine liberation or the capacity for Africans to freely determine their own destiny and path in history. Formal independence only exchanges the colonial for neo-colonial; this is what gave rise to the post colonial quest for national liberation. In this paper, I will attempt a re-thinking of the quest for national liberation in the socio-

political thought of Fanon and Cabral vis-à-vis the role of culture and the educated elite. Our objective is to channel a course for development and progressive social change in Africa. I will argue that the role of culture and the educated elite in national liberation as put forward by both Fanon and Cabral need to be re-conceptualized for a sharper focus so that it can be relevant in confronting neo-colonial problem in Africa.

The importance and influence of Fanon and Cabral as theoreticians of the African colonial and postcolonial predicament cannot be over-emphasized. While we must note that there is a high level of convergence in the thoughts of these revolutionary figures, one would realize, as this essay reveals, that the thought of Fanon provides a sharper conceptual analysis especially of the significance of the educated elites in the struggle for national liberation. While both of them are critical theorists on decolonization, I argue that their recommendations are short sighted. This shortsightedness affects Cabral's concept of re-Africanization or return to source; a requirement that the educated elites in post colonial Africa should commit class suicide. It also affects Fanon's recommendation of violence as the counter-measure in decolonization. Both strategies, while very significant, need to be adequately problematized and reassessed in Africa's challenge of coping with her re-colonization in the present global order.

This paper is divided into four sections. The first section provides an analysis of imperialism and its off-shoots, namely colonialism and neo-colonialism. The analysis is to provide a background for national liberation and how culture comes to be important in the liberation issue. The second section deals with Fanon's and Cabral's concept of national liberation. Here, I argue that a dialectical model of national liberation that fuses Fanon's and Cabral's strategies offers a more adequate proposal and either's. In the third section, an analysis of the role of culture and the educated elites are provided. In the fourth and final section, we conclude by showing that the recommendation of violence is an inadequate response to the marginalization of Africa and that African political class and other elites need self-discipline if Africa is to develop and have a place in the global capitalist system.

Colonialism, Neo-Colonialism and Africa

This concept of imperialism is contested one in political philosophy. Yet, its impact and influence on the course of African history and development is unequivocal. Its effect is particularly obvious all around, especially in the age of U.S. definition of the globe in its own image and the implications of that cultural definition on the rest of the world.

According to Edward Said, imperialism has its origin in a certain kind of thinking or certain mental attitude. This is why he explains imperialism to mean “thinking about setting on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived or owned by others”.³ Although he did not provide any moral justification for this kind of thinking, he remarks that its primary motivation is the hunger for overseas market, raw materials, and cheap labor and huge profitable lands. Imperialism as Said shows does not remain at the level of thinking and ideology alone. The thinking is a motivation for action. This is why he goes further to define imperialism as the practice and the attitude of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling distant territory.⁴ Thus, imperialism becomes a form of domination of one political space or society by another by reason of the formers’ economic and military strength or rather supremacy.

Imperialism was erected on impressive, though perverse, ideological formulations that are intended to paint certain territories and people as backward and hence demanding domination and subjugation. Such terms as inferior, barbaric, salvage, uncivilized, native, etc are commonly used. These terms are ideologically employed to assault the mentality of the people of the ruled territories so that they can accept the supremacy of the imperial culture. Colonialism and neo-colonialism are off-shoots of the Western imperial agenda and adventure across the world.

Historians of imperialism usually divide its history into a number of distinct epochs/stages. The first stage is mercantile capitalism; colonialism and neo-colonialism represent the second and third stages respectively. The first stage began about sixteenth century. This period was a result of the discovery of various distant lands beginning with the expedition of Columbus. This stage is marked by the activity of robbing these newly discovered lands and political spaces by forcefully taking their wealth and even their peoples. This laid the foundation upon which the second stage, namely colonialism, was laid. During the mercantile stage, it is the companies of the imperial countries that were

involved in the plunder of the territories. Those who justify the mercantile period see it as a necessary consequence of the growth of capitalism, and hence motivated purely by economic concerns. During the colonial stage European nations took over from the companies by taking full administration of the territories and setting them as colonies.

African scholars like Chukwudi Eze do not differentiate between the mercantile and the colonial periods. For him, colonialism is traceable to “both the sporadic and systematic maritime commercial incursion into Africa by European fortune seekers which began in the mid-fifteenth century”.⁵ This period as we can see coincide with the mercantile period. Describing the colonial experience Eze says we should understand colonialism as:

The indescribable crisis disproportionately suffered and endured by the African peoples in their tragic encounter with the European world from the beginning of the fifteenth century through the first half of the 19th century.⁶

For him, as found also in the thought of Fanon and Cabral, this period is marked by horror and violence of the transatlantic slave trade, the imperial occupation of most parts of Africa, the forced administration of its peoples and the resilient and enduring ideologies and practices of European cultural superiority (ethnocentrism and racial supremacy (racism)).⁷

The above reference to Eze reveals the character of colonialism and shows also that it is propelled not only by economic interest but by a kind of cultural and racial arrogance on the part of the Europeans. An examination of the thought of Fanon and Cabral will give us a better perspective of the colonial situation in Africa.

Fanon and Cabral are unanimous in their perception of the character and the role of colonialism in Africa. For Fanon, colonialism is characterized by a kind of estrangement of the colonized through a kind of perverted logic. He argues that

Colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and future of a dominated country. Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the natives' brain of all form and content. By a perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed and distorts, disfigures and destroys it.⁸

The intention of the European colonialist whether British, French or Portuguese is to make the African natives realize that they had no historicity and could only be part of the

historical progress of humanity by accepting and being assimilated into European cultures. By distorting the historicity of the colonized, the white imperialists alienated the natives from their land, and also fundamentally from themselves.

The third stage of imperialism is neo-colonialism. This period coincides with the end of the Second World War in 1945. Between this period and the 1960s, most colonies gained formal independence. Despite this independence, it became obvious to former colonies that they are still very much tied to the administrative aprons of their colonial masters. For Kwame Nkrumah neo-colonialism is part subjugating tactics of the imperial agenda. It involves granting formal independence to be followed by certain development “aids”. Under this guise, the erstwhile colonialists devise innumerable ways to accomplish objectives formerly pursued by stark colonialism. Thus for him, neo-colonialism could be seen as the sum total of the modern attempts to perpetuate colonialism while at the same time talking about freedom.⁹

Fanon gave a brilliant analysis of the neocolonial situation. He notes that the middle class which took over power from the colonial regime is an “underdeveloped class”.¹⁰ The explanation is that this class lacks the requisite economic power to drive the economies of postcolonial African countries. The class is thus driven into a corner which gives rise within its ranks to catastrophic reactions which will oblige it to call for help from the colonial masters. Cabral also shares this opinion with Fanon. He argues that the lack of economic power of this class turns on its lack of political power. The reason for this is that political power has its foundation in the economic capacity of the ruling class.¹¹ Apart from this, the class has no practical knowledge of the management of their countries economies since they were not involved in nation building practically from the on set. This creates the problem of the dependence of the countries - politically and economically on metropolitan politics. What is left out of this brilliant analysis by Fanon and Cabral is the question of whether it is historically inevitable that the middle class that took over power has to run to the metropole for assistance.

Neo-colonialism, therefore, signifies that the West continues, at least as an economic presence and at most as a controlling cultural authority in Africa’s postcolonial multiple lives. It is an expression of the fact that, regarding the metropolitan adventure in Africa, for instance, the past is not past, over or concluded, but continues, even though, in

a different dimensions. This mechanism is kept running by the military and economic powers wielded by the West. It is this imperial adventure of Britain, France and U.S. which, for Said, has laid the ground work for what is in effect now a fully globalized world.¹²

Consequent upon the imperial activities, the need for an African revolution and the liberation struggle in all ex-colonies have fundamentally characterized contemporary history and politics. Revolution, in this sense, means the transformation of life in the direction of progress which gives birth not only to national independence but also the elimination of all foreign domination of people's history and personality. And as Cabral notes "the national liberation of a people is the regaining of the historical personality of the people its return to history through the destruction of the imperialist domination to which it was subjected."¹³ We can therefore say that national liberation is not only a struggle against colonialism but also against neo-colonial manifestations. This is what makes Fanon's and Cabral's thoughts significant today. In what follows, we turn to their conceptions of national liberation.

The Idea of National Liberation

The starting point of the analysis of national liberation and the role of culture in the process, especially for Fanon and Cabral as we have seen, is the analysis of the colonial situation, a situation which is characterized by oppression, racial segregation and a chasm between the elites and the masses as well as between the city and the country side.¹⁴ It should be clear from the onset however that the colonial situation yields different models of national liberation for both of them. Fanon's description was intended to show the racist intention of the colonialists and the consequent alienation it effected on the natives' psyche. The model this yields for Fanon was a psychological model of national liberation which is aimed at overcoming the psychological alienation of the Africans. He presents the natives' personality as the exemplar for the political. Political liberation becomes, for him, a therapeutic process of re-establishing personal and collective self-identity and dignity.

Cabral's description, on the other hand, was intended to depict how the colonial situation was a disruption of the historical development of the natives rather than a

dragging of the people into the path of history as is suggested by Hegel. Cabral's model is in a sense political. National liberation now becomes a means by which the society self-determines its direction and progress. Cabral conceives the society in organic terms. Accordingly, the society possesses internal dynamics which determine its working and development. Summarily, African national liberation and revolution becomes the struggle to overcome the colonialist and neo-colonialist interruption of the historicity and self-government of the colonized. It is a process of returning to the source out of which the colonized spun their history prior to the coming of colonial exploitation and subjugation; the reclamation of history, to use Serequeberhan's description.¹⁵ Cabral argues that

The foundation of national liberation lies in the inalienable right of every people to have their own history, whatever the formulation in international law. The aim of national liberation is therefore to regain this right, usurped by imperialist domination, namely: the liberation of the process of development of national productive forces.¹⁶

In other words, the colonized as the *periphery* has, and insists on, the right to draw meaning from itself not as a *centre* of its own development.

As noted earlier, Fanon presents an analysis that is predicated on racism. This is not to say that Fanon was guilty of the charge of inverted racism as could be seen in the works of Onyewuenyi, Diop and Odelela¹⁷ or as found in the Seneghorian *Negritude* movement. Fanon merely reiterates the racist dimension and intention of the white imperialists. This understanding is very important so that Fanon would not be read as being opposed to racial and culture contact. To my mind, no culture can hope to develop and make tangible intellectual and material contribution in the present global milieu without availing itself of the opportunities of a dynamic borrowing from other culture. This however has to be mutual rather than imposed, and the elements borrowed from other cultures must be consciously adapted rather than forced as we have in the colonial and neo-colonial situations.

Cabral on his own presents what one can call a pluralistic conception of history. And since culture is the fruit and determinant of history,¹⁸ whatever tampers with the history of a people tampers with their cultural life and vice-versa. Culture and history become the modes of being and doing of human existence. Each society, for him, has an inalienable right to determine the direction of its historical development. In this

framework, as Serequeberhan remarks, the idea of “advanced” or “retarded” cultures or histories is completely out of place.¹⁹ The reason is that such a judgment necessarily, and always surreptitiously, privileges the cultural and historical context of Europe out of which it is being made. Thus, the pluralistic conception of history as found in Cabral is an implicit critique of the metaphysics of history found also in Kant, Hegel and Marx which reveals the ideological underpinnings of European conception of history and humanity. Cabral, in his critique of the colonial adventure, puts forward the thesis that colonial domination had “arrested” the development of indigenous history. He argues that

There is a misconception held by many people, even on the left, that imperialism made us enter history at the moment when it began its adventure in our countries. This conception must be denounced. Our opinion is exactly the contrary. We consider that when imperialism arrived in Guinea it made us leave history - our history.²⁰

He argues further that

In the colonized countries where colonization on the whole blocked the historical process of the development of the subjected peoples or else eliminated them radically or progressively, the imperialist capital imposed new types of relationships on indigenous society.²¹

The reality of colonialism is thus the violent superimposition of European historicity on Africans. It is in this sense that one can understand Cabral’s conception of national liberation as reclamation of history. Thus, Cabral particularly frowns at the importation of any anti-colonial revolutionary theories and practices for national liberation in Guinea or any part of colonized Africa. And as Peterson remarks, Cabral determined that any theory and practice of struggle must be borne out of a strict analysis of the material condition of the people and culture in question, as opposed to abstract theoretical speculations.²² In this sense, one may label—following Masolo—Fanon as well as Cabral existentialists in the sense that their political thought is based on the unique concreteness and applicability of personal experience.²³

There is no doubt about the fact that the models suggested by Fanon and Cabral on the national liberation struggle are very significant. To my mind, however, taken individually, the models are insufficient. This is because, on the one hand, the psychological healing of the natives may still leave them tied to the apron of the

colonialist if they do not take over their productive forces and self-determine the course of their own history. On the other hand, the reclamation of history may not be efficient if the psychology of the natives is not decolonized. The mind of the natives has been brainwashed and has internalized the framework of the imperialists. When taken individually, the inadequacies of these models suggest a radical synthesis of the Fanonian and Cabralian models with an emphasis on Fanon's advocacy of mental or psychological decolonization.

A critical examination of Cabral's thought reveals him as having some commitment to Marxism without being a Marxist. While he accepts the basic premises of the Marxist theory of economic development, he deviates in two important senses. The first is his conception of society in organic rather than mechanical terms. He describes societies as integrated whole that produce their own histories and follow the upward paths of their own cultures.²⁴ He sometimes speaks of culture as the flower of a plant at other times as fruits. He also conceives it as a plant which "plunges its root into the humus of the material". He notes that the capital for forming and fertilizing the germ which ensures the conformity of history and societies lies in culture.²⁵ This organic view is matched by his conception of development as the unfolding behaviour (development) of a phenomenon-in-motion depends mainly on its internal characteristics, whatever the external conditioning. The internal process of the society is then the living and interconnected development of its productive forces, its related social structure and culture.

Another sense in which Cabral deviates from, and attempts a critique of Marxism, is revealed in his emphasis on "productive forces," rather than "class struggle" as the primary moving force of history. We must reiterate that the use of these terms and others like "mode of production" etc reveals the Marxist influence on Cabral. However, he thinks that it is Eurocentric for the Marxists to argue that the primary motivating force of history is class struggle. To argue in this way shows, for him, a superficial knowledge of the essential characteristics of some colonized people. In his opinion, the formation of classes within one or more human groups is basically the result of progressive development of productive forces and the way in which wealth is produced.²⁶ The implication of the above is that:

The socio-economic phenomenon class arises and develops as a function of at least two essential and interdependent variables: the level of productive forces and the system of ownership of the means of production.²⁷

Cabral argues this way to critique European ideology. To say that class struggles are the motivating force of history is to say that history begins with class struggle and that would be to place outside of history the whole period of life of human groups from discovery of hunting, and later of nomadic and sedentary agriculture to cattle raising to the private appropriation of land. This would have the consequence of placing outside of history African and some other continents before they were subjected to colonialism. What Cabral seems to have in mind is that history is a continuum that flows from the infinite past into the infinite future. Therefore, class struggle as the motor force of history must operate in a specific historical period as determined by the mode of production identifiable by the level of productive forces and the system of ownership. History has continuity even after the disappearance of classes and class struggle.²⁸

However, while it is the case that Cabral deviates in essential ways from Marxism, his socio-political thought can only be interpreted as a reconstruction of Marxism. In fact, an analysis of the thoughts of some notable African political thinkers, Nkrumah, Senghor, Nyerere and Awolowo, reveals that Marxism is the basic framework of their socio-political edifice.

The Role of Culture and the Educated Elites

Fanon and Cabral conceive national liberation as essentially an act of culture. The reason for this is that imperialism in all its manifestation is a disruption, domination and denial of the culture and historical process of the colonized people whether in Africa or elsewhere. For Cabral,

To take up arms to dominate a people is, above all, to take up arms to destroy, or at least to neutralize and to paralyze their cultural life. For as long as part of the people have a cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation.²⁹

And as Césaire rightly remarks,

...a political and social system that suppresses the self-determination of a people thereby kills the creative power of that people or what amounts to the same thing, where colonialism has existed, whole people have been deprived of their culture... the culture life of a colonized people disappears or become debased as a result of the colonial system.³⁰

The above show that inherent in culture is the creative power of the people. It is in this sense that one can understand the vigorous attack of the colonialist on African culture and its recognition by Fanon and Cabral as potent force that can frustrate colonial domination. In this light, national culture takes on an eminent importance as the repository of resistance in the face of colonial/foreign domination. Culture thus becomes a singularly dangerous tool in the hand of the oppressed people through which they regain their historical personality and thereby return to history.

What could be gleaned from this analysis is a dynamic and dialectical rather than essential conception of culture. An analysis of Fanon and Cabral reveals that though both of them emphasized the cultural factor in the struggle for national liberation, they vehemently denounced the racially or regionally specific theory of African culture which had been put forward by some political leaders. They saw such theories like Negritude and Pan-Africanism which were orchestrated outside the continent of Africa simply as the means where by the alienated educated Africans had sought to articulate their new consciousness of the culture and history from which they have been severed. Fanon explains that one could sympathize with those who advocate an African culture where none exist. The denial of African personality and culture by the colonialists has been total and continental.³¹ This unconditional continental denigration and denial prompted an unconditional affirmation of African culture. This for him has the danger of a romanticising African culture. He argues that there is some significance in the search for an African culture especially as it is based in the past but that such an exercise has the tendency to degenerate because it could take culture beyond the living realities of the people and hence become useless.

We can appreciate Fanon's critique of theories which are based on a romantic attachment to the past and his contention that every culture is first and foremost national vis-à-vis the fact that each culture is unique and is confronted with certain peculiar

problems.³² However, to argue consequently that a common denominator could not be found from which an attack could be launched against the imperialist is to have a wrong picture of the whole situation and a demonstration of Fanon's inability to take the lived experiences of the colonized people into consideration.

As we have earlier noted, colonialism create a dualism in African society. This dualism refers to, on the one hand, those untouched by colonial education and culture who maintain a close relationship with African culture and tradition, and on the other hand, those who throw themselves on the colonialists' culture and take every opportunity to criticize their indigenous culture. Those two groups represent the varying reaction to the colonial situation and culture. Cabral writes:

(The colonizer) provokes and develops the cultural alienation of a part of the population either by so-called assimilation, or by creating a social gap between the indigenous elites and the popular masses. As a result of this process of dividing or of deepening the divisions in the society it happens that a considerable part of the population, notably the urban or peasant petit bourgeoisie, assimilates the colonizer's mentality, consider itself culturally superior to its own people, and ignores or looks down upon their cultural values.³³

Puts in another way, for him:

A distinction must be made between the situation of the masses that preserve their culture, and that of the social groups who are assimilated or partially so, who are cut off (from the indigenous history) and are culturally alienated.³⁴

For both Fanon and Cabral, the rural mass who form the majority of the people in the society are the embodiment of the culture of the people. So culture is not just an abstraction or a frozen relic of a dead past; rather, it is a living reality that is embodied in the lived historical realities of the peasant's socio-cultural experience. Despite the assault on African culture, it is not totally destroyed by the colonial system since the parts of the colonies most affected by colonialism are urban areas. Cabral writes

Repressed, persecuted, humiliated, betrayed by certain social groups who have compromised with the foreign power, culture (history) took refuge in the villages, in the forests, and in the spirit of the victims of domination.³⁵

The existence of this cultural base of the society in the rural areas is considered by Cabral as a failure of the colonial system. It shows that the colonial system laced a firm grip on

all the aspects of the colonized societies and in so doing the colonialist developed against itself a contradiction that would lead to its own demise. This is because it is this cultural residue that gives strength to the resistance to imperial domination. The question now remains how culture and tradition as embodied in the lived realities of the indigenous people can be used for revolutionary purposes.

The answer lays in the fusion of the horizons of the rural majority and the educated minority, that is, the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie. The reason is that societies divided in the above sense are impaired and may not find it easy to develop in the sense that they lack the internal ethos that constitutes them as organic historic wholes.³⁶ According to Cabral, the daily drama and the experience of the petty bourgeoisies soon reveals that despite their intimacy with the colonialist, they do not really get integrated into the colonialist's structure and culture because the colonialists do not see them as equals. Thus, both enmeshed in and at the same time excluded from the structures of colonial dominance, they remain marginalized and relegated to colonized status.

To my mind Cabral's conceptualization of the return to source and the role of the educated elites is too simplistic. Cabral did not problematize the process adequately. For instance, he is too optimistic about the willingness of the educated elite to abandon their privileges and friendship with the colonialist. Cabral also refuses to question the possibility of the petty bourgeoisies' re-integration into the mass culture having embraced the cultural framework of the West. For instance, Fanon notes that "the forms of thought and what it feeds on, together with modern technique of information language have diametrically reorganized the people's intelligence".³⁷ A look at the analysis of the situation by Serequeberhan reveals the same optimism. He seems to have been carried away by the attractiveness of Cabral's suggestion so much so that he fails to see in Cabral the refusal to question the possibility of such a *return*.

However, when one looks at Fanon this critical deficiency is supplied. He was not too optimistic about the petty bourgeoisies' return or their re-integration. For instance he remarks that the tearing away of the petty bourgeoisie is necessary but, nonetheless it is a painful and difficult path to take. He therefore is in doubt if they would follow this *heroic positive, fruitful and just path*. It is a fruitful path because if such a necessary fusion is

achieved it will allow the elites to think of the nation, not in a one-sided perspective, but from the point of view of the whole nation. Secondly, it will allow the elites to put the knowledge they have acquired from the colonialists into the service of the whole nation. The third significance is that the national economy is put in service of the whole nation rather than in service of the colonial master. Fourthly, the peasant's rich cultural tradition can be used to positively transform the mentality of the bourgeoisie and make them play leading roles in national liberation and development.

What is however lacking in Fanon is his failure to show how the petty bourgeoisie can overcome their unwillingness and thus come to take this painful but heroic path. An adequate socio-political theory, to my mind, should not only tell us what should be done but how it should be done. Contemporary socio-political thinkers have a job to do in this direction.

The Question of Violence in National Liberation

Violence as a means of national liberation features prominently in the thoughts of Fanon and Cabral. They picture the colonial situation as violent and believe that decolonization and national liberation should be violent but Fanon is more vigorous in his call for violence than Cabral.³⁸ Our intention in this concluding section is not to undergo an analysis of their conceptions violence but assess how their recommendation can help us cope with the challenges of a postcolonial state in a global age. There is no doubt about the fact that colonialism and neo-colonialism are violent on the Africans personality and culture. In an article titled "The Violence of Globalisation", Yash Tandon expresses the opinion that the concept of free-market is a myth, and that the global economy under the U.S-controlled financial institutions and transnational corporations are doing violence to third world economies through their economic relation with these countries.³⁹

The problem is that while we recognize that powerful countries control the running of the global capitalist economy, the forces operating it have become almost so impersonal that a violent counter-attack becomes useless. The necessity of a face to face encounter with the imperialist has now changed. It seems then that the recommendation for violence is relevant only within the colonial context. What then can be done? Herein

lays the significance of the need for mental decolonization and the suggestion of class suicide. The political class who has been enriching itself at the expense of the individual Third World countries by dinning with global economic powers should break their accord with the imperialists and thereby allow their horizon to be fused with that of the masses. The violence being recommended for the colonial situation also becomes relevant here. This time the violence is not targeted at the imperialist but at themselves. The reason is that to break company with the imperialist powers would lead to some unpalatable consequences which will look like they are being violent on themselves. This suggestions look like a call to delink from the global economic system which we have been inextricably tied. The truth is that this is not a viable option for Third World countries. What is needed now is concerted effort to strengthen those institutions and structures that are able to survive in a de-linked environment. This is the responsibility of the government. That is why Fanon argues that the development of a national culture requires the support of the state.⁴⁰ What we need is a state, or a political class that can transform the economy and the nature of the state. The African economy and politics have to be brought under the control of the people and reshaped to serve the primary needs of the people. Africa needs a group of elites that can discipline their taste for foreign alliances and the benefits that accrue to them.

I do not thereby imply that the resultant effect would bring immediate ease for African countries. The reason is that it means we would only have to do with what we have. We may have to stop exportation and importation for some time and produce our needs locally using our local products. There is no doubt about the fact that such a policy would have consequences. But these consequences would be more likely to involve the elite losing the benefits of foreign aid than Western powers sending armed men to kill ordinary Africans.

Endnotes

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⁵ Chukwudi Eze, "Modern Western Philosophy and African Colonialism," in Chukwudi Eze (Ed.) *African Philosophy: An Anthology*, (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), p. 213

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⁷ Ibid.

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¹¹ Amilcar Cabral, *Unity and Struggle*, (London: Heinemann, 1980), p. 136

¹² Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p. 6

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²⁵ Ibid., p. 142

²⁶ Ibid., p.123

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- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Ibid., pp. 124-125
- ²⁹ Ibid., p.140
- ³⁰ Aime Cesaire, "Culture and Colonization," *Presence Africaine*, Nos. 8, 9 & 10, pp. 196-197
- ³¹ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 170-171
- ³² Ibid., p. 174
- ³³ Cabral, Quoted in Peterson, "Returning to the Core"
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Cabral Cited in Serequeberhan, *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy*, p. 105
- ³⁶ Serequeberhan, *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy*, p. 105
- ³⁷ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 181
- ³⁸ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 27-84, Cabral, *Unity and Struggle*, p. 134
- ³⁹ Yash Tandon, "The Violence of Globalisation," *Echoes*, <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/jpc/echoes-18-08.html> (Accessed September, 2008)
- ⁴⁰ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 181

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