Educational policy in Africa and the issue(s) of context: The case of Nigeria and South Africa

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This paper will look at the three distinct time and educational policy periods in African education – the pre-colonial, the colonial and the post-colonial – using Nigeria and South Africa as a generic representation of the problematics of education and socio-cultural development in Africa. The central goal of the paper is to point out the fact that practices that are taken for granted as best practices elsewhere in education have little or no place in the educational policy and processes in Africa. Issues such as the role of culture, the role of languages of instruction, the role of indigenous philosophy/gnosis (Mudimbe, 1988), and the role of the community in the education of its youth and citizens, are generally given little consideration. These aspects are usually dismissed as not necessary for the education of African children. This attitude mis-educates rather than educates for personal, national and continental development.

Cultural foundations, socio-cultural development, South Africa, Nigeria, community, national educational policy

> Each centered person becomes an owner not a renter of knowledge.
> *Professor Molefi Kete Asante (1994)*
>
> Only where man feels himself to be heir and successor to the past,
> has he the strength for new beginning.
> *Janheinz Jahn (1958)*

INTRODUCTION

All scholars of comparative education rightly locate three phases in Nigerian education (Gutek, 1993) which generally can be applied to South African education as well. According to Gutek, Nigerian education, and by application South African, has three main historical periods: the pre-colonial, the colonial, and the post-colonial or independent. The differences between the two countries might be in the intensity with which these three time periods impacted on their particular contexts.

The second and third periods are fairly well studied by outsiders, as well as by African scholars of educational policies and processes. The first period is generally ignored, perhaps due to ambiguous sentiments such as European scholars seemingly seeing no need for it. This is despite their understanding of location theory (Asante, 1994) and its impact on educational achievement. African scholars, who have totally taken on European theories and ideologies, find such studies very discomforting to their individual ambiguous adventures (Kane, 1963). African educational policies are therefore carried out in a cultural and educational policy and developmental vacuum in terms of African people's everyday lives. I will now take a closer look at the terms culture, education and development, and then relate these terms to educational policy processes in Nigeria and South Africa.

CULTURE, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Worldwide, there has been an increased awareness of the impact of cultural practices on educational achievement that has challenged previous conceptions of education (Pai & Aldler, 1997). Cultural relevance in educational processes is acknowledged by Marxist and neo-Marxist educational scholars (Apple, 1982, 1996; Freire, 1998; Gourix, 1991) as well as some conservative, capitalist and colonial-oriented writers (Ravitch, 1991; Schlesinger, 1992). The same statement can be made about culture and development. It seems, however, that in Africa, the role of culture and its relationship to educational attainment as well as to socio-political and economic developments, is more easily and readily dismissed (Makgoba, 1997). This strange phenomenon is at times very difficult to explain due to the deeply ingrained self-doubt in the African psyche (Wilson, 1993) as has been the case also for African Americans in the USA (Woodson, 1933, 1999). How does one then try to explain the obvious? There is an analytical need to do this so that, in the process, African educators might become more conscious of the damage they are inflicting on their sons and daughters, as has been demonstrated elsewhere (Delpit, 1995).

To address these issues clearly, we will pause here and define the three main terms that will guide this analysis: culture, education and development. First, each term will be considered independently. The three then will be discussed together, especially considering how the first two affect the third.

Cultural Foundations

While there is no one single definition of culture, functionally there is an overwhelming acceptance that it is '... a system of norms and control', as well as 'a map' (Pai & Adler, 1997: 23) that gives a group a sense of direction. This map of, or for, a group of people or a society, is what enables the group to evaluate where it has been, where it is now, and where it hopes to go. A mastery of this 'system of norms and control' - this 'map' - enables one to connect the past to the present as well as to the future.

Historically, the word 'culture' has undergone considerable modification. Among the ancient Greeks the world was viewed in terms of *the cultured* (Greeks in general, but the male aristocrats in particular, since Greek society was a hierarchical society based on class, gender, and slavery) and *the barbarians* (non- Greeks). The Enlightenment thinkers took on the word culture posited on European and non-European races, societies and groups in terms of the 'civilised' for the former and the 'savage' or 'primitive' for the latter (Eze, 1997). Embedded in these two views of culture were the ideas that '... the non-Greeks, incapable of culture and lacking the superior rational capacity [the ability to justify one's behaviour, preferences and mores] for the Athenian-style democratic social organizations lived brutishly and under despotism" (Eze, 1997: 4). As Eze (1997: 4) noted further on the second view:

> European Enlightenment thinkers retained the Greek ideal of reason, as well as this reason's categorical function of discriminating between the cultured (now called 'the civilized') and the 'barbarian' (the 'savage' or the 'primitive'). It can be argued, in fact, that the enlightenment's declaration of itself as the 'Age of Reason' was predicated upon precisely the assumption that reason [the ability to justify one's behavior, preferences and mores or to more simply put, the ability to follow a rule] could historically only come to maturity in modern Europe, while the inhabitants of areas outside Europe, who were considered to be of non-European racial and cultural origins, were consistently described and theorized as rationally inferior and savage…

The most fascinating aspect of Eze's (1997) views is the question of source authority for the cultural and philosophical anthropology of this period: Where did the Greeks and the enlightenment thinkers secure the sources for such categorical (pre)suppositions? Hume

(1711-1776), Kant (1724-1804), and Hegel (1770-1831) blindly quoted each other's fables over and over, so that they became facts (Eze, 1997), or what Mudimbe (1988: 15) called 'epistemological ethnocentrism'. This is despite the fact that Hegel of all of the three, as Eze (1997) pointed out, had more access to factual data and should have disabused those earlier notions about *culture* and *otherness* in his anthropology. This intertextuality (Eze, 1997) could not be questioned. This is because the ideology of justified belief of the Enlightenment period superseded their so-called search for truth. Like one of their followers many years later, Carl Sagan (1983), 'the power of a will to truth' (Mudimbe, 1988: 15) and not professed disinterested scholarship, became their preoccupation. When source authority and interpretive authority conflict, the danger of ideological universalisation is easily realised.

Today, however, even the most mean-spirited European cultural anthropologist and philosopher will not posit the term *culture* in these narrow and prejudiced terms. As Gollnick and Chinn (1998: 4), paraphrasing Goodenough (1987), noted: 'Everyone has a culture'. The previous use of the term culture indicated '... the refined ways of the elite and powerful'. It was also a reference to '[p]eople who were knowledgeable in history, literature and the fine arts'. These categories of people were capable of possessing culture, or '... were said to possess culture' (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4). As Gollnick and Chinn (1998: 4) concluded: '[n]o longer is culture viewed so narrowly'.

Today, anthropologists '... define culture as a way of perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4). Culture thus 'provides the blueprint that determines the way we think, feel, and behave in society' (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4). Others have noted that culture is '... in us and all around us, just as the air we breathe' (Erickson, 1997: 33). If these propositions are true then it follows that there are fundamental distortions embedded in our African educational thought, policies, theories and practices about educating ourselves and our children. These distortions thwart the very intentions of what should constitute education - content, processes and results. This is because, apart from culture giving one the 'do's and don'ts of appropriate behaviour within' the society, it also 'imposes order and meaning on our experiences. It allows us to predict how others will behave in certain situations' (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4).

While the above might sound a little simplistic, being unaware of their culture leads people to lack a consciousness of their own 'self' in the educative process, or to be critically unaware of the 'other' in their context (Mudimbe, 1988*).* To educe (Stanage, 1987) is to bring forth what might be either innate or socialised in the individual to critical consciousness, not to bank the knowledge (Freire, 1998) in such learners. One educated in such an artificial context is only superficially at home with the self and the other, thus making good education impossible either to give or to receive. This is because all good educational theory posits progressively moving from the known to the unknown. Understanding the context of education and its planning within a psycho-social duality (Dewey, 1916, 1964) therefore becomes the key. This duality is not a matter of either/or, but of both, if effective learning and meaningful citizenship are to occur.

Every cultural and educational process, along with its planning, has two key components: it enculturates children of all racial, ethnic and gender groups (Pai & Adler, 1997: 4), and it socialises its young (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). These two components operate culturally because of four other factors: (i) culture is learned, not biologically determined; the young must of necessity be introduced to their society, both formally or informally; (ii) culture is shared, and therefore embedded in human, technical, and scientific language; (iii) culture is adaptive to the challenges of context; and (iv) culture is dynamic, either taking an evolutionary or a revolutionary path (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). These components,

characteristics and paths that culture takes are the same as or similar to those taken by educational processes and therefore by policy planning.

What then is education? There are multiple definitions. Some theorists define it as preparation, both formal and informal, for life (Counts, 1932, 1962). Others have taken the view that education is life itself, or is itself life, not preparation for life (Dewey, 1916, 1938, 1939). Like culture, educational processes also target the enculturation and socialisation of the citizenry on both formal and informal levels. The aim of any education system is to prepare individuals to assume mature roles in a given society. At the heart of what is education, or educational, is the issue of whether it should be just about cultural transmission (Strouse, 2000), and more importantly whose culture is to be transmitted (Spring, 1997) In our case, it is whether it should be about cultural transformation, as is the case in Nigeria (Soyinka, 1996) and South Africa today (Makgoba, 1997).

THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

Nigeria and South Africa experienced contact with Europe to varying degrees and in different time periods. Given that the colonial and post-colonial periods have been extensively studied, my concern here is that of locating the pre-colonial with the issues of planning for effective educational processes.

First, it is important to note that there existed an African educational frame of reference before European contact with the peoples in the areas today called Nigeria and South Africa. Because of the colonial origin and nature of present-day African education, the socio-cultural discourse of African education insists on theorising on traditional Eurocentric functional, conflictual, and associative or assimilationalist platforms without engaging with this first phase of African education (Bassey, 1999). When an African scholar attempts a different approach it attracts attacks from entrenched colonial and neo-colonial scholarship. This was demonstrated by Mudimbe (1988) and more recently by Spreen (2001) in her review of Bassey (1999). The goal of such pseudo-scholarship is always to say: We did not teach you that. Where did you get it from? You must be a fraud because we who know did not approve of such an understanding of your world. This resistance scares African scholars away from pursuing the kind of research that should contribute to improving education. While there are breakthroughs in the literary and African philosophical circles, these are not being applied effectively in the field of educational policy and classroom practice.

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

The colonial period was one of direct involvement of colonial Europe in African affairs. It took different forms. In some colonies like Nigeria it was about exploitation of raw materials for use in Great Britain. Education was a very superficial concern. It was left in the hands of the missionaries most of the time. The missionaries strove for the complete destruction of the African worldview, thus turning Africans into little Englishmen (Chanaiwa, 1980) or into subjects of another European nation. The same could be said about South Africa, except that in this case the colonising community had no intention of ever leaving. The education of the Nigerian as well as the South African was therefore for barbarism (Tabata, 1960); that is, it targeted self-hatred and self-destruction as desirable qualities. The mission-educated Nigerian, as well as the South African, generally referred to as the 'new African', suffered from three forms of ambiguity: of the state, of nationalism, and of class and class consciousness (Marks, 1986). These three adventurous ambiguities came back to becloud the post-independent elite's educational policy, especially in relation to the contextualisation of education in local African cultures.

When African scholars theorise about educational issues, policies and planning in Africa they show little regard for pre-colonial African eductive processes (Stanage, 1987*)*. When educated Africans embrace a Jasperian theory of African history and existence, and thereby of education -- i.e., that African culture and ethos cannot survive in the face of European civilisation, and its past is therefore doomed -- we mis-educate our sons and daughters, rather than educate them (Asmal and James, 2001; Jahn, 1989/90).

The Malinowskian-Skokian effect theory (Jahn, 1989/90) of the so-called neo-African culture misses the point as well. This is the view that says the African elite wants to become European at all cost, but eventually realises that legally this is impossible. Such an elite returns with a vengeance to its African ways as a '... psychological retreat before European pressure' (Jahn, 1989/90: 15). This perception also misses the point. These two approaches miss the key cultural questions about the first phase of African education. They still confuse the indigenous knowledge question with their 'epistemological ethnocentrism' (Mudimbe, 1988: 15). While they deal with the conditioned behaviour of the African as he or she confronted Europe, concentrating the discourse on just this impact of Europe on Africa, or on the African reaction alone, does not explain the ease with which these Africans returned to their previous cultural ethos. This characterisation, while serving the 'epistemological ethnocentrism' (Mudimbe, 1988: 15) of the proponents, does not address the question of the African 'gnosis', as Mudimbe (1988) calls it, for lack of a better way to communicate the concept. It is at this juncture that Jahn's 1989/90 analysis and dismissal of these deficit theories of African culture and therefore the first phase of African education will be helpful in discussing our next concern, that of development.

When we talk of development, what do we mean? The word development is synonymous, according to the *Random House College Dictionary*, with other words such as 'expansion, elaboration, growth, evolution; unfolding, maturation'. To develop is to move forward from where one is. Two things, among a host of many others, are presupposed here: one, a beginning; and two, a continuum. Development as a sign of progression has to start somewhere. If any development is not rooted in a specific cultural, ideological, philoso-political or metaphysical ethos, its educational processes and outcomes are open to question. It is aiming at nothing. Our human past teaches us what we should avoid and what we should pass on. In the ongoing discourse on African education, these two lesson are totally missing: our past is despised and dismissed and our present and future thereby are jeopardised. The question is: are we destined to be doormats? What causes some of us to return to the past in order to prepare for the future? Is Karl Jaspers' or Malinowski's functionalist theory of African culture, and therefore of education and development, correct? If not, how do we respond to Jahn's inquisition about ourselves as Africans, though these questions were directed to his European contemporaries? According to Jahn (1989/90: 15):

> Could this [African] renewal, this [African] rationalization of tradition, in fact be the crucial period in African development, which is making it possible for the Africans to assert themselves, and to escape the fate, assigned to them by Jaspers and Malinowski, of 'becoming tools'? In other words, is that nationalism, though unhealthy for European rule, perhaps not so 'unhealthy' at all for the Africans - considering that it has already begun to bring about the emergence of independent African states? We ask what the Africans are thinking, what they are planning, what they believe, how they can survive the crisis, why the historical process fails to conform to the predicted pattern - but we pay no attention to the rational revival of the African tradition by African intelligence, or else we dismiss it as the drug of psychological self-intoxication, as 'Skokian.'

If development is about progress, and if progress is about a starting point and a continuum, then development in Africa is heading the way of its antonymous path: deterioration, disintegration if not outright stasis. This is because development in Africa seems to be

context-proof, be this spiritual, economic, social, political, intellectual or cultural. Development in Africa is always cast in deficit terms: what the African is not and should become, instead of what s/he is and wishes to become. This is because education in African from the colonial to the present aims at the production of the 'half-educated man' (MacMichael, 1934) who, according to Collins et. al (2000: 190), '... had sufficient knowledge to lead his people from their educational traditions but did not know whether to take them'.

Nigerian and South African education that is developmental calls for bringing together the first phase of Nigerian (Gutek, 1993) and South African (Makgoba, 1997) education so that it will begin to address developmental issues of Africa origin. This analysis will not, however, specifically address African philosophy of education as the key issue, but will concentrate on how culture affects education, how education in turn affects development, and how these should be tied to educational policy concerns in Nigeria and South Africa.

Educational practice is either about cultural transmission (Strouse, 2000) or cultural transformation (Makgoba, 1997). Be such transmission or transformation of certain skills or a body of knowledge, the end result is to make one a good person and an effective member of one's society. The individuals so equipped have the power to transform themselves and their societies. The lack of a transformative theorisation (Strouse, 2000), however, leads to a deficit educational orientation, as is the case in Africa (Bassey, 1999), and more particularly in Nigeria and South Africa, because the individuals so educated are located at the periphery of their centre(s). As Asmal and James (2001: 186) note:

> Black Africans had to overcome the burden of Bantu education … rested on a racist anthropology designed to generate cheap labor for what remained a colonially organized economy. Colored and Indians students were also treated as presumptively subordinate minorities. Though apartheid has been dismantled, its effects are still evident in a population that is desperately undereducated and, in many respects, *mis*educated.

These undereducated and miseducated individuals suffer from a lack of centredness (Asante, 1987, 1994), Asante (1994: 53-4) noting that:

> The primary view held by Afrocentrists is that the most rewarding results of any analysis of culture [must or should be] derived from a centered place position, usually defined as the *place* from which all concepts, ideas, purposes, and visions radiate. Determining place, therefore, becomes one of the central tasks of the Africological scholar. Marginal positions or marginalized theorists [theories] of aesthetics are consequently called into severe question in regard to their efficacy.

One of the difficulties that African education faces is its lack of extensive resources to research into the processes of how we locate ourselves in the educative process. Sponsored research is not interested in that. As the World Bank and IMF have re-established their colonial hold on nations like Nigeria, less and less funding is made available for the kinds of research that will make indigenous knowledge part and parcel of the educative process. For the above reason, Africans are assumed students all the time (Jahn, 1989/90). While referring specifically to African aesthetics, Asante's (1994: 54) comments that '... part of the difficulty in assessing the African aesthetics in a scholarly and critical manner has been the dislocation of Africa and Africans for the past five hundred years' and also that 'the traditions of the African aesthetics in the West have been discontinuous, corrupted, and distorted'. To Asante (1994: 54), therefore, this dislocation '... has meant that the African aesthetic sensibility has had to assert itself under adverse circumstances'. These same comments hold for African education. Sometimes, because of five hundred years or more of misinformation, African education finds it too difficult to look at newer ways to solve African educational and developmental needs. As Jahn (1989/90:17) noted,

> The Africa presented by the ethnologist is a legend in which we used to believe. The African tradition as it appears in the light of neo-African culture may also be a legend - but it is a legend

> in which African intelligence believes. And it is their perfect right to declare authentic, correct and true those components of their past which they believe to be so. In the same way a Christian, asked about the nature of Christianity, will point to the gospel teaching 'Love thy neighbour' and not to the Inquisition. ... For several centuries Africa has had to suffer under the conception of the African past formed by Europe. As long as this was so, that European conception was 'true,' that is to say, effective. But the present and future on the other hand will be determined by the conception that African intelligence forms out of the African past.

Jahn's analysis will surprise many today as purely post-modernist questioning of grand narratives as sources of meaning creation. But that is precisely what Eze (1997: 7) was referring to as the source of European cultural 'intertextuality' on Africa. Development that is intrinsic is therefore the kind of development Africa needs: bottom-up, not top-down development based on a 'one size fits all' ideology (Gutek, 1993) like that of the IMF/World Bank (Samoff, 1999). Intellectually, such development can be achieved more easily through African intertextuality, due to their existential rootedness in the context. African intellectuals in general, but educators in particular, are called upon to exemplify this intertextual project.

The possibility of this intertextuality is what Jahn (1989/90) called neo-African culture. According to Jahn (1989/90: 18), '[N]eo-African culture appears as an unbroken extension, as the legitimate heir of tradition. Only where man feels himself to be the heir and successor to the past has he the strength for a new beginning'. The literary disciplines and their theoreticians (Eze, Mudimbe, Asante, p'Bitek, Wa Thiong'o, Achebe, Makgoba, Soyinka and a host of others) are way ahead of the educators. Much of their works have yet to inform educational practices and policies on the continent.

Socio-culturally, what do schools do? The answer to that question depends on what a given society wants to enculture and socialise its citizens to do. It is also a question of what mandate the society hands over to its teachers to execute. If it is for active participation in the critique of such a society, more critical, constructivist and sometimes conflictual approaches will be preferred. The goal here will be that of helping learners come to terms with issues of legitimisation and reproduction of inequalities in society (Bowels, 2001; Strouse, 2001), as hidden curricula in schools and society (Apple, 1996; Giroux, 1991) are excised. This is usually the Marxist and neo-Marxist approach to schooling. If, however, the goal is to locate the individual in his or her place in society, a more functionalist approach will be needed. If socialising but not much transmission is the goal, then a progressivist and interactionalist approach is the goal. Under very normal circumstances, these three approaches can solve the educative dilemma.

But what schools actually do in places like Nigeria and South Africa, based on the historicity of Bantu and colonial education and their current neo-colonial African representatives, is cultural transmission of a particular class orientation (Marks, 1986) without critical approaches (Bassey, 1999). This is because Bantu and colonial education was specifically about cultural imperialism (Carnoy, 1974) and class transplantation (Gutek, 1993). The differences were only those of degree of such imperialism and transplantation. The Nigerian and South African neo-colonialist still defined education in these narrow terms. Generally, Nigerian and South African educators, like their counterparts all over the continent, still view their jobs in terms of being gatekeepers - weeding out the undesirables, with multiples of meaningless examinations (Gutek, 1993) which even their colonial masters might have left behind.

The key element in this kind of education, as is the case with Native Americans in North America, is first about the process of deculturalisation (Spring, 1997). This is the process whereby the natives are culturally impoverished, made to hate themselves, and made to feel

that only that which is metaphysically, epistemologically, axiologically, (i.e., ethically and aesthetically) other, or outside of themselves, is worthy of respect and thereby of being learned (Asante, 1994). This deculturalisation goes as far as asking students to change their names, dress code and/or religious beliefs; punishing students for speaking their native language within the school premises; and pressuring students to avoid eating local delicacies or using African names. It has gotten to the point that some 'educated Africans' will not let their children speak any African language as a reinforcement of the school's conditioning mission. This simple linguistic act alone cuts these young ones off from a wealth of cultural capital needed for all contextual, personal and societal development.

The second process involved in Nigerian and South African education, like any other subordinate group, is that of acculturation (Pai & Aldler, 1997). This is when the desired values are administered to the students. The students here, as in the case of Nigeria and South Africa, will be required to spend an inordinate amount of time acquiring European languages and knowledges at the expense of real critical academics. Some of these European languages, like Afrikaans, are basically useless outside of their immediate context; i.e., South Africa. The most important aspect of education, that is, the enculturation (Pai & Aldler, 1997) of the Nigerian and South African student, will be left unattended. This is because the first phase of African education, the pre-colonial phase, which should have tied the students to their respective communities as a basis for critique and reform, are eliminated or easily dismissed (Makgoba, 1996, 1997). This makes educated Africans good for every other community but the African community. The educated Africans are total strangers to their own African context. This is educating for export, not for home development. In the field of technical knowledge, the educated African is given modules and textbooks based on little of what they are familiar with. Neither is there any room or provision for practical demonstration in the immediacy of such a context.

Education that is developmental will have to be education that is transformational (Bassey, 1999; Makgoba, 1996, 1997), not simply transmission- and reformation-oriented, more so when the culture to be transmitted does not contribute to the impoverishment of the everyday life of the learner or his/her community. Such an education should, first and foremost, emphasise a child's centredness in his or her learning context (Asante, 1994). This is of importance today because even within the colonialist camp it is accepted that all of our knowledge is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The African child needs to understand the African context very well if such a child is ever to contribute to moving such a context forward. The child needs to formally study in African language in actually to acquire the sensibility of his or her people in its totality. In this way African education, like its counterparts elsewhere in the world, will be teaching African children '... to see the world from the perspective of African cultures' (Spring, 2000: 191, citing Asante, 1994). The key concern of this kind of pedagogical approach, sometimes called Afrocentric pedagogy (Spring, 2000), or Afrocentricity (Asante, 1994), is the concept of 'African centredness' (Spring, 2000: 191). While mindful of the multiple perspectives of Africa as demonstrated in Asante's works (1994), how is centredness related to the issue of development?

Development does not take place in a vacuum. If one's education is about perpetual dislocation or peripheralisation of the self, then such an education will be a deficit education, if not outright mis-education (Asante, 1994; Asmal & James, 2001; Woodson, 1993/99). It is neither life (Dewey, 1916), nor does it prepare one for future living (Counts, 1932). This life-centred perspective also overcomes or avoids what Kunjufu called 'the seasoning' effect (Spring, 2000:199), this being the method by which Africans worldwide are made to be subordinate to Europeans. The first approach this method uses is to make the

slave, the colonised or the neo-colonised obey by '... instilling fear of the owner through threats of death and torture for disobedience' (Spring, 2000: 199).

In the postcolonial sphere, these threats are about the withdrawal of economic life sources administered by those colonial institutions (World Bank, IMF, etc,) set up to maintain colonial agendas that continue to sap the life out of Africa as in the slave and colonial days. As Samoff (1999: 427) has accurately observed about the IMF/World Bank use of the structural adjustment tool in Africa: '[c]olonial rule was, among other things, a general strategy for integrating Africa into the global political economy on terms set largely in Europe. Formally managed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, structural adjustment plays a similar role.' The second aspect of seasoning is that of making the slave, the colonised or the neo-colonised 'loyal to the master', even when the master is not physically present. The master's economic blueprint, which such a master will never even think of implementing at home, will be shoved down the throats of the slave, the colonised or the neo-colonised, using a neo-colonised general or politician as is the case of Nigeria. As Eiseman (1989: 110) noted about the World Bank report on African education of 1989, 'The World Bank strategies for African education take virtually no notice of the educational literature of the African countries, as a perusal of citations and references in the report will indicate. African education researchers will feel justly slighted'.

As Kuti (2000) pointed out, an African leader is always found to implement such a report, given the culture of bribery and the view that anything foreign must be good for the nation. While the South African leadership speaks of a gradual dismantling of apartheid to avoid white flight, their assimilationist concerns seem more at the heart of the situation than fairness. As Samoff (199: 404) has noted about the post-apartheid South Africa situation and some of the cosmetic solutions advanced by those in authority:

> Clearly, repealing discriminatory laws will not in itself achieve equality of access any time soon. Nor would the discriminatory elements embedded in curriculum, pedagogy, and examinations disappear of their own accord … to define equity as equality distracts attention from injustice instead of exploring and addressing the links between discrimination and injustice.

The third aspect is that of making the African slave, colonised and neo-colonised believe 'in the superiority of the white race over the black race'. Everything humanly or divinely good is from the white race. Their gods are the only ones that can save, their currency the only real currency acceptable, their facts, no matter how distorted, the only acceptable facts. Then, the final aspect becomes very easy: the slaves, colonised, and neo-colonised thoroughly hate themselves. African men and women will forbid their children from speaking any African language. The Africans, like the African slaves, 'hate Africa, and lose pride in their heritage' (Spring, 2000:199).

The question of development is also viewed entirely as a question of material acquisition, through whatever means. Education becomes commodified and is viewed only as a gateway to stealing. No moral imperatives are considered (Freire, 1998). Teaching and learning to transgress boundaries (hooks, 1994), and to become creative for the larger good of humanity, are dismissed (Ihonvbere, 1998). There are no longer conscious efforts to make a distinction between wants and needs. The soul is sacrificed for the material.

The question of centredness (Asante, 1994; Spring, 1997) addresses this gap. Afrocentric pedagogy, particularly from Asante's (1994) point of view, places the child in a holistic learning context. Spring (2000) pointed out the holistic approach to economics in Asante's Afrocentric pedagogy as well. According to Spring (2000), Afrocentric pedagogy is a demonstration to the students that '[T]he stability of the economic system resulted in the stability of the political system and social system'. This was the case with analysing the

ancient Ghana empire, a history topic, for example. Such an approach is a good example of holistic learning, not just an 'epistemological ethnocentrism' (Mudimbe, 1988) aimed at creating deficit feelings in the learner and a sense of superiority to those who can memorise large bodies of facts contained in outdated textbooks. Asante's approach to educating Black children, also encourages what some authors call 'personal witnessing' by allowing the students to 'reflect' on what is learned as well as 'testify' or share with others what one knows. It is through this dual process that one really knows, based on the feedback one has received from those one is sharing with.

There are some philosophical issues that make centring one's students very important. As philosophy of education derives its existence from philosophy of life, the praxis of harmonising our *weltanschauung* of holistic teaching and learning calls on us to take a much closer view of what is going on in the field of African philosophy and religions. Adesanya (cited by Jahn, 1989/90) commented on the existing coherence in African philosophical conceptions, thus pointing to the work ahead for African educators if they are to make African cultures, educational processes and development come together. According to Adesanya, as cited by Jahn (1989/90: 97):

> This [African/Yoruba philosophy] is not simply a 'coherence of facts and faith' he writes, 'nor of reason and traditional beliefs, nor of reason and contingent facts, but a coherence or compatibility among all the disciplines. A medical theory, e.g., which contradicted a theological conclusion was rejected as absurd and vice versa. This demand for a mutual compatibility among all the disciplines considered as a system was the main weapon of Yoruba thinking. God might be banished from Greek thought without any harm being done to the logical architecture of it, but this cannot be done in the case of the Yoruba. In medieval thought, science could be dismissed at pleasure, but this is impossible in the case of the Yoruba thought, since faith and reason are mutually dependent. In modern times, God even has no place in scientific thinking. This was impossible to the Yoruba since from the Olodumare an architectonic of knowledge was built in which the finger of God is manifest in the most rudimentary elements of nature. Philosophy, theology, politics, social theory, land law, medicine, psychology, birth and burial, all find themselves logically concatenated in a system so tight that to subtract one item from the whole is to paralyse the structure of the whole'.

While Adesanya was speaking specifically about the 'ethnophilosophy' of the Yorubas, as Jahn (1989/90: 97) noted, this is '... presumably also for the whole of traditional thinking in Africa, for African philosophy as such'.

THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD

The question since legal 'independence' becomes: What then can Nigerian and South African educators do to change the tides? Africans' indigenous cultural solutions to Africa's educational policy, developmental needs and problems have to come to terms with the results of Africans' previous 'seasoning' for self-debasement, be it Bantu education or just indirect rule and its legacy, as is the sorry case of Nigeria today (Soyinka, 1996). In the cases of Nigeria and South Africa, the militaries (Ihonvbere, 1998; Onwumechili, 1998) and returning liberation armies have institutionalised this debasement by their brute forms of governing or existing.

The World Bank and the IMF cannot help us if we cannot help ourselves (Jagusah & Dimah, 1999; Dimah & Jagusah, 2000). This is because these institutions and their reference point do not fit the African situation (Makgoba, 1997). As Mabokela and King (2001: xviii) noted about post-1994 South Africa: 'This new vision requires reconstituting all spheres of South African society. This includes the education sector'. Neither does globalisation in places where there are 'No Teacher Guide, No Textbooks, No Chairs' (Samoff, 1999: 393) solve the problems. As Mudimbe (1988: 1) rightly observed, colonialism and colonisation basically mean '... organisation, arrangement ... meaning to cultivate or to design. ... But it

can be admitted that the colonists (those settling a region), as well as the colonialists (those exploiting a territory by dominating a local majority), have all tended to organise and transform non-European areas into fundamentally European constructs'.

Many naïve African intellectuals hold to the view that the colonialists are gone, yet they do not give heed to the 'colonising structures and marginality' left behind that still influences the African 'discourse of power and the knowledge of otherness' (Mudimbe, 1988:1). In fair-ness, this kind of discourse is carried on more by the Africanist scholars of the cold war era. African philosophy and Afrocentric or African-centered scholarship since the 1980s in North America, for instance, has gone beyond the ethnocentricity debate to clear formulations of some of these issues. The fact is that such a discourse has yet to reach continental African ears due to the nature and the marginality as well as the politics of sponsored research in North America and Europe whereby only the research that debases Africa is sponsored. Also, mostly, white investigators are considered qualified, with a few African Americans or other blacks with similar views to whites that are sponsored to do such research. While this has hindered much of this research from reaching where it is most needed, individuals like Makgoba in South Africa are carrying on personal works at heavy personal emotional and intellectual cost that might change things in the near future.

Globalisation, just like the IMF/World Bank, while serving the neo-colonialism of today, still does not address the metaphysical concerns of what it means to be a African in the world and to be educated as such (Makgoba, 1996, 1997). African development will therefore wait for its socio-cultural motif and philosophy not only to acquire its identity (Masolo, 1995), but to apply itself equally in defining Africa's educational goals, processes and outcomes. As the old adage of all meaningful educational theorising and best practices posits, moving from 'the known to the unknown' is the best way to go about educating. At the present, this is not so in the intertextuality of African culture, education, and therefore development. To reject such a cardinal principle is to place our educational and developmental needs in a state of perpetual dis-equilibration.

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