

Reflections on Issues of Post-coloniality and International Relations in Africa

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Introduction

Historiographical traditions have a way of going into hibernation, shedding their aged and hideous scales, and beginning life anew, ready to spit the same old poison. That is what seems to have happened to imperialist historiography, dealt crushing blows in the 1960s and 1970s by nationalist and Marxist historians. The partial, but powerful, images that dominated the world's media in the 1980s and early 1990s, of a continent wracked by coups, chaos, and carnage, of people dying from drought and disease, and countries collapsing under the weight of state corruption and coercion, provided a fertile ground for the resurgence of crude, rabidly racist perceptions of Africa. And like vultures smelling death, supply-side bankers, with IMF or World Bank attaché cases, sanctimonious western politicians, award-seeking journalists, self-appointed 'aid' missionaries, and even publicity-starved "pop stars", descended on the continent for their pound of flesh. In this atmosphere, imperialist historiography and neo-classical developmentalism flourished. [Tiyambe, Paul Zeleza (1997) *Manufacturing African Studies and Crises*. Dakar: CODESRIA]

Africa's integration into the western capitalist project began with the Europeans' travelling to a land that they soon named

America, killed the indigenous owners of the land and took over the land and other resources. It was soon after that Africa was drawn and integrated into the service of western capitalism: first when it was transformed into a source of profitable human cargo to America, then as a producer of raw materials for Europe and lastly as a producer of products for all the imperialists in the World. The centrality of this globalising agenda goes beyond the colonial compulsions of production and export of raw materials such as cotton, cocoa, coffee, timber and tobacco, uranium, tantalite, diamond and gold to modern slave labour by the willing economic refugees through brain drain which they labelled brain gain while locally it is known as the *Nkabakyeyos*. These range from child and adult female sex slavery to intellectuals.

Any reflections on issues of post-coloniality and International Relations in Africa *ipso facto* require one to begin by reflecting historically, materialistically, dialectically and philosophically on the *locus* and importance of Africa within the imperialist agenda since Columbus' accidental landing on the lands that the Europeans had the audacity to relegate to themselves powers to rename it America. This therefore, calls for an epistemological navigation back to the 15th century. It is such a historicisation that will enable this study to grasp the reasons that underlay western imperialism in invading Africa, globalising* it and integrating it into the western capitalist project. All this was achieved by first transforming Africa into a depository of profitable human cargo for selling to America to service capitalist interests in America and Europe.

Without going into the debates regarding the primitivity, barbarism and positivities of this five-century old slave trade, we need to recognise though in passing the fact that this trade brought enormous profits to the slave merchants and their

* Here, we use the concept globalisation not in its current usage of "global lies" about global village "global pillage", with imperialism masquerading as a "partner in development" with its victim. We instead use it in its etymological, non-ideologised and racialised sense to mean the process through which Africa was opened up for international capitalist exploitation.

home countries; it enriched the slave economies with robust labour. This labour from Africa was highly skilled and experienced in, *inter alia*, agriculture, mining and smithing. It thus possessed what capitalism desperately needed for its extractive purposes: resources for export to the then highly developed capitalistic Europe. It is this historical approach that will unravel the new inter-imperialist contradictions, which came to maturation in America's declaration of independence in 1776, and the subsequent war of liberation. It is this approach that will unravel how all these developments gave rise to new dynamics that compelled Europe to search for other reliable, alternative sources of cheap raw materials; and how this search brought Africa once again into a firm imperialist grip (Beaud, Michael, 1984). The inherent contradictions characterising capitalism, and those between capitalism and labour, and the new challenges of the newly formed European nations combined to expose the genesis and materiality of imperialism in form of colonialism.

Britain, by then the leading industrial power in the world — dubbed the workshop of Europe — was setting the pace for imperialism. It took initiatives to block any more capturing and trading in slaves. This had been a very lucrative trade, which Britain had up to then held so dear and from where most of British capital had been raised. It had now turned round and designed a new capitalist exploitative project, which entailed enslaving the Africans onto their own lands to serve its interests. This was a very profitable venture with minimal costs. Why? The Africans would provide their own resources, tools, supervision, accommodation, food, etc. to produce the required raw materials. It is this approach that will help this study to understand the imperialist exploitative and oppressive roles and the people's anti-imperialist struggles up to independence. It is also this approach which will enable this study to understand the new dynamics of imperialism in post-coloniality, the reasons why Africa has not managed to reclaim its independent positionality, push for its interests internationally, influence and regulate international relations, interrogate and rupture the existing paradigms and espouse

new discourses that would be based on local conditions and praxes.

As a point of reminder to the readership, this study is neither oblivious of Africa's enormous contributions to the world, given that Africa is the origin of human beings. It follows logically therefore that it is the origin of human civilization and development, socio-political, epistemological, religious, superstitious, magical, philosophical and dialectical constructions and advancements. Nor is it blind to the factuality regarding Africa's invasion of Europe in 711 AD and the establishment of the Moorish Empire, which lasted up to 1492 (John Jackson, 1970; Patrick Tabaaro, 2004; Anta Cheikh Diop, 1991). Given the shortage of time and space in this paper, the focus of this study will be restricted to post-coloniality or neo-coloniality — a period of the reign of multilateral imperialism. Kwame Nkrumah had defined it as the last stage of imperialism.

For purposes of this study, we shall begin with a short historical review of imperialist military invasion of Africa, which helped to expose Africa to the vicious exploitation of western capitalism — a western globalising agenda. It will historicise the ravages of imperialism up to the contemporary epoch, which the west in its totalising and universalising approach has branded globalisation.

Initial European Globalisation of Africa through Slave Trade

The first question to reflect on is about the relationship between Africa and the capitalist west. In terms of factuality, Africa was transformed into an overflowing granary or depository of resources for the capitalist west. Given their differing modes of production, and Africa's innumerable problems — most of which stemmed from the inhuman slave trade — Europe bombarded it into submission to serve its higher order (Jean Suret-Canale, 1988; Walter Rodney, 1972). This needs historicizing.

The first major external assault and massive plunder of resources from Africa came in the cruellest mercantilist capitalism of slave trade. While not blind to the Trans-Saharan

slave trade that predominated from around the seventh century and the subsequent Eastern African slave trade from around the twelfth century, the indiscriminate capitalist Trans-Atlantic slave trade from 1490s to 1880s wrecked persistent havoc all over the continent. Credit goes to the Africanist scholars — mainly of the dependency discourse for their epistemological commitment and invaluable intellectual contributions in unearthing archival materials on this man-made horrendous catastrophe for Africa. Among these was Walter Rodney (1972) who brought out shocking data of the millions of Africans who were shipped as human cargo to America and those that died in this whole chaos. The reader should not lose sight of the fact that these merchants also made these slaves carriers of other merchandise from Africa. Examples included ivory and skins, vegetation resources and minerals. This marked double exploitation in which human cargo carried other merchandise for the slave merchants. Needless to say, this trade had untold adverse and tragic consequences on the whole continent (Walter Rodney, 1972, 1978; Basil Davidson, 1992; Diop, 1973). They killed through raids; others were attacked and killed or injured by ferocious animals while fleeing the slave raiders or hiding in forests; many others died of diseases occasioned by those insecurity-situations, lack of shelter, food, medicines, etc. Famines became permanent occurrences. All these went on unchecked until the late 1880s.

Transforming Africa from Being Sources of Human Cargo to Producers of Raw Materials

The inter-capitalist contradictions between the emerging American capitalism and the hegemonised exploitative European capitalism, together with the dynamics in industrial Europe combined to give rise to European colonisation of Africa. Colonialism in Africa was a form of European imperialism that lasted until the 1960s. This excludes many settler colonies. Examples included the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde, and the British Settler colonies of Zimbabwe and South

Africa. The Colonised Africans in these colonies had to wage arduous militant wars until when they won their independence, the last being South Africa just over a decade ago, in 1994.

The political economy of colonialism involved a people of a higher level of production invading a people occupying a lower level of production and development, fighting, and defeating them, disorganizing and reorganizing them to serve alien material interest. In other words, colonial imperialism implies people occupying a higher position subordinating those of a lower order to serve their material, economic, political and social interests. It is this, which explains the vicious, virulent and cruel character of European colonisation in Africa (Frantz Fanon, 1966).

What needs to be clarified is that to achieve capitalist material interests at that historical material time required occupation of physical space. The main imperialist requirement at the 1884/85 Berlin Conference was for the occupation of territoriality by the capitalist powers before making any territorial claims. Colonisation entailed struggles over territoriality or physical space, political spaces, economic spaces, medicinal spaces, and other spheres — whether of sociality, or religiosity, epistemological, conceptual, magical, superstitious or philosophical, zoological, botanical, etc. In other words, the materiality of colonial imperialism involves not only occupation and domination and controlling the material aspects of the conquered peoples but also other aspects of their lives: ontological, metaphysical, philosophical, nutritional, inspirational, etc. (Mahmood Mamdani, 1976, 1984, 1994, 1996; Basil Davidson, 1992; Murindwa-Rutanga, 1991, 1994, 1999; Jean Suret-Canale, 1988; Partha Chatterjee, 1993; H. Jaffe, 1985; John Iliffe, 1969).

These works explain in detail the forceful and merciless colonial occupation of the physical, territorial, political, economic, spiritual and epistemological aspects of the colonized peoples. Partha Chatterjee brings a contrary dialectical scenario between colonialism and nationalism within the economic, socio-cultural, religious and intellectual domains in colonial India. It is this dialectical relationship

between the colonialists and the nationalists, and the Hindu leadership that kept off imperialism from much of the Indians' social and cultural domains. Regarding Africa, Mamdani (1996) unravels the imperialist mechanics in their colonial project, the political explanation for adopting of indirect rule following the Indian Mutiny of 1857 and the despotic character of this form of governmentality. He exposes the despotic character of this colonial project, which he terms "decentralized despotism". Here, one of the most memorable, dreaded examples in Uganda is Bigwera, a petty colonial chief who ruled some parishes in southern Kigezi. Though a petty chief, he extracted maximum benefits from whoever was under his jurisdiction. Though long time dead, he is still feared. Old women still living do not wish to be reminded of him. Men dreadfully talk about him with seething anger. Women were forced to compose obscene songs, sing in chorus and dance in praise of Bigwera's masculinity in bed with them. All women would have to stop whatever they were doing whenever Bigwera's entourage passed, carrying him in *engozi*, (a carrier woven like a stretcher to carry chiefs, brides, or the sick). His despotic activities and compulsions can only be understood through the Fanonian explication of how colonial imperialism inflicted psychological violence on the minds of the colonized peoples. To accomplish this, colonialism applied a multi-barrelled approach. This included balkanization of territories and societies, and combining incongruent peoples and societies under the same rule. To demonstrate this, while the minute Belgium could carve out, claim and exploit the whole of the Congo — by then including Congo Kinshasa, Congo Brazzaville and other territories as its colony; Germany's imperial claims over Rwanda left out certain peoples formerly of Rwandese origin and relationship in Congo, Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda.

Another aspect was the imperialist re-organization of the newly created economies into import-export economies. Through this process, imperialism integrated them into what the dependency discourse termed the metropolitan capitalist systems. With time, this colonial distortion transformed these

countries into permanent producers of what they did not consume and consumers of what they did not produce. The negativities of colonial rule, its dislocation of the colonies, the colonized peoples' knowledge systems, industrialization, commerce and trade, intellectuals and professionals, artisans and other skilled peoples, etc. impaired and blocked Africa's possibilities of influencing international relations. As Frantz Fanon demonstrated, this colonial system was violence and it had to be maintained by violence. The explanation for this was that the colonized peoples were contesting it bitterly, using a multiplicity of struggles. (Mahmood Mamdani, 1996; Murindwa-Rutanga, 1991, 1992, 1999)

All these so far demonstrate how Africa was not the subject or the main actor in this imperialist relationship. Africa was drawn in as a victim and it could at best influence the events and their course only through resistance. Whether the Nyabingi Movement, (Karen E.F 1985, Murindwa-Rutanga, 1991), the Watch Tower Movement (David, Lan 1985), the Mau Mau Movement (Carothers 1954, Throup, W. David 1988, Gakaara wa Wanjau 1988, Karogo, T. 1987), the Algerian War of Independence (Ian Clegg, 1971) or the guerrilla wars in Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde (Cabral, Amilcar, 1969), Zimbabwe (T. Ranger 1985), or the latest forms of anti-colonial struggles as in South Africa up to 1994 (Davies, R. 1984), they could inform the new courses of history and change them but they could not determine the nature of international relations in those colonies. To demonstrate this, despite the strong workers' voice for independence in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and other workers' organizations in South Africa, together with the African National Congress mass membership and the revolutionary voice of Pan African Congress and other parties, still, they were the white minorities who determined the nature and course of international relations. We need not forget that up to independence in 1994, the Anglo-American multi-national corporations were controlling over 84 per cent of the investments in South Africa. One would wonder as to how much has changed since then and in whose favour.

The Price of Sliding from Coloniality to Post-coloniality

The dynamics and conclusion of the Second World War transformed the colonial powers into vulnerable objects of attack. Inside the colonies emerged anti-colonial militant struggles. Then, there were pushes by the unkind US for open door policy. In addition was the Soviet Union's diplomatic pushes especially at the UN. These compelled the colonial powers to grant independence to the colonised peoples. However, the practice proved that the new independent states were no different from the colonial states. The change was in running the system. Local faces replaced the Europeans though most of those in the civil service were retained through a new ploy under the rubric of Africanisation process that followed. The new leadership still lacked initiative, independent decisions, vision, ideological clarity and cognitive praxis. It is this which largely explains why there was no radical break with imperialism when African countries got independence. It is this, which explains why the former colonial powers were the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with these newly independent countries and were the first to open up embassies there. The reality was that this was a legitimate way of opening headquarters for intelligence network and spying in these newly independent states. They would also use these headquarters to plot mischief and sabotage against these new states.

To demonstrate this, it was Britain, the former colonial power over Uganda, which opened the first diplomatic relations with Uganda at independence. This is evidenced by the registration of the Diplomatic cars. The registration of British cars in independent Uganda starts with CD 01. Any wonder that this vehicle numbering is followed by the US imperialist power, whose vehicle registration starts with CD 02. Then the other European imperialist powers followed. These car numbers demonstrate very clearly two things. First is that the former colonial powers did not leave their former colonies. They instead disguised themselves under the cloak of diplomacy. It is through such changing of colours like

chameleons rather than their roles and *modus operandi* that Belgium played a central role in the liquidating of Patrice Lumumba, the first democratically elected Prime Minister of the Congo, and ousted his government. Secondly, the other imperialist powers rushed to these newly independent countries with exploitative purpose. This was a new phase of multilateral imperialism, where the former colonies, which had been retained as personal properties of the individual colonial powers, were now opened up for all forms of imperialist exploitation. This was simplified by the fact that the physical presence of the imperialist powers in form of colonialism was neither welcome nor tenable. Rather, the World Bank settled in their stead, supported by the UN and its numerous arms. This however, would lead to a new complex crisis of imperialist exploitation without accountability.

Unlike countries like USA and Norway, both of which got independent economically and politically, the USA in 1776 and Norway in 1905, the independence which was granted to the African peoples was in form of political power without economic power. This *nouveau* rush by so many imperialist powers to get their share in these newly independent countries created a problem for the latter regarding consolidation of their independence. Given their lack of a coherent national bourgeoisie in control of the economy and their national politics, the post-independence leadership inherited the anti-people colonial state machinery without any critical positive modification. Worse still, they inherited the import-export economy without any critical reflections on how to redirect or revolutionize it to serve the national interests. In other words, there was absence of a nationalist project and a nationalist programme. The crisis for these countries stemmed from the lack of strong foundations. Imperialism had weeded out or sidelined any leadership that had demonstrated any nationalist foresight, preaching or leanings towards nationalism. The list of those that this vicious imperialism weeded out is long and painful as virtually every colony paid the price. On top of the list are Patrice Lumumba and Kwame Nkrumah, the two democratically elected leaders. These two were committed to

the total liberation of Africans and were working tirelessly towards a free United States of Africa. The list, which includes Stephen Biko, Mondlane, Machel and Karekyezi, is unending. Those who, though sidelined, had been struggling to liberate their countries returned from the bushes to experience a multitude of new frustrations. They were sidelined right from the beginning constitutionally as well as through power distribution arrangements. They found power being handed over to the petty bourgeoisie, a class that had been sewing imperialism. It had also harboured dreams of sitting in the places of the colonizers and take over whatever the Bazungu owned. This class had no plans of handing over land to the masses, creating jobs for them, let alone effecting any social transformation for the vast majority. Most of these returnees ended in jail and others returned to the forests. Many of them lost hope and lived miserable lives till death. Ignatius Musaazi from Uganda remained a good example. He started his anti-colonial struggles in the 1920s, organized farmers in the 1930s, organized workers in Tanzania and engineered the strikes of 1940s. He founded the UNC in 1952 and opened with others UNC offices in Cairo. He was marginalized in the politics of independence and died a miserable death in late 1980s. The only memorable act was to bury him in the heroes' corner at Kololo Independence ground.

Contrary to these negative developments, independence had held enormous promises for the decolonising Africans. These included increased freedom, increased material well-being and development without toil. Their utopia included a time of bliss without colonial, foreign or domestic domination, forced labour, taxation, without public executions, public Kiboko floggings and other forms of state instituted brutalities, oppression and exploitation. They envisioned a society of progress, where their children would go to good schools and study up to the highest levels; where they would control their land and determine the nature of production, without repressive laws and punitive measures — whether relating to production of export crops, processing or marketing.

Crisis of Post-coloniality

Post-coloniality was marked by a serious absence of committed organic intellectuals to plan and effect social transformation. The new leadership that assumed power had been groomed in the colonial schools, missionary teachings and bureaucracies. They constituted a *nouveau* cadreship that had been longing for western lifestyles, thinking and practices. Many of them had been to Europe, on guided tours, or studied there; others had read the corrupting western literature that was ideologically riddled or had watched ideologically packaged western films that were depicting European modernity. Still others had read the wonderful stories about its modernity. Programmed theories were being obeyed all over the continent. Among these was the US constructed modernization theorization, which preached how to move societies from situations of lack to stages of high mass consumption à la Rostowian theorisation. (W.W. Rostow, 1960; S.P. Huntington, 1961; Goran Hyden, 1980, 1980; Bates, 1981). These western intellectualizations and constructions were meant to provide the modular of the societies these new rulers were supposed to construct. All this ideological exposition had a great bearing on the new leadership. They became more inclined towards development of their societies along the European paths. This was consolidated by the modernization discourse, which was being imported wholesale from the US and was implemented uncritically. It was the purveyance of a glorious and fascinating future that largely explained why the newly independent African countries embraced the modernization discourse. Needless to say, this discourse constituted a very highly ideologised, utopianised and romanticized theorization and political programme. It had within it empty trappings and rhetoric of rapid modernity and development without toil. It provided romantic solutions without risks and or hard work. Strange as it may sound, resources and other ingredients for modernity and development were supposed to flow in from without while the population sat back and enjoyed the benefits. In other words, it was a developmentalist project without the

people. Aid, loans, grants and capital would come in and do miracles in the classical, biblical sense.

Unfortunately for Africa, the new African leadership and intelligentsia embraced this project without subjecting it to criticality. As if very late for something very important, no one ever questioned its ideological import, let alone its political, economic and imperialistic mission. This whole process had the negative effect of depriving Africa of any initiatives — political, economic, epistemological, philosophical or ideological. It instead helped the west to maintain and consolidate its monopoly of production and dissemination of epistemes, ideas, information, medicine, policies, etc. It helped the west to retain its unquestionable epistemic domains, which provided stability to its citadels of knowledge and epistemologies instead of destabilization that could have resulted in paradigmatic interrogations, instabilities and shifts. This detained African intellectualization in marginality and invisibility within the periphery. In the process, it continued to deny African intellectuals a central locus within the continent. All these denials had negative consequences of dwarfing African intellectualisation. It also denied the African intelligentsia class and practitioners a platform for effective participation in international relations, and in generating knowledges and theories about it. The Africans had rare opportunities only at the UN and its related institutions such as the GATT. Internally, they constructed others such as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the East African Community (EAC) and Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS).

The Betrayals of Independence and their Negation

It needs to be noted at this stage that the continuous uncritical wholesale implementation of the modernization theory led African countries into heavy indebtedness. Coupled with this was the widespread irresponsible, non-accountable corrupt leadership, and all these made the African countries lose credibility. These gradually became crucial interstices for the

imperialist west to make giant steps and begin dictating over these countries. Added to this was the US intervention and spreading of the cold war. This provided a justification and an occasion for the US to begin propping up and grooming dictatorships in Africa. These were a *sine qua non* for the longevity of its imperialist oppression as these dictatorships began to depoliticise, traumatize the population in a bid to containerize them, keep them meek, docile and submissive without raising questions or trying to shift loyalty to the Soviet Union. Topical among these were Presidents Idi Amin Dada of Uganda, Mobutu of the then Zaire — now the Democratic Republic of Congo, Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, Bokassa of Central Africa, Saidi Barre of Somalia, Houphouët-Boigny of Côte D'Ivoire and Kamuzu H. Banda of Malawi. Most of these were military elites, a category which one strand of the modernization discourse had identified as the modernizers. This was premised on the ground that they controlled the coercive machinery to enforce law and order.

Contrary to this discourse's promises, these military elites suppressed the masses and unleashed state terror upon the population. They exhibited extreme hostilities towards their people, negated their concerns, became insensitive to their wishes and demands. Their actions led to the hijacking of the states. They became synonymous or surrogates of the state. In Mobutu's words, he was the state. As President Idi Amin declared himself life President of Uganda and Conqueror of the British Empire, President Mobutu declared himself the State, and President Bokassa crowned himself emperor. Macias Nguema reached extremes by massacring hundreds of school children for refusing to wear uniforms bearing his portrait. This category of dictators became insensitive to the sufferings of the subalterns. Whether stemming from military background or emerging through democratic elections, the attention of this leadership was on rapid primitive accumulation of wealth from above. They used state power for their capital accumulation drives. To achieve this required them to deny people their democratic rights. Whatever they wanted could be achieved by force. Anybody who questioned their actions

was a saboteur, sabotaging the nationalist project. The imperialist west was more than willing to facilitate them with whatever they desired — materially, economically, technologically, diplomatically, militarily or in terms of espionage, intelligence equipment and skills, etc. Given the raging cold war, the external environment was favourable to them. It is a combination of these negativities that largely explain the continued conspicuous absence of coherent movements in these countries during the Cold War (Jean François Bayart, 1993, 1999; Mamdani, 1983, 1996, 2001; Nzungu — Ntalaja, 1999, 2001; Claude Ake, 2000) etc. It would not be farfetched and false to opine that it is this containerizing the discontented and aggrieved societies for so long under the dictatorial machinery of the neo-colonial states and the imperialists that led some individuals to emerge as war lords after the waning of the cold war and wreck anarchical insurgencies in their societies. The politics of oppression, neglect and exclusionism ended up creating grounds for dissension.

What needs to be explained here is the new dynamics in post US — SU inter-imperialist rivalry. The collapse of the Soviet Union had brought with it the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. This was depicted through the breaking down of the Berlin Wall. This development had four important consequences. First, it temporarily shifted the world order from a bipolar order to a unipolar order, where the US temporarily became the only major actor. This temporality became an occasion for it to begin bullying and threatening the whole world. However, it also became an occasion for other capitalist economies including China to increase their chances of taking over the Soviet Union's place. Second, it effaced the usefulness of the imperialist support for dictators in the third world. In the process, the west shifted its focus from the developing countries to Eastern Europe. With no communist threat to overrun the world, Africa no longer mattered to the capitalist world. This then had the effect of obliterating any possibilities of maneuverability, which the developing countries had previously maximized between the US and the SU. Lastly, it ushered in profound changes in international relations.

Crisis of Militarized Conflicts in Africa

Africa in post-coloniality has been a terrain characterized by murderous anarchical conflicts. Every region of Africa has had its share in this. Right from RENAMO in Mozambique to UNITA in Angola, Gibeny's Movement in the Congo, Charles Taylor in Liberia to Foday Sankoh in Sierra Leone, and Said Barre in Somalia, plus the secession struggles in Ethiopia and Sudan, and the genocide in Rwanda. In the Great Lakes Region, it had to take the Tanzanian state and Ugandan guerrillas to fight and defeat the military dictatorship under Idi Amin Dada in Uganda. Not long after, a guerrilla Movement — the National Resistance Movement (NRM) had to be launched and it used Maoist guerrilla tactics to fight and defeat the fascist dictatorships that succeeded the Amin dictatorship. Thereafter, it had to take a faction of the NRM to form a guerrilla force — the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) — and invade Rwanda in October 1990 to oust the Havyarimana dictatorial regime. The RPF was a struggle, which at the inception was expected to be a walkover to Kigali, 85 miles from the border where they launched their invasion. Contrary to the invaders' expectations, those within the RPF leadership who survived death had to change from conventional tactics to guerrilla tactics, after experiencing enumerable human losses. This was a war that claimed not only over one million lives of Africans but also of many European soldiers. It was a war characterized by enormous losses in form of human beings through a horrendous genocide, (Mamdani, 2001) resources and military equipment. What needs to be noted here is that this war constituted a prelude to a major military adventure against the Mobutu regime in the Congo. Having defeated and thrown out the Havyarimana's government, the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) combined with the National Resistance Army (NRA) and invaded the Congo. Their purported object was to remove the Mobutu dictatorship from power. They travelled thousands of kilometers from the eastern Congolese border and toppled Mobutu's dictatorial regime. The question is why they could defeat the Zaïrean forces so easily.

We need to face the reality that the Congolese Defence Forces were ill equipped and ill-prepared for war. They depicted a sorry state which was a clear reflection of the leadership's betrayal of Africa. The leadership had neglected them. It failed to remunerate them properly in the face of the hyperinflation, which had eroded the salaries and wages and ruined the national economy. Though Mobutu had the elite guard to protect him and his family, he left the business of the war and national defence in the hands of the mercenaries. True to Niccolò Machiavelli's advice, the mercenaries whom Mobutu had hired fled whenever they heard that the invading forces were approaching their positions. This reflected the level to which Africa had stooped — people who were struggling against whites the other day now hiring white mercenaries to defend them. The overthrow of Mobutu's military dictatorship became grounds for new conflicts. Kabira's installation to power created new contradictions with the joint Rwanda-Uganda forces. He immediately sought military assistance from Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia to chase away these "external forces" from Congo in 1998. This move created new grounds for the rise of a bitter war between the joint Rwanda-Ugandan forces against the Congo government forces. This war was launched from the eastern border of Congo. The invading allied forces could not have a second walkover to Kinshasa. They still encountered resistance from the Congolese forces supported by allied forces from Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia. This impasse gradually created sharp differences amongst the allied forces. Each of them began to set up new movements in Congo. Among these was the Rally for Congolese Democracy, which gradually became the leading opposition organisation in Congo. (Sunday Vision, June, 2005). What came to pass was the fulfilment of the African proverbial endless war that leads to the humiliation of the invincible and courageous warriors. In this particular war, it did not take long before the allied Rwandese forces and the Ugandan forces fought amongst themselves three times in Kisangani. It is alleged that the first round in 1999 left over 200 soldiers dead on both sides, while the second clash the following year left 70 soldiers dead.

(Sunday Vision of June 5, 2005). It was these clashes in Kisangani that exposed the souring relations between Rwanda and Uganda and created an enormous rift in the Uganda-Rwanda relations. Some pessimists have depicted all these negative developments in Africa right from the 1970s to the present as Africa's lost decades. The view of this study is that though they constitute negativities, without major signs of progressive movements, they still reflected signs of internal capacities to resist negative forces. They also reflected the capacity of the African peoples to survive in cruel circumstances. They however deprived the continent of the capacities, time, resources and attention to focus on international relations and shape them, whether at the local level of theory, discipline and/or practice. They have continued to threaten and project Africa as a disintegrating continent, full of wars, famines, crises, poverty and hopelessness instead of an integrating one. The west has been at the forefront of these false and baseless depictions.

They are these internal weaknesses which to some extent explain why the African nation-states have not developed internal, regional and/or continental mechanisms for resolving their various contradictions. Their common approach is to appeal to imperialist powers led by the US and the global financial institutions to intervene wherever they are confronted by problems — socio-political, economic or epistemological. The Uganda-Rwanda conflict in Kisangani demonstrates this very clearly. Contrary to expectations, Uganda and Rwanda had to appeal to Britain for intervention to resolve their Kisangani conflictual relations. A conflict between neo-colonies had to be settled by an imperialist power, which was their historical enemy. In this spirit, the Presidents of Uganda and Rwanda had to fly to Britain to present their defence and await the verdict and Britain's subsequent intervention. This left out all the other African states. This is reflective of Africa's international relations in post-coloniality. However, these conflicts in the post-cold war period are building a strong case for Africa's active participation in international relations. There

have been enormous opportunities extended beyond the militarized politics to the political, diplomatic and epistemological arenas. However, these opportunities seem to have been lost. The conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone seem to provide a better example (Ibrahim Abdullah 2004). This is where the West African States organized, under Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to intervene in these conflicts. They are such local, regional, continental initiatives that are crucial, sometimes with external support. This approach should be applied to try and halt the tragic bloodletting in Darfur, Sudan where African states have so far failed to provide prompt and appropriate intervention to save lives of people and property. In other words, Africa has to move from incompetence, inaction, lack of initiatives to a new proactive approach aimed at active participation in local, regional, continental and global matters.

The Cost of Debt Bondage

One of the main markers of the transition from coloniality to post-coloniality was the *nouveau* entanglement of the newly independent states into the debt trap designed by imperialists. That is why all African countries in post-coloniality have become victims of the trap, which was set by the modernization paradigm. While duping and misadvising the decolonising countries that the solution to all the problems that they were facing and any future ones lay in acquiring external loans, aid and grants for modernity, this theory never revealed to them the innumerable dangers which were lurking underneath. In other words, it preached the sweetness of honey in a beehive while deliberately hiding from the inexperienced audience crucial information regarding the killing stings of bees poised to kill whoever ventured to *okuhakuura* — to harvest honey from beehives.

Thus, Africa's crises were compounded by the debt traps set by the imperialist west — mainly through the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), USAID etc. Worse still, most of the externally borrowed money was not put to use as

originally planned. Given the coldwar context and its usefulness to the US, there was no one in Africa who would raise a finger when the politicians of the day salted away money for their own use. Mobutu and S. Abacha's externalization of the accumulated wealth in billions of dollars bears sufficient credence. This corrupt and corrupting situation opened the floodgates for all forms of malpractices. It is not surprising therefore, that these countries began to experience persistent economic, political and epistemological crises. The situation has ever since been worsening to the extent that many national budgets are largely foreign funded. For instance, 48 per cent of Uganda's recurrent expenditure is covered by money from donors. Contrary to expectations of decreasing the debts, they are on alarming increase. There is heavy foreign funding for unnecessary, non-productive ventures such as civic education for elections and for electoral and other political and non-political activities. No wonder therefore that a small country like Uganda owes the international community over five billion dollars.

All this heavy indebtedness and dependence on external sources put into question the issue of freedom of African countries to take actions that were independent of the western donors. At the epistemological and informational levels, it is an intellectual shock that epistemes are being imported wholesale from without, mainly from the west, without any inputs and initiatives from Africa. African intellectuals and practitioners are placed in incapacitating *loci*, just waiting for the imported finished products, packaged either in book or journal form, internet, films, or reports. There seems to be a conspiracy to continue keeping away the local intellectuals and researchers from organic and professional intellectualisation and cognitive praxis. The ploys include the heavily funded though useless consultancies and short-term research projects that are already defined and answered by the funders themselves. There are concerted efforts to transform African universities into consultancy bureaus to gather valueless or common knowledge information and data that in most cases are irrelevant to the societal needs and even to the funders. A

lot of money is being flooded all over the continent to lure and derail committed professors, intellectuals and researchers from serious, organic, relevant intellectual work and researches to energy and time consuming, useless though well-paid pseudo-researches. The most crippling aspect is that the hired researchers find the research projects already defined, problematized and answered by the funders. Even most of the research results are provided in the proposal before the research is undertaken. What they are praying for so heavily is for the researcher to endorse and authenticate them. Worse still, most of the research findings end up being piled up without any reading or follow-up. (Micere Githae Mugo, 2005).

Another harmful development is that a lot of external money is pumped into government departments and ministries. This money is then availed to junior staff and/or fresh graduates and other amateurs to conduct surveys or rural rapid appraisals. These junior researchers and technical staff then bring back whatever information they come across. Their funders then use these findings as the authentic and credible data to confront and fight, discredit and dismiss research findings and conclusions drawn from long-term researches by local professors, intellectuals and senior researchers. In explaining this new phenomenon, Rutabajuuka, the Executive Director of the Centre for Basic Research showed that money had become an opium that detracted ongoing basic researches. This is in line with what Mamdani had underlined in the early 1990s when he dismissed the donors' intentions to transform research institutes in developing countries into surrogates for universities. By then still Executive Director of the Centre for Basic Research, he had explained to those donors that research institutes could not be substitutes for universities whether in research, teaching and/or dissemination of researched knowledge.

Unfortunate as it may be, the same donor thinking is crippling local intellectual efforts. Donor money is flooding the leading universities in Africa albeit not to augment the resilient though very poorly funded research efforts but to derail them and any other intellectual and epistemological

projects by committed local scholars, intellectuals and practitioners. Another method being used to push African intellectuals and universities from knowledge production is being spearheaded by the World Bank, IMF, intellectuals and journalists. They have mounted a crusade to force African universities to abandon their duty of knowledge production and teaching students how to think and start on a new one of teaching skills for the local needs. Fascinating as it may sound, it remains shallow and dangerous. On the whole, all these have enormous long-term crippling effects not only on research and knowledge production but also on the country, its unity, its nationalist project and even on the research institutions themselves.

Other problems continent-wide include the uncritical implementation of neo-liberal theories and policies which were espoused and dictated by the World Bank, the IMF etc. In the name of its "New World Order", the West is pushing the post-colonial states into oblivion through its ahistorical and anti-dialectical dictates of "rolling back the state." This project is not aimed at fulfilling the Marxian prediction of the withering away of the state and bureaucracy to give way to communism but this theorization seems to be guided by malice and racism. It seems to be following the law of displacement, whose object is to take over all the spaces earlier controlled by the states and all their organs. This marks a major shift from the Benthamite utilitarianism to the Lockean profit maximization project. The invention and deployment of NGOs in all domains all over the continent constitutes another imperialist agenda and machination aimed at weakening and effacing the African states. Although the inventors and beneficiaries of this subversive category of NGOs treasure them as *magic bullets*, peoples in Africa have concluded that they are *Nothing Going On*. Their object is to dominate and take control of Africa and its resources. Their object is to try and replace the African states, which had been discredited before the people when dictatorships in Africa received imperialist acclamation, support and resources to negate people's concerns, suppress democratic struggles and demands. Given the exposure of the

direct role of imperialism during the dictatorships, the imperialist west found it imperative to hide behind NGOs. What needs to be noted is that most of these NGOs get their funding from western states and related organs. As such, they are averse to Africa's rights, well-being and development, indeed negative and hostile to its independence and sovereignty.

Another problem stems from the subversive and direct interference of the western powers in any situation where Africans try to generate independent solutions and successes. Examples include Algeria, Angola, Zimbabwe and Mozambique where western imperialism played very destabilizing and crippling roles. This is well brought out by Amilcar Cabral (1969).

Another problem stems from the gradual shift of the *loci* of power from Africa to the donor countries. Increasing external indebtedness has *inter alia* resulted in a crisis of self-negation. Africans are losing confidence in themselves. This is leading to their vulnerability. It creates a tendency of impatience and intolerance amongst the politicians and rulers to internal criticisms or dissension. As Thomas Y. Clive (1984) shows, this breeds authoritarianism. State repression and suppression become rife and the situation degenerates to dictatorship. The states feel that they are besieged; they begin to externalize search for friendship, alliances or support and end up in a destructive embrace with imperialism. This interstice enables the latter to increase its leverage over them. It increases its subversion of their political and economic decisions. These include budgetary, monetary, fiscal and other policy aspects. It is common knowledge that annual national budgets of many of these countries are now made in Washington and then flown into these countries on the budget day for reading to parliaments and subsequent implementation. This is normally achieved through the collaboration of some highly-placed blue-eyed boys and girls of IMF and World Bank in the critical sectors of national Finance and Treasury in these countries. The monolithic, neo-liberal structural adjustment problems — initially introduced as programmes but ended creating

problems and themselves becoming problems — and their implementation in all the developing countries demonstrate this very clearly. What is most heartbreaking is that African states seem not to be ready to challenge or shift from the current fallacious, destructive path of the current traumatizing imperialist world disorder.

Following the striking at the deepest heart of the US on September 11, the US set it upon itself to decide for the whole world how they were going to relate with it. This was clearly put by the US President Bush that whoever was not with the US was against it. This in turn left the world with minimal options in determining their international relations. It was the US giant that took it upon itself to dictate how the world would behave without dissension. The US has taken it so far as to dictate to all the airlines to submit lists of their clients booked for travel on their planes long before the flights. Failure to adhere to this would invoke punitive reprisals.

The restrictions of the World Trade Organisation regime, trade related intellectual property rights (TRIPS) and other barriers have created serious problems for the externalized African States. Some openings and avenues to trade and interventions that GATT had been providing have been effaced. It is shocking to find that the only way out is for the outsiders to feel so sympathetic and demonstrate against western imperialism on behalf of these peoples. The most memorable ones include the demonstrations which took place in Seattle followed by others in Europe, etc. All these demonstrate the numerous complications and frustrations which inhibit and preclude Africa from taking an active part in international relations and contributing in a big way theoretically and practically.

Conclusion

What we have done in this article is to show at the level of generality some of the numerous forces and activities that have been eroding and/or effacing grounds for Africa's independent participation locally, nationally, regionally, continentally and

globally. They echo Ojinga Odinga's famous work: *Not Yet Uhuru* (Not Yet Independence) and Kwame Nkrumah's warning against neo-colonialism which he exposed as the last state of imperialism. As this article showed, imperialism in form of neo-colonialism has continued to determine, define and shape Africa's international relations. The most unfortunate thing is that all these negative trends have continued to worsen without any visible signs of reversal. Collective initiatives, whether under Non-aligned Nations, OAU, SADEC, COMESA, EAC, etc. ended up being sabotaged, eroded and undermined or hijacked and harnessed by imperialism and its local allies. The same fate befell all individualized efforts by groups or nation-states. Topical among these in Africa were Marxism, Socialism, African Socialism, African Humanism, etc. This assertion is verified by US's generous gift of millions of land mines planted in Angola to maim and wipe out the Africans under the disguise of fighting the SU and Marxist Government in Angola. Hand in hand with these was RENAMO's malignant, ferocious and atrocious counter-revolution in Mozambique and its horrendous heinous mass murders, maiming and other untold crimes that it committed onto humanity. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda by the *Nterahamwe* (genocidiare militias in Rwanda) together with Rwanda's armed forces is one of the latest testimonies in Africa. Cynic racists do not hesitate to applaud Africa for its contributing to international relations by implementing and extending practically the frontiers of Malthusian theory on population control. This however cannot detain us from looking into the struggles within the continent for positivities and solutions.

All these demonstrate how international relations in post-colonial Africa cannot be understood outside imperialism. One needs to break the ideologically constructed pack of lies by imperialism that Africa's problem stem from the fact that Africa is besieged by ethnicized and tribalised politics and conflicts, religious and linguistic divisions. Rather, there is need to understand the panopticonic loci of imperialism. One needs to see whether civil societies in Africa have worked together with the state and NGOs to reverse these trends and processes.

Imperialism is increasing its vices of hiring and deploying a multiplicity of individuals, groups and professions into its services. These include *inter alia*, intellectuals, academicians, lawyers, civil servants, politicians, and other social groups in society.

This article brought out a grim scenario where states are recruited in the service of imperialism. This is complicated by the fact that most NGOs are externally funded by the imperialist powers and multi-national corporations. As such, their orientation and outlook are exteriorized. As the saying goes, who pays the piper calls the tune. The work showed how NGOs are increasingly becoming pervasive, anti-democratic, dichotomizing, atomizing, divisive and anti-nationalistic. Above all, given their satellite character, they lack any independence existence, sustainability and continuity. As such, there are no possibilities for them to work together for the good of Africa since they are in the service of imperialism. While we may take pride in the general acclamation that it is only Africa which was free of pollution since it is unindustrialized, and free of nuclear and other toxic waste, the new President of World Bank, Mr. Slowotz's latest definition of Africa's international relations is most worrying. The new solution is for the west to dump part of the pollution, nuclear waste and other toxic wastes in Africa so as to make it have a share of the world pollution burden. In this new definition of Africa's international relations lies total destruction for Africa.

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