
IDEOLOGICAL PROSTITUTION AS A BANE OF AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT: A READING OF THE SUNS OF INDEPENDENCE AND TRIBALIQUES

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Abstract

One major concern which serves as raw material for literary production for most post-independence African novels is the phenomenon of ideological prostitution. This phenomenon is a direct product of ideological confusion resulting from the divergent nature of the interests of Western colonialists who scrambled over the African continent following the Berlin Conference in 1884. The colonial enterprise was driven by the sheer desire of Western capitalist countries to usurp, dominate and exploit occupied territories in Africa to feed Western industries in metropolitan Europe. In the wake of this adventure, conflicting ideologies such as capitalism, socialism, communism, Marxism, Leninism, Christianity, nationalism, fetishism, Islam, traditionalism, modernism, etc. which were generating a lot of debates in Western societies found themselves smuggled into Africa with the various agents of colonialism and imperialism. Be it through the British colonial policy of indirect rule or the French policy of direct rule and assimilation, the African people have been fully or partially socialized into these exogenous ideologies which they do not understand in any way, yet are expected to use in the conception of solutions to their ever-growing developmental challenges and socio-political, organisation. This paper is an attempt to provoke intellectual discourse and to generate critical debates on the need for ideological literacy informed by indigenous African realities and world views. It critically examines how Ahmadou Kourouma and Henri Lopès, combining symbolism, metaphor, irony and sarcasm, bring to the fore the ridiculous nature of ideological prostitution, otherwise confusion, and its nefarious developmental impact. The study is an empirical one supported with textual data gathered the two novels listed in the topic above. It is posited in the theoretical framework of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Studies (CDS).

Keywords: *Conceptualisation, Ideology, Illiteracy, Prostitution and Underdevelopment.*

Background to the Study

The accident of history make us what we are today, but we can work to shape the course of our future if we give ourselves the trouble to know what it takes. [...] If the present

configuration of Africa space is so demonstrably harmful to the continent's population, and yet has powerful agencies actively maintaining it and extending it into the future, it is logical to wonder why. What purpose was the system designed to serve? Why, in spite of its lethal toxicity, didn't Africans of the post-Independence generation abandon it, to replace it with a humane, intelligent, African system? (Armah: 2010, pp. 9-13).

An ideology is first and foremost a set of ideas conceptualised in -ism, -ity, -acy lexical item to serve as framework for shaping human behaviour towards certain economic, political and social outcomes. In this regard, socialism, communism, capitalism, Marxism, Leninism, Maoism, Nkrumahism, Christianity, democracy and many others, stem from ideas about society, community, capital, Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Mao Tse-Toung, Kwame Nkrumah, Jesus Christ and government of the people respectively. Ideology is therefore the material base for a superstructure in the form of its economic, political and social outcomes. It is the product of human thought processes informed by socio-cultural and natural realities which define a specific human society. The society is able to identify itself better with ideas and concepts that reflect its immediate realities and natural habitat than with same alien to it. The processes of adaptation and adaptation which this calls for, takes a longer period and even eventually corrupt the receiving society. This corruption results from a kind of prostitution which characterizes the relationship between developed and developing societies.

Ideological prostitution can therefore be defined as a perpetual flirtation with multiple endogenous and exogenous ideologies in the quest of a sustainable ideological anchor for addressing socio-economic and political challenges confronting the development of any given human society. The situation resulting from the implantation of Western ideologies in Africa through colonialism transfigured into imperialism and neo-colonialism with its attendant confusions is a clear product of ideological confusion.

The colonization of the African continent which started at the Berlin Conference in 1884 marks a landmark in all aspects of the African's life. The encounter between the Western and African cultures generated the concept of post-colonialism which manifests itself through factors like hybridity and double-consciousness. Several works by Bhabha (1990; 1994), Said's seminal work (1978), Quason (2000) and Spivak (1988) have captured the repercussion that the Western intrusion into colonized territories in general had on the colonized, or inhabitants of the 'Periphery', the 'Center' being Europe or the land of civilization. Bhabha stresses that the phenomenon of hybridity originated from that encounter between the culture of the colonizer and that of the colonized, and that alienation can reach extreme levels in characters who find themselves at a loss, torn between the two cultures and Armah's Brempong in *Fragments* (1971) and several other characters embody the alienated African who, out of shame for his/her culture rejects their African names and ways and force onto themselves a Western identity. Fanon (1952) dissects the mental alienation of the colonized who strives to embrace blindly only Western values.

It is important to mention that the encounter between the 'East' and the 'West' truncated to some extent the organic evolution of African societies who were enjoying a peaceful, locally-rooted socio-economic and political organization that had flourished. The Africans were enjoying decent living conditions guided by well-structured and organized rules, laws and habits. Diop (1974) sheds light on that situation and reaches the scientific conclusion that human civilization originated in Africa and colonization simply derailed the state in which African rich civilizations existed and he further extrapolates that if colonization had not occurred, Africa would have been more advanced at the cultural and technological levels today than Europe. The Burkinabe Historian Ki-Zerbo (1990) also reveals that in the 14th Century, Sub-Saharan Africa had more libraries than Europe. Those libraries were situated in Tombouctou in today's Mali and contained materials in African languages and Arabic. The fruitful commercial and cultural exchanges between

sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa had contributed to the creation of such precious repositories of knowledge. Colonization therefore assigned to itself one main task: to replace African social and political organization and structures by Western ones and that was more pronounced in French colonies where assimilation was the colonial system. The British colonies underwent the indirect rule (initiated by Lord Lugard in Nigeria) and as such, some critics contend that those territories maintained some degree of 'Africa' value in their social organization. What cannot be denied is the fact that Western colonization brought a new dimension on all spheres of life on the African continent and the main means through which those changes were brought was the Western school which was based on the three R's (Reading, Writing and Religion). The first educated Africans and writers like Laye (1954), and the subsequent generation of writers like Oyono (1966 and 1967), and the more recent ones like Awoonor (1972) depict in a vivid manner the implicit or explicit way in which the Western culture was imbibed by the African in the colonial and post-colonial era. These realities have led to ideological prostitution which is at the root of Africa's developmental woes, as painted in the two narrative texts which provide the primary data for this paper.

The *Suns of Independence* and *Tribaliques*, both published in the post-independence era, are political satires meant to deplore the derailment and the disappointing trends in the socio-political and economic organisation of African Nations following the attainment of Independence from their erstwhile colonial master (Britain, France, particularly).

The two narrative texts though set in two different geographical areas, La Côte d'Ivoire and Congo respectively, deal with similar, if not the same, socio-economic and political realities resulting from bad governance, nepotism, corruption, abuse of power and ideological bankruptcy and confusion. They lucidly reflect the core issues which are the primary concerns of this paper, hence their choice as appropriate sources of primary data for the study.

Objective of the Study

This paper critically examines how Ahmadou Kourouma and Henri Lopès, combining symbolism, metaphor, irony and sarcasm, bring to the fore the ridiculous nature of ideological prostitution, otherwise confusion, and its nefarious developmental impact.

Research Questions

The paper attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is the genesis of ideological prostitution in Africa's socio-economic and political development?
2. How have Western ideologies contributed to the entrenchment of ideological prostitution in African societies?
3. Why is ideological prostitution a bane of development in Africa?
4. How do Kourouma and Lopès bring to the fore the ills of ideological prostitution?
5. How can the trend be reversed to salvage the socio-economic and political developmental fortunes of Independent African countries and their citizens?

In the subsequent paragraphs, all reference to *The Suns of Independence* will be shortened as *The Suns*. In the case of *Tribaliques*, it will remain as such.

Literature Review

The Genesis of Ideological Prostitution in Africa's Socio-Economic and Political Development

Frustrated by socio-economic and political challenges of his country in the wake of Independence, "Fama Dumbuya! A true Dumbuya, of Dumbuya father and Dumbuya mother, the last legitimate descendant of the Dumbuya princes of Horodugu [...]" (*The Suns*: 4), the protagonist in *The Suns of Independence*, is seen as an ideological prostitute.

He is confused and disillusioned at the turn of events. Fama, a stark illiterate, “[...] As illiterate as a donkey's tail” (*The Suns*: 14), jumps on board the anti-colonial struggle in the pursuit of a nationalist agenda. In his mind, the French colonialists are the cause of all the ills befalling his country, the Ebony Coast. Therefore once they are driven out and independence attained, all will be well with him and his compatriots. Hence, like a distant storm the suns of independence had given warning of their coming, and at the first gust of wind Fama had shed everything: trade, friends, women, to use up his nights and days, his money and his anger in railing against France, the father and mother of France. He wanted revenge for fifty years' domination and for the loss of his birthright”. (*The Suns*: 14)

From the above quotation, it is obvious that Fama's involvement in the independence struggle of his country is premised on two main reasons: his aversion for French colonialism and the pursuit of vendetta to restore the lost glory of the Dumbuya dynasty of the great Horodugu. He is therefore driven by two opposing world view: nationalist and feudalism. This is a clear manifestation of ideological prostitution. This leads to a show of contradictory behavioural patterns in his way of relating to his compatriots.

Whereas Fama is fighting the French colonialists for implanting injustice and exploitation in his country, he at the same time considers many of his compatriots as slaves because of his feudal mentality and his dire desire to regain his lost birthright and rebuild the defunct dynasty of the Dumbuya. He is a confused character who does not know what ideological foot to stand on. He appears to be a nationalist, feudalist and self-centred character who is in a state of utter confusion. In an independent Republic, Fama the nationalist still thinks in terms kingdom, prince, slave, etc. Fama thinks he is prince to be adored by all in honour of tradition and customs based on feudal social stratification. Thus, his anger over the public association of his family with the Keita family by an old traditional praise-singer who should know better. The old, wizened praise-singer announces, following the late arrival of Fama at the seventh day funeral ceremony of Kone Ibrahim in the capital, that in spite of the late arrival of Fama, the last legitimate Prince Dumbuya of the great Horodugu Kingdom, “... the customary rights of the noble families have been respected; the Dumbuya have not been forgotten. The princes of Horodugu have been put with the Keita”. (*The Suns*: 6). This submission does not sit well with Fama because “Those who are not Malinke may not know it: in the circumstances this was a deliberate insult, enough to make eyeballs explode with rage. Who had lumped Dumbuya and Keita together? The later are kings of Wasulu, and their totem is the hippopotamus, not the panther”. (*The Suns*: 6) Clearly Fama is in a complete state of ideological confusion, resulting from ideological perversion. The realities of the national independence and the republican state Fama vehemently fought to install are at variance with his feudal taste and self-centeredness.

The contacts with exogenous cultures create a state of multiculturalism in Africa. The various cultures come with various ideas and for that matter, various ideological orientations. Fama's character, for instance, is shaped by Malinke culture, royal upbringing, Islam, colonialism and urbanisation, among others. He is torn between capitalism, socialism and feudalism. The Kingdom of Horodugu is now partitioned between the People's Republic of Nikinai and the Capitalist Republic of Ebony Coast. (*The Suns*: 59). Fama is now force to be a citizen of two different countries ideological divided on the basis capitalism and socialism. Ironically, the two countries are the territory of Fama's great Horodugu Kingdom of yesteryears. He needs a national identity card in order to be allowed to inter the other portion of his fatherland.

The challenges of ideological prostitution can also be traced to the multiplicity of belief systems in African. Fama in *The Suns* practices Islam, fetishism and ancestral worship. Salimata, his spouse, is also seen consulting marabouts, taking concoction prepared by them, giving alms for Allah's favour, etc. All these are symbolic of the reigning confusion in the minds and body of these characters. They are indeed the allegoric imagery of Africa and its people flirting with all kind of IMF and World Bank prescribed policies and programmes towards economic recovery to no avail.

The ground for this perversion and confusion was prepared through colonial socialisation which, through education, religion and trade changed the taste and the orientation of Africans towards European goods and services, and way of life at their own detriment. This constitutes one of the fundamental processes that have contributed to ideological prostitution and confusion. It is a ground for alienation of the Africans. At this point, we will examine the role of western ideologies in the entrenchment of ideological prostitution in African societies as painted in *The Suns* and *Tribaliques*.

The Role of Western Ideologies in the Entrenchment of Ideological Prostitution in African Societies

Western education has contributed in no small measure to the ideological prostitution of Africans. Independence or pseudo independence (since we do not see it as a real independence) saw the rule of newly educated Africans like Senghor in Senegal, Felix H. Boigny in Côte d'Ivoire and Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana to mention just a few. Some few years later that first wave of political leaders was violently replaced by the military through coups d'états in most cases. In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah provides a picture of the coup that overthrew Nkrumah in Ghana. The beginning of the military rule is exactly the moment that corresponds to the birth of political and precisely ideological prostitution in Africa. Together with religion, Western education in an attempt to make of the Black Africans wear 'White masks' has turned Africans into confused people alienated and disoriented.

The Cold War set in at the end of the Second World War and divided the world between the Western Bloc (led by the capitalist's states like the US, the UK etc.) and the Eastern bloc which was the Soviet Union and its allies all over the world. That geographical division was anchored in an ideological one: Marxism, Socialism, Communism, Leninism, Maoism, Trotskyism and others were some of the main ideologies propounded by the Eastern bloc while Capitalist, Liberalism and others were the motto in the Western camp and its satellite States throughout the world. Despite the fact that certain countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas declared themselves as 'non-aligned', meaning not affiliated to any of these two camps, each neo-colonized country could be tagged with one these etiquettes. In Africa, the conflict between citizens who in one way or the other affiliated themselves with the Capitalist or Communist ideology became enemies, caught in a battle whose foundation they did not know. Most of the African leaders who proclaimed themselves as capitalist or liberalist did not understand what that ideology meant, and they saw in anyone who did not 'trumpet' the word communism, an enemy that had to be 'eliminated'. Ideological prostitution stems from that political ignorance which gradually degenerated into an ideological prostitution. Ignorant and semi-literate presidents wrongly quote Western writers, scholars and ideologists in their speeches in front of the African masses.

An illustration is found in Lopès' *Tribaliques* when the Member of Parliament (*deputé*) Ngoukou-Ngouakou delivers a speech on women's liberation in Africa. The appalling nature of the scene and the proof of ideological prostitution and ignorance lie in the fact that the leader simply quotes Western scholars and politicians who do not fit the context. He struggles before attributing his quotation to La Fontaine:

Les salaires de nos femmes dans ces différents métiers doivent être égaux à ceux que percevaient les Européens...(Tonnerre d'applaudissement..) Car comme le disait...euh!...euh!...comme le disait euh!... Enfin je crois bien que c'est La Fontaine... (Applaudissements) car comme, disais-je, disait La Fontaine: "A travail égal, salaire égal" (Tonnerre d'applaudissement). (*Tribaliques*: 55).

[Our women must have equal salaries as European women in all the jobs women have... - Heavy cap of hands - Because as... euh! euh..! as it was said by...euh! Well, I think La Fontaine said it... (Loud claps of hands.). As La Fontaine used to say, "Equal work must attract equal wages" (Thundering clap of hands)]. *Our translation*.

This excerpt shows two things that are closely related to ideological prostitution: first of all, a man who does not know anything about the daily realities of women (as the novel reveals in the subsequent pages), prostitutes himself to the noble cause of women that he appropriates in his voracious search for power and authority - he speaks at all forums, regardless of the theme - but he sings a name (scholar) that connotes a thought, the Western one. Unfortunately, he displays his lack of political and ideological knowledge and then lies to the African populations who listen to him and believe every word he says. This is a blatant example of “sowing the seed of ideological corruption”: Teaching the poor local populations the wrong thing, with unshakable courage and determination.

Ideological prostitution is also blatantly revealed and criticised by Kourouma when he portrays General Secretaries and CEOs who can embezzle huge amounts of money without any fear as long as they keep singing the praises of their bosses under a One Political Party system. The narrator states:

“[...] for the two fattest, meatiest morsels of Independence are undoubtedly the post of secretary-general and cooperative director... As long as they are careful to praise the president, the one and only chief, and his party the one and only party, the director and the secretary-general can swallow up all the money in the world, and in all Africa not one eye will dare blink. (*The Suns*: 14).”

Ideological Prostitution as a Bane of Development in Africa

The multiplicity of exogenous ideologies flooding the African sphere creates grounds for ideological misunderstanding and misinterpretation. This is eventually a source of confusion in policy formulation and orientation in African countries. The situation creates a vacuum for indigenous ideologies required for the articulation of the development realities of African countries and their people. It has turned African countries into testing ground for a plethora of alien ideologies which are hardly understood by African governments and intellectuals who only guess the meanings of these exogenous ideas without substance, since they are disconnected from the realities that serve as material base for their formulation.

For instance, *Tribaliques* shows that Western political figures are mentioned by people who know almost nothing about them. They simply list the names of Western Leftist ideologists without knowing where those people come from. Lopès mentions the case of a young man who had just returned from France and was “shaking” his neighbourhood with names that people knew nothing about:

“*Un jeune étudiant, qui venait de rentrer depuis peu de France, leur parlait d'hommes qui s'appelaient Marx, Engels, Lenine, Mao Tse Toung. Ce dernier était, paraît-il, chinois*” (*Tribaliques*: 16).

[A young student who had just returned from France was talking to them about some people named Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Mao Tse Toung. The latter was believed to be Chinese]. *Our translation*.

Lopès touches upon another topic that cannot be avoided when African societies are discussed: tribalism. Indeed in Africa tribal affiliations have caused a large number of socio-political disturbances and the most recent case that comes to the reader's mind is the Rwandan genocide which was founded on the fact that Hutus and Tutsis were two different ethnic groups and each of them wanted to rule the country. At least, that is the version presented to the international opinion although some researches point an accusing finger at the divide and rule policy of France and Belgium. In *Tribaliques*, people who train in Eastern European countries (referred to as '*le Rideau de fer*' or 'iron curtain') are branded as public enemies and denied jobs. In the case of Nzodi, tribalism works in an extraordinary way and despite his studies in a communist county, he gets an appointment. The author writes:

Nzodi. Il avait étudié dans les pays de l'Est pendant sept ans et il avait obtenu ses diplômes d'ingénieur. Cette formation "derrière le rideau de fer" lui avait valu d'être mis à l'index à son arrivée. Mais Nzodi était du même village que le président- donc son frère. Nzodi fut le premier des jeunes cadres à expérimenter qu'en Afrique les liens tribaux l'emportent sur les divergences idéologiques, fussent-elles de lutte de classe. (Tribaliques: 98)

[Nzodi. He had studied in Eastern European countries for seven years and had obtained his degrees in Engineering. That training "behind the iron curtain" had made him to be notoriously distinguished since his return. But Nzodi and the president were from the same hometown - village - so they were brothers. Nzodi was the first among the African young degree holders to realize that in Africa, tribal links always win over ideological differences, even if they involve class struggle]. *Our translation.*

The sad consequence of this political illiteracy and ideological prostitution is the ruthless way in which the president in *Tribaliques* clamps down on anyone who is accused or suspected of having links with communists. Doctor Mobata, a physician who is branded without any evidence as a communist is cruelly tortured by Zakunda and Mibolo, the two ferocious and vicious men of the special 'presidential police' and the Doctor opens one of his veins in his prison cell and bleeds to death since he could not take it anymore. (*Tribaliques: 120*).

The Artistry of Kourouma and Lopès in Exposing the Ills of Ideological Prostitution in Africa

Kourouma and Lopès through a combined aesthetic effect of irony and humour present a despicable picture of the state of Africans under the destructive influence of ideological prostitution. They bring out both the comical and tragic manifestations of the ill of the phenomenon of ideological perversion leading to the bastardization of African norms and practices. - Kourouma uses the despicable state in which African societies find themselves as a result of the adoption of foreign political systems which are not understood by Africans and also which are foreign to Africans. As a result of the displacement of the African pre-colonial system that ensured co-existence and peaceful collaboration among various ethnic groups and casts (social classes), now the "nouveaux riches" who are corrupt wealthy greedy people are at the realm of affairs and a fierce quest for money is the order of the day. As a result, Fama is turned into a "quasi-beggar", he who was so noble and respected in pre-colonial Africa.

In *Tribaliques*, Lopès focuses on a Congolese society where new ideologies are flowing in. On p. 16, reference is made to a young man who just returned from Europe and is speaking of "people called Mao, Lenine, Marx, Engels, etc". The narrator adds that "Mao Tse Toung is said to be Chinese...". The lack of certainty around such big ideological figures who are now present (at least ideologically) on the African scene captures the confusion of the independent Africans.

The new crop of leaders in the same book uses their power and position to woo women and moral decadence is the consequence. Women ran after the wealthy corrupt politicians and their local allies, and political brutality and violation of basic human rights become a reality. In the name of communism or leftist ideologies, freedom of speech is eradicated: an enlightened medical doctor is tortured and kills himself in his prison cell (the book provides several examples of bloody and inhuman treatment of people who simply voice their political opinion) and young educated citizens seek greener pastures abroad because only those who are close to the circles of the political leaders can find employment.

Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* provides examples of the disappointing "arrivists, demagogue charmers", corrupt African educated-illiterates through a character like chief Nanga who is the foil of the narrator, Odili, a young uncorrupted educated-educator.

Kourouma trivializes socialism, the one-party system and capitalism through irony and humour. He exposes the absurdity which results from the confusing interpretation and application of these western ideologies by ordinary characters such Jakite, an escapee from the ills of socialism, and Sery, a driver's mate. Following Jakite's use of the village bridge constructed under self-help program which came with Socialism and the one-party system, the "NDL youth were lying in wait for him; they leapt out and attacked him, pinioned him, pulled off his trousers, attached a rope to his genitals and tied him to one of the post of the bridge, like a dog". (*The Suns*: 57). When his father ran to implore the party secretary-general, the later replied that "since socialism was to bring to an end the exploitation of man by man, nobody should set foot on a bridge he had not helped build. [...] socialism was socialism". (*The Suns*: 57). Ironically, Jakite's father has in the past made substantial material and financial contributions to the party without any gain in return. Indeed, he has been unduly exploited by the one-party system. His right of free association has been violated under this bastardized system ever since it saw the day at independence. Yet his only son has to be subjected to dehumanising treatments in the name of socialism for using a bridge he did not physical help to build.

Under the influence of a xenophobic passion, Sery on his part claims to know the secret of peace in Africa. He explains: "Do you know what causes wars and misery in Africa? No? Well it's quite simple; it's because Africans don't stay at home". (*The Suns*: 59). In reality, the causes of wars and misery in Africa are found in the perpetual exploitation of the resources of the continents by capitalist and imperialist forces parading as international investors in the corridors of power in African countries. Through ideological perversion, Sery is blindfolded and could see beyond African brothers who only leave their home because the very things he considers them to be the causes. Sery, like many African leaders and people sees the problems of the continent at the superstructure level; hence proffer superficial solutions which do not touch the material base.

Kourouma and Lopès paint caricatured characters who exhibit crass ignorance and misunderstanding of Western ideologies they pretend to be articulating in the formulation of their national development policies. The military leaders in *Tribaliques* are a war with "intellectuals" who have studied in Russia and classified in the optics of the capitalist world as "reactionaries" communists or "socialists" who constitute a threat to state and must therefore be constantly watched, if not arrested and torched to death, like in the case of Doctor Mobata. Considering the nefarious impact of ideological prostitution on the socio-economic and political development of Africa as painted in the two narrative texts, what measures can be put in place to halt its threats?

Conclusion

Ideological prostitution is a cancerous cell inimical to the socio-economic and political development of African countries. No meaningful socio-economic and political solution can be found to the myriad of challenges confronting the continent without ideological sanity and sanctity. Real progress and sustainable development of the African continent and its people can be achieved only through a redefinition of a clear indigenous ideological blueprint. This would help to sanitize and sanctify the bastardized and confused ideological basis of the continent for the way forward.

Ideological sanity and sanctity can be attained through a concerted effort to reexamine all programs and institutions of socialization in the various African countries so as to redefine a cogent ideological direction for the continent in the framework of the African Union (AU).

The process of harmonization in high education begun by the Association of West Africa Universities (AWAU) should be accelerated to a continental level. Considering the intellectual background and the professional experience of the membership of this association (Vice-chancellors and high caliber researchers from universities across West Africa), it will serve as the most appropriate forum for initiating moves towards the conceptualization of a cogent African-reality informed ideology required for the real and sustainable socio-economic and political development of the continent and its people.

Much as the African people cannot stay out of a globalizing world, they must all the same not allow themselves to be consumed by it. The process of globalization is actually a movement towards harmonization of values that define a common humanity. It is not and should not be towards the annihilation of the weak by the strong and powerful of this world.

African people must therefore be indispensable actors and not mere spectators in this all important irreversible process. This, however, can only be achieved through a well-thought out and coherent African-reality based ideology.

The point of departure of every human endeavor is an idea, which is then processed into an ideology. The ideology becomes the driving force of policies and programs meant to actualize the initial idea. Consequently, once the idea of development is not clearly defined, it leads to confusion and unpreparedness. This is a plausible ground for the proliferation of ideological prostitution as witnessed in *The Suns of Independances* and *Tribaliques*.

One can therefore conclude that ideological sanity and sanctity is the indispensable material base for the sustainable socio-economic and political development of Africa. Without it, all attempts towards developing the continent and its people would be fruitless self-serving efforts which would only inure to the triumph of imperialist and neo-colonialist agenda which seek to keep African in a perpetual state of vulnerability for capitalist exploitation.

Recommendation

Towards Ideological Sanity and Sanctity for Socio-Economic and Political Development

In the mist of all this endless circle of violence, ignorance, corruption and ideological prostitution, there is a ray of hope through strong, determined and resilient characters like Nadia's mother who has links with the Algerian Liberation Front and stays away from the political and social mess in *Tribaliques*. (p.79). Another example that provides a solution to the political bane of Africa is found in Ndote, a young student who is politically educated and patiently helps and encourages his friends to seek political education. He is portrayed in the following lines in the novel:

J'avais eu l'occasion de le rencontrer lorsque nous faisons nos études en France. Il était sur le point de rentrer diplômé vétérinaire. Je le revois encore animant chaque dimanche notre syndicat d'étudiants. Il fut un de ceux qui m'aidèrent le plus à me décomplexer et qui me firent comprendre la nécessité de l'indépendance (non pas de mon petit pays) mais de l'Afrique. (Tribaliques: 79)

[I had the opportunity to meet him when we were studying in France. He was about to complete his studies in Animal Science. I can still picture him leading discussions in our Students' Union. He was one of those who helped me the most in getting rid of my complex and he made me understand the need for independence (not just for my little country) but for Africa]. *Our translation*.

Ndote's ideas and actions are the kind of thing required from all citizens over the world today in countries which are still suffering from the cancer of bad governance in general. Political and ideological education of the type in which Ndote is involved is what Africans need. Some years ago, students had access to such forums like FEANF (*Fédération des Étudiants d'Afrique Noire en France*), where they were exposed to political debates and ideologies and acquired political consciousness. Unfortunately the current crop of African students does not have access to such an exposure in most cases. They have to struggle and obtain their university degrees and then fight to earn a living if they get a job in a saturated job market made worse by stringent measures like the ones imposed by the IMF and World Bank when African countries go to them for loans. SAPs (Structural

Adjustment Programs) are blatant examples of such suffocating measures which simply keep our countries backward, under-developing and dependent.

A close examination of Fama's behaviour in *The Suns of Independence* makes him emerge as one of those few Africans who resist political prostitution. He frowns upon the behaviour of Africans who have sold their dignity. (pp. 8 - 10). He calls them "the damned" a term ironically reminiscent of what Fanon (1961, 1968) says in *Les damnés de la terre*. Fama seems to be the "*damné*" or the wretched here. The oppressed and the African masses have willingly turned themselves into "*des damnés*" (wretched ones). Fama's aversion for the ideological perversion runs through the whole text. This justifies his insulting posturing towards everybody and everything that he considers tainted by the cancer of ideological perversion. This aversion is summed up in very derogatory terms such: 'bastard'; 'bastards'; 'bastardization'; 'damned'; 'damnation' and 'wretched'. For instance, "Fama grumbled: 'Hell and damnation! *Nyamokode!*'"; "The bastards lounging about in the middle of the pavement as if it were their old man's backyard". (*The Suns*: 5). "Road carriers' union or bastards' union..." (*The Suns*: 55). On one occasion, when the delegate of the national union of road carriers asked Fama to 'get out of a vehicle for another one', "He stood up, pulled out his knife ... threatened the delegate and insulted everyone, the delegate and all the bastards in the union, their father and the mother of Independence. (*The Suns*: 55 56)

Ideological sanity and sanctity for socio-economic and political development in Africa requires the development of a pool of critical minds on the realities of African problems. This can be done through a re-examination of the socio-economic and political structures of African societies. In other words, how did we reach where we are now? This brings to mind the position of Achebe (1966) that "We need to go back to the place where the rain began to beat us". This means that Africans need to trace the origin of the problems that are impeding the real emancipation of the continent. This origin can obviously be traced to a combination of factors. Key among these factors are the contacts with the Arabs, trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, the partition of Africa, Western colonisation, independence, neo-colonisation, Western imperialism, the Cold-war, pseudo-democracy.

Since formal education is the most powerful tool for the inculcation of ideology, educational curricula in African institutions must be carefully and consciously designed to achieve and promote a concerted African development ideology. In view of this, a careful examination of African cultural values, norms and practices vis-à-vis African realities is without doubt an unavoidable venture towards the reversal of the trend of ideological prostitution and its inherent ills which lead to underdevelopment, pauperization and enslavement.

Invariably, there is an urgent need to train critical minds to conceptualise indigenous ideologies informed by African realities and resources. These critical minds would be the material base of the new superstructure to be subsequently developed. The role of these critical minds is crucial in for several reasons. They are to develop the philosophical foundations from a concerted harmonization of African world-views and realities, on one hand, and those of other continents which Africans would be call upon to live with, in a symbiotic relationship of interdependence on planet earth. They would by so doing positioning Africa to be an effective and active actor, rather than a parasitic spectator in a fast globalising world.

Conscious effort must be made to engage African leaders, intellectuals and youth on the need to imbibe indigenous ideologies and use them as the theoretical and analytical framework for policy formulation and implementation toward addressing the developmental challenges of the continent.

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