African Philosophies of Education: Colonialist Deconstructions and Critical Anticolonial Reconstructionist Possibilities

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INTRODUCTION

In conceptualizing and theorizing about the conventional (as presented in dominant Western-centric discourses), as well as counter-conventional (as in decolonizing, multicentric perspectives) of philosophy and philosophies of education, we could perhaps and contemporaneously agree on some clustered thought systems, and thereof emerging analytical formations that, in epistemic-contextual terms, inform select social and educational situations. In the more conventional terms, both formalized or otherwise dispensed readings and attached discussions of philosophy are indeed, at least as presented in the Western Canon, credited to early Greece and to its most important thought figures (i.e., Plato and his student Aristotle who were associated with the Athens Academy as founded by the former). To immediately problematize this habit in a more nuanced format, through a habitualized assumption, and straightforwardly staying with general (original), linguistic meaning of philosophy (philosophia as love of wisdom from the Greek word φιλοσοφία), we must be able to argue otherwise. That is, without any historical or related epistemic nationalism, we must safely state 'the love of wisdom' that contextually results from analytical and critical observations and inquiries about our lives and relations as attached and implicated by all social and physical surroundings across the globe. This reality should be at least as old as human

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life. While Platonian/Aristoteleian/European philosophical accreditations are about 2500 years old, human life (as counted from the first homo sapiens) is about 300,000 years old.

To perhaps stave off any worries about complexifying my observations here beyond the critical and deconstructive and reconstructive purposes intended, let me affirm that I am not saying that philosophy and its educational packets—as we know and analyze these today—started around the emergence of the first homo sapiens. That might be read as stretching the case too much, too far away, and too thin for the organized ways this area should be comprehended. What I am indicating though, is my continuous, thick argument that this area of knowledge and study is a cultural component and emerges from people's lives, with culture representing the space–time envelops and intersections of individual/groups' understandings, relations, behaviors, and sanctions in given socio-physical contexts. With that in mind, philosophy in so-called classical Greece was not detached from the Greek/European culture, thus sustaining its meanings and valuations in post-Platonic, post-Aristoteleian periods. It was also inherited, via the Latinization of Greek, the rationalization of Euro-centric knowledge and ways of knowing through and post-Enlightenment situations. Across the world, these assumptions about uni-centric philosophies and philosophies of education were undertaken on colonial epistemic projects that were formalized and institutionalized through colonial education (Abdi, 2008, 2013; Nyerere, 1968; Rodney, 1982).

The monocentric fabrications of the philosophical and its attendant philosophies of education as focusing on what education is needed in a given context, why such education and how it should be formulated implemented (Ozmon & Craver, 2012), was what led and sustained these continuous unidimensional belief systems with Africa, and other non-European spaces, constructed as a philosophical. Indeed, as Higgs (2008) noted, the hegemonic colonial discourse that attempted to negate the diversity of knowledges and lived experiences requires a full challenge that accords African populations the needed epistemic and epistemological contexts for liberation and development. It is with the centrality of education (formal or informal) for people to ascertain their situations, analyze their needs and aspirations, and design ways of advancing in select or multiple components of life that also implicates all philosophy as educational. Indeed, the observation attributed to John Dewey that 'all philosophy is a theory/philosophy of education fits well with the ubiquitous presence of the philosophical in both the cultural and attached learning and teaching realms of the person and their community(ies). As such, all socially organized communities, regardless of their geographical or other characteristics, can claim the presence, as well as the practice of, philosophy and philosophies of education as both are so fundamental to critically inquire about and interactively respond to both the prevailing/emergent realities and needs of spatial–temporal mediated life systems and contexts. In terms

of educational contexts and analyses, we shall note that philosophy and education, as a constructs and practices, are natural to all human contexts for, as already implicated above, humans are both inquiry-driven and learning beings, which are both fundamental to their continuities and survival.

Colonialist Deconstructions of African Philosophies and Philosophies of Education

Despite the above presented fundamentality of both education and philosophical inquiries for people's lives, the colonialists' deliberate 'de-philosophization' of Africa was not limited to that, but also extended to the educational situation and, so clearly, to African philosophies of education (Abdi, 2008; Achebe, 2000). What should be understood here is the observational looniness of such assumptions which actually pose more dangers that might be initially detected. When we, either out of biased ignorance or for domination or exploitative intentions, cancel the presence and possibilities of education, we can sense and pragmatically notice the denial of historical and current agency. By direct extension, the rescinding of situational initiatives that trigger and drive peoples' advancement and well-being are extensively damaged. Yet, this is precisely what happened to Africans and other subjects of European colonialism, who were perforce exposed to a well-organized psycho-cultural and educational onslaught that derided their cultures, learning systems, pedagogical arrangements, which all served as precursors for, indeed facilitated subsequent political and economic dominations (Abdi, 2013).

To achieve psycho-cultural and educational colonization in the African context therefore, the first steps were to disparage and decommission African educational and social development systems, locating the continent as ahistorical, a-philosophical, uneducated, and deprived of development (Achebe, 2000; Nyerere, 1968; Rodney, 1982). Indeed, these initially presumptive and as we know now, false racist assumptions, which were, nevertheless, realized through colonial education (Kane, 2012 [1963]; wa Thiong'o, 1993), set up and sustained continually damaging psychosomatic impacts. These also extended into intergenerational cognitive colonization schemes that continue to solely elevate Eurocentric and Euro-American-centric ideas, languages, knowledge systems, learning institutions, and related educational desires and valuations. Based on my continuing reading here and as discussed in few previous, related oeuvres (see Abdi, 2008, 2013, 2020), the discrediting of Africa on the historical, educational, and developmental fronts was foundationally attached and carried out through the organized denial of the continent and its peoples' philosophical and educational philosophy achievements. As already implicated here, such denial is, to be precise, nonsensical as it is both counter-rational and counter-reasonable. Yet, these were organized attempts to rescind what has actually defined and formulated, and in primary and fundamental livelihood terms, this ancient land's livelihood and learning dynamisms as well as social development achievements and intentions.

For emphasis at least, and cognizant of this as somewhat already implicated above, the fundamentality of philosophical thinking, analysis, and criticisms must be present in all human contexts, which also makes educational philosophies the sine qua non of human cultural, political, and economic designs and progress. To convey the point as thickly as possible, no social group or other humanly connected entities (whether in larger or smaller community or national spaces, including in family and/or organizational contexts) could have lived or survived over millennia in the African world without conceptualizing and achieving select philosophizing and learning philosophies contexts. Henceforward, it was imperative to add to the extractable learning and teaching thoughts systems that were crucial for the indispensable generation and regeneration of required interdependent ecological and selectively localized vie quotidian existentialities.

Despite these facts, dominant Western philosophy advanced their own ideas as being the totality of philosophy and philosophical thinking as these were created, discovered, and emanated from a universalistic European epistemic center that demands from the rest of the world to draw from it with unquestionable learning and knowledge loyalty. Such loyalty demands strictly following Platonic (Socratic) and Aristotelian intentions (i.e., the so-named classical Greece and Athens) and continued through coinciding Eurocentric thought traditions. Sympathetically, according to such totalizing credit and with analytical amnesia about the rest of the world, the British philosopher Alfred N. Whitehead tried to teach us that all philosophy was, for his own ipso facto, only a footnote to Plato (Ozmon & Craver, 2012). In responding to this shallow and totalizing epistemic crediting and arrogance during the misnamed postcolonial context, Chinua Achebe (1989) marveled, sort of pro-sarcastically, at the non-camouflaged code where for African thinkers and writers, the qualitative validity of their works have had to be sanctioned by contemporary European and Euro-American men [and women] in post-Athenian and currently domineering [sic] centres of power and 'knowledge' (New York, London, Paris). In Achebe's characteristic and blinking-averse format, he notes how he could not decipher the 'cocksurness' (his term) of these still colonialist-minded creatures.

The issue of de-philosophization and its affiliated categories of education and social well-being are directly related to the interchanges of power and knowledge, or in Foucauldian terms, the intersecting and interdependent lines of the two (Foucault, 1980). For me, this affirms the deliberate colonialist historical disempowerment of Africans and others, and which, by direct extension, negated their epistemic and epistemological locations and intentions. Indeed, it was the British historian H.R. Trevor-Roper (1963), who was based at Oxford University (note both the imputed and accrued power statuses of the man and the place, and thus, the knowledge valuation attached to his ideas), who 'affirmed' for his audience the ahistorical nature of Africa. That is the whole place, the whole landmass (i.e., the second biggest continent on earth) and its peoples without any history prior to European colonialism. This

should expose the monstrosity of such statements which were, for all practical possibilities, false and useless ethnocentrically racist talk. But that was not the case for Trevor-Roper who was hardly the only inventor of the multitude falsehoods about Africa, from the so-called European thought leaders. The globally celebrated German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel (1965), somehow knew, without setting a foot on Africa and without any contact with one single African, that this ancient continent was devoid of history and historical achievements, representing a darkness-enveloped landmass that was ready to be plundered, taken-advantage-of, and robbed of its resources.

The narrating of these tragically false assumptions about Africa and its peoples need to be told and retold as their impact has represented, at least in knowledge, learning and developmental terms, a systematic onslaught that lowered the onto-existentialities as well as the subjectivities of communities that have not yet recovered from such presumptive if 'believable' (re: the profile of the protagonists) exhortations. To understand the depth of the problem, one need not miss that Hegel was talking about Africa around the advent of nineteenth-century colonialism and certainly had direct impact on the imperial project that pillaged African lands and lives. To show the centrality of Hegel's work to the so-named 'Scramble for Africa' (Pakenham, 2015 [1991]), one can simply refer to his rationale on the wisdom of stealing Africa's resources by Europeans (Hegel, 1965). Africa, as he put it, was an infantile place fit for plunder and pillage by Europe. Interestingly and quite astonishingly, these Hegelian schemes of dehistoricization, plunder, and theft were conveyed in one of his most important works oxymoronly entitled *Reason in History*. At any rate, the point here is not to repeat his diatribe but rather to highlight the colonial rationalist language he mastered to play an intellectual vanguard for the benighted and again massively misnamed *Mission Civilsatrice* (Said, 1993). It is also important and indeed categorically central to my arguments here that such pathologization of Africans, their capacities and life systems minimally shaped so much of the global situations, relationship, and social development contexts we see today.

My arguments should also minimally convey the need to continuously, systematically and as needed, negate and refute item-by-item, the false, racist exhortations with counter-racist humanizing notations and attached perspectival pragmatics. The false assumptions and their attendant destructive impact and outcomes were later perforce advanced through colonial military actions and educational projects, which sustained the schemata of the continent and its peoples' dehistoricizations, de-philosophizations, and de-epistemologizations. Such schemes deliberately destroyed over millennia-thriving primordial, traditional life systems, and almost permamentized, as Nyerere (1968), Rodney (1982), and Achebe (2009 [1958]) cogently analyzed, the now celebrated African poverty and underdevelopment. To critically discern the level of destructiveness that was unleashed on Africa/Africans' corporeal, mental, and wealth contexts (minimally for a clear comprehension for new generations of

students and scholars), I revisit Ivan Van Sertima's brilliant, if subjectively difficult, readings on the situation:

> No other disaster with the exception of the Flood (if that biblical legend is true) can equal in dimensions of destructiveness, the cataclysm that shook Africa… .Fast populations were uprooted and displaced, whole generations disappeared, European diseases descended like the plague decimating both people and livestock, cities and towns were abandoned, family networks disintegrated, kingdoms crumbled, the threads of cultural and historical continuity were so torn asunder that henceforward, one could have to talk of two Africas: the one before and the one after the Holocaust. (Van Sertima, 1991, p. 8)

It is indeed with the described magnitude of colonial psycho-cultural, educational, and physical destructiveness that should entice us to not avoid the realities of the case for professional convenience or observational comfort, but rather to deal with it, analyze it and continuously critique all of these headlong. Ongoing comprehensively critical inquiry is needed to psycho-socially, practically, and counter-colonially decommission the damage done to Africa's multiple life references. It is with this in mind that we should reference the still supremely relevant, seminal works of, inter alia, Frantz Fanon (1967, 1968) and Aimé Césaire (1972). Although they were not born in Africa but part of the transatlantic African diaspora (from Martinique in the Caribbean), they read, as much as anyone else, the comprehensiveness of the overall onto-epistemological damages, which they reflected upon, and from there, pointed out active ways to liberate the fundamental particles of people's lives. In Fanon's (1967) terms and connecting well with Albert Memmi's (1991) work who was another excellent colonization scholar, when damages are done to one's fundamental contextual references (in subjective, thought and general worldview situations), the new subjects created become, in psycho-cognitive terms at least, external to their original self. From there, these new subjects normalize their 'naturalized' (minimally in their minds) inferior status vis-à-vis their oppressors.

In comprehensive terms and referencing Nyerere's (1968) excellent analysis, the continuing struggle against the extensive, systematic devaluing of people's lives, which must be confronted tout court, should build more on anti-colonist and liberating philosophy and philosophies of education terrains. Indeed, the depth of internalized inferiority overtime was/is so thick that Freire's construct and possible practice of *conscientization* (*concientazaçao*) could be deployed here as a multistep platform and prospect for onto-epistemological liberation. Nyerere, as a philosopher-statesman (Graham, 1976; Mhina & Abdi, 2009), critically and quite astutely read the long-term impact of colonial education and its attached philosophical assumptions that, as mentioned above, first demeaned the reconstruction of the continent's learning and developmental platforms to counter the longue durée

de-patterning of the general perceptions and attached subjective existentialities of generations of Tanzanians and Africans. Indeed, while we might contemporaneously speak about education as a developmental platform (Abdi, 2008; Afful-Broni et al., 2020) that enhances people's lives in personal, professional, institutional, societal situations, or otherwise with observable validity with such assumption (e.g., the usually measurable correspondence between levels of learning and economic viability), Nyerere (1968) clearly saw the damaging nature of colonial education. It minimally imposed an externally problematic and perforce implemented schemes that attempted to alter the situational realities of the colonized, inculcating in the minds of its recipients, enduring clusters of cognitive colonization (wa Thiong'o, 1993, 2009).

Certainly, in all contexts of human history, we continuously thought/think about and established/establish learning systems that were/are ipso facto, essential to our existence and forward movement in civilizational and related matters of life. It is with that fundamental reading of human life, especially as it is attached to historical and contemporary Africa and the lives of Africans, that education as it is perceived, philosophized and constructed, becomes so indispensable for our socio-cultural existentialities (Mandela, 1994; Nyerere, 1968). As Nelson Mandela shared in his autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994), from elemental individual well-being to social development, the quality as well as the provision of available learning and pedagogical platforms serve as the main drivers of the case and especially so when communalized to all members of the community.

While the constructions of philosophical traditions and the learning operations thereof deduced, span across times-and-spaces, even after the ending of most physical colonialism in Africa in early-to-mid 1960s, the continent and its peoples continue to contend with the derivatives of European Enlightenment-attached modernist thinking and practices (for an interesting read and Euro-centric of modernity, see Huntington, 1971). Modernity would deride, even now, Africa's life systems as irrational, primitively disorganized, and time wise immeasurable. Certainly in partial response to these and other surface assumptions, Nyerere's (1968) anti-colonial educational and social development projects, which were mainly constituted in his *Ujamaa* program (Ujamaa broadly meaning *familyhood* or in extended readings, *villagehood*), aimed to establish a basic platform for Indigenous education and social development projects. These, as sometimes misunderstood, were not against other knowledge systems, but saw the fundamentality of such projects as extendable into the overall social well-being possibilities across Tanzania and potentially elsewhere in Africa.

However, or expectedly, the projects were differently read by opposing interest groups both inside and outside Tanzania. Ujamaa which was negatively depicted by global capitalism and its agents, as McHenry (1994) cogently observed, also faced initially latent opposition from the emerging and individually enterprising comprador class in the late 1960s to early 1970s Tanzania. So with Ujamaa's unfulfilled possibilities for the reconstruction of African

philosophies of education, and the factual continuation of colonial education in Tanzania/Africa's curricular, linguistic, and certainly philosophical dimensions, how are we to read the context and respond to it as we enter the third decade of the twenty-first century? For my descriptive, analytical, and critical corners, the redoing of colonial philosophies of education is as urgent as ever. To be sure, and especially for those who might be new or relatively new to African philosophical and educational studies, perhaps a reminder that the continent's slow and, in some places, absent social advancement is not, in absolute categorical terms, natural to Africans and their world. The one human race capabilities (not two races or more, see Cook, 2005), regardless of location and background, are comparable across the board and in global terms. Perhaps a good example of this is to open-mindedly ascertain the achievements of African immigrants in spaces where their initiatives, intelligence, enterprising, and related energies are not impeded by colonial politics and control systems by African dictatorial regimes. This also explains why so many highly educated and capable people are leaving the continent. For those who read and react to Africa from external plateaus, the continent might be seen (in selective terms) via its almost celebrated (if so misplaced) poverty status, complemented by the absence, again selectively, of competitive economies, all occasionally exacerbated by cases of de-development (e.g., destroying the limited institutional viability there via civil wars). While some of these perceptions are not totally out of place, the risk of simplistic, de-historicized readings abound. In critically ascertaining the weight of the counter-dehistoricizing fight, Cabral (1970) noted how the fabrication of ahistorical Africa and its peoples was deliberately connected to the colonial double objective of dehistoricization and the subsequent rehistoricization of Africans as a newly discovered parcel of the natural progression of European history.

Without belaboring the point on the current depressed development situations, which are factually historically connected, we can also practically state, without a thread of hesitancy, that Africa's current development issues are firstly due to the political office longevity schemes of some leaders. This is complemented in quasi-direct terms by the political and policy continuities (the leaders' failure and culpability as well here) of decontextualized and socio-culturally alienating educational systems that continue to disregard and demean the continent's rich knowledge, learning, and pedagogical traditions. Drawing upon Cabral's (1973) seminal points again with prior echoes from Fanon (1968), the rhetoric of national liberation and related anticolonial struggles followed by limited political independence and attempts to create a cohesive developmental community can all be as such, and nothing more than rhetorical and insignificant. That's, unless the postcolonial leadership pragmatizes these into real improvements in the daily living conditions of the people. Alas, the majority of African leadership in the past 60 or so years miserably failed in this, and the masses' developmental aspirations for social advancement are at best of quarterly completion in very few countries. As such, and to reiterate one central objective in this writing, if Africa is to achieve

decolonized Africanist philosophical, educational, and development possibilities, African leaders and education policymakers should heed the call for new ways of reviving and reconstructing the continent's rich traditions in these and related domains of life. It is with this call in mind that I now turn to possible ways of reconstructing African philosophies of education for socio-cultural, educational, and overall community well-being.

African Philosophies of Education: Critical Reconstructionist Analyses and Possibilities

Relying for epistemic and analytical intentions on the preceding arguments, I am able to say, in a straightforwardly manner, that traditional African education was well-conceptualized, well-designed, and well-constructed with communally functional and viable learning pedagogical platforms that were of important historical, cultural, and philosophical foundations, operations and outcomes. As such, precolonial African contexts of education were, perhaps as much as anything else, directly responsive to, and pragmatically implemented within the blocks and actions of critical query situations. In historico-situational terms, these were not dissimilar from the ways we perceive and interact with contemporary educational philosophies. Without that (through a sort of reverse analysis), Africans and other colonized populations across the globe wouldn't have been exposed to Europe's imperial schemes had the former not devised, revised, and advanced important and contextually functioning systems of learning that were built on such philosophies of learning. On the 'sort of reverse analysis' point here, they would have perished long ago, which could have also practicalized the colonialists' false *terrra nullius* thesis about Africa and other places. With this in mind, my direct and sans apologie deployment of the constructs and practices of philosophy and philosophy of education in historical Africa should not represent an extraneous descriptive or analytical puzzle as that is exactly what was happening, calling for necessary modifications and reconstructions and needs on the ground.

A propos then the centrality of the reconstructionist perspective where the intervening purpose here is not to claim a novel need to come up with just new African philosophies of education, but to reassert and re-enliven what was destroyed by the colonial epistemic and epistemological onslaught. This onslaught, which was again designed to damage both the corporeal and cognitive subjectivities of the persona Africana so as to facilitate the colonizing project, encompassed all systems of Indigenous knowledges, educational systems, and the critical queries (philosophical perspectives) attached to those, and to the overall quotidian as well as long-term psycho-cultural locations and formations of people. Indeed, to borrow a few lines from reconstructionist Africana critical theory as a way of countering epistemic apartheid (Rabaka, 2010), while still staying connected to the general intentions of the criticality tradition with ongoing ameliorative intentions

and possibilities (Frye, 2020 [1957]), I reaffirm how African traditional societies survived, thrived, and advanced via perspectively querying about their education systems. From there, people suggested and shared potential learning and teaching betterments, and acted upon those, with everything actively and essentially connected to prevailing as well as emerging community needs and aspirations. As such, what we now call the main questions of educational philosophies (i.e., what education, why such education, and how to do it) were categorically and with agentic realities, formulated and selectively undertaken in these traditional societies.

In reaffirming, as many times as opportune, traditional African educational philosophies, were effective to historico-culturally ascertain and appreciate the prevailing contexts for which these were designed, constructed, and utilized. In most cases (with some important exceptions), such educational philosophies and related epistemic as well as learning and teaching platforms were not in conventional written formats. Yet the blocks of knowledge present and operational were systematically and comprehensively preserved in the minds of intellectually well-endowed community members who, as we learned from the trenchant analysis of the late Kenyan philosopher Henry Odera Oruka (1990), were inter-communally recognized for their sagacity, or as he called them, African sage philosophers. To critically comprehend and appreciate such sagacity and the epistemic achievements of African sage philosophers therefore, one need not miss the centrality of all of this in relation to the histories, cultures, and related learning and pedagogical realities as created through, and operationalized via the continent's oral literatures (orature). As such, these systems of knowing, inquiring about, analyzing, and henceforward acting upon critically attained episteme were orality-based-and-expounded philosophies of education. That even when the most comprehensive and systematic writing in the so-called ancient world, as we know that script today and through its millennia formalizations and reformatting, was actually invented in Africa (Ong, 2013 [1982]). That is, through the socio-cultural calligraphic formations and reformations of Egyptian and Nubian kingdoms and dynasties in northeastern Africa.

Indeed, enlarging the potentially assumed confines of the critical in ascertaining the problematic and colonialist interplays or orality-embedded epistemic systems and text-borne knowledge categories, the hegemonic and onto-epistemological supremacist elevation of the latter over the former, established and sustained the extensity of the still impactful mental colonization realities (wa Thiong'o, 1986, 2009). These continue to imprint and sustain so much demerit points on Africans' psycho-political and economic situations and by the needed expansive undertaking of social development projects. As such, the urgency of reviving African philosophies of education to inform and structure both learning and pedagogical systems should be clear. Minimally at the ideational level, followed by structural redrawing of the situation and the multi-focal reconstruction of these philosophies, it is imperative to successfully formulate educational contexts that refrain from alienating people from their

cultural, linguistic, and related knowledge and learning needs. What should be practically understood is that this does not mean African schools and institutions of higher education will stop teaching useful knowledge from elsewhere. What it means though is to loudly announce knowledge and education as also emerging from African sources, minds, and achievements. In Sandra Harding's (1998, 2008) cogent analysis, all knowledge, regardless of its current status and composition, is essentially and for all practical intentions, of collective human origin and collaboration. It is within that collective and collaborative reality that African traditional philosophies of education, as emanating from the original space of humanity, contextually and certainly in global terms, must announce their viability and over millennia learning-wise effective mechanisms in the continent's and selectively, in extra-Africa contemporary educational terrains.

As alluded to above, world media readings and simplistic reporting on this ancient continent have Africa as hastily synonymized with interconnected educational, politico-economic, and related progress failures that have become, with more negativities than otherwise, of naturalized status. In more nuanced and generalization-refuting perspective, the continent and its peoples do deal with more than their fair share of human development issues, especially as there are measured through the indices used by the yearly published UNDP Development Report (UNDP, 2020). Perusing the report which is neither perfectly designed as it does not fully account for all the political, economic, and educational situations in the continent, African countries, nevertheless, monopolize the lowest ranks of the available information. Here, perhaps a brief point for now, on the conceptual and practical constructions of development (social development as I have been labeling it for the past little while). The idea of development as it is currently constituted in the social sciences literature is not actually that old; that is in the long history of human life. As policy-into-programmatic terms and intentions, the construct and its practical implications were first presented in a post-World War II speech on an assumed platform of international development by then American President Harry Truman who saw, from his triumphant vantage point, a way of uplifting poor populations via American-centric/Western-centric economic and related advancements (Black, 2002). Interestingly and not unexpectedly, the assumed viability of exported international development did not solve the world's problems, and more often than otherwise, created a uni-directional policy and project perspectives that were more or less only fitted for their Western socio-cultural origins. Somewhat like colonialism, though more benign in its control of people's lives, this modernity predicated progress assumed too much about the well-being needs of Africans and others from afar, thus applying a detached, prejudicial gaze that hardly took into account the actual needs of different populations.

In the analysis of the late Nigerian political economist, Claude Ake, what was termed development (in both economic and political terms) in Western capitals, did not make sense in African terrains, basically and in practical points, thus qualifying itself as non-development and impractical (Ake, 1996, 2000).

Despite such development assumptions and issues and the locational feasibility complexities, the need for human advancement is still an important prospect in the lives of Africans and others. This is important in the sense that Africa and Africans are not detached from the rest of the world, nor located outside the zonal influences and realities of globalization even if in most cases they are systematically marginalized within and around it. It is with such pragmatics that we shall still locate different projects of formal, informal, non-formal education as potentially contributing to people's well-being in these and future times. That, even when we have been speaking extensively about the damages done by colonial education on the bodies and psyches of *dadka Afrikaanka ah* (African people) and other colonized Indigenous populations across the globe. It is indeed with the still intact colonial systems of education in most postcolonial states that we must discuss a new type of social development that could be achieved through the reconstruction of the philosophical, linguistic, curricular and general learning as well as teaching intentions and possibilities of contemporary African learning and teaching systems. In posthumous epistemic and developmental crediting, the seminal works of anticolonial African philosophers including Julius Nyerere and Amilcar Cabral, among others, should, in categorical and postfacto terms, prove the point: Counter-cultural, counter-linguistic, counter-philosophical, and counter-epistemological education, in essence, counter-African onto-existentialities learning and instructional platforms, cannot develop Africa and its peoples.

It is with these irrefutable facts in mind that contemporary and still Western monocentric education with its actual underlying philosophies, policy formulations, and attached practical implications/outcomes cannot and will not establish and sustain acutely needed advancement possibilities in neither Africa's mostly overcrowded urban centers nor in the continent's rural locations. To repeat, with an eye on the pragmatics of the moment and in both psychosocial and material terms, Africans are fully connected to the world and to all its desires and aspirations for better lives, even when they are not economically so endowed. This applies especially to young people, who are the future of the continent and are so more connected via the now ubiquitous internet availability and attached social media platforms, to the rest of the world. The African youth, who are expected to number about 850 million by the year 2050, see/feel, in quotidian terms, the facilities of life, especially in employment and countable wealth parcels, in extra-Africa spaces, which are no longer limited to Europe and North America, but are also present in a number of places in especially Southeast Asia.

While the year 2050 might sound to some as some distant time block, it is actually approaching fast. Even with that potential complicated time–space comprehension, the youth unemployment situation tells a story of economic despair with an estimated 70% of that population exposed to chronic poverty (International Labour Organization, ILO, 2016). Select potential analytical queries to my arguments here could be the following: How about the education, why is that not helpful, and what levels do these youth achieve? Maybe

they need more education, could be a suggestive observation. Interestingly and especially in urban centers, a good majority of the young people who are dealing with these difficulty employment situations did not only complete primary and secondary schools but a good number hold tertiary-level credentials. Indeed, the situation is not about the absence of education but more so the relevance of such education, which, as extensively pointed above, is not thought-of, designed and implemented for the needs of Africans. For all practical undertakings, such learning does not only provide decontextualized, de-communal epistemic and training style blocks, but also damages the subjective confidence of its recipients. By extension, it also diminishes the transformative agency of learners by continually elevating, to say de novo, the history, cultures, knowledges, and achievements of the so-called developed world. In parallel terms, such education also directly or otherwise decommissions people's basic ontological and related humanizing as well as close-to-self, and connected-to-community capacities and potential advancement references. As noted by the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET, 2016), it is with these realities that half of the continent's millions of young people who come out of universities every year remain unemployed.

With the inter-justifying problematics of education and social development in the continent therefore, the reconstruction of Africa's learning and teaching platforms including but not limited to the philosophical as well as the cultural and attached linguistic contexts is important and urgent. Such systematic prospects of reconstruction assure a return, again in Cabralian terms (Cabral, 1970, 1973), to the lost and long-awaited Africanization (as opposed to colonial de-Africanization) of the ways we think about education, conceive the contextual and viability possibilities of such education, and via such deliberations and outcomes, accord a prominent place for African Indigenous Knowledge systems and epistemologies. Again, the process of Africanizing both the learning and knowledge contexts will be emanating from and comprehensively responsive to the whole of African ontologies, cosmo-ecological locations, and communally-benefiting needs, aspirations, and undertakings. It is high time therefore, to speak about the urgent need to Africanize education and its knowledge categories, complemented by the imperative to bring together/query about the multiple, interconnected critical points of the case. Indeed, I agree with Afful-Broni et al. (2020, p. 9) when, with recognitively critical and contemporaneously prescient notations, they write: "put simply, 'Africanization' is a process of making something 'African' in terms of a relation of history, identity, context, politics and the philosophy of practice."

Conclusion

In this work, I have engaged, with broad analytical and critical notations and intentions, a quasi-circular presentation on the fateful knowledge and learning encounters between Africa and its peoples, on the one side, and the

dehistoricization as well as the philosophical and epistemological onslaught of European colonialism. Such onslaught was deliberately unleashed to suppress, not just people's basic lives but their educational and social development references as well. As should be gleaned from the chapter, the complexity of the issues that pertain to these historical-into-contemporary contexts and outcomes need to be ascertained with the systematic decommissioning of the Eurocentric deconstructions of Africa's socio-cultural and learning platforms. These platforms included the traditionally embedded philosophical and educational philosophy systems that were foundational to the way Africans thought about, related to, interacted with, impacted and were impacted by their social and physical ecologies, and thrived over millennia. In analytical intermediary terms, I have connected the issues to their epistemic and philosophical trajectories and to select European thought leaders who, in totalizing falsehoods, acted as the de-ethical apologists for the colonial project, thus creating a fabricated image of the continent that was multiply demeaning, and extendedly dehumanizing. To counter these philosophical and educational mythologies which have been perforce pragmatized through colonialism (as most enduring myths become real for willing believers) and with the educational philosophical terrain in 'postcolonial' Africa as still fairly connected to that, I have suggested the need for philosophical and educational philosophies reconstructions for Africanized education and social well-being.

Via the anticolonial constructions of African philosophies of education especially, the main points should be responsive to describing and analyzing the generally major philosophical questions which, although should always be locally formulated, could still have widened global interfaces and connectivity. That is, what systems of learning and teaching do African desire and need in these so-called globally interconnected and networked times. Such primary point should consequence the rational query of why specific categories of education should take precedence over other possibilities, all complemented by the critical methodological question of how such reconstructions should be designed and implemented for inclusive individual and community advancement and wellbeing. Indeed to recall de novo, Amilcar Cabral's timeless analysis, culturally de-sourced peoples cannot achieve development, which should take us back, with the appreciation of the implicated *Sankofa*[1] praxis, to his 'return to the source' prospect (Cabral, 1973) in cultural, philosophical, educational, and social progress counter-colonialist constructions and reconstructions.

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[1] *Sankofa*, in generalized terms and for my understanding here, is a linguistic/expressive term from the languages of Ghanaian peoples, and serves as an important socio-cultural metaphor to value, indeed to go back and retrieve, what was there before/left behind.

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