

HARNESSING THE FECUND DEPTHS OF HUMAN SUBJECTIVITY: A SELF-RELIANCIST'S THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

No meaningful development ever happens outside considerable ingenuity of the self, stretched beyond the bounds of settled convenience. With this understanding in view, this paper advances a developmental alternative theory for African states, one that is driven by the resilience of the human spirit. It speaks of the transformative powers of the self which lie within the human ontological constitution, although only comes into activity when called upon to do so. It is otherwise described in the paper as human subjectivity, the thinking power of man. But unlike other kinds of power, for instance, electric energy; the human subjective power is inexhaustible and unique. In other words, while electric power depreciates with each usage, the paper contends that the human subjective power gets nourished the more it is put into use. This fact is substantiated in the paper using the German speculative thought on the powers of a reawakened self directed towards social transformation and creative exercise. The significance of the discourse lies in its ability to orient the African states on the best alternative developmental theory, that is, a self-reliancist approach. Thus, the study benefits the developing nations, especially the African who often go cap in hand seeking foreign solutions to localized problems. The research adopts the analytic method of enquiry. However, against the risk of advancing an autarchic state situation, the paper takes cognizance of the fact that no state can absolutely be self-reliant without needing the other. But in needing the other, the self must not be subsumed in the process. It is for this reason that the paper in its final analysis recommends self-mastery as the starting point for the quest for the attainment of self-reliancist theory of development. It consequently submits that only a mastered self is capable of creating order and directing the state towards self-reliancist initiative.

Keywords: Development, Human subjectivity, Self-affirmation, Self-discovery, Self-reliancism

Introduction

Indeed, what has overtime plagued entire humanity and the developing societies in particular is the tendency to often relinquish the course of action and certainty of knowledge to the state of void (that supersensible state which human experience cannot attain), the type which Immanuel Kant describes as the great unknown root of man's mental powers, which he designates with index zero as the limit of human knowledge. It was this form of agnostic approach to reality that German thinkers immediately after Kant rose to react against. Their aim therefore was to develop a new kind of philosophy to safeguard both knowledge and virtue from the subversive doctrines of the era. In other words, German nationalism which received a boost from the philosophies of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, took its cue from the critical thought of Immanuel Kant. The chequered history of the German people, just like that of the Africans and most developing states, reflected a nation that was alienated of its natural share of power.

This of course was not unconnected with imperial experiences encountered in the lordship of Rome and the French.

Thus, the nationalistic consequences of Fichte's philosophy on human subjectivity wore a revolutionary outlook against traditional thought and the revealed knowledge. By the emphasis on human Subjectivity, Fichte's thought radicalized politics, economics and knowledge. Fichte, just like his fellow compatriots immediately after him, sought to challenge mythological account of experience with a view to making human subjectivity the basis of knowledge as opposed to the revealed or bequeathed knowledge. The reason for the exploration of human subjectivity therefore, is to develop the human cognitive possibilities. Fichte insists that there is a design in the universe. He posited the human mind, as the legislator of objective experience. In the earlier views of Kant, the outer world causes only the matter of sensation which is ordered by our own mental apparatus in space and time, and supplies the concepts through which experience is apprehended. What then is human subjectivity?

First and foremost, subjectivity in philosophy speaks of one's ability to rely on the inward judgement and powers in relating with the world rather than relying on the outside. Human subjectivity on one hand, speaks of human self-affirmation and authenticity of action. It speaks of the latent powers in man that is capable of not only self-transformation but also the transformation of the world, if properly harnessed. It is geared towards asserting human reality as the point of departure of all earthly possibilities. Human subjectivity is the mental powers of the concrete individual person directed towards meaning making. On the other hand, in like manner, self-reliancist's state theory of development harps on the imperativeness of inward driven development initiatives for the emerging or developing states. Its doctrine orbits around the belief that the powers humans need in transforming self and the society lies within the subjective human reality.

In that order, the task in this essay will be how to unleash these two concepts, vis-a-vis human subjectivity and self-reliancism, on charting a viable development alternative for the developing societies. The research seeks to answer the question; why are some societies degeneratively collapsing while others are consolidating and advancing in every facet of life? The paper's immediate intervention locates the problem of arrested development in the black hole of what it calls 'agentive notion of causality' which is a primitive mentality towards progress. Agentive causality in developmental terms is, first, the thinking or reasoning from the position of helplessness, that is, the belief that nothing moves until there is an exertion of external force. It is a form of reasoning from the position of a weakling, a victim. This happens both at the level of the individual self-development and at the level of state developmental policies and actions. Such attitude breeds weak leadership, weak institutions and continuous search for foreign/external help in resolving localized problems. Developing nations are grossly culpable of this approach. They are often seen jettisoning the core mandate of engaging the human mind in problem solving for a quick and easy fix alternative, in which case creative and critical thinking become perceived as avoidable drudgeries. It is a no brainer to hold that this has been the bane of Africa's intractable leadership crisis. To understand the true picture of Africa's developmental predicament, the discussion shall take off with a quick overview of Walter Rodney's thought on: development, Africa's development and underdevelopment. This is to be able to understand and appreciate where the current Africa states are coming from.

Against this backdrop, the paper shall enrich the discussion by engaging the German Philosophic System; vis-a-vis Johann Gottlieb Fichte's idea of the finite ego/human subjectivity otherwise known as the inner powers of man. The discussion on the unfathomable inner powers of the human mind to transform self and the society shall dovetail into the philosophy of Self-reliancism as properly articulated by Kolawole Ogundowe. The rationale for the choice of this author on this very theme is that his treatment of this theory encapsulates a viable developmental option, most especially for the developing states. The argument of the

author is that self-reliance, the philosophy of a new world order, is the sine qua non for the 'new states' search for authentic development. Ogundowole uses the term 'New States' to represent those deprived, colonized, developing and economically backward societies, most of which are found on the African continent. Hence, the work thus argues that, for any meaningful development to take place, it ought and must be inward driven. It further notes that "nothing is impossible with the man relying on the self in him. Only the self-reliant or self-reliant like Economic structures are likely to register meaningful development" (Ogundowole, 2007, p.28).

Africa's Developmental Predicament: A Clue from Walter Rodney

In looking at what development is, Rodney reveals that development in human society is multi-faceted. At one hand, from the individual perspective, it means "increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline and material well being ... At the level of social groups, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships" (Rodney, 1972, pp.1-2). At the other hand, development could be used in relation to economic sense. This, again, raises the question-what then is economic development? In looking at this, Rodney explains that a society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity depends on the extent to which the laws of nature are understood (pp. 2-3).

A reference is made to the people of China, how they discovered these wonders of nature and worked on it to the betterment of the Chinese society. Although there was increase in production owing to changes in and tenure and ownership, all of these ended up creating another form of social problem called inequalities because a tiny minority monopolized access and means of production. For Rodney therefore, this justifies why development ought not only be viewed squarely in economic terms, "but rather as an overall social process which is dependent upon the outcome of man's efforts to deal with his natural environment" (p.5).

He maintains that while all societies could be said to have experienced development, it is also true that the rate of such development varied from one continent to the other. In Africa for instance, using Egypt as a case study, Egypt had the ability of producing wealth in abundance twenty five centuries ago. This was because the people had a mastery of many scientific and natural laws; through "their invention of technology to irrigate, grow food and extract minerals from the sub-soil" (p.9). It could be admitted that development was not even in all Africa societies, this was because each of the societies in Africa had different experiences. In some places for instance, political and religious patterns affected each other, with one often dovetailing into another. The religious assumption that a certain forest was sacred, for instance, was the kind of element in the superstructure which hampered economic activity and the quest for scientific exploration (ibid). However, because of the many-sided nature of development as Rodney pointed out, rather than continue to harp on economic or noneconomic senses of development, the interest of this current discourse centers on how those economically deprived societies (Africa in particular), and the individuals therein can focus their attention on that which nature had given to them with which they can transform the self and the environment. Thus, the work advocates for development that is humanly inward driven. Rightly captured by Iniobong Udoidem (1991, p.45), "for both socioeconomic and political conditions are contingent on the individual person's development".

On the question of underdevelopment, Rodney points out that it is not a question of absence of development, in that, every society had a form of development either in a greater or lesser extent. However, underdevelopment only makes sense when juxtaposed with

development. It shows that development has not been on even plane. Thus, underdevelopment, strictly speaking, talks about the pace of developmental activities in different human groups (Rodney, (p.15). The forgoing point on underdevelopment thus eliminates the view that African societies never experienced development prior to the arrival of the colonial intruders as some European race supremacists would have one believe. Just like in the 18th century, when Britain began to grow wealthier, many Russians were very concerned about their country being backward in relation to other economies like England, France and Germany (ibid). The point here is that development and underdevelopment become laudable when viewed in comparative terms.

Underdevelopment in modern sense talks about a particular relationship of exploitation vis-à-vis, the exploitation of one country by another. Any country that is tagged underdeveloped today is as a result of exploitation either in the past or present, colonial or neocolonial. According to Rodney, “African and Asian societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers” (ibid). This of course ended up in depriving such societies of the benefits of their natural resources and labour. Unfortunately enough, such development was made worse by the fact that even Africans themselves had come to accept such state of affairs with great equanimity of mind and consequently, doubted their capacity to transform and develop their natural environment (Rodney without external reliance, 1972, P. 25). That is what Rodney described as “cultural and psychological crisis”. For those who reason under such mindset, effort geared at development through reliance on the self would amount to futility. The objective of this paper, again, is to dispel such erroneous thinking by proposing a self-reliancist approach as the most workable approach to development.

However, reading Rodney, there seems to be some sort of category mistake in his two claims: first, his attempt to place the present economic cum political quagmire of the African societies squarely on the altar of colonialism and imperialism; second, his attribution of underdevelopment in African societies to lack of industries and technologies. These two claims are disingenuous. African continent was not the only place where these heinous activities took place. The Latin America and the Asian continent all had the same experience within the said period as Africa. It is a known fact that greater number of these societies which were hitherto classified alongside Africa as third world nations have risen above their predicaments both politically and economically, with Asia as a leading light in that category. For that reason, Africa cannot afford to fold its hands and keep blaming colonialism for its predicament, almost hundred years after gaining independence. It is only an unskillful workman who continues to quarrel with his tools. Political independence has set Africa loose. What still holds her down is greed, inability of leadership to transcend private interest to public good, lack of courage to say no when saying yes will be against national interest and the lack of will to carve out an identity for the African people.

Again, the claim that one of the principal parts of underdevelopment is lack of industrialization and lack of technology is highly debatable. Although, this excuse may be said to be admissible in Rodney’s days, the case is quite different today. The point is, since then, there has been more and more industrial productions moved to the third world, yet the third world’s developmental predicament remains intractable. Therefore, it is sufficed to hold that underdevelopment, in contemporary terms, does not necessarily mean lack of industrialization just as development should not be equated with industrialization. If the essence of industrialization and technological know-how is to serve foreign economy’s interest rather than to aid the receiving states to be co-creators and inventors in arts and sciences, such activities

will end up further perpetuating underdevelopment in the receiving states. It is evident today that some of the third world states are industrialized to a great length, still the corresponding population experience few benefits from such industrialization because their presence only serves foreign interest rather than that of the home states.

The missing link that is deducible between Africa's underdevelopment and the quest for development is education for self-reliance. It simply means education for youth enlightenment and empowerment. This type of education system is one built on the solid foundations of philosophy and culture and acts as backgrounders to the sum total upbringing of the African child. Its aim is to instill discipline, honesty, commitment to and belief in motherland, obedience, loyalty and respect for father land, patriotism, prudence and the will power to succeed in every endeavour.

It is one that ensures the authenticity of words and actions and above all, the wisdom to turn every adversity into advantage (Okoro, 2009, pp.40-42). Africa cannot afford to remain a bad workman. It must redefine and reaffirm itself. The art of the strong wanting to often lord over the weak is a fundamental character replete with all living creatures. If Africa, as an acclaimed cradle of civilization, had gotten its acts right before the Europeans, who says it would not have probably been the one to colonize and exploit the whites? Put differently, the event of being colonized should not be taken as an alibi for self-surrender and inauthenticity of action.

It is for the foregoing reason that the imperativeness of this current discourse about human subjectivity and self-reliance cannot be overemphasized, especially with respect to the continent of Africa where the wind of globalization, although with its own benefits, seems to be blowing off the need for authentic selfhood and the courage for self-affirmation. With "the aggressive imposition of a particular eccentric culture, eccentric value system, element or elements therefrom, on human civilization and world development process" (Ogundowole, 2004:188) continues to have a dapping effects on the weaker societies of the world.

Human Subjectivity and Self-reliance: What are they about?

A lot has been said about human subjectivity in the preceding introductory section. Notwithstanding therefore, subjectivity in philosophy speaks of one's ability to rely on the inward judgement and powers in relating with the world rather than relying on the outside. In other words, it is when one's world is shaped, reshaped and sharpened by the innate instincts. It is the latent inner powers of the concrete human being which is unique to each individual and through which human feelings, perceptions and interpretations of experience is made possible. From Descartes to Hegel, and to virtually all the continental thinkers, human subjectivity is the reality of a thinking being, the I am. The ability to think is the first point of departure in affirming human uniqueness. Put differently therefore, human subjectivity is the innate powers by which one affirms, redefines and actualizes earthly possibilities. It lies fallow in each individual until it is called up into use. Subjectivity defines the subject as a thinking and distinct being.

Self-reliance, as espoused by Ogundowole, is an alternative state theory of development which comes about from the struggle between the capitalist ideology and socialist ideology. It is a concept targeted at giving the developing states a footing for progress. In a world so polarized between poor states and rich states, the urge for 'do it yourself' becomes a natural product of the passion for self-defence in the face of unfathomable forces, which tend to suppress, oppress with the intent to keep one in a perpetual subjugation and in a beggarly state. Providing further clarification, Ogundowole explains that:

Self-reliance is the realization of the principle of self-reliance. It is the ideology or orientation based on this principle. As a set of purposive activities directed towards self-realization. It demands that the entire activities of a people be organized into definite set of preferences and priorities in which one set may be admitted preferences and priorities which one set may be admitted but only when more important alternative are not pressed. (1988, p.71).

Hence, an essential attribute to self-reliance is conscious purposive activity. There has to be a clear direction for any policy and the accompanying activities. It comes as a consequence of social and historical development of man. There has to be a breakaway from a neocolonialist structure which the new states are caught up with, to a do it yourself philosophy. The author is of the opinion that what has been lacking in African states is a consistent direction and logical starting point to solve their problem; hence self-reliance should be the starting point.

Ogundowole further makes a clear distinction between self-reliance and self sufficiency. For him, a thing is self-sufficient when it is in need of nothing outside of itself. In sharp contrast, self-reliance means that a nation and a nation alone, must create and provide its entire people's needs and requirements entirely and absolutely from within its natural limited resource flow (ibid, p.73).

Again since no nation can provide all its needs, self-reliance makes room for inter-play among nations in so far as such interplay does not breed exploitations, injustice and winner takes all situation. The point the author holds strongly is that; "self-reliant society is thus the consequence of socio-historical development of mankind. It is its next stage. In a sense, it is unavoidable, but at the same time, the majority's choice of a future" (Ogundowole, 2007, pp. 27-28) for the developing states.

Tapping into Human Subjectivity: the German idealist Paradigm

No doubt, one major problem that has bedeviled developing societies is the unavailability of creative statesmen. In other words, it is the absence of what Plato calls philosopher king. These creative statesmen are men of developed minds who have undergone through a rigorous mental training and are therefore adequately equipped to confront leadership challenges. These uncommon types of men are system builders, wealth creators and society stabilizers, who in their process of acting, chart a new course for humanity.

Today, as observable in virtually all developing states (Africa in particular); economies, systems, institutions and ethical standard continue to collapse in remorseless succession. It is amid these seemingly intractable challenges that the need to do-it-yourself kind of philosophy becomes highly imperative. As earlier observed, German idealism rose as a response to a system in dire need of reconstruction, a system under siege and a "nation under the noses of the occupying forces" (Breazeale, 1993, p.147) of the French army. Prussia, much more than Western Germany, was culturally less advantaged. It was not surprising that Kant, Fichte and Hegel spent more time trying to fashion out a system which will enable the German nation as a whole to take its proper position. According to Russell,

Prussia, however, though politically redominant, was culturally less advanced than much of western Germany. This explains why many eminent Germans, including Goethe did not regret Napoleon's success at Jena (Russell, 1946, p.692).

Fichte's memorable address to the German nation stirred that immense sense of patriotism and to explore the inexhaustible prowess of human subjectivity for the development of the society. He “attempted to kindle a sense of distinctively German patriotism and outlined a program of national education for this purpose... and subsequently exercised a wide influence upon the development of German nationalist sentiment” (Breazeale, p.147). He maintained that anything in the world is ordered by the ego. Human subjectivity is the master of the phenomena world; it is the ego that legislates on the phenomena, the organizer of the world. In building social institutions and development pattern, emphasis ought to be placed on the boundless capacities and creative ingenuities of the human mind as the unifying unity. In analyzing the creative processes of the mind, what it gears towards is the physical transformation of the universe, the mental process by which we give form, direction and order our creative actions, and the autonomy of mind to navigate freely without any kind of deterministic tendencies. As further captured by Breazeale, Fichte insisted that “the practical power is the innermost root of the I; and basing itself upon this insight, it attempts to demonstrate that our freedom itself is a theoretical determining principle of the world” (p.148).

Kant, on his part, had ultimate intention, in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, to demonstrate the creative and inventive powers of the human mind and to show how the mind proceeds to create or invent ideas with which it organizes the world. He however ended up leaving his readers halfway when he got to the question of the noumena reality or the transcendental realm. This vacuum was later filled by Fichte with the demonstration that both phenomena and noumena, the physical and the non-physical world are penetrable and reconstructible by purposive human ingenuity. According to Schroeder,

One of Kant's central claims is that the unity of the perceived world presupposed the unity of the ego - the ego sustains the world's coherence. Fichte discovered a different way to show the relative dependence of the world on the transcendental ego. He interpreted this ego as a dynamic, active process that is both self-aware (subject) and self-expressed (object) at once (Schroeder, 2005, p.23).

Fichte discovered his fundamental principle at the instance of Kant's system which ended up creating a vacuum. The noumena realm, we could recall, was the realm Kant says, is beyond the apprehensive ability of the human mind. He divided reality into phenomena and the noumena. However, while the phenomena is knowable by the mind, the noumena is beyond the realm of human experience. In other words, for him, the mind cannot go beyond the world of experience. Any attempt by the mind to transverse the phenomena world, Kant says, will result to what he calls “an antinomie, a contradiction...these antinomies served as a sign of warning that the mind had got beyond the limit of its own legitimate use”(Mead, 1936, p.86). Fichte debunked the concept- of the noumena and insisted that reality only consists of the phenomena world, and this world is organized by the ego, human subjectivity. He developed a system in which every claim flowed from a single principle. Fichte discovered his fundamental principle at the core of Kant's system: the transcendental unity of apperception, the source of self –identity. He thought that to leave the Kantian noumena to subsist would perpetuate

agentive causality which is capable of ushering in a life of resignation i.e abandoning human cause of action to fate and determinism.

On the contrary, Fichte contends that the transcendental ego authorizes itself to institute norms that will organize empirical action. By this, he unifies both the ego and the world and sees it as two sides of a coin. In other words, both the subjects and the object are two ways of viewing man. The ego for Fichte organizes and unifies the world. It institutes order in the midst of chaos. It is the transcended ego that manifests itself in all human activities. In this way of speaking, the prior divide that had existed in the Kantian noumena and phenomena world is eliminated. "The transcendental ego strives to realize itself in all human activity, knowing, acting and creating" (Schroeder, 2005. P.23).

Fichte's concern therefore is to expose the finite reason of the human mind for the transformation of the society. Human subjectivity for him is the legislator of the universe. Therefore, the call to human subjectivity is a call for self-mastery, self-reliant and authenticity of action. The exploration of human subjectivity shows the primal position that man occupies in the scheme of things. The primevality of thought in the view of Fichte, is the foundation of existence and at the same time, what sustains existence. The emphasis on human subjectivity points to the unbounded potential of man's transcendental powers by which order is instituted in the midst of disorder. For Okoro:

This inner power is an unfathomable ability that lies dormant and needs to be explored and used. The interesting thing about this Inner ability is that it can be directed to any dimension or function we want it to assume (Okoro, 2008, p.53).

This form of ability transcends and does not conflate with book or academic intelligence. But rather, it is the natural capacity for effective and efficient management of human and material resources.

Human Subjectivity and Situation Management

The main aim of exploring human subjectivity is for system building and situation management. Institutions, over time, are built but one major problem which has remained intractable, most especially in the developing societies, is how to get astute managers to man those institutions and guide them into achieving the purposes in which they were created. Of course, there is no way to talk about astute leadership and situation management without talking about human freedom. In other words, it is impossible to have creative statesmen without self-discovery. Fichte talks about how the ego strives to actualize itself, and this process for him is in the continuum. Citing Fichte, Schroeder, again, writes:

The actualization of the transcendental ego is thus a continuous process of striving and transformation, a process that unifies actions with their achievement producing harmony between subjects and objects (Schroeder, 2005, p.24).

What is meant here is that at the bottom of every management process is self-realisation. That is, one must discover who one is, what one's potentials and capabilities are. The problem of developing societies, particularly the African, is the inability of self-assessment. That is, placing square pegs in square holes. For human subjectivity to be properly harnessed, skill

evaluations, environmental awareness and the ability to master same, ought to be the criteria for ascension into leadership position.

Self-Discovery, Self-Affirmation and the Discovery of Others

Thales, an ancient Greek thinker, was asked by his interlocutors; what was the most difficult thing? He responded, to know thyself. It was from this reason that Socrates was credited with the maxim 'man know thyself', for an unexamined life is not worth living. Even long before Socrates, one of Confucius disciples, Tse Lao, had asked him; what constitutes the higher man? He replied, The cultivation of himself with reverential care. Influenced by Confucius, Tse Lao concluded that he who knows others is- learned; he who knows himself is wise.

Therefore, Ekwutosi posits that "self-discovery implies one accepting the truth of who one is and making effort to live out that truth and to improve on it if need be" (Ekwutosi, 2003, p.85). It goes hand in hand with identity discovery and affirmation. The point which is deducible from the above is that the transformation of society is aided by self-realization. To transform the human society, one ought to first and foremost transform oneself. From the discovery of the self, one proceeds to discover other people and things in one's environment. The discovering of oneself is the first point of embarkation towards self and societal redemption and it is also the first point of affirmation of human subjectivity.

Descartes, in his Meditation, set out to prove this very fact. This is contained in his popular statement *cogito, ergo-sum* "I think, therefore, I am", meaning that thinking or individual subjectivity is the starting point of any human person. Discovering of oneself is very crucial in the process of reconstructing human society. In defending the imperativeness of human subjectivity, Descartes emphasized further in the second meditation on first philosophy that not even a malicious demon is capable of implanting convincingly a delusion in his mind as to doubt his own existence and subjectivity. Thus, Descartes says: if I think that I am being deceived to believe that I exist, then my thinking so correctly implies that I must exist before I could be deceived (Descartes, 1968, p.103). For Fichte, the ego in the process of actualizing itself, actualizes the non-ego also. in other words, not only is the question of self discovery beneficial to the individual self, it is also beneficial to others because in the process of discovering oneself, the discovery of others equally happens concurrently, showing that human beings have a shared existence. That is why Heidegger would insist that Dasein (man) is a being-with others (Heidegger, 1962, pp.231-232).

Okoro summarizes it thus. "For there to be cohesion and stability within any organization, there must be inter-subjective discourse amongst members of that organization. It is through this process that the attitudes of cooperation and conciliation can, be developed" (2013, p.9). Philosophy is a science and must therefore be based on "a fundamental proposition which is understandable and self evidently true. This fundamental proposition is that the ego affirms its own being" (Omogbe, 1996, p.181). This opens up the discussion on self-affirmation as a necessary requirement for the mastery of the self and the environment. The point deducible from the discussion on human subjectivity is that firstly, the subject of experience affirms its own being. Secondly, the object of experience is opposed to the subject. Thirdly, both the ego and the non-ego are finite with each being limited by the other.

Strictly speaking, self-affirmation and self-discovery cannot be separated from each other. Self-discovery cannot be fully realized except in self-affirmation and self-affirmation in itself presupposes self-discovery. According to Ekwutosi, self affirmation is not simply "courage to be" (as Paul Tillich would have us believe), it is not "will to be" (according to Nietzsche). It is

not "power of being" (as in Spinoza), it is not "endurance" or "self-sacrifice" (as proposed by the stoics). It is neither "fortitude" (as embraced by Socrates) nor "development of the human aura" (as opined by Lobsang Rampa) (Ekwutosi, 2003, P. 91). However, self-affirmation embraces all of these. It is simply being fully oneself. For Skorupski,

Self-affirmation is self-direction which implies the development of the self. It is not the cultivation of human beings according to conventional wisdom of society. Neither is it a process of unexamined, underrated growth. It is rather self-governed by which each person chooses his own plan for himself. His character is his own responsibility (Skorupski, 1987, p.348).

The summary of it all is that "self-affirmation is a path created by waiting on it. It is through it that one experiences the thrill of one's unique personality. As such, one begins to distinguish real self from borrowed self (Ekwutosi, pp.91-92). Therefore, for the human subjectivity to begin to play its role as the centre of gravity in system and societal reconstruction, it must be under the atmosphere of freedom wherein it can freely master and affirm itself.

No development can occur in the absence of freedom, because without freedom we are in bondage, and bondage is slavery, which is the lowest degradation to which human nature can fall, which is the very opposite of development. There can be no development if men are ignorant, intimidated, poor and sick in body and mind... There is no development if man himself, is not developed in his body and in his mind (Ellah, 1987, pp.44-45).

Authentic leadership in any society is that which is committed to the course 'of action via which the people discover their essences. The decadence in most developing societies as evident in different parts of the African states, all points to the fact that there seems to be scarcity of creative statesmen who can match words with actions. A leader is termed weak if one lacks the coercive power to assert one's authority in decision making and execution. "Thus, the first preliminary step towards a sound and genuine politics (leadership) is the emergence, within the state, of a creative political genius and inventor. The political superman is the one who must furnish the place in which poet, artist and thinker as well as those who lack the will and moral stamina to create own work, will find the right footing. Only a political genius can assure both private and public security and preside over "the, regulation of motives" which alone makes society possible" (Unah, 2002, p.32). These creative statesmen ought to take charge of every facet of the society. They must be above sentiments and primordial emotion. They must be able to explore the full instrument of the state in achieving a greater happiness for the greater number of people.

Understanding Development in Self-reliancism

The postulation of the idea of self-reliancism relates to the progressive level of the individuals as well as that of the entire society. A progressive state is a developing state. It is awkward to regard a society as developed or developing if its social, political, economic and cultural realities are depreciating or static. Development involves the ability of a people to confront, transform and affect positively on the present condition; ability to combat societal problems culminating in the comfort and happiness of citizens. As captured by Uduidem (1991, p.51), it "consists in the people's capacity to harness the resources within their reach, manipulate them to their own advantage". All of these lie in the powers of human subjectivity as the sole

purposive, dynamic and creative agent of the physical universe. Right from the stone-age, humans had always devised means of combating forces of nature that militated against the development of the human society and had always fashioned out ways of improving the human harsh environmental condition. From the ancient period, philosophers also put forward ideas that culminated in the transformation of society and the human condition. Therefore, a fact that is difficult to erase is that development, in all its facets, is about the people. In other words, the people are the ones who determine the path development should follow. It then follows that development is the creative ingenuity of man who relies on the self in him. This was demonstrated in the stone-age, the ancient time, the age of science and the contemporary time. As such, development came either as by product of an effort to surmount an existing problem or a way of improving on the already existing structure.

Although Rodney and many African philosophers have continued to maintain that colonialism is the bane of development in developing states' desire for self-realisation; while this position may have some credibility, it also needs to be stated that such credibility is a reflection of their perception of what development is and what it is not. Development for them, it seems, is synonymous with decolonization, liberation and political independence..

There are also those who conceive development from a material perspective. Man's prosperity in Francis Bacon's perception lies in his ability to master the forces of nature and cause nature to serve his needs by means of scientific discoveries and inventions (Kharin, 1981, p.216). Man changes the climatic conditions of his life by watering deserts during marshland and altering the course of rivers. His production activity also influences his climatic condition in that the burning of oil, coal, and peat return about tons of carbon to the atmosphere (ibid). Therefore, as man is the problem through his activities, he is also the solution. Consequently, Ogundowole charges that the best use of nature's environment be made in order to create what is not readily available to humans. This is what he understands as development because it springs from human creativity. That is, the use of the resources of geosphere, imagination and unprecedented ingenuity to achieve overall social objectives. In other words, when perceived from this sense, development becomes not so much a matter of what a nation has, but what it does with what it has (Ogundowole, 2004, p.92). Although he appears to support the idea of exploiting nature's resources to improve man's material wellbeing, he warns that such must be done with adequate understanding of the needs and level of sophistication of a people. This is necessary because technology is a product of specific need of people and how they can best satisfy it. For this reason, development becomes the application of the creative ingenuity of a people to evolve a technology that is related to their needs. This makes technological transfer not suitable and beneficial to development quest of the developing states. Instead, what is needed is a progress enhancing development which originates from a people's independent reaction to their peculiar challenges.

Development that enhances progress is not, and cannot be a matter of applying sophisticated technology to the problems of backwardness in the developing states. Technology is the product of peculiar types of activity carried out by certain people at a particular period of their development. Technological development is the practical product of these activities and it is meant to enhance the performance of these activities. Hence, for Ogundowole, the development of technology should be determined, dictated by specific needs and specific knowledge of how to satisfy these needs (ibid, p.90). In this regard, he reasons that development should be dynamic and should involve the ability of a people to adapt to changing circumstances, the realization of the fact that new solutions outlive their usefulness. He maintains that the conception of solutions is better internally. Development, he insists, is like ambition, which a people cannot receive from another. Development involves the transformation or complete abolition of all that will disrupt the process of self-realization. Development is self-reliance, the ability of a people to uphold progress (pp.91-93).

Making a distinction between development and progress, he says that development is a broader concept and is multi-dimensional. Development may merely mean a mechanical motion, the spatial displacement of object. It may mean forward and backward; upward, sideways and downward movement. When it lingers back, it is seen as regress. When it is merely oscillating and without established trajectory, it becomes self-canceling motion and seen as movement without motion. Development only becomes progressive when it is upward or forward moving. Progress therefore is essentially an upward/forward trust motion along an optional trajectory (ibid, pp.94-96). For this reason, the developing states need pursue vigorously programme along the self-reliancist ideal.

Evaluation

Due to the failures of the forces of socialism and capitalism to successfully deliver the needed happiness to the people of the developing states, it is enough to conclude that, perhaps, the developing states ought to embrace a more realistic approach to development. This more realistic alternative, no doubt, is no other than an approach which teaches the new states how to fish rather than being spoon-fed with fishes. This work, to an extent, equally agrees with Ogundowole and Rodney on the belief that colonialism contributed in no small measure to the economic woes of the developing states, most especially the African states. Other writer who shares this view concerning colonialism is Onimode (1981, p.80). He agrees that the exercise which existed between Nigeria and the Britain for instance, was essentially “the search for a cheap and steady supply of raw materials for British factories, market expansion for the mass production of manufactured goods, outlet for surplus capital, and employ idle labour.

A more devastating evil of colonialism arises from the fact that the stealing of human beings, aside exploitation of materials, is not only a bane on the development of the new states on the face value, but also the expropriation of the potential surplus of the new states. These and more in the views of the author culminated in the subjugationist tendency which is destroying the developing states. Therefore, the analysis of the self-reliancist theory as a developmental alternative, reveals an international environment where states strive for survival in a hostile world arena. As such, self reliancism is an attempt to redress this lopsided relationship among states, which are antagonistic to the development possibilities of the new states. It is to this extent that the work departs from the blame game and charges the developing states to take their destinies into their hands and chart a new developmental course.

An initial reading of self-reliancism or the expression of self-reliance may convey an impression of a philosophy of isolation, a state with an autarchic status which relies only on itself to provide for all that it needs. How realistic is this (although an erroneous assumption) in an international environment of interdependence among states and global emergence of regional integration? Does this not present self-reliance and self-reliancism as an obsolete and unrealistic idea and philosophy respectively, in a co-operative international environment?

To be sure, self-reliancism, on the contrary, promotes a better international solidarity and interdependence among states in this contemporary global world order. Self-reliancism does not preach isolationism nor does it lay claim to self-sufficiency. What self-reliancism emphasizes is that such interaction should be based on the principles of justice. Integration should be the free choice of a people and should eliminate the exploitative vices and obviously unjust system which encumber previous inter-states relations, especially between capitalist subjugationism and the developing states. Hence, a rejection of the hitherto unhealthy interaction will see to the birth of a New International Economic along a self-reliancist path of development. For instance, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) initiative recognizes the historical and colonial roots of Africa’s underdevelopment and argues for a self-reliant future for Africa: “ the hopes of Africa’s people for a better life can no longer rest on the magnanimity of others”. (cf Kanbur, 2002, p.3). This further reinforces the compatibility of

the idea of self-reliance with regional integration. Article four of the African Economic Treaty, establishing the African Economic Community has part of the following:

-To promote economic, social, and cultural development and African economics in order to increase economic self-reliance and an indigenous and self-sustained development.

-To establish, on a continental scale, a framework for the development, mobilization and utilization of the human and material resources of Africa in order to achieve a self-reliant development (Ndulo, 2001, p.1)

From what Ogundowole reveals, a fundamental idea pervasive in the notion of self-reliance and the philosophy of self-reliance is the concept of freedom. All along, the discussion in this work has continued to harp around autonomy to decide, freedom of action, independently charting a new developmental path, right and ability to set goals, homogenous solution to problems, expression of one's freedom of choice. Therefore, a critical view of the notion of self-reliance and the philosophy of self-reliance shows that both represent a philosophy of freedom. The desire to be free is part of the reality of the human person. It is part of the reality of human existence who always seeks to transcend its present state towards higher transcendence, "to move beyond what is to what is not, to exercise greater freedom" (Unah, 2002:70). Thinking, planning, resolving and deciding are realities of human freedom. They emanate from reflections on man's existential condition. It cannot be done for one by another. The need to do it yourself further re-inforces the demand for self-reliance. It also re-enforces the need not to give up one's independence, which is fundamental to, and at the same time, a quality of the human person. Self-reliance, therefore, becomes indispensable in our quest for a sustainable development and freedom. To allow decisions about a state to be taken by others is to give-up one's independence. Hence, Sarah (2007, p.27) sums up this view thus: "without freedom there is no solid human growth, no healthy human relations, no possibility of advancement and no faithfulness. Hence the urgency of attaining a demanding and responsible freedom."

Conclusion

What is instructive in the treatment and analysis so far orbits around the fact that the knowledge of self-reliance theory should form a conscious basis for redirecting a developing state's path towards developmental quest. This process will take the form of independently formulating policies, and setting goals for the realization of a society where the contributions of various segments in the society are annexed for sustainable development. On the basis of this, it is important to raise a very vital question on self-reliance theory. Could self-reliance and its principles be a flawless postulate, which heralds all-round salvation for the developing states? Ogundowole in his response does not think so. Also, for Ikoku, the path towards self-realization of self-reliance is not an easy one. It is a path with which difficulties encumber (Ikoku, 1980, p.90). Ikoku however insists that, although it is not an easy run for the actualization of self-reliance, a consistent effort must be put to fully actualize its reality.

As to the question whether there can be any nation which is totally self-reliant? For Ogundowole, the answer is in the negative; "no society is self-reliant in the absolute sense or probably ever will be" (Ogundowole, 1988, p.160). He however admits that some societies come closer to it than others "and in recent history, mankind has been approximating it bit by bit all long. That is, history in the modern times; people's struggles to be self-dependent, for self-reliance" (p.160).

The salient points in this discourse are as follows: that self-reliance is a philosophy of freedom. It is a philosophy which encourages the promotion of the positive cultural values of a people and a product of a disciplined self. It is a philosophy which emphasizes the possibility of multi-dimensional solution to the problems of man, society and nature. It is a philosophy that invites co-operation without exploitation, a philosophy that recognizes inter-dependence, not isolation or an autarchic existence. It equally insists on the need towards personal development and self-actualization through learning and improvement.

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