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Intercultural postcolonial dialogue, factoring fanon in the hegelian foreclosure: the master-slave dialectic and the african postcolonial condition

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We cannot trample upon the humanity of others without devaluing our own. The Igbo, always practical, put it concretely in their proverb *Onye ji onye n'ani ji onwe ya: 'He who will hold another down in the mud must stay in the mud to keep him down.*

- Chinua Achebe, <u>The Education of a British-Protected Child</u>

Abstract

The master-slave dialectic, otherwise known as the lord-bondsman dialectic is a major scene in Hegel's narrative understanding of the journey to absolute knowing in his Phenomenology of the Spirit. However, this narrative, when interposed by Fanon's Master-slave colonial dialectic, mirrors politico-cultural discourses of identity, identification and power in asymmetrical relations. Narrowed to the postcolonial context of Europe and Africa, it permits the tracing of the entangled and mangled relations subsisting between Europe and Africa and the dialogic option available. Deploying the conceptual frame of Intercultural Dialogue and historical-Postcolonial intercultural analysis, the study could establish patterns of hegemony and forced dependency that could benefit from intercultural dialogic mediation.

Keywords: *Intercultural postcolonial dialogue, Master-slave dialectic, Franz Fanon, Dialogue, African postcolonial condition, Friedrich G.W. Hegel*

Introduction

In 2017, I submitted a translation article on postcolonial textual dialogue to a journal for consideration and possible publication. The paper contextualised Hall's postulation on the mutual inclusion of the self in the other and

the other in the self. I deployed Hall's position not only to argue favourably on the possibility of dialogue between the self and the other to perhaps resolve extant mutual conflict between them but similarly applied the position to textual dialogic relations between supposedly former colonizer and colonized. One of the reviewers was not happy that I credited Hall with that argument and referred me to Hegel's master-slave dialectic as precursor and source of Hall's claim. The reviewer was, however, definitive that there was no possibility of dialogue between the master and the slave. I looked for Hegel's master-slave dialectic tucked within his "phenomenology of the spirit". It was a tough read from my very moderate philosophy background. I also found Frantz Fanon's response to Hegel. I resubmitted my reworked paper arguing that in the context of the overall discourse of my paper, dialogue was, at least, probable. The paper was turned down, a major point of rejection being that it was ideologically disagreeable.

This paper reexamines the master-slave narrative, the Lord-bondsman dialectic, of Hegel and Fanon's intervention within the entangled and mangled relationship between Europe/the West and Africa hinged on the cultural and power politics of identity and identification and positioning this relationship within the imperative of intercultural dialogue. The study privileged the concepts of dialogue and intercultural dialogue as framework and adopts historical-Postcolonial intercultural analysis that allows the establishment of relational patterns of asymmetry and inequalities that necessitate dialogic mediation.

The struggle for existence and freedom

Hegel in his phenomenology of the Spirit discusses the various ways by which consciousness develops self-consciousness leading it to absolute knowing. In a major scene in this discursive journey known as 'the master-servant dialectic' or Lord-bondsman dialectic, Hegel provides an abstract ontological narrative that exclusively details a specific form of human relationship based on domination and subservience or dependency and the struggle in-between for dignity and complete freedom of a human identity.

The relationship is between two consciousnesses (beings-in-existence), who are only 'self-recognizing-others' to each other but each of whom needs to be recognized by the other as a 'self-conscious being' for it to attain true 'self-consciousness' – "a cognitive awareness of the self and its relation to the other and the world" (Villet, 2011, p.40) by which the consciousness attains the unity of itself, its value and freedom or independence as a full human identity. "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself" says Hegel, "when and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it only exists in being acknowledged"

(Hegel 1977, p.111). The hypothetical narrative contextualises the dialectical process by which an individual human being not only takes full cognizance of who he is and his place in the universe but seeks to validate his existence as a truly free and dignified human being. An underlying issue is whether the individual self can really attain this validation of its existence independent of other human beings.

The narrative pointedly begins with the stage of 'consciousness' by which the subject(self) becomes aware of object existence outside itself and moves to the stage of 'self-consciousness' in which the subject develops a sense of 'self-for-itself' by which it is the only and absolute measure for its existence and other object existence ephemerally serve its desire. This self meets another self-consciousness, also the absolute measure of its own existence, and each would validate itself as true self-consciousness 'only' to another self-consciousness (Hegel, 1977, p.113). Each of the two is defined by its difference as another self-consciousness.

In other to validate itself as the only measure for its own existence, each finds the other to be a threat within the context of society (their meeting) and culture (difference in the perception of self and the other). They engaged themselves in a bitter struggle-to-the-death. Each trying to eliminate, exclude or dominate the other in other to assert itself as the only measure for its own existence (see Hegel, 1997, p.114). However, within the dual contexts of society and difference in which both relationally subsist, each must obtain the willing recognition of the other to obtain true self-consciousness, that is, to validate its existence, its value and freedom as a full human being; eliminating one, excluding it or reducing it to a rank less equal to 'self-consciousness' forecloses the possibility of recognition and of any one of them attaining true self-consciousness. This need for each other Hegel rightly qualifies; "a self-consciousness exists for *a self-consciousness*. Only so is it in fact self-consciousness; for only in this way does the unity of itself in its otherness becomes explicit for it" (1977, p. 110).

An excluded and or differentiated other is thus ironically constitutive of the self; the other, as what defines the self, equally embodies the self. The self can neither know itself nor be self except with the constant presence of the other. Hegel puts it thus "Self-consciousness has before it another self-consciousness; it has come outside itself…First it has lost its own self, since it finds itself as an *other* being; secondly, it has thereby sublated that other, for it does not regard the other as essentially real, but sees its own self in the other" (Hegel, 1807, p. 179).Hall (1996)avers to this fact of mutual inclusiveness when he states that there is no identity without the dialogic relationship to the other; the other is not outside but also inside the self, the identity (See also

Eke, 2022, pp. 52-53):

Identity is thus the relationship of the other to oneself:

> Identities are constructed through, not outside, difference.
> This entails the radically disturbing recognition that it is
> only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what
> it is not, to precisely what it lacks, to what has been called its
> *constitutive outside* that the 'positive' meaning of any term
> and thus its 'identity' can be constructed (Hall, 1996, p. 4)

Hall's assertion, presumably, has benefitted from Hegel's Master-Slave dialectic. Hegel deals with the complex problem of identity especially with the claim that an individual becomes a person in the full sense of that word through gaining the acknowledgement of others (Toner, 2009, citing Inwood, 1992, p.245). Self-consciousness is thus not exclusively consciousness of oneself; it is a relation to something other than me in which I relate to myself above all. It is the awareness of another's awareness of oneself by which one becomes aware of oneself only by seeing oneself through the eyes of another (see Houlgate, 2013, p.12). In other words, it takes another like and equal with me in being, who I have so recognized, to recognize me as me in other for me to be me for that other; without this other who is also an 'equal-like-me', I cannot be me. This implies the inclusiveness of oneself in another and another in oneself.

The desire, quest and struggle for this 'mutuality of recognition' and for the attainment of true self-consciousness provide the motion and dynamics for the relationship between the two consciousness. This relationship opens to four possible outcomes. The first is non-recognition in which case each consciousness treats the other as a 'mere thing', an object with no full value, freedom and dignity of a human identity. In the second outcome, each consciousness sees the other as an absolute threat to its own autonomy – "a fight to the death". In the third possibility, a consciousness submits to the other resulting in a master-slave relation (see Honenberger, 2007, p. 154), and in the fourth, both consciousnesses recognize the equal value of each to the other and thus the voluntary interdependency of each on the other to attain true self-consciousness and to validate its existence, its value and freedom as a full human being since the elimination of each by the other is technically the elimination of the self.

Hegel's dialectic explores further the third possibility. One of the combatants values life and submits itself to the other, a master-slave relationship ensues in the struggle. The relationship, however, fails to achieve willing or "proper mutuality of recognition" (Villet, 2011, p.39), but

stagnates in the fight for domination in the quest to obtain recognition and self-consciousness. This is because the master in a position of dominance negates or rejects the self-consciousness of the dominated slave by refusing to recognize it as a consciousness equal to his (the master's own). The master regards the slave as a mere object, lacking independent consciousness, wholly dependent on the master and inessential for the master's attainment of self-consciousness (see Rollins, 2007). The desire of the Hegelian slave to attain self-consciousness is frustrated by this negation. Left to reflect on his subordinated otherness, he finds satisfaction in labour – a process of working and transforming objects through which he rediscovers himself, attains a "mind of his own" (Hegel, 1977, p. 119) and implicitly achieves independent, but not true self-consciousness. The master does not have the privilege of attaining true self-consciousness and the satisfaction of his dominant position becomes dependent on the products created and services rendered by the slave; he thus falls into dependence on the slave (Houlgate, 2013). The relationship of the Hegelian master and slave failed for neither could achieve true self-consciousness because neither recognizes the other as a self-consciousness of equal value and a complementary identity to itself.

The Hegelian dialectic, is subsequently interposed by Fanon's reinterpretation of the same in the colonial master-slave dialectic. Fanon problematizes mutual recognition with the factors of race and violence, which add urgency to and energizes the dynamics of the relationship. The master is the white colonizer and the slave is the black colonized. The white master does not even consider the black colonized slave to be quite human but an animated machine, one of a "machine-animal-men" (Fanon, 1986, p. 220), completely a thing, an object whose only job is to labour for him (the white master). The black slave is inessential for the white master's self-consciousness not just for being dependent but mostly for not even being human. The black colonized slave, unlike the Hegelian slave, however, does not desire the unearned recognition of the white master (Fanon, 1986); neither does he find liberation in labour, nor tries to objectify the white master. The reciprocity between master and slave possible in the Hegelian dialectic is lacking in Fanon: The black slave only wants to rupture the master-servant relationship and become white master, i.e. he is fixated with becoming a subject or master on his own terms. He appropriates the resources of violence to earn for himself full human meaning and identity, freedom and recognition (Fanon, 1986; Eze, 2011). This is because a recognition or freedom given by the white master without it being earned by force will be given on the norms and values of the master and such recognition that is not based on the norms and values of the slave is no recognition at all; the master only recognizes himself in the

slave and still determines the actions of the slave (Hogan, 2018).

In both dialectics, the relationship fails to achieve true self-consciousness for each of the selves. Hogan, relying on Hegel's position that "true freedom is a matter of being both a master and a slave, both authoritative and responsible" (2018, p.25), shows that Hegel's master and slave, then, represent two distinct types of failures, "the master purports to exercise authority without responsibility and the slave takes himself to be responsible but not authoritative. The point of Hegel's discussion of master and slavery is, in part, to demonstrate that master-slave relationship is defective" (p.26). The Fanonian colonial dialectic also fails to achieve freedom for any of the white master or the black slave because the white master is not only master he also "does not so much as recognize the slave as *capable* of recognizing others"(Hogan, 2018, p. 27), and the Black slave is unable to achieve freedom not only "because he does not view himself as authoritative, but also because the only notion of independence, selfhood, and authority in his possession is that of the white master." (Hogan, 2018, p. 27). If the black slave, using the resources of violence liberates himself to become like or the 'white master' subject, he becomes master in the nature and quality of the vicious, extortionist and oppressive 'white master', in which case, he lives the white master's life, not his own.

The Necessity of Dialogue

Both dialectics appear to exclude dialogue between the 'self-recognising' consciousnesses in conflict. However, the struggle of the two consciousnesses with and against each other in the two narratives of the dialectic shows recognition of the other in-negation, whether passively in the Hegelian slave's resort to labour to achieve independence and the dependence of the master, or actively and aggressively in the Fanonian slave's resort to violence to liberate himself, earn self-consciousness and become master. This 'recognition-in-negation' is "improper recognition" (Villet, 2011, p. 39) because it does not achieve mutual realization of self-consciousness (i.e. full, free human identity), rather one identity is always seen as less identity to the other either in being or in equality; and the dialectic – the conflict of difference, inequality and the resort to violence permanently persists.

Improper recognition emerges from the neglect or refusal of the 'self-recognising' consciousnesses to accept the core realities underlining their social existence namely i) that self-consciousness, the 'self-recognising' human being, having met another 'self-recognising' self-consciousness is not the only human consciousness in the world, ii) that so long as the validation of its self-recognising consciousness as a free, dignified human

being is dependent on the recognition by another self-recognising human consciousness, it is no more the absolute definer of and measure for who he is and for what it does, iii) that if the self-recognising consciousness eliminates the other self-recognising consciousness, who it needs to attain and validate its true consciousness or will not accept its equality of being by devaluing the other as sub-human or non-human, the self-recognising consciousness will not get recognition and validation for its dignity and freedom, and iv) that positive mutuality of recognition must be based not just on the equality of being, but also on the equality and validity of difference. That is, both are valid and equal self-recognising consciousnesses, i.e. human beings, and also validly different either in culture, colour, race or all three and more. It is on the recognition and acceptance of these four realities that each of the self-recognising consciousness may take responsibility for the desired positive and willing mutual recognition and the attainment of the desired human dignity and freedom for each and for both.

The concept of 'mutuality of recognition' defines the interdependency of the two consciousness on one another to achieve self-consciousness and to become free, full and independent human identities; and the persistence of the dialectic, the conflict, establishes the necessary condition for the mediation of dialogue and for understanding and reconciliation, seeing that no one can exist without the other, no one side can win without the other.

Dialogue and The Context of Intercultural Dialogue

Dialogue is here a turn-taking conversation geared towards understanding and cooperation or as Svare, (drawing on earlier dialogue theorists like Martin Buber, Mikhail Bakhtin, Paolo Freire, David Bohm, and Hubert J.M. Hermans), briskly puts it, it is "cooperation through the medium of language" (2019, p. 10) characterised by empathy, imagination and flexibility. Subsumed and active in the operation of the dialogic characters of empathy, imagination and flexibility are dialogic norms of fairness, openness, honesty, equality, reciprocal empowerment, avoidance of deception, manipulation and oppression, which help to realize the cooperative aspect of dialogue (Svare, 2019). In the practice of dialogue, individuals collaborate to achieve a common goal or a set of complementary goals. In the dialogic conversation, the individuals in question realise „cooperative goal interdependence", by discovering or creating a common goal beneficial to each of them or they discover or create the complementarity or correlatedness of their different goals for which attainment each person is dependent on the other. (Tjosvold & Wong, 1994, p. 299).

In dialogic conversation, empathy refers to the cognitive and affective

abilities to recognize and appreciate the perspective and needs of another. Empathy will prompt cooperating partners to encourage and assist each other to attain their common or complementary goals. The imagination quality of dialogue addresses the imaginative ability of cooperating interlocutors to interpret verbal and non-verbal behaviours and to sort and/or modify the form of a cooperative goal(s) to enable its achievement, while flexibility is the ability to revise goals and strategies as may be necessary for cooperation – "to modify or discard existing goals, to establish new ones, or to regroup or resize goals within the geography of goals that is being formed by the cooperating partners. Another function of flexibility concerns revisions of action paths" (Svare, 2019, pp. 9, 10, 11). As Tjosvold & Wong (1994) note "Controversy, when discussed in a cooperative context, stimulates elaboration of views, the search for new information and ideas, and the integration of apparently opposing positions. These dynamics result in understanding the problem, more adequate solutions and commitment to implement them" (p. 299).

One of the areas in which dialogic cooperation can be necessary is "the search for well-being or meaning at a social and/or existential level [...], the desire for self-confirmation or self-realization based on the intuitive realization that we only become fully ourselves through dialogical relations with others" (Buber, 2004, p. 13; see also Svare, 2019, p.11).

The need for dialogue in the Hegelian and Fanonian master-slave dialectics is predicated on the reality that each of the self-recognising consciousnesses needs the other for its self-realisation as a full, free and dignified self but each is distanced from the other by difference or rather by the prejudices arising from or created with their differences. The necessity exists for a cooperative conversation over their being to each other, over their multilayered differences and over the prejudices arising therefrom in order to achieve the goal of each becoming a full, free, dignified, and true self-consciousness – whole human identity.

The master-slave dialectic narratives further foreground the complementary duality of the self's existence in the mutual inclusivity of the self in the other and the other in the self by which the self's dialogue with the other is the self's dialogue with itself and thus resonating Hermans and Hermans-Konopka theoretical concept of "the dialogic Self" (Hermans, 2010). The notion of "the dialogic Self" joins the discordant concepts of 'self' and 'dialogue' together and points to the idea of

> the external transported to the internal,
> and, reversibly, the internal is exteriorized
> to the external. In this way, the self is no

longer reified as an "entity in itself" but as a process that is intrinsically relational. As a consequence, the self has no existence separate from society but is part of the society. Stronger, the self becomes a "mini-society" or, to borrow a term from Minsky (1986), a "society of mind." (Hermans, 2022, p. 389)

The above means that what the self does affects the other and what the other does affects the self in their mutual existence in society.

Besides individual temperament, which in social relations is greatly determined by culture (Chen 2018), major sources of difference and conflict in social contexts and within the discourse context of this study are culture, race and interests. Other difference and conflict markers like class, education, wealth and others are here subsumed to culture, race and interest or considered incidental to them. The estrangement, exclusion, or rejection of the sociocultural other creates distance between diverse peoples and cultures and potentially results in misunderstanding, prejudice and strife. But the ironic mutual inclusion of the other in the self and the self in the other suggests the possibility, opportunity and indeed the necessity, for both to engage each other in dialogue to possibly reach understanding and cooperation for peaceful coexistence (Eke, 2022). Each of Crapanzano (1990) and Miller (1994) separately holds that the mutual inclusivity of the self in the other and the other in the self not only justifies but also necessitates dialogue between both to settle misperceptions and misunderstandings. As Miller(1994)puts it "if the other is really another form of the same, much can be said, done and thought. … There is the possibility of understanding and reconciliation. The two sides can talk, perhaps reach a consensus" (pp. 11-12). Peaceful coexistence will become possible when each truly and fully recognises the full human worth, dignity and freedom of the other in word and in deed.

Hegel's master-slave dialectic and Fanon's application of this dialectic to the colonial condition and, by extension, the postcolonial condition predicate the dismissed but potentially viable and necessary option of dialogue between the two self-consciousness, for them to, at least, appreciate and understand that "difference neither references superiority or inferiority nor equality and inequality in being human" (Eke, 2022, p.53). Successful dialogue and reconciliation would diminish estrangement or exclusion.

The Fanonian recontextualisation of the Hegelian dialectic and its micro-level master-slave binary to black-white and European-African

colonial relations enables the examination of the salient issues of human-cultural identity, identification and implicit relations between them down to postcolonial conditions.

The African Postcolonial Condition

On August 22, 1415, King John I of the Aviz ruling house of Portugal, led his sons, including Henry the navigator, on the successful conquest of the Moroccan fort and port city of Ceuta in Africa ostensibly in the crusading spirit to defeat the muslim moors in Africa, disconnect them from supporting their brothers in Iberia, and win victory and glory for the Iberian Christian states (see Constaca, 2015) but prioritizing the control of the exotic goods trade routes of trans-Saharan and trans-Middle Eastern caravans and the natural goods products of Morrocco(Disney, 2009). Sub-Saharan Africa had remained a mystery and dread to Europeans. The faintest idea of Africa that Europe had was through trans-Saharan Arab intermediary merchants, who brought African gold to the Mediterranean and Europe.At the siege of Ceuta, Prince Henry heard the story of the flourishing gold of Timbuktu from the Arabs. Beginning from 1418, Henry the navigator, organised expeditions in the geographic search for trade and economic resources in West Africa and on the pretentious reason to discover and civilize the continent. By 1482, the Portuguese have reached the mouth of the Congo traversing through Madeira Island, Cape Bojador, Cape Blanco, Arguin in Mauritania, Coastal Senegal, Guinea Bissau, the Cape Verde islands, coastline of modern Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, coast of modern Ghana, and the Bight of Benin (Ijoma, 1982), meeting already highly evolved African cultures (Brown and Hill, 2006). In 1441, the first exploration led by Prince Henry came back with the first batch of slaves and gold (Duiker and Spielvogel, 1998, p. 496). This success spurred other explorers. For about sixty years (1480-1530), Portugal held trade monopoly with Africa (Vogt, 1975). After this time, however, other European powers, sufficiently attracted by the trade and territorial gains of Portugal and by the demands for labour in the discovered new world(Roberts, 1992), challenged Portugal's unique advantage and claims in Africa as economic, civilising and geographic discovery motives become the achievement of conquest. These powers included England, France, Holland and Spain mainly, then Sweden, Denmark and to a far lesser extent Brandenburg-Prussia (Jones, 1984). European industrialisation and the rise of the sugar, tobacco and cotton plantations in the Americas escalated the horrible and inhuman European trade in African slaves transforming it into the massive human commercial cargoes of Africans in chains and brutishly, many of whom died on the way, carted off to Europe and the Americas for

inhumane exploitation of labour and for the slave-breeding plantations. The African slaves formed the hugely forced labour and capital leveraged to build western capitalism, profits and development (Williams, 1944; Akyeampong, 2017). Activism and embarrassing advocacy against the moral depravity and inhumanity of slavery and/or divested investments in profitable non-slave trade areas (see Williams, 1944; Otelle, 2017) led to the hesitant, staggered but eventual abolition of the slave trade in Europe and the Americas but the abolition was transformed into colonial imperialism in Africa – the partitioning and expropriation of African lands through the mechanisms of force, violence and deception, the establishment of forced & foreign rule on Africans, the pillaging of African wealth and resources; indeed the setting up of African lands, fragmented into disconnected and rivalry patchworks for absolute hegemony, as one massive produce plantation for raw materials and natural resources to Europe and America and the enslavement of Africans as slave labourers on their own lands without human dignity(David, 2011). The enslavement of Africans by Europe and America did not quite end with the end of the international slave trade, African slaves were breeded like cows, horses and pigs in plantations for the internal slave market (Djelid, 2024). The Livingstonian prescription of the three Cs-Commerce, Christianity and Civilisation to end the trade in slaves turned out to be used as pretensions for the scramble for or rather the balkanisation of Africa in the European hunt for land, market and African wealth and resources (David, 2011).

The subhuman value placed on Africans, the denial of their human dignity assigning them the worth of market products and 'beasts of burden' to be bartered on the open market with such items as liquor, tobacco and metals and their colonisation by Europe were justified by European anthropologists, ethnolinguists and philosophers, including those of no mean reputation like Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Hegel, who constructed a raciocultural hierarchy that placed 'blacks' at the lowest rung and ascribed primitivity, barbarism, lack of history, lack of culture, lack of voice or language and sub-humanity to them(Kant, 1777; Hegel, 1975; Fortin, 2006; Sorrells, 2016). Arndt (2006) further notes in corroboration that to justify Europe's colonial encounter, the "'White man's burden' of bringing 'civilisation' and 'salvation' to Africa was invented", the same also as its necessary opposite – "the 'uncivilised, primitive African', who embodied the 'quintessence of evil' and lacked any sense of morals or values was constructed" (p. 21). Proto-narratives of exclusion on Africans/Africa were raised in reinforcement by European writers to portray Africans' otherness and further validate their enslavements and colonisation. Chinua Achebe describes a conscience-stricken Europe desperate to excuse the cruelty of the slave trade in order to keep the economic profits from the

trade spread claims that Africans "were not really human or that the slave trade was in fact a good thing for them because the alternative to it was more brutal by far":

> And therefore, describing this fate that the Africans would have back home became the motive for the literature that was created about Africa. Even after the slave trade was abolished in the nineteenth century, something like this literature continued to serve the new imperialistic needs of Europe in relation to Africa. This continued until the Africans themselves, in the middle of the nineteenth century, took into their own hands the telling of their story (cited in Bacon, 2000, para. 11).

Anticolonial nationalism and militant liberation struggles in Africa and other intervening factors prevailed on the colonisers to reluctantly grant "flag independence" and self-rule but not before institutionalising a different knowledge system that would deprecate and continue the erasure of the African cultural self and groom a "colonially-created African political elite" (Arukwe, 2024, p. 432), goaded with the prioritization of individual greed, who will preside over the sustenance of colonial legacies left behind.

The African postcolonial condition transmuted from this toxic Europe/the West-African colonial relations is a category of experience, entrenched in the sustained or continuing legacies of colonisation, in which the African continues to live with and against the domineering effects of a repressive, exploitative and oppressive colonial past that has been mapped into the neocolonial present through the disguised power and influence of the imperial metropole ('former' colonizer powers) refracted in various forms of 'globalised' control of the systems & institutions, structures & processes, frames of knowledge, references & discourse, values and ways of life of the 'former' colonized African (Eke, 2006/2012). While scholars continue to search for conceptual clarity between the postcolonial and the neocolonial, both proceeded from colonialism and foreground different aspects of a single process: the cultural homogenization of ever larger areas of the globe by devaluing and even erasing indigenous ways of life, displacing them with the ethos and priorities of dominant, technologically more advanced nations, and asserting overt and covert hegemonic powers over them (Semioticon, 2002).

While Europe/the West appear to have by far managed to accept that the African is human and has culture, he is still regarded to be an unequal, racio-cultural inferior member of that humanity (Pierre, 2020; Jallow, 2021), and thus qualifies for prejudice and abuse, hate speech, including in public

and political discourse, barriers in access to quality education, healthcare and housing, for oppression, exploitation and servitude. His representation in public and political life is very low (Jallow, 2021). The bases for the projection and practice of these stereotype and scorn on the African being the European ascribed cultural and racial inferiority on him, although race does not exist naturally but an invented social category. Susan Arndt describes the processual abstraction of racism from the hideous motive to justify imperialism and colonialism and the self acclaimed supremacy of Whites. Arndt(2006) notes racism to be

> a complex of attitudes (feelings, prejudices and ideas) and actions which are based on the fact that Whites – starting off from alleged "scientific" theories of "race" – select and dichotomise one of many physical attributes (e.g. skin pigmentation), classifying them as "naturally given" and as relevant criteria for differentiation. The thus created differences are then generalized, made absolute and ranked hierarchically […] in a process of White hegemonisation. Based on a normative construction of the "Self", the "Other" was invented and homogenized in the process. Such constructions allowed Whites to legitimize – both psychologically and practically – differing opportunities of power and lifestyle for Whites and Blacks, along with White aggression and privileges (pp. 13-14).

Chin and Fehrenbach (2009) corroborate Arndt in asserting that "groups *become racialized* when their difference is registered and invested with heightened negative social meaning" (p. 4); difference is substantially the result of cultural diversity.

The African self-recognizing consciousness, by the Hegelian dialectic narrative, is, here, negatively recognized by the European self-recognizing consciousness to be of unequal human value and, therefore, cannot serve as the basis for the recognition of the European self-recognizing consciousness as a truly free and dignified human existence or identity. The African, whose quality of humanity has to be kept in doubt always by reason of a mischievously ascribed inferiority, must remain as the extreme otherness of what the European never imagined or wished himself to be but which he, however, needs to constantly affirm and reaffirm his 'immaculate' identity and sustain his claim to unequal privileges (Achebe, 2016). African lands or lands on which Africans live in the continent and in the diaspora must be shielded from 'development' or kept 'underdeveloped'. This will make the

lands to continue to serve as the sugar, tobacco and cotton plantations of the slave-trade era in the Americas and Europe for the production of cash crops, raw material and solid minerals for export to or use by Europe/the West. Meanwhile postcolonial conditions must be unwaveringly enforced on the African for him to remain the enslaved labourer, the consumer of European manufactured products, and the *other* that the European/Westerner abhors and is grateful not to have become.

Intercultural Dialogue between the European and African Self-Consciousnesses

In the master-slave dialectics, the self-recognizing consciousnesses have a common need namely each to attain the true unity, freedom and dignity of a human being through the recognition by the other as a true, independent and dignified human being. The core and real basis of difference between the European and the African is culture, in which the master-slave dialectic is contextualised within social relations, not the humanity of the African or European; for both are humans and considering also that individual and collective temperamental differences in social relations are by far shapedby culture, though temperaments have biological roots (Chen, 2018).

Race is a derived abstraction. It is pertinent, though, to heuristically argue that if race does not exist in nature but derived from arbitrary categorization and if every human person belongs to a human race, thus normalising race as a feature of human belonging, then the devaluation of a people because of their race is also the devaluation of the common humanity that constitutes human beings. However, the emptiness and failure of race as a contrived social category to really define or represent any component of what truly constitutes humanity is seen in the smart and pernicious resort of its proponents to overtly abandon their classical biological, colour and religious foregroundings of racism to now link racism to culture in 'cultural racism'. Under the cover of culture, the vicious practices of discrimination, abuse, violence, oppression and exploitation derived from classical racism would be continued on targeted social groups (Blaut, 1992; Ngwenya, 2018). The basis of dialogue is thus on cultural differences, for culture is uniquely human (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952).

Reading both narratives together, it would appear that the African, considered the slave in the Fanonian narrative, has the option in the Hegelian narrative to creatively use his land and its resources to produce such benefits that will force the European into dependency on the African and his produce. The African may then gain his independence. But both narratives are aversed to that option because the independence thus gained is neither true freedom

nor dignified, it is being the 'white master' all over againthus creating the need for a different kind of engagement between the two, more appropriately, intercultural dialogue, to build the needed synthesis, perhaps.

The goal of the dialogue would be the understanding of cultural differences that will enable informed, constructive and healthy relations with each other but from the fundamental and non-negotiable knowledge that cultural differences and whatever may constitute racial differences do not signal superiority or inferiority in the quality of being human. Different cultures of nations and peoples represent diverse and imperfect aspects of a single and shared humanity. Deepened understanding of cultures through dialogue will deepen and broaden the understanding of this single and shared humanity. Such understanding has the potential of fostering healthy intercultural relations that will guarantee true human freedom and dignity within willing mutual interdependence of cultures and peoples.

Conclusion

The reviewer professor of my paper may be right, after all; the Hegelian master-slave dialectic and even the Fanonian intervention with the Colonial Master-slave dialectic foreclose the possibility of dialogue.Both narratives, however, and ironically too, recognisein the failure of the master-slave and the white master-black slave colonial dialectics the implicit necessity fordialogue if a one truly free and dignified humanity would be achieved. This foreclosure results from the apparent unwillingness of the parties in the relations to engage themselves in any form of meaningful dialogic relations though they recognize each other in negation, in a manner that will not achieve their most desired and commonneed – a truly dignified and free human identity/existence.

The lord/master condescended from the most desired lofty pursuit of true, free and dignified human existence to refocus on the very low and abhorrent goal of subordinating the slave and exploiting his labour and its products and services for self-pleasure. In doing that, he sacrificed the quest for the unity of himself, a free, and dignified human identity even to the point of fallen into the same indignity of dependence on the slave, who he regards to be subhuman. The slave, himself, left to nurse the wounds of his subordinated otherness, seeks fortitude in the investment of his labour to production in other to find satisfaction, bringing the master into dependence but not the achievement of unity of self, a truly free and dignified human identity and in Fanon, the black slave turned the resentment of his subordination into vengeance against the white master.

In the African postcolonial condition, the Eurowestern self or more

specifically the Euro-American self, symbolized by the white master in the Fanonian master-slave dialectic, first rejected the African's humanity, then accepted his humanity in inferiority. Afterwards, Europe and America configured 'globalised' systems, institutional and structural mechanisms of control, including global media infrastructurethat imposes images, terminologies and languages of exclusion like undeveloped, under-developing, developing, third world and others that make the expropriation of the African's (land) natural and human resources, his deployment to servile labour on his land or in diaspora, his excursion into the consumerist ghettos, the erasure of his culture, and the enforcement of his assimilation into neo-liberal individualist capitalist ethos seemingly just policies of Euro-American's developmental and reforming zeal. These policies on the whole are still based on and amount to the sustenance of an inferior and less than human view of the African and the enforcement of subserviency and exploitation on him. The African may only be accepted as human, equal and free, on the terms and definition of Europe and America. However, on thoseEuro-American terms and definition, the African will not be the self-recognising consciousness Europe needs for the European's true, whole, free and dignified human identity.

      The Euro-American self fundamentally, remorselessly and with lack of introspection narrates the sufficiency of its-self through the willful negation and subjugation of the African self, falsely and self-deceptively making itself the "absolute Being" (Gordon 2015), who must be served by all. In doing this, it becomes an obstacle "in the way of human being or a human way of being" (Gordon 2015, p.19). However, in keeping the African as its 'negated and subjugated otherness' (see Achebe, 2016, p. 25), ironically the completion of the European's human identity, it drags itself down to the same inferiority and sub-humanity that it ascribes the African; for the true unity of the European self, its dignified and free human identity/existence is not possible without its other self, the African. Here stands the imperative for a sincere, non-hypocritical and non-deceptive intercultural dialogue; for *He who will hold another down in the mud must stay in the mud to keep him down.*" The one truly free and dignified humanity shared by 'all human peoples' is yet to be attained.

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