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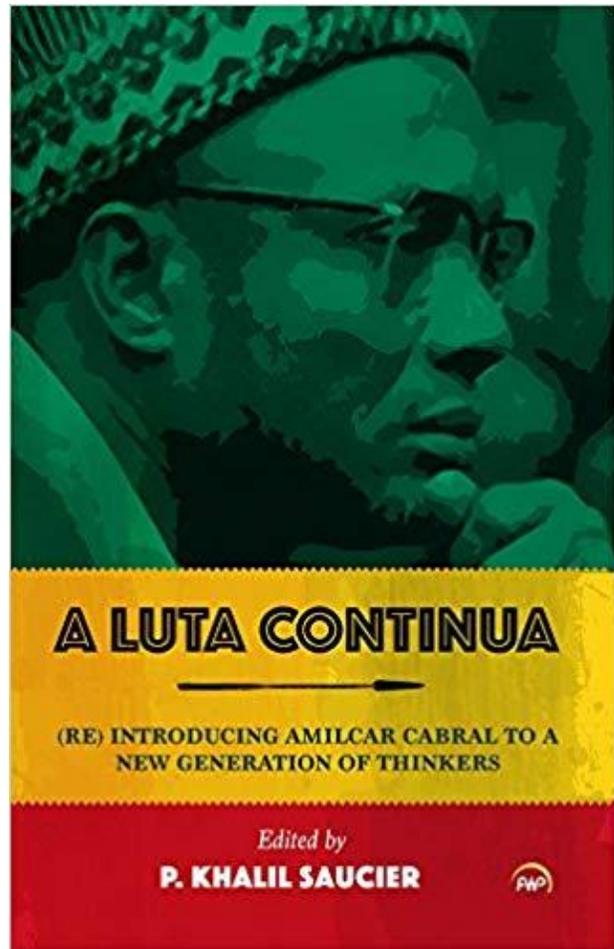
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The utopia is the metaphor for a hyper deficit that is formulated at the level at which cannot be fulfilled that is what it carries of importance is not what it says about the future, but the virtual archeology of the present that brings it forth. (Santos, 1995, p. 482)

If one has to determine a guiding thread – and there are many and quite crucial – in Saucier’s *A Luta Continua: (Re)Introducing Amílcar Cabral to a New Generation of Thinkers*, that thread would certainly be Cabral’s poetic-critical philosophy of praxis, “return to the source.” Implicitly or explicitly, Saucier’s anti-colonial oeuvre helps educators really concerned with “social and cognitive justice” (Paraskeva, 2014, 2016, 2018; Santos, 2014) to understand the importance of such ferociously “anti-colonial-here we stand” commitment. As Robeson (1958) or hooks (2000) would put it, the historical struggle against colonialism, oppression and *el patron colonial de poder* (Quijano, 1991) can only be won by unequivocally refusing to rely on epistemological matrixes out of the Africana philosophy of praxis. Indeed, this is not a



minor issue, especially when, Saucier (p. xix) claimed, it has been “often misconstrued or tendentiously applied, often understood as returning to a premodern and/or primordial Africa; an exercise that is paramount to merely proving civilization and history existed to the white man.” Undeniably, Cabral argued (1973, p. 51), “the underestimation of the cultural values of the African people based upon racist feelings and upon the intention of perpetuating foreign exploitation of Africans, has done much harm to Africa.” In this context, Cabral claimed that the victory against colonialism was only possible by the return to the source, which was much more complex than a struggle against foreign domination. He stated:

The return to the source is therefore not a voluntary step, but the only possible reply to the demand of concrete need, historically determined, and enforced by the inescapable contradiction between the colonized society and the colonial power, the mass of the people exploited and the foreign exploitive class, a contradiction in the light of which each social stratum or indigenous class must define its position. When return to the source goes beyond the individual and is expressed through groups or movements the contradiction is transformed into a struggle (secret or overt) and is a prelude to the pre-independence movement or of the struggle for liberation from the foreign yoke. (Cabral, 1973, p. 63)

As the *sine qua non* condition of re-Africanization, return-to-the-source (i.e. the return to “the human” accurately highlighted in Saucier’s rationale on p. xix) “is of no historical importance unless it brings not only real involvement in the struggle for independence, but also complete and absolute identification with the hopes of the mass of the people, who contest not only foreign

culture but also the foreign domination as a whole. Otherwise, is nothing more than attempt to find short-term benefits – knowingly or unknowingly a kind of political opportunism” (Cabral, 1973, p. 63). In this context, Woods (p. 194) claimed, “for Cabral, re-becoming African is a strategic move to forward an agenda of repossessing that which was stolen, political control over the territory that as a result of colonialism had come to be known as Guinea-Bissau.” Return to the source, according to Murillo, is a way of reading and being in the wor(l)d, one that jazzes both the “physical and metaphysical” in an autochthonous cartographical commitment as well. Poetically and politically, such commitment seeks “to grip the gravity (of the question, of the black position), to intensify its force, so that the ground, Ilha, comes clearer into view, closer, begins to take shape in the imagination” (p. 93).

Building on Saucier’s approaches, I argue that Cabral’s return to the source is the very cradle of a very “practical utopia grounded, rooted (as no doubt befitting an agronomist) in the land and the realities of his people” (p. 103). This implies a non-negotiable commitment against modern Western Eurocentric thinking, which is an abyssal thinking. It consists

of a system of visible and invisible distinctions, the invisible ones being the foundation of the visible ones. The invisible distinctions are established through radical lines that divide social reality into two realms, the realm of “this side of the line” and the realm of “the other side of the line.” The division is such that “the other side of the line” vanishes as reality, becomes nonexistent, and is indeed produced as nonexistent. Nonexistent means not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being. Whatever is produced as nonexistent is radically excluded because it lies beyond the realm of

what the accepted conception of inclusion considers to be its other. What most fundamentally characterizes abyssal thinking is thus the impossibility of the co-presence of the two sides of the line. To the extent that it prevails, this side of the line only prevails by exhausting the field of relevant reality. Beyond it, there is only nonexistence, invisibility, non-dialectical absence. (Santos, 2007, p. 45)

The motto of such abyssal thinking goes well beyond the radical impossibility of co-presence and a fundamental radical negation of [the] [an]other existences (Paraskeva, 2011). The radicalization of such abyssal episteme is outshined by the “intensely visible distinctions structuring social reality on this side of the line are grounded on the invisibility of the distinction between this side of the line and the other side” (Santos, 2007, p. 46). In a way, Santos goes well beyond Todorova (1997) regarding the “incomplete other.” That is, there is no incomplete other (and incomplete self) because there is nothing beyond the abyssal line.

Invisibility and nonexistence of the “one side” are the roots of visibility and existence of the “another side.” Knowledge and modern law are two major and distinct, yet interrelated and complex areas that represent the most refined accomplishments of such cultural politics of radical nonexistence and negation (Santos, 2007). The visible and legitimate belligerent battles among science, philosophy, and theology – one should not forget that we belong to a civilization that used to burn people alive because of their claim that the world was not flat – cartelize the Western Cartesian modern side and “their visibility is premised upon the invisibility of forms of knowledge that cannot be fitted into any of these ways of knowing” (Santos, 2007, p. 47). That is,

popular, lay, plebeian, peasant, or indigenous knowledges on the other side of the line [vanish] as relevant or commensurable knowledges because they are beyond truth and falsehood. It is unimaginable to apply to them not only the scientific true/false distinction but also the scientifically unascertainable truths of philosophy and theology that constitute all the acceptable knowledge on this side of the line. On the other side of the line, there is no real knowledge; there are beliefs, opinions, intuitive or subjective understandings, which, at the most, may become objects or raw materials for scientific inquiry. Thus, the visible line that separates science from its modern others is grounded on the abyssal invisible line that separates science, philosophy, and theology, on one side, from, on the other, knowledges rendered incommensurable and incomprehensible for meeting neither the demands of scientific methods of truth nor those of their acknowledged contesters in the realm of philosophy and theology. (Santos, 2007, p. 47)

Cabral’s return to the source is thus above all the supreme step towards an “epistemology of liberation that requires the liberation of the epistemology itself” (Santos, 2014; see also Paraskeva, 2014), not only challenging modern Western epistemological despotism with an African epistemological matrix, but also providing simultaneously the source and a for instance of how to de-link and to engage in a radical co-presence as Mignolo (2011) and Santos (2014) would put it – which implies a perpetual epistemological disobedience. In this sense, Cabralism, is a serious challenge to Eurocentric forms of modern critical theory, not just because of the inherent complex metamorphosis of such process, but also “in the sense that his critical theory is not quarantined to the life-worlds and life

struggles of white workers in capitalist societies” (Rabaka, 2014, p. 152). Cabral’s critical theory, Rabaka (2014) claimed, relied upon his conscious reading that dominance and oppression were beyond the capitalist system and were determined by a world system that urges for the need of a common theory and praxis of liberation respectful of the idiosyncrasies of the oppressed. Cabral indeed “urges us to develop our theories and strategies by directly engaging with the specific economic, political and cultural locations of our struggles” (Daves, 2013, p. 466). Saucier’s anti-colonial anthology grasps the issue accurately.

Cabral’s critical return to the source(s) suggests in no uncertain terms that Africana critical theory of contemporary society concern itself with the deconstruction of European-derived continental and diasporan African philosophical discourse, and the reconstruction of a radically decolonized and re-Africanized critical theory and praxis tradition – that is to say, what I have been referring to as the Africana tradition of critical theory and revolutionary praxis. This deconstruction presupposes that modern workers in Africana philosophy, and Africana studies in general, have the analytical skills and intellectual tools to undertake such an endeavor (p. 25).

However, Cabral was very sentient of what I have called *indigenoustude* (Paraskeva, 2011), the tendency to romanticize and exoticize an indigenous past, an issue insightfully grasped in Saucier’s (p. 20) piece.

For Cabral, Africa, which is to say Africa’s histories, cultures, and peoples, are much more complex, their cultures more wide-ranging and diverse than previously noted by colonial anthropologists, ethnologists, missionaries, and others, including European-educated (or, rather, European-miseducated) Africans and their all-encompassing

theories of Africa’s ancient and glorious past. This, of course, is not in any way to imply that Africa did not have an ancient and glorious past, but only to emphasize that not everything in Africa’s past was paradisiacal and that contemporary Africana critical theorists should employ Cabral’s distinct dialectical and historical materialism when approaching Africa’s histories, cultures, and struggles.

That is, such “return” is not to a stagnant tradition or a-historical Negro-African values a la Senghor. The “return” is a redeeming of the blocked historicity of the colonized. It is a tangible reclaiming of the humanity and freedom of the formerly colonized, and according to Serequeberhan, the genuine re-insertion into history of “an African people that realizes its right to independence” (pp. 80-81). Cabralism is at odds with “the reduction of African existence to a Westernized/modern and an Indigenous/exotic object of Occidental manipulation, curiosity, and control” (p. 75). It is in such sense, that it is crucial to understand Cabralism as a de-linking momentum, a full blast decolonial thinking that involves a nonnegotiable *desprendimento* total, a decolonial link (Mignolo, 2011, p. 3). Following Mignolo’s (2011, p. 45) examination of Quijano’s reasoning, *desprendimento* or *desprenderse* (i.e., delinking) implies

epistemic de-linking or, in other words, epistemic disobedience. Epistemic disobedience leads us to decolonial options as a set of projects that have in common the effects experienced by all the inhabitants of the globe that were at the receiving end of global designs to colonize the economy (appropriation of land and natural resources), authority (management by the Monarch, the State, or the Church), and police and military enforcement (coloniality of power), to colonize knowledge

(languages, categories of thoughts, belief systems, etc.) and beings (subjectivity). “Delinking” is then necessary because there is no way out of the coloniality of power from within Western (Greek and Latin) categories of thought. (p. 45)

That is, one needs to *desprenderse de las vinculaciones de la racionalidad- modernidad con la colonialidad, en primer término, y en definitiva con todo poder no constituido en la decisión libre de gentes libres* [extricate oneself from the linkages between rationality/modernity and coloniality, first of all, and definitely from all power which is not constituted by free decisions made by free people]” (Mignolo, 2011, p. 45).

Delinking implies epistemic disobedience rather than the constant search for ‘newness’s’ [and] takes us to a different place, to a different ‘beginning’ (not in Greece, but in the responses to the ‘conquest and colonization’ of America and the massive trade of enslaved Africans), to spatial sites of struggles and building rather than to a new temporality within the same space (from Greece, to Rome, to Paris, to London, to Washington, DC)” (Mignolo, 2011, p. 45). In Cabral’s anticolonial mind, it implies a decolonial approach to “prioritize local reality” (p. 106). As Cabral (1980) argued, “only through a principled study of reality, of the strictly here and now, can a theory of revolutionary change be integrated with its practice to the point where the two become inseparable” (p. xi). In this sense, decoloniality is “the energy that does not allow the operation of the logic of coloniality nor believes the fairy tales of the rhetoric of modernity” (Mignolo, 2011, p. 46). Decoloniality, blatantly, is not just a call to interrupt the Cartesian model of modernity. It offers a solution for another word, another world. It is one of the best for instances “to learn to unlearn in order to relearn” (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 32), deeply sentient of the fact that since the “national liberation is the overcoming of the colonial

interruption of the historicity of the colonized, it is a returning to the source out of which the colonized actuated their ek-sistence” (p. 75).

In a humanity that requires a sub-humanity to exist (Santos, 2018) “the struggle against colonialism is thus a reaction: a process of firmly opposing the colonial smothering of the particular human ek-sistence of the colonized” (p. 75). De-linking is not “to limit ourselves to an isolated reality, within our village, as it would be impossible to imagine how we should go and struggle against colonialism; it is crucial to knowing our reality and knowing also all the realities” (Cabral, 1980, p. 63). De-linking is an ideological commitment, towards a post-abysal momentum (Santos, 2007), or as I have examined elsewhere, non-abysal momentum (Paraskeva, 2016), which entails a radical co-presence, as Santos (2014) advocates. “Practices and agents on both sides of the line are contemporary in equal terms” (Santos, 2007, p. 66), implying an ecology of knowledges “premised upon the idea of the epistemological diversity of the world, the recognition of the existence of a plurality of knowledges beyond scientific knowledge” (Santos, 2007, p. 67). In so doing, post-abysal thinking, in a hegemonic sense, renounces a general epistemology, providing the political clarity that “we probably need a residual general epistemological requirement to move along: a general epistemology of the impossibility of a general epistemology” (Santos, 2007, p. 67). Cabral exposed the real epistemological colors of pragmatic revisionary heterotopia, as Santos (1995, 2018) would put it. Precisely because Cabral was a “praxis-oriented person” (p. 104) deeply rooted in the Global South’s epistemological matrix, Cabral utopianism, as Williams noted, was undeniably palpable, a people’s utopia that reflected his own people. In Cabral’s terms, “the utopia is the metaphor for a hyper deficit that is formulated at the level at which cannot be fulfilled that is what it carries of importance is not what it says about the future, but the virtual archeology of the present that brings it

forth” (Santos, 1995, p. 482). In Williams’ approach, Cabral’s utopia jazzes with Bloch’s and Wright’s “concrete/real utopia” in African critical – as it denotes an anticipatory consciousness, an alternative anticipatory African philosophical consciencism (Nkrumah, 1964), thus “recognizing what is practically possible, grounded in productive and progressive human agency” (p. 107). Precisely because “the desired future is not simply ‘there,’ but very much carefully constructed through the ongoing practice of those who desire it” (p. 107), Cabralism puts forward a pragmatic re-visionary heterotopia (see Santos, 2018). That is, both the utopia and the multiple paths towards it cannot be wrapped and anchored only within the framework of modernity and its coloniality (Paraskeva, 2019). Cabral’s utopian’s legitimacy relies on a “new epistemology and psychology, which resides on the virtual archeology of the present” (Santos, 1995, p. 481). This implies moving from traditional hegemonic and counter-hegemonic utopian frameworks and engages in what Santos (1995) defines as heterotopia:

Rather than the invention of a place elsewhere or nowhere, I propose a radical displacement within the same place: ours. From orthotopia to heterotopia, from the center to the margin. The purpose of this

displacement is to allow a telescopic vision of the center and a microscopic vision of what the center is led to reject, in order to reproduce credibility as the center. (Santos, 1995, p. 481)

Such pragmatic re-visionary heterotopia, based on a “praxis based of democratic substantiveness” (Freire, 2009, p. 172), implies also to be quite sentient of the role of education, as “Cabral’s call for liberation schools in Guinea-Bissau that can be used in the training of cadres to combat the negative aspects of the beliefs and traditions of our people” (p. 176). Epitomized by Freire (2009) as the pedagogue of the revolution, Cabral pragmatic re-visionary heterotopian success relies in his permanent call to return to the source a dynamic philosophical praxis of a pedagogy of emergencies (Santos, 2018), which crosses Saucier's *A Luta Continua*. Saucier's volume is a must-read for those really engaged in the struggle against the epistemicide (Santos, 2018) and the reversible epistemicide (Paraskeva, 2019), against institutional racism, genderism, and classism so rooted in the daily life of our public institutions. A sublime anti-colonial example towards the demonumentalization of coloniality (Santos, 2018) so well grasped by Saucier and colleagues.

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