

Towards A Pan-African Vision: The Current State of Affairs in Somalia

by

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Abstract

This paper calls for a Pan-African vision rooted in the historical struggles of the colonized as a means to think through contemporary challenges facing Africa. The discussion strives to make sense of the current state of affairs in Somalia from a Pan-African perspective, and works to historicize Somalia and draw attention to its nuances by affirming the place of African peoples to exercise true social, political, and economical self-determination. In this inquest, the author locates himself in the conversation to indicate how he comes to engage with Pan-Africanism as he articulates theoretical frameworks and operationalize as he draws on his understanding of Pan-Africanism. Second, the paper discusses the importance of re-thinking Pan-Africanism both as a social movement and as an anticolonial political ideology, and as a guiding framework in the struggle of the Somali people. And finally, the paper concludes by offering pedagogical possibilities of thinking through a Pan-African vision.

Introduction

The term Pan-Africanism has taken on a life of its own. From a disciplinary stance, Pan-Africanism has been written about in a wide array of academic disciplines, including political science, history, sociology, cultural studies, and African studies. What is astonishing in my view is that the social/political idea of Pan-Africanism has been attributed to the failure of the African continent to resolve any of the standing challenges throughout Africa. Moreover, the very idea of Pan-Africanism signifies, to some people, an outdated idea that cannot succeed. For me, the idea of Pan-Africanism is born out of the everyday anticolonial struggles of the African people, wherever they reside. It is a vision to restore all that is thought to be lost, and to hold on to key ideas which encompass the African creed. It is the living quest to restore the dignity of the African, move succinctly towards the unity of African peoples, and to exercise self-determination. Moreover, it is central to decolonization as a process which leads to emancipation and freedom. When I think of Pan-Africanism, I'm drawn, first, to the issue of land in Africa. To draw on the words of Frantz Fanon (1967) from the *Wretched of the Earth*,

For a colonized people, the most essential value, because it is the most meaningful, is first and foremost the land: the land, which must provide bread and, naturally, dignity.... The colonized subject has never heard of such an ideal. All he has ever seen on his land is that he can be arrested, beaten, and starved with impunity (p.9).

The colonial powers have enslaved millions of African people, and have carved out the Continent to dominate the social, political, and economic affairs in Africa. Nugget We Thing's (1986) in his works *decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* eloquently captures this sentiment when he explains:

The contention started a hundred years ago when in 1884 the capitalist powers of Europe sat in Berlin and carved an entire continent with a multiplicity of peoples, culture, and languages into different colonies. It seems it is the fate of Africa to have her destiny always decided around the conference tables in the metropolises of the western world (p.4).

In strong agreement of Thiong'o's articulation, the idea and the movement of Pan-Africanism emerged in response to colonization. The writer of *Remembering the Dismembered Continent*, Ayi Kewu Armah (2010) goes even further with his analysis explaining:

We, the people of Africa, have tended to regard the continent--all of it--as our home; that regimes imposed by invaders from Europe and Arabia,... have attempted to configure African space and time in ways beneficial to themselves ...[F]ormalized in Berlin in 1885, the residual fragment was further subdivided into separate plantation-style colonies (p.9).

The first part of the quote is instrumental in thinking of the historical genesis of the collectivist Pan-African identity. As such, the articulation of Pan-African ideology is the work of key African intellectuals and activists such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, and Jomo Kenyatta to name a few, as they express, collectively of what it means to be African socially, politically, and ideologically. According to W.E.B. Du Bois “the pan-African movement aimed at an intellectual understanding and co-operation among all groups of African descent in order bring about the industrial and spiritual emancipation of the Negro peoples” (Cited in Walters 1993, p.1). Therefore, we must re-think Pan-Africanisms within the contemporary moment to address some of the historically rooted challenges facing African peoples. Reiland Rabaka (2010), in his work, *Africana Critical Theory: The Black Radical Tradition, From W.E. B DuBois and C.L.R. James to Frantz Fanon and Amilcar Cabral*, also echoes this sentiment as he examines the intellectual traditions of Black political activists. He argues that we need to revisit the rich theoretical African traditions as we fight for freedom and re-think the possibilities of resistance in this colonial world order. Although we have celebrated a defeat of colonialism during the 1950s, 1960s, and well into the 1990s throughout the colonies, colonialism is alive and well. As such, it is present in the colonial discourses that are imposed on former colonies, which are now referred to as the developing world (see Bhabha, 1984; Kelley, 1999; Said, 1994; Tiffin, 1995; Williams & Yousaf, 1994). Throughout Africa colonialism still has a firm grip on our minds, bodies, and souls. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (1993) articulates this reality as he states:

In the particular case of Africa, people struggled against the slave trade and slavery; against the colonial invasions and occupations by forces armed with the latest technologies; and today they continue that titanic struggle against neo-colonial encirclement. Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, African people fought wars to preserve their independence against the various invasions from Europe. Under the colonial phase they fought wars for national independence. Today Africa is still engaged in wars to complete the national democratic revolutions as the very first and necessary step towards social change. And in all these phases, the struggle to bring about people’s power, social change, a new society is still continuing with even greater intensity as imperialism and its internal allies in Africa put [up] barrier after barrier. (p.54)

Here wa Thiong'o gives a well conceptualized, historically grounded point of departure to engage in conversation about the contemporary Pan-African struggle in Africa.

Given the extraordinary challenges facing Africa in the era of universal human right, stemming from colonialism and its aftermath, we must rethink the Pan-African ideals that our anticolonial struggles were founded upon. This work calls for a Pan-African vision that is rooted in the historical struggles of the colonized as a means to think through the contemporary challenges facing Africa. The discussion strives to make sense of the current state of affairs in Somalia from a Pan-African perspective, and works to historicize Somalia and draw attention to its nuances by affirming the place of African peoples to exercise true social, political, and economical self-determination. In this inquest, the author locates himself in the conversation to indicate how he comes to engage with Pan-Africanism; articulates theoretical frameworks, and operationalize as he draws on his understanding of Pan-Africanism. Next, the importance of re-thinking Pan-Africanism both as a social movement and as an anticolonial political ideology, and as a guiding framework in the struggle of Somali peoples is discussed. And finally, the paper concludes by offering pedagogical possibilities of thinking through a Pan-African vision.

This exercise draws on indigenous knowledge, coupled with anticolonial thought. I have chosen to build upon these theoretical paradigms, in order to explore the ways in which Pan-Africanism can be operationalized to better understand the role of colonialism in some of the contemporary challenges in Somalia. By facilitating this discussion through a Pan-African conceptual framework from an indigenous Somali stance, I am able to raise critical questions about power, African self-determination, and freedom.

The African Self and the Pan-African Political Ideology

I am a Somali living within the Canadian Diaspora. I conceptualize Pan-Africanism as the social/political moral ideal that is rooted in the quest for self-determination. I come to engage with Pan-Africanism as a social/political paradigm, with the ability to move Africa towards the revolutionary path of contesting the current colonial powers. As such, this ideology is equipped with an African tradition of leadership, integrity, and selfless sacrifice to respond to colonialism and its aftermath. As a Somali, Pan-Africanism enables me to ground my thoughts in the histories of the anticolonial struggle, as I make sense of the contemporary colonial relations which have been ascribed to my place of origin. A Pan-African vision also enables me to stand in opposition to the Eurocentric theorization of the current state of affairs in Somalia, to express agency, and to think about methods of decolonization from an African perspective (Du Bois, 1989; Fanon, 1967; wa Thiong'o, 1993; Childs & Williams 2014; Tageldin, 2014). Pan-Africanism is an oppositional paradigm that enables me to keep a gaze on colonial oppression and to evoke the voices of the Ancestors who have fought, and sacrificed their lives for the African way of life. Moreover, it enables me to walk their courageous path and to hold on to the rich African anticolonial traditions.

Discursive Framework

As I try to make sense of how colonialism has configured and reconfigured Somalia, it is imperative for me to use a theoretical framework that centers colonial social, political, and economic relations to bring forth my understanding of, not only the historical challenges faced by the colonized, but also the nuances of some of the contemporary challenges. By engaging in a discussion about colonialism in Africa, with an emphasis on Somalia, it is crucial for me to ground my analysis in a theory that is built upon notions of resistance and self-determination. Most importantly, I am drawn to anticolonial theory because it arose out of the struggle as an intellectual tool to dislodge colonialism. The premises of anticolonial thought lies in the theoretical application of this theory to the everyday lived experiences of the colonized (Fanon, 1967; Mimi, 1967). According to Dei & Asgharzaeh, 2001, anticolonial theory:

[I]s an epistemology of the colonized, anchored in the Indigenous sense of collective and common colonial consciousness. Colonial in this sense is conceptualized not simply as foreign or alien, but rather as imposed and dominating. The anti-colonial approach recognizes the importance of locally produced knowledge emanating from cultural history, daily human experiences, and social interactions... Its goal is to question, interrogate, and challenge the foundations of institutionalized power and privilege, and the accompanying rationale for dominance in social relations (p.300).

This theory permits me to cast the gaze on colonialism and to think beyond the dominate masters' narrative. This narrative suggests that Somalia has been without a central government since 1991, without giving any consideration of how colonialism is implicated in the current state of affairs. This narrative negates our people's existence prior to the civil war, and dismisses both our historical and contemporary struggles to preserve our African way of life. Moreover, this narrative is damaging for those of us who internalize it. This is particularly important for those of us living in the Diaspora, because we are, in my opinion, disproportionately exposed to Eurocentric discourses about our homelands, and many of us have internalized this logic (Du Bois, 1989; Fanon, 1967; wa Thiong'o, 1993). We need to understand the legacy of colonialism, and how it continues to impact Somalia, it is worthwhile for me to operationalize a theory that is capable of uncovering colonial ideologies to explain how they continue to be deployed to wreak havoc on the colonized. In her works, Wane (2005) explains that she always thought colonialism started out with an idea. This notion enables me to raise several questions such as: What is this colonial idea, regarding Somalia specifically? How does it manifest itself in the daily lives of Somalis, both at home and within the Diaspora? How do we resist this colonial idea and or ideas? In addition, we, the African people, have developed a critical gaze to subvert colonialism, not only as a means of survival, but also to assert our voices within our communities (see, Serequeberhan, 1994; Leteska, 2000; Hooper, 2001; Higgs, 2009).

A key component of this theory is to enable the colonized to theorize notions of self in relation to their social/political environments in their own voices, while telling their own stories. To borrow Thomas King's famous words, "we are the story" and we should be able to tell our histories. Ali (2001), in his work, *Culture, Education, and Development in South Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, asserts that colonized people must write their own histories within educational contexts, stating, "Hence, the falsity of the educating and, therefore, the civilizing mission that colonialism so heavily depended on. It is essential to expose the specificity of the European historical trajectory that had forced them to acquire new lands for their own economic and social survival"(p.12). As such, anticolonial theory would enable me to anchor my perspective in my indigenous culture and history about Somalia. This theory permits me to speak about Somalia prior to Western colonization, shed some light on the colonial encounter, and draw on the vision of our Elders to articulate our intergenerational Pan-African struggles. By engaging in an honest dialogue, pertaining to my African perspective on Somalia, it is vital for me to situate my analysis in a framework that is able to amplify my African indigenous knowledges epistemologically, ontologically, and axiologically. According to Warner (1991) indigenous knowledge (IK) is:

[L]ocal knowledge-knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. IK contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities. Such knowledge is passed down from generation to generation, in many societies by word of mouth. Indigenous knowledge has value not only for the culture in which it evolves, but also for scientists and planners striving to improve conditions in rural localities (cited in Arawal, 1999, p.416).

In concert with Warner's ideas, I firmly believe theorizing through my indigenous African cultural knowledges helps produce, disseminate, and validate our own histories. Moreover, our collective Somali cultural knowledge's emphasis a holistic Pan-African views of how Somalia came to be. Through the Eurocentric lens, our homeland has been depicted as the 'failed State in the Dark Continent' (Menkhaus, 2007, 2013; Call 2008). Warner's ideas are especially useful, because of the emphasis on local context, which enables me to engage with the local knowledge's produced and disseminated within the Canadian, Diasporic context. I've been able to consider how we in the Diaspora discuss our conceptions of Somalia through a Pan-African lens. I strongly believe that our locally produced knowledges, in relation to notions of 'Home' both physically and spirituality, are profoundly unique. This unique perspective acknowledges the oppositional culture and the political cultural armor that those in the Diaspora wear, while also insuring that the connection with Somalia as an African space is not lost or abandoned. Revolutionary thinker Malcolm X (1992) advanced the notion of cultural migration and a return back to Africa as he stated:

[T]he solution for the Afro-American is two-fold—long range and short range. I believe that a psychological, cultural, and philosophical migration back to Africa will solve our problem. Not a physical migration, but a cultural, psychological, philosophical migration back to Africa—which means restoring our common bond—will give us strength and incentive to straighten our political and social and economic position right here in America, and to fight for the things that are ours right on this continent. (p. 152)

Although I am speaking about a different African Diaspora within a different social-political context, the above quote is relevant in engaging ideas of Pan-Africanism with Somali peoples because of the centrality of the ‘common bond’ and the physiological cultural return. This concern has always been central to a political process of anchoring and claiming Africa as a source of identity (see Du Bois, 1965). As such, Somali culture encapsulates strong bounds between individuals, the communal collective, and an ancestral homeland, with codes of social responsibility, reciprocity, and togetherness (see, Abdullahi, 2001; Ilmi 2012, 2015). Hence, the Somali saying ‘*Geel walba Geele kehorary isammehwesouwacha*’ [every camel follows the footsteps of the camels ahead]. In terms of a Pan-African struggle, the above proverb signifies the intergenerational struggle that we all must engage in. Moreover, it speaks to a profound sense of responsibility, wherein all Somalis must walk the courageous path of the previous generation, those who operationalized Pan-Africanism to transform their societies.

The Pan-African Vision

I conceptualize Pan-Africanism as a guiding African philosophy that can assist me in understanding the current state of affairs in Somalia. Pan-Africanism, as a theory, social movement, and a political ideology, is not a thing of the past, but rather a historically living body of knowledge that encapsulates the essence of the African struggle. According to Ibekwe Chinweizue (1987) in his book, *The West and the Rest of Us*,

[O]ne of the tasks an independent Africa had to undertake if it wanted to fulfill its historic duties was the creation of new political ideas and institutions that would unify, strengthen and fully liberate the continent into sovereignty and make its people prosperous and proud. A strong and proud future for Africa could not be brought about without substantial improvements on both the per-conquest and the colonial inheritance (234).

I agree with Chinweizue’s call for political ideas and institutions, and I choose to engage with Pan-Africanism as a self-cultivating, powerful socio-political idea, to be operationalized in the struggle for freedom in Africa. In his article, “A United States of Africa,” Julius K. Nyerere, one of the champions of Pan-Africanism (1963) explained:

There is one sense in which African Unity already exists. There is a sentiment of 'African-ness', a feeling of mutual involvement, which pervades all the political and cultural life of the continent. Nationalist leaders all over Africa feel themselves to be part of a great movement; they recognize a special responsibility to the political unit in which they happen to belong, but feel personally involved in the triumphs and set-backs of all other African countries. There is, in other words, an emotional unity which finds expression in, among other things, concepts such as the 'African personality' and in a tendency to consult together at international conferences (p.1).

Nyerere's political analysis captures the very essence of the unity of African peoples. Within the contemporary geopolitical landscape in Somalia, his theorization offers a conceptual framework to move towards collective action and conscience-building to resolve some of the geopolitical challenges which face the nation and her peoples. Nyerere's articulation is derived from his understanding and/or involvement in the Pan-African Congress conferences of the late nineteenth century, likely the birthplace of the Pan-African political movement. It is for this reason that Nyerere is acclaimed as an instrumental figure and African forefather. The relevance of his articulations is critical in reading African people collectively, not as a historical and holistic expression during the struggle for so-called independence, but as a collective existence for African peoples and the ones of the continent. This sentiment encapsulates the Somali proverb "*nonua Toulke Kama Ganatoago*" [no man enters Heaven without his clans' men]. Somalia's case enables us to raise new critical questions, and begin a comprehensive dialogue, about what went wrong, why, and more importantly, how to ensure that what happened in Somalia does not happen in any other African nation State. Kwame Nkrumah (2001), in his seminal work, *Revolutionary Path*, indicates as a necessary element of a people's anticolonial struggle as he wrote:

Colonial existence under imperialist conditions necessitates a fierce and constant struggle for emancipation from the yoke of colonialism and exploitation... [T]he basis of the solution of the problem is political. Hence political independence is an indispensable step towards securing economic emancipation. This point of view irrevocably calls for an alliance of all the colonial territories and dependencies. All provincial and tribal differences should be broken down completely. By operating on tribal difference and colonial provincialism, the colonial powers' age-long policy of 'divide and rule' have been enhanced... The efforts of colonial peoples to end colonial exploitation demands the eager and earnest collaboration of all of them (P.16).

While Nkrumah's articulation is steeped in a Marxist economic analysis, he also highlights the importance of the call for unity, for all African peoples, in their struggle against colonial rule. I, therefore, turn my attention to analyzing the ways in which resolutions from the fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester can be used as a guiding framework for the pursuit of freedom.

Operationalizing Pan-African Principles: A Guiding Framework

It seems like much has not changed since the 1945 Manchester conference. Although the resolutions were quite promising, many of them have not been put into motion and African Nations yet to achieve complete independence. As such, we, the African, have not succeeded in decolonizing Africa. Frantz Fanon once asserted that:

Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is clearly an agenda for total disorder. But it cannot be accomplished by the wave of a magic waned, a natural cataclysm, or a gentleman's agreement. Decolonization, we know, is an historical process; in other words, it can only be understood, it can only find its significance and become self-coherent as far as we can discern the history-making movement which gives it form and substance... Decolonization, therefore, implies the urgent need to thoroughly challenge the colonial situation (p.2).

Conceptualizing the anticolonial struggle from a Fanonian perspective highlights the urgency and the dire need to stand in the face of colonialism with the aim of dislodging it from the universe. What is most unsettling for me, as I study the resolutions of the fifth Pan-African Congress within the modern era, is the realization that not much progress has been made. As such, much of the continent is still in the grips of colonialism and, although independence was quite promising in moving Africa toward freedom, much of the continent is still a colonial milieu. I do not believe those who sacrificed themselves in the struggle for African freedom did so in vain. That being said, how can resolutions from 1945 still be relevant within the contemporary moment if we have made significant headway? I contend that our Pan-African struggle must continue to bear its fruits for future generations.

The first article from the Pan-African Congress outlines the need to "secure opportunities for all colonial and coloured peoples in Great Britain" and, in order to accomplish this goal, demands that "discrimination on account of race, creed or colour be made a criminal offence by law" (Asante & Abarray, p.518). The reality is that in the North American context African identities are marked by histories of colonialism and racialization (hooks, 1992; Ibrahim, 2008; Omi & Winnant, 1998; West, 2000).

It is the common experiences of racism, the assigning of racial categories, and the denial of racial discrimination in Western societies that needs to be challenged. For those living in the Diaspora, the question of rights must be engaged from a Pan-African lens, with the aim of securing a collective voice, ensuring the survival of African communities abroad, and also using this voice as a mobilizing force to promote decolonization in Somalia.

The second congress resolution is economic in nature. This article outlines a series of economical disadvantages, set up by the British colonial regime in West Africa, including the systemic exploitation of African resources, the killing of industries, land and property rights, workers' rights, and an array of economic factors which undermine development in Africa. From a Pan-African perspective, this article evokes mainstream discussions about Somali being a 'failed State,' opening up a discussion about what it means to be living in a 'stateless' society'. This would enable Somalis to think through the current challenges as a means of exercising self-determination. This lens would enable the populace to begin looking inwards to look for culturally appropriate responses, as opposed to waiting for the West to help raise critical questions about the political autonomy of Somalia and the cultural integrity of the Nation. In most parts of Africa, Western media is seen as always capitalizing on, and showing images of, severely malnourished peoples, and children in particular, to broadcast the food shortage crisis in Africa. This occurs even now, given the images of starvation being shown by Western media from drought-affected areas in Somalia, without any mention of the external colonial factors that cause famine in Africa. In *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Walter Rodney (1982) eloquently captures the predicament in which many States of Africa, and Somalia in particular, often finds itself:

Attention must be drawn to one of the most important consequences of colonialism on African development, and that is the stunting effect on Africans as a physical species. Colonialism created conditions which led not just to periodic famine but to chronic undernourishment, malnutrition, and deterioration in the physique of the African people... A black child with a transparent rib cage, huge head, bloated stomach, protruding eyes, and twigs as arms and legs was the favorite poster of the large British charitable operation known as Oxfam...Oxfam called upon the people of Europe to save starving African and Asian children from *Kwashiorkor* and such ills. Oxfam never bothered their consciences by telling them that capitalism and colonialism created the starvation, suffering, and misery of the child in the first place (p.236).

From a Pan-African economic stand point, the politics of famine and the subsequent coverage would be subject to questioning. In his book, *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon (1967) powerfully articulates the effects of the colonizer, helping the colonized through Western medicine, on indigenous populations.

He makes reference to natives who find themselves in a very difficult predicament, when he says, “This is what we have done for the people of this country; this country owes us everything; were it not for us, there would be no country.” Then he goes on to state that there is a real mental reservation on the part of the native, making it difficult for him to be objective, to “separate the wheat from the chaff” (p.122). In this quotation, Fanon persuasively captures the particular quandary that many Somalis are in. As such, many of us attribute the political instability to colonial and neo-colonial relations. At the same time, many of us fall into the trap of expecting Western powers to ‘help Somalia’.

The principles of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter are embedded in the third article of the Pan-African Congress resolutions, along with some fundamental freedoms which the delegates at the conference aspired to. Today, these freedoms are very basic human rights, providing freedom of speech, press, voting right, land rights, rights for education, welfare and medical services. In Somalia, millions do not enjoy these fundamental rights speak to the very brutal colonial order of Statelessness that has been imposed on the people. Yet, a lack of basic freedoms—freedom from organized chaos, civil war, famine, and colonial policing of the Nation state’s borders—provides precise conditions for the struggle for freedom, despite the circumstances. Moreover, a lack of freedoms serves to rally the people, and evoke their critical social consciousness, as well as the anticolonial indigenous African culture within them as a means of engaging in our collective struggle. Steve Biko (1978), in *I Write What I Like*, pointed out:

Black consciousness is in essence the realization by the Black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their operation—the blackness of their skin—and to operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude...Liberation therefore, is of paramount importance in the concept of Black Consciousness, for we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet remain in bondage. We want to attain the envisioned self which is a free self (p. 49).

Biko uses the Black struggle against apartheid in South Africa to demonstrate an awakening of the national consciousness; such an awakening is the driving force in a peoples struggle against their oppressors. In Somalia, the lack of some basic freedoms could bring about a national conversation about the inhumane grips of colonialism.

The Declaration to the Colonial Powers is the fourth article that was articulated during the fifth Pan-African Conference. This article indicates that African leaders intend to secure the freedoms of their people through peaceful means, but if they do not relinquish their colonial grip, then necessary force would be used to secure freedom.

In this declaration, the delegates indicate that the continent has been patient, and that the peoples will no longer be silent of their conditions. In Fanon's book (1967) *Toward the African Revolution*, he highlights the objective of the armed resistance in Algeria, referring to it as a demand, rather than a prayer:

To begin with, at no moment has FLN appealed to the magnanimity, to the good-nature of the colonizer. In dizzying swift mutation, the colonized acquires a new quality, which developed in and through combat. The language used by the FNL, from the first days of the Revolution, is a language of authority (p.100).

Fanon's works speak to a necessarily uncompromising, authoritative voice that the oppressed must employ to assert their desires for freedom, for the oppressor only knows the language of force or intimidation. Somali people must use the unwavering language of rights, that universal language that promotes morality and freedom for all. I contend that such language would subvert and challenge the colonial historization of the current state of affairs in Somalia and, thus, provide a platform to articulate the aspirations of the Somali people, in and through Somali culture in the struggle for freedom. Such a stand has the potential to create a national front and a movement to address the grievances of the peoples.

The final Declaration that came out of the Manchester conference of 1945 is a proclamation to the colonial peoples. This call was directed at African people, professionals and intellectuals, to fight for their rights. This declaration is quite powerful, because it calls for unity and collective action to challenge colonial rule in all of its forms. In *Unity and Struggle*, revolutionary anticolonial thinker, Amilcar Cabral (1975), also expressed a similar sentiment towards the armed struggle between his people and the Portuguese colonists. He writes:

The moment of truth has come, the time has come for you to have the real proof of all that our Party has announced to you with the humane intention of helping you to protect your lives against the criminal lies and orders of your colonialist bosses...Our peoples who will fight until victory for the independence of our land as not the enemy of the Portuguese people. You are the sons of the Portuguese peoples. But you are being used by the colonists as tools to kill our people. We want peace, freedom and co-operation between men and between all peoples. But for this very reason and cause, we must put an end to Portuguese colonialism in our land; we must remove all obstacles to our national independence (p.163).

Cabral's broadcasting of the nature of his people's struggle, as well as his call to arms, is instrumental in awakening the nationalistic character of his Nation and articulating the rules of engagement. His stance encapsulates the nature of a resistant political culture, born out of the inhumane conditions that African societies are subjected to. This unmistakably courageous stance is necessary to walk the path toward freedom. Moreover, this declaration must be understood, politicized, and put into practice as a Pan-African call for duty, within the contemporary era, to respond to colonial and neo-colonial relations. Further to the point, such an oppositional attitude could be operationalized to reveal how colonialism continues to manifest itself within the contemporary moment. More importantly, we will be able to keep abreast of the intergenerational struggle that our Ancestors have waged on our behalf, and to continue the struggle for freedom in our own.

The Pedagogical Possibilities of a Pan-African Vision

Pan-Africanism and various other African philosophies and movements that have emerge in response to slavery, colonialism, and imperialism have all made significant gains in the quality of life of African peoples, wherever they might be. Pan-Africanism is not an abstract idea, but a critical response to oppression. Moreover, many of the anticolonial social movements that embraced Pan-Africanism are not movements of the past, since their legacies live within us today. We embody their stories of struggle, selfless sacrifices, and courage. The strength of Pan-Africanism should not be measured by its past successes and failures, but instead by the potency of our convictions, and the determination with which we collaborate to decolonize the world of today. I contend that, re-visiting the resolutions of the fifth Pan-African Congress, within the contemporary geopolitical era in Somalia, is crucial in restoration of the hopes and dreams of the peoples living in political turmoil. Moreover, it leads to a comprehensive understanding of holistic African socio-political experiences in and through the portrait of the colonizer and the colonized. As I stated earlier, Pan-Africanism is a historically rooted paradigm. Where Somalia is concerned, Pan-Africanism would enable Somalis to anchor their vision in the rich histories of the anticolonial struggles of previous generations, and to make sense of the contemporary challenges facing the Nation. Moreover, it enables one to ponder critical questions such as: What are the root causes of political instability in Somalia? What are culturally relevant African approaches that could be utilized to bring socio-political progress to society? I contend that Pan-Africanism is a moral/ethical philosophy that is able to ignite the social consciousness of the peoples to engage in their struggle. As such, a Pan-African perspective provides a new understanding of the brutal nature of oppression.

This philosophy enables African people to step outside the Eurocentric colonial discourses that have traditionally placed everything African outside the realm of philosophy African social/political though outside the realm of philosophy (see, Bodunrin, 1981; Gyekye, 1987; Masolo, 1994; Oruka, 1990; Outlaw, 1997; Serequeberhan, 1991; Wiredu, 1998, 2004; Abdi, 2012). More importantly, it allows one to critically analyze and challenge the colonial power structures that maintain the colonial order. The Pan-African path is a revolutionary path that is championed by the people, for the people, and endured by the people in the name of their struggle.

Conclusion

It is time to summon the Pan-African vision of our Ancestors and allow this vision to guide our collective quest for self-determination. From the outset, African people did not passively accept colonialism, and they have indeed fought spiritually, mentally, and physically, engaging in armed struggles to liberate their communities. Millions have sacrificed their lives to preserve their ways of living and being, to ensure that future generations would not have to endure colonialism and its aftermath. It is from their histories of struggle that we inherited our legacy as African peoples. The Pan-African living legacy was born out of the consciousness and courageous leadership of African people to see the continent liberated from slavery, colonialism, and imperialism. Admittedly, there were pitfalls, and drastic failures in confronting colonialism. However, we, the peoples of Africa, must treat our living legacy with respect within the contemporary era (see, Marble, 2005). We must not dismiss it as an irrelevant political theory of the past. We must also not allow the colonizer to tell us the history of our peoples from a Eurocentric perspective, and we must not allow the colonizer to falsify our freedom songs and sing them back to us. Cabral (1975) asserted long ago “That value of culture as an element of resistance to foreign domination lies in the fact that culture is the vigorous manifestation, on the ideological or idealistic level, of the material and historical reality of the society that is dominated or to be dominated. Culture is simultaneously the fruit of a people’s history and determinant of history” (p.141). In concert with Cabral’s ideas, there are elements of Pan-Africanism which are from our collective past which need to be, not only theorized but also operationalized, as they bear fruits for our future. Moreover, to make sense of the past and present, the history of where we’ve been and the prospects of what we can achieve, we must conceptualize our lives, and the lives that came before us, through a Pan-African lens. I contend that a Pan-African vision is the only vision which would enable us to walk our collective revolutionary path. In Somalia, a collective sense of Pan-Africanism would enable us to plant the seeds of our struggle in the history of the continent, thereby allowing us to articulate our aspirations within an African paradigm and to hold on to hope as we lay claim to the future.

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