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RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT. AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

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1. Conceptual Clarifications

This paper explores the themes of responsible leadership in ‘education’ and ‘development’ from the perspective of applied ethics. In philosophical discourse, ethics deals with values, norms and attitudes. Applied ethics has to do with the practices derived from these three ingredients of ethics. The words ‘education’ and ‘development’ are two of the most over-used, misused and abused labels today. Too often, ‘education’ has been used as a synonym for ‘schooling’ and ‘literacy’, especially with reference to the so-called ‘developing’ countries. At the same time, ‘development’ has been commonly used as an indicator of the extent to which a former colony has adopted the North Atlantic mode of industrial production, economic organisation and political governance. In this era of ‘globalisation,’ there is great need for open discussion and critique on these words, and the processes they are intended to describe. Unfortunately, these words are often taken for granted in discourses on ‘education’ and ‘development,’ while they presuppose a wide variety of meanings and connotations. In the following pages it will be shown that ‘education’ is a cultural process through which individuals are socialised to become responsible adults within the community.

The goals of ‘education’, as defined here, are latent and presupposed within the community’s self-understanding. In contrast, ‘schooling’ is an institution-based process of inculcating knowledge and skills to achieve specific objectives. Schools, colleges and universities are the places where ‘schooling’ is provided. The veracity and validity of those objectives is not open to question by the teachers and the learners. It is structured within the policy formulation.

From an African perspective, these two words (‘education’ and ‘development’) as commonly used are externally defined and superimposed. For this reason, African countries are often described as ‘developing’ while those of the North Atlantic are described as ‘devel-

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oped'. It is never specified when a country becomes 'developed' because the pace-setters and referees of 'development' are always changing the goal-posts. It appears that with this kind of rhetoric, former colonies will never become 'developed,' unless and until they become synchronised with the dominant economies. It is in this context that the former colonies of Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) are economically tied to the European Union, whose dominant members are the respective former colonial powers.

The GNP and GDP indicators of 'development' are macro-economic statistics which do not portray the micro-economic and the local cultural specifics of the peoples in each country. In the annual UNDP *Human Development Report*, countries are grouped in clusters, as if 'development' means one thing to 'developed' countries and another to the 'developing' countries. The categorisation also groups the countries of northern Africa together with the Arab countries of West Asia. The phrase 'Sub-Sahara' Africa has become part of the UNDP vocabulary. No other region is labeled on the basis of a desert, a forest, or a prairie! What is the significance of the Sahara Desert in international economics and politics? The logic of this categorisation is inconsistent. Some countries are grouped together by race; others are grouped together by religion; while the rest are in one category because they are 'developed'. Such inconsistency in categorising the world's nations betrays the prejudice of those responsible for labeling the nations and peoples of this world. If the poor and the weak nations of the world had the power to name and label the world, they certainly would use different labels. But the power to name the world is vested in those who are able to exert themselves over the rest. Thus the poor and the weak cannot name themselves. They have to be named by others!

During the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, a set of 'Millennium Development Goals' were formulated and proposed with targets and indicators to be reached by 2015. These goals are not derived from the thinking of ordinary men and women in villages and towns across Africa and elsewhere. Nor are they the result of debates in the parliaments of the world. They are objectives for lobby groups, most of which are from Europe and North America. One of those goals is 'alleviation of poverty'. There are no Millennium Development Goals for the 'developed' countries to meet. Are they expected to continue developing? Or are they to 'slow down' and stagnate waiting for the 'developing' countries to catch up? If the only requirement is for them to make donations, grants and loans to 'help' the poor 'reduce' or 'alleviate' poverty, the chasm between the affluent and the destitute will continue to increase. Most of the rhetoric about 'alleviating' or 'reducing' poverty has more to do with charity than with equity.¹

2. Historical Background

The constitutions of former African colonies that became sovereign nations during the 1960s, stated in the Preamble that the main objective of the State was to ‘eradicate poverty, ignorance and disease.’ By the year 2002 (when the WSSD was convened) nearly forty years later, this objective had not been achieved. On the contrary, poverty increased rather than decreased. Now the ‘global agenda’ under the ‘Millennium Development Goals’ is to ‘reduce’ or ‘alleviate’ poverty, rather than to ‘eradicate’ it. When, and why, did the ‘developers’ give up? Why did the first attempt fail? What are the guarantees for the success of this second attempt? One of the conditions for the success of this second initiative is that the ‘developed’ countries should honour their commitment to contribute 0.7 percent of their respective Gross Domestic Product (GDP) towards the ‘poverty reduction’ strategies. This target of 0.7 percent was set in the 1970s within the context of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It was never fulfilled by any of the industrialised countries which form the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). There is no indication of any willingness or readiness on the part of these nations to meet the target even this time. Nor are there any coercive mechanisms to compel any nation to comply.

It seems that the rhetoric in international forums is often as distant from actual local realities as to be an irrelevant luxury, for a rather small globe-trotting elite. The ‘Millennium Development Goals’ are a ‘dead letter’ even before the strategy is launched. It is an open question whether these goals can be internalised in thought and action among ordinary individuals and communities across the world. Ordinary people do not have the statistical vocabulary to quantify and qualify the discourse on Millennium Development Goals.

The economic and technological achievements of the nations of Europe and North America (and those of Japan, India and China) were neither induced nor accelerated by external forces and agencies. They were not the result of a Declaration in an international conference. Nor are they the fruits of donations and grants by affluent nations to destitute ones. Rather, those achievements are the result of internal cultural responses to needs, challenges and problems of ordinary people. The eighteenth century industrial ‘revolution’ in Europe was internally propelled. In the twentieth century, China has had to institute cultural self-isolation in order to consolidate its internal capacity for technological innovation. During that period, a process of national reeducation for self-reliance helped the Chinese build the technical capacity which has proved an important asset after the ‘globalisation’ of trade and industry. Owing to that earlier strategy, China has now one of the fastest national economies in the world.

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Likewise, in the 1940s India began with cottage industries which were intended to serve local communities in meeting their technical requirements for basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, footwear, fuel, water, transportation and health. The national education policy was deliberately designed to promote local creativity and innovation for local consumption.

After the Second World War, the Marshall Plan was launched to facilitate the reconstruction of the destroyed infrastructure of the nations of Japan and Europe (especially West Germany). Under this plan, those nations received massive support for rebuilding their cities, infrastructures, industries, agricultural and social systems. They were guaranteed markets for their manufactured goods to Europe and North America. Their security was also guaranteed against any external threats that might result from the Cold War. In contrast, the decolonisation of Africa in the 1960s was not accompanied by any such special arrangements. Instead, loans were heaped upon the young sovereign nations at exorbitant interest, making it impossible for any of those nations to repay. The nations of South America suffered the same fate from the 1950s. The loans had to be repaid in 'hard' currencies, while the 'soft' local currencies were arbitrarily devalued making it impossible for these fragile and vulnerable economies to grow.²

These countries were destined to continue producing raw materials for the industries of the OECD. They would have to pay for imported manufactured agricultural and industrial inputs with poorly priced raw materials. Policies of import substitution did not work, because it was assumed that these countries were, of necessity, created to be producers of raw materials and importers of manufactured products. The producers could not set the price for their raw materials; nor could they dictate the price of their imports. They remained losers, both ways. After forty years, these countries had become much poorer than they had been under colonial rule. Thus the pauperisation of the nations of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) was by design, not by accident. The 'Millennium Development Goals' will not change the relative distance between the affluent and the destitute. The strategy is not intended to reduce that distance, but to increase it. By 2015, the chasm between the industrialised and the destitute nations will be much deeper and wider than it was in 2002, when the 'Millennium Development Goals' were proposed. This is because there is no determination on the part of the affluent nations, to fundamentally change the relationship between the so-called 'developed' and the so-called 'developing' nations of this world. As long as *economic apartheid* is practiced, the chasm will continue to increase. Thus the ostensible rhetoric to 'alleviate' or 'reduce' poverty has the impact of increasing dependence and indebtedness on the part

of the already destitute nations and peoples. Fair trade is a much more realistic and effective means of dealing with poverty than charity.³

3. National Debts and Poverty-Reduction Strategies

The campaigns launched by some North Atlantic voluntary agencies to persuade their respective governments to ‘cancel’ the debts owed to the industrialised countries by the poor ones have shown that there is hardly any readiness or willingness to remove the yoke of indebtedness on the necks of the same poor people whose poverty is to be ‘alleviated’. Thus the poor must remain poor. The ‘best’ that can be done is to make their poverty a little ‘bearable’. Under the World Trade Organisation’s (WTO) rules and regulations, the poor countries are required to open their markets for manufactured goods from the industrialised countries at the same time that high tariffs are imposed on both their agricultural and manufactured products, making it impossible for them to compete in the global marketplace. The huge profits reaped by the industrialised countries from this unfair global trade regime are used to finance charity and relief disbursements within the global strategy of ‘alleviating poverty’. Such disbursements help to mop up excess liquidity in the OECD, rather than to increase wealth in the destitute nations. Mopping up excess liquidity is a prudent tool of financial management. But it is not a tool for creating wealth among the poor. It risks increasing dependency among the recipients and destroying the capacity of individuals and communities to survive under difficult local conditions. The disbursements create artificial ‘needs’ and ‘wants’ which are external to the local economy. When the disbursements dry up, the communities find themselves destitute.

Here is an illustration. In central Kenya, coffee prices slumped in the late 1990s. The local farmers’ co-operative societies through which coffee berries were processed had formed Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCO) to help the farmers. In the context of the collapse of the coffee industry, these credit bodies continued to lend the farmers money to meet such basic needs as payment of school fees and hospital bills. Since there was little or no income from the coffee produce to service the debts, the farmers became increasingly indebted. By the time the coffee prices rise again, many of those peasants will be so heavily indebted that they will find it difficult to recover economically. In the meantime, many of the peasants became disillusioned by the coffee industry, and abandoned their small coffee plantations. It would have been logical for the peasants to diversify their agricultural activities away from coffee production, and refrain from reliance on the credit facilities without any guarantee of adequate incomes from coffee to support comfortable livelihoods.⁴

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International banking ensures that the affluent will become opulent, while the poor will deteriorate to destitution. Already, the cost of banking in the transnational banks in a country like Kenya is so high that a poor person finds it cheaper to bury his money in the ground or put it in a box. One needs huge minimum deposits which the poor people can neither meet nor sustain. At the same time, the cost of borrowing is so high that the terms of repayment make it almost impossible for the borrowers to create wealth and get away from poverty. Many borrowers spend the most productive part of their lives servicing the debts they have contracted for mortgages and other needs. It is ironic that loan interest rates are much higher in African countries than in the countries where the transnational banks originate. Even in the micro-credit schemes intended to help poor people, the interest rates are much higher than in the countries from which the funds are disbursed. Thus the 'alleviation of poverty' has become big business. The poor have to remain poor, for the rich to get richer.

In the mean time, offshore and private banking makes it possible for the elite across the world to instantaneously transfer funds across borders without any consideration of the impact of such transfers on local economies. The financial crisis in South East Asia in the late 1990s is a clear illustration of this point. The world is occasionally treated to media clips of political leaders who, after their death, are ostensibly reported to have stashed huge sums of money in private and offshore banks. Why is the disclosure done after death when no action can be taken? What is the ethical justification of such accounts? It would make sense to institute an international Convention to require that leaders should bank their money within their respective borders. Such a convention would ensure that national taxes and incomes are not surreptitiously transferred to other countries while the local citizens are left struggling with inflation. Such measures are much more effective in 'alleviating' or 'reducing' poverty than charity and relief disbursements.

4. The African Context

Today, 'education' and 'development' are defined in terms of adjustment to 'economic globalisation,' a concept which has no conceptual equivalent in many local languages. In tropical Africa, for example, colonial rule and the Christian missionary enterprise both undermined the traditional ways and means of socialisation. Through indoctrination these forces superimposed European values, norms and attitudes and practices on African individuals and communities. The colonial administrators' objective in this strategy was to form an African elite to facilitate subjugation. For many missionaries, on the

other hand, traditional African values, norms, attitudes and practices were considered repugnant to their understanding of 'Christian' life, thought and belief. Preparation for salvation in heaven was measured in terms of the extent to which an African individual or community adopted the cultural norms of the missionary in charge. To missionaries, 'conversion' was another word for 'civilisation'. Thus the missionary curriculum for prospective African converts portrayed the imperial metropolis as the gateway to 'heaven'.

The impact of this combined onslaught on the African cultural and religious heritage was devastating. Schooling became the means through which Africans should be alienated from their own selves, their history, cultural and religious heritage. This colonial and missionary legacy has lingered on and persisted long after the attainment of national sovereignty. The curriculum at all levels of schooling has placed emphasis on ideas, beliefs and theories developed mainly in the North Atlantic, while denigrating the heritage of the majority of people who still live according to traditional values and norms. Text-books and reference works, especially in secondary and tertiary levels, continue to be imported from Europe and North America. Through schooling, the African cultural and religious heritage is portrayed as a hindrance to 'development'. An African becomes more and more alienated from one's culture and history as one rises in academic achievement. Thus the most 'schooled' African individual is also the most alienated from one's own culture.⁵

In contrast, most societies which are considered 'developed' place great emphasis on their respective cultural and religious traditions. No society can be 'developed' unless and until its education system takes seriously its people's long history, culture and religion. To emphasise this insight, John Garang in his Address on 9 January 2005 during the Signing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement for Sudan, traced the history of the Sudanese from the biblical story of Creation at the Garden of Eden.⁶ While it is possible to dismiss such an interpretation of national history as 'myth,' it is also possible to appreciate the power of myth in providing a people with reference points and signposts in their history. Factual accuracy is not essential for myths and legends. Yet without myths and legends a nation cannot sustain its identity. Cultural development begins when a people becomes conscious of the necessity to critique its own past and present. Constructive cultural and religious self-criticism should be the foundation of progress. This fact applies to all peoples, irrespective of race, place, religion or historical period. The former colonies of Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific cannot be an exception.

Development cannot be superimposed from outside a culture. The European Renaissance, which is the foundation of European modernity, evolved from within the cultural and religious self-critique. It did

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not abandon European traditions. Rather, the European Renaissance was a revival and re-interpretation of the European cultural and religious heritage. Likewise, Japan's technological prowess is based on a re-affirmation of the cultural and religious heritage of that nation's peoples. The same could be said of the newly industrialising countries, such as India, China, South Korea, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. Perhaps one of the factors hindering technological progress in tropical Africa is the failure to incorporate African values, norms, attitudes and practices in the 'development' planning processes. If this analysis is correct, then the technological crisis in tropical Africa may be viewed as primarily ethical, rather than financial. It is not the lack of a resource base that causes technological stagnation or retrogression. Africa is rich in a wide diversity of resources. The colonial legacy has ensured that these resources are extracted for the benefit of the industries mainly, though not exclusively, in the North Atlantic. Fair trade, rather than massive 'aid' holds the key to prosperity in the former colonies of Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific.⁷

5. Education as a Process of Cultural Socialisation

All people in every culture have evolved a process (education) through which their members of the younger generation are socialised to understand and appreciate the values, norms, attitudes and practices of the community to which they respectively belong. This process involves transmission of the knowledge, skills and experience accumulated over generations for the survival of the community. Colonial subjugation interferes with this process as the invaders impose their own 'education' process on the conquered subjects. Such subjugation was experienced in various parts of tropical Africa, which were occupied by various European imperial powers following the Berlin Conference of 1884. Without any regard to the cultural unity and integrity of various African communities, the colonies were arbitrarily established in accordance with the clout wielded by various claimants to African territory. Britain and France took the largest share, followed by Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Spain and Italy. The USA continued to wield influence in Liberia, which had been established as a home for former slaves which were no longer needed as industrial machinery replaced manual labour in plantations and factories. Literacy skills are important but not essential to the process of education. It is possible to be 'highly schooled' and 'poorly educated'. This seems to be the situation applicable to the African elite today. Many have acquired high academic knowledge but are unable to relate it to the cultural and religious heritage of their respective communities and nations. At its best, the process of education is the responsi-

bility of parents, teachers, priests, peers and the society generally. Education is multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary, concerned with the ends for which an individual ought to live. On the other hand, schooling is often specialised, narrow-minded and means-driven. Formal school examinations are intended to ensure that the learner has acquired the knowledge and skills specified in the syllabus. Effective 'education' is best achieved through informal learning. It is long-term and ends-driven.

It is unfortunate that in tropical Africa 'schooling' has been substituted for 'education'. In that substitution, the roles of parents and priests have been relegated to the background, while those of teachers and rulers are elevated. Most children and young people enrolled in school and college spend nine months every year under the instruction of their teachers and tutors. During the remaining period neither the parents nor the priests have adequate time to interact with the youth. Consequently, young people join peer groups which greatly influence the shaping of character and personality. The advertising industry promotes individualism and consumerism in a cultural context where there is little or no purchasing power. Urban norms are commended while rural life is condemned. Consequently, many young people flock to urban centers, where there is no infrastructure to absorb them. Informal urban settlements have become the rule rather than the exception in Africa's towns and cities. The majority of dwellers in these informal settlements are young people. Many of them have received basic schooling in rural areas, in a curriculum which praises urban lifestyles and shuns rural norms. From an ethical perspective, it is important to appreciate the role of schooling in the rural-urban influx. Likewise, corruption can be explained with reference to the lack of coherence between the knowledge and skills acquired at school on the one hand, and the moral values inculcated at home and church, on the other.

6. Schooling as an Instrument of Cultural Alienation

The following Table outlines some of the indicators of cultural alienation which arise from the substitution of 'schooling' for 'education'. The left column represents traditional African education, while the right column represents post-colonial African schooling. The details are self-explanatory, and the contrast is clear. The bottom row shows corruption as one of the logical consequences of schooling. By implication, corruption can best be eradicated through education, not through legislative and punitive measures. The reason is that as long as schooling portrays public goods and systems as external to individual values and interests, individuals will be tempted to take

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advantage and extract as much as they can from public resources and convert it for private use. Although *legislation* against corruption is important, it should supplement rather than substitute for *education*. Raising awareness against corruption should be presupposed in the values, norms and attitudes of the entire education system. Hard work should be praised and rewarded while laziness and underhand deals are condemned. Individualism, which schooling encourages, works against the common good in a social environment whose legacy is divisive. Communalism, which traditional education presupposes, operates as an alternative social security apparatus and as a sub-stratum of the official, formal social structure. Under these circumstances, it is very difficult to eradicate corruption. Many members of the elite do not recognise as corruption the strategies often used to bypass the established bureaucratic procedures in various sectors of governance and industry.

Goran Hyden in his book *No Shortcuts to Progress* observes that it is difficult to synchronise tropical Africa into the global market while the majority of the population presupposes rural communitarian norms and operates a mode of production and consumption which he calls the *economy of affection*. Campaign against corruption in tropical Africa has not yet taken seriously the fact that the norms and values presupposed in economic globalisation are incompatible with those of local economies which have no terms of reference for corruption. Cheating, disguised as profit, seems to be the foundation of the market economy. There are no limits of how much profit should be made. The market economy values a person only as a customer who purchases goods and services. In contrast, the market-place in rural Africa is very different from the main shopping centre in the heart of a town or city. In addition to the exchange of goods through monetary transactions, a village market is the place where the villagers meet to exchange views and sustain their social identity. A prosperous businessman who exploits his customers and makes huge profits is likely to be regarded as an enemy of the people, rather than a 'patron' of the village.

**Traditional
African Education**

Place of Learning:
Home

Teachers:
Parents and Relatives

**Post-Colonial
African Schooling**

Place of Learning:
School and College

Teachers:
Professionals

Traditional African Education	Post-Colonial African Schooling
Knowledge Content: Distilled from the African heritage	Knowledge Content: Imported from Western culture
Skills: Ways and means of survival	Skills: For salaried employment
Techniques: Apprenticeship	Techniques: Theory and experiment
Pedagogy: Oral and practical	Pedagogy: Textual and theoretical
Quality Assurance: Rites of passage	Quality Assurance: Examinations
Values: Self-esteem and integrity	Values: Upward mobility
Beliefs: From African religious heritage	Beliefs: From secular philosophies
Norms: Co-operation & diligence	Norms: Competition and opportunism
Attitudes: Caring and sharing	Attitudes: Individualism and exploitation
Practices: From each according to ability	Practices: According to job-description
Impact: Mutual responsibility	Impact: Selfishness and self-centredness
Consequence: To each according to need	Consequence: Corruption and inefficiency

Schooling pedagogy tends to presuppose and inculcate the idea that ‘modernity’ is preferable to ‘tradition.’ In fact, there is nothing virtuous about modernity, and nothing vicious about tradition. Within every culture there is a creative tension between the past and the future. This creative tension provides the key to innovation. When the transformative tendencies predominate over conservative tendencies, change becomes the acceptable norm. Conservatism is normative whenever the conservative tendencies predominate. It is

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difficult to induce constructive change through externally imposed values, norms, attitudes and practices. The illustration above shows the negative consequences of externally superimposed schooling which fails to blend traditional values with new ideas and insights.

There is great need for schooling systems in post-colonial Africa to take seriously the traditional values, norms, attitudes and practices as a prerequisite for endogenous development. Such an approach will guarantee that epistemological and technological innovation emanates from the accumulated wisdom and expertise of local communities. All industrialised and industrialising countries have each a national ethos derived from national culture and history, on the basis of which the national curriculum is designed and implemented. Without a national ethos, it is impossible for citizens to evolve national goals and ideals. Globalisation is not a substitute for national and local aspirations. Rather, it is a distraction which fragments local and national initiatives in response to the pressures of advertising and propaganda from the more powerful nations and transnational corporations.

It is ironic that while African countries lag further and further behind in technology, they have become exporters of highly trained personnel, at the same time that they continue to import 'experts' from the industrialised countries. Hundreds of thousands of doctors, nurses, engineers, architects, professors, agriculturalists, economists, accountants, lawyers — continue migrating to the North Atlantic where they can earn higher salaries and enjoy higher standards of living. The campaigns for 'alleviating' or 'reducing' poverty will in the long term be futile, until African countries can train and retain their own experts. The so-called 'brain-drain' is directly related to the content of academic and professional training provided in African schools, colleges and universities, which is almost identical with that provided in the imperial metropolis. The African graduates who take employment abroad find it easier to fit in low-level employment in the host countries, than to become responsible leaders at home. Yet there has been no international Protocol to compensate African countries for the loss they suffer whenever a trained person takes up employment abroad after long and massive investment in education and training. The brain-drain has sometimes been rationalised with the argument that African professionals find it difficult to find employment within the public and private sector of their respective countries. Such an argument proves the point that the academic and professional curriculum is in dire need of reform, so that African academics and professionals can contribute meaningfully and effectively towards wealth creation and technological advancement in their respective nations of their birth. Reliance on expatriates will not, in the long term, 'alleviate' or 'reduce' poverty in Africa.⁸

7. Education as Custodian of Tradition and Schooling as Promoter of Modernity

The illustration shows how transformative and conservative tendencies pull against each other in every society. In tropical Africa, schooling has represented the transformative tendencies whereas traditional education has been primarily conservative. In industrialised countries, both the conservative and the transformative tendencies have comparable literary and technical competence. Within the governance structures both tendencies are creatively and constructively present. The tragedy of Africa's social transformation is that cultural resilience is sustained primarily by those with little or no schooling, while the schooled elite associates itself with 'modernity' and alien values, norms, attitudes, tastes and practices. It will be difficult to 'reduce' or 'alleviate' poverty in a context where the tension between tradition and modernity is ultimately destructive rather than reconstructive. Whenever and wherever external forces enter into a culture, a conflict inevitably arises between the foreign and local advocates of the new culture on the one hand and the custodians of the old culture on the other. Such a scenario is evident in most of tropical Africa. The traditional forms of education co-exist with the post-colonial norms of schooling. At home, children are exposed to traditional ways of thought and belief, while at school and church they are indoctrinated to adopt new ideas, creeds and practices.

Unfortunately, schooling and churching are given higher rating than traditional upbringing, even though the latter has cultural roots extending far back into history. One consequence, among others, is the continuing conflict between traditional values and norms on the one hand, and those associated with modernity, on the other. Although the tension between tradition and modernity is typical of all cultures, it is much more acute in those contexts where modernity is associated with imported values and norms that are superimposed upon the traditional ones.⁹

The nations most adversely affected by liberation of trade in cultural services are those whose institutions of schooling are rooted in cultural alienation. Thus countries of Europe and North America are managing to sustain their cultural values and norms at the same time that they import entertainment and leisure services from elsewhere. In Asia, the same can be said of Japan, India and China.

The rites of passage are a dramatic illustration. In central Kenya, since the 1920s there has been conflict between the church and the State on the one hand, and the custodians of traditional norms on the other. This conflict came to the surface over the practice of initiation of adolescents into adulthood. Missionaries wanted the youths to be released by their parents to undergo schooling. Many parents insisted

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that their traditional norms and practices of socialisation were essential to the preservation of their cultural identity. The missionaries involved colonial authorities to prohibit the practice and enforce the ban. In response, the practice was driven underground, and became one of the grievances in the nationalist struggle against colonial rule. More than seventy years later, a conference was convened in August 2004, at the International Conference Centre, Nairobi specifically to condemn female initiation. Why has it taken so long to eradicate the practice? Although many women participated in the conference on invitation and at the expense of non-governmental organisations, the campaign can hardly succeed until there is readiness and willingness to appreciate the perspective of those communities that find some value in the practice. It should not be surprising if a century after this conflict erupted there will still be campaigns against it. Cultural tradition cannot be eradicated through schooling. It requires a process of re-education. Another illustration is urbanisation. In Europe, rapid urbanisation was the result of the industrial revolution. People flocked into the towns to work in factories, and abandoned the farms which were increasingly mechanised. In tropical Africa, most urban centres during the twentieth century began as colonial administrative stations. Since the colonial economy required Africa to be a source of raw materials, the industrial sector remained undeveloped.

This colonial legacy was inherited by the new sovereign African nations. In the meantime, the school and college curriculum continued to give prominence and preference to the urban mode of life against rural habitation. The consequence has been an influx of schooled young people to the towns and cities, where they have found inadequate infrastructure to accommodate them. Today, most urban centres in tropical Africa contain large informal settlements characterised by shanties within and at the periphery of municipalities. Thus schooling has tended to uproot the African youth from the rural areas in an economy which is primarily agricultural. Reversing the influx from the urban centres back to the rural areas is impossible. Strategies will have to be devised to make rural areas more attractive for habitation, through improvement of infrastructure such as potable water, electricity, telephones, mechanised farming, food-processing and all-weather accessibility. In the long term, rural habitation may be more luxurious than life in urban centres. This is already the case in industrialised countries, where it is prestigious to live in the suburbs. Investment in basic infrastructure in rural Africa can contribute immensely towards the reversal of population flow from urban to rural areas.

8. Urbanisation without Secularisation

In Europe and North America urbanisation encouraged secularisation. With migration from the farm to the city, the individual became free from the communal values, norms, attitudes and routine practices which were reinforced by community. As the population became increasingly urban, the communitarian ethic was replaced by individualism. Religion ceased to be the basis for morality, and the employer became more important than the priest. Anonymity became a positive value and norm – as the way of life in town and city. In tropical Africa, informal settlements within the urban centres have more places of worship compared to the rural areas from which the schooled youth are migrating. These places of worship are much more diversified than in the rural areas. In addition to the older Christian denominations introduced by the missionary enterprise, there are independent churches dating from the colonial period, local independent churches initiated by self-styled preachers, and new Pentecostal, Charismatic and Congregational churches exported especially from North America. For example, in Kibera (one of the largest informal settlements in Nairobi) there are more churches than water supply points. Many of these churches are personal ‘kiosks’ started by enterprising young people who try to provide comfort and a sense of belonging to displaced individuals.¹⁰ The localities within the informal settlements are often concentrations of people from the same rural area, trying to replicate rural norms within the city. Traditional norms, with some improvised modification, are trans-located into the informal settlements. Thus the process of secularisation, as described by such authors as Harvey Cox and Peter Berger, is hardly applicable in the urban centres of tropical Africa.¹¹

High church attendance among the urbanite African elite confirms that religiosity does not decline with urbanisation, irrespective of social status and ethnic identity. New denominations of the Congregational, Charismatic and Pentecostal types continue to attract followers from all social strata especially in urban areas. Faith-based organisations both foreign and local participate in the provision of social services in both urban and rural areas. A large proportion of local popular music has religious lyrics and instructions, derived partly from sacred scriptures and partly from religious pedagogy. Thus religion spontaneously permeates the whole of the African social environment. Whereas modernity in the North Atlantic implies a shift from religiosity towards secularism, in Africa it provides new and diverse ways and means of responding to the sacred. Four Abrahamic faiths co-exist with varying intensity from region to region across the whole continent: African religion; Christianity, Islam and Judaism.¹²

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Urban centers in tropical Africa	Urban centers in north Atlantic
High religious adherence	Low religious adherence
Welfare associations the norm	State social security the norm
Small urbanite population	Predominantly urbanite population
Strong attachment to ancestral homes	Little or no attachment to ancestral homes
High unemployment rates	Low or medium unemployment rates
Small industrial sector	Large industrial sector
Administered by central government	Administered by autonomous authorities
Poor infrastructure	Sophisticated infrastructure
Huge gap between richest and poorest	Small gap between richest and poorest
Low telephone connectivity	High telephone connectivity
Low electric connectivity	High electric connectivity
Low water connectivity	High water connectivity
Poor transportation infrastructure	Advanced transportation infrastructure
Shanty housing for the majority	Permanent housing for the majority
Low schooling for the majority	High schooling for the majority
Low monthly income for the majority	High monthly income for the majority
Poor medical care for the majority	Advanced medical care for the majority
Poor leisure industry	Advanced leisure industry

It is difficult to predict the future of Africa's urban informal settlements. Some countries (such as Tanzania, Nigeria, Malawi and the Ivory Coast) have tried to establish new capital cities, where modernity can become the mode of life. It is instructive to note that the

rural-urban influx can be reduced only through educational processes which give prominence and preference to the rural mode of life.

Conclusion

In this paper it has been shown that endogenous education and development are the most effective means through which individuals and communities can constructively respond to the challenges facing them in an increasingly globalised world. Responsible leadership in education and development demands re-training and re-orientation of all those involved in preparing the youth for responsible adulthood and responsible citizenship. Schooling and skills training is important but inadequate. Inculcation of moral values, norms and attitudes must become an integral part of the process of education. Only in this way will responsible leadership be enhanced and sustained in the long term. Thus parents must play their full part in education, together with priests and other religious leaders. At the same time, educational and training institutions must include in the core of their syllabi the values, norms and attitudes which are consistent with efficiency and effectiveness in all sectors of the society. I have dealt with this theme in greater detail in my books *From Liberation to Reconstruction* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1995) and *Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction* (Nairobi: Acton, 2003). One of the greatest pedagogical challenges in Africa today, is how to reform schooling so that it affirms traditional African values, norms and attitudes while at the same time encouraging innovation, inventiveness and creativity. In the knowledge-based global economy of the future, successful nations will be only those nations whose culture promotes education.

Synchronisation of local African economies with the dominant global capitalism will increase rather than reduce the chasm between the affluent and the destitute. Education as the process of socialisation for responsible citizenship can best be achieved when citizens have a national ethos to bind their social consciousness. The cultivation of such national social consciousness is the primary task of national leaders. Factional and sectarian leadership is ultimately destructive, even when it is intended to promote marginalised sectors of population. Education, at its best, should help the learners to understand and appreciate their actual and potential capabilities in the context of the wider society. In tropical Africa, schooling has tended to emphasise diversity rather than unity, even when unity is self-evident.

The decision to emphasise unity rather than diversity is an ideological choice, not a technical one.¹³ The colonial regimes emphasise

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diversity and differentiation because it helps the colonial administrators to 'divide and rule'. Post-colonial education systems have to consolidate national consciousness through curricula that are designed to emphasise national unity and national destiny without undermining individual and community interests. Global capitalism thrives through transnational advertising and competition. Thus it runs counter to national economic strategies. Ideally, education should help learners at all levels to understand and appreciate the tension between local and national interests on the one hand, and global capitalism on the other.¹⁴

It is a matter of ethical concern when, under the pretext of 'reducing' or 'alleviating' poverty pauperisation becomes more the rule than the exception in most of the world. All statistical indications at the macro and micro levels suggest that the poor sectors of populations are becoming poorer, relative to the more affluent. In the long term, the world has to face the ethical challenge of choosing between charity and equity.¹⁵

NOTES

- ¹ On Millennium Development Goals see Stein Villumstad, *Reconstruction of Africa. Perspectives from Without and Within*, Nairobi: Acton, 2005.
- ² Escobar, Arturo, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 29ff.
- ³ On this point see Stückelberger, Christoph, *Global Trade Ethics*, Geneva: WCC, 2002.
- ⁴ Oral interviews, January 2005.
- ⁵ The conflict between Traditional African Education and Christian Missionary Schooling is one of the enduring themes for African novels, plays and poetry since the 1950s. This point is amply illustrated in novels, plays and poetry authored by prominent African creative writers such as Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Mongo Beti, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Okot p'Bitek, John Ruganda, Ayi Kweyi Amah, and others. (See African Writers Series, London: Heinemann Publishers).
- ⁶ The event was covered live on Kenyan Television and Radio channels.
- ⁷ For a documentary elaboration of this point see Ghai, Dharam (ed.), *Renewing Social and Economic Progress in Africa*, London: Macmillan, 2000; Devarajan, S. et al. (eds), *Aid and Reform in Africa*, Washington DC: The World Bank, 2001.
- ⁸ On this point see Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, *Manufacturing African Studies*, Dakar: CODESRIA, 2002.
- ⁹ For further discussion of this point see Mugambi, J.N.K., *Christianity and African Culture*, Nairobi: Acton, 2002, pp. 111-126.
- ¹⁰ Kibera Centre for Urban Mission, Carlile College, Nairobi, January 2005.
- ¹¹ Cox, Harvey, *The Secular City*, New York: Penguin, 1965; Berger, Peter, *Rumor of Angels*, New York: Doubleday, 1969.
- ¹² The phrase 'Abrahamic Faiths' refers to the common denominator of Judaism, African Religion, Christianity and Islam – all of them base their teachings and practices on what seems to be a 'synoptic' pool of tradition, rooted in ancient Upper Egypt (present Sudan). See Bernal, Martin, *Black Athena*, Vol. 1, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987.
- ¹³ On this point see Makgoba, M. W. (ed.), *African Renaissance*, Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1999.
- ¹⁴ Nurnberger, Klaus, *Beyond Marx and Market: Outcomes of a Century of Economic Experimentation*, London: Zed Books, 1998.
- ¹⁵ For further discussion of this challenge see my two books, Mugambi, J.N.K., *Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction*, Nairobi: Acton, 2003; *From Liberation to Reconstruction*, Nairobi: EAEP, 1995.