Original Paper

Black Emasculated Patriarchy

Carol Tomlin[1], Ericcson T. Mapfumo[2], & Paul C. Mocombe[3]

[1] Leeds University, USA

[2] Leeds Beckett University, USA

[3] West Virginia State University, The Mocombeian Foundation, USA

Abstract

This article posits that the shift from industrial capitalism to postindustrial capitalism in the West has led to what Mocombe deems emasculated and feminine patriarchy, the assumption of patriarchal norms by the state, its ideological apparatuses, queers, and women (given the feminization and queerification of the postindustrial workplace) from individual men whose masculinity is no longer associated with being producer and provider as it was under industrial capitalism; instead, they have been interpellated and embourgeoised, like their female counterparts, to define their masculinity as sensitive entrepreneurs, consumers, and or service workers. Black men in this social structure are, paradoxically, emasculated and hyper-masculinized. The former, given their poverty and under-education in the postindustrial social structure they are unable to assume the service-worker, consumer, and entrepreneur emasculated identity required to recursively organize and reproduce their being-in-the-world; the latter, the entertainment industry and athletic domain have become the spheres they are relegated to where their hyper-masculinity is overemphasized as means to the emasculated identity.

Keywords

Ideological domination, Capitalism, Underclass, Globalization, Feminism, Theory, phenomenological structuralism, structurationism, masculine studies, gender studies, black identity

1. Introduction

This article posits that the shift from industrial capitalism to postindustrial capitalism in the West has led to what Mocombe (2022) deems emasculated and feminine patriarchy, the assumption of patriarchal norms by the state, its ideological apparatuses, queers, and women (given the feminization and queerification of the postindustrial workplace) from individual men whose masculinity is no longer associated with being producer and provider as it was under industrial capitalism; instead, they have

been interpellated and embourgeoised, like their female and queer counterparts, to define their masculinity as sensitive entrepreneurs, consumers, and or service workers in the postindustrial order. Using Mocombe's (2022) theory of phenomenological structuralism, we posit that black men in this social structure are, paradoxically, emasculated and hyper-masculinized to recursively organize and reproduce the ideologies of the American post-industrial social class language game. As a result of the former, emasculation, given their poverty, overrepresentation in the prison industrial complex, and under-education in the postindustrial social structure, they are unable to assume the service-worker, consumer, and entrepreneur emasculated identity required to recursively organize and reproduce their being-in-the-world like their white male, female, and queer counterparts. However, unlike their white male counterparts, there is a process of hyper-masculinization, which defines the black male identity. That is, the entertainment industry and athletic domain have become the spheres they are relegated to where their hyper-masculinity is overemphasized as means to the emasculated identity.

2. Background of the Problem

Since the 1960s, there have been two dominant schools of thought on understanding the origins and nature of black American practical consciousnesses, the ideas black Americans recursively reorganize and reproduce in their material practices in the United States (US): the pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality schools. The pathological-pathogenic position suggests that in its divergences from white American norms and values black American practical consciousness is nothing more than a pathological form of, and reaction to, American consciousness rather than a dual (both African and American) hegemonic opposing "identity-in-differential" (the term is Gayatri Spivak's) to the American one (Elkins, 1959; Frazier, 1939, 1957; Genovese, 1974; Murray, 1984; Moynihan, 1965; Myrdal, 1944; Wilson, 1978, 1987; Sowell, 1975, 1981; Stampp, 1956, 1971). Afrocentric Proponents of the adaptive-vitality school suggest that the divergences are not pathologies but African "institutional transformations" preserved on the American landscape (Allen, 2001; Asante, 1988, 1990; Billingsley, 1968, 1970, 1993; Blassingame, 1972; Early, 1993; Gilroy, 1993; Gutman, 1976; Herskovits, 1958 [1941]; Holloway, 1990a; Karenga, 1993; Levine, 1977; Lewis, 1993; Lincoln and Mamiya, 1990; Nobles, 1987; Staples, 1978; Stack, 1974; West, 1993).

Contemporarily, both positions have been criticized for either their structural determinism as in the case of the pathological-pathogenic approach, or racial/cultural determinism as in the case of the adaptive-vitality (Karenga, 1993). In directly or indirectly refuting these two positions for their structural and racial/cultural determinism, contemporary post-sixties and post-segregation era black scholars (Critical Race Theorists) in the United States (US) attempt to understand black consciousnesses and communities by using post-structural and post-modern theories to either reinterpret W.E.B. Du Bois's (1903) double consciousness construct as an epistemological mode of critical inquiry that characterizes the nature or essence of black consciousness, a la Cornel West (1993) and Paul Gilroy (1993), or, building on the social constructivist work of Frantz Fanon, offer an

14

intersectional approach to the constitution of black consciousnesses and communities, which emphasizes the diverse and different levels of alienation, marginalization, and domination, class, race, gender, global location, age, and sexual identity, by which black consciousnesses and communities get constituted, a la bell hooks (1993) and Patricia Hill Collins (1990) (Reed, 1997). In spite of their efforts, these two dominant contemporary responses to the pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality positions inadequately resolve the structural and racial determinism of the aforementioned approaches by neglecting the fact that their theories and they themselves, like the positions of the pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality schools, derive from the racial-class division and social relations of production of global capitalism or the contemporary Protestant (post-industrial) capitalist world-system. In other words, the latter two positions are a result of the postindustrial ideology characterizing contemporary society, where the emphasis is on the commodification and glorification of the self and sexual/racial identities for economic gain backed by finance capital, and do not resolve the structure/agency problematics of both the pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality positions.

Using Mocombe's (2019, 2022) theory of phenomenological structuralism, which offers an approach to resolving the structure/agency problematic encountered by the pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality positions, we assess the constitution of black male identity, which is an interpellated and embourgeoised identity, in the contemporary post-industrial economy, which is characterized by three things, emasculation, feminine patriarchy, and queerification.

3. Theory and Method

Mocombeian (2019, 2022) phenomenological structuralism, which is a structurationist theory that views the constitution of society, human identity, and social agency as a duality and dualism, views the contemporary postindustrial social structure in the West and America as paradoxically constituted via patriarchy and emasculation highlighted by its emphasis on both Protestant neoliberalism and identity politics. Mocombeian phenomenological structuralism posits that societal and agential constitution are a result of power relations, interpellation, and socialization or embourgeoisiement via five systems, i.e., mode of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse, which are reified as a social structure or what Mocombe (2019) calls a "social class language game" by persons, power elites, who control the means and modes of production in a material resource framework. Once interpellated and embourgeoised by these five systems, which are reified as a social structure and society (social class language game), social actors recursively organize, reproduce, and are differentiated by the rules of conduct of the social structure, which are sanctioned by the power elites who control the means and modes of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse in a material resource framework. Hence, societal and agential constitution are both a duality and dualism: a dualism given the reification of the social structure via the five systems; and a duality given the internalization of the rules of the five systems, which become the agential initiatives or praxes of social actors differentiated by the rules of conduct that are

sanctioned based on the economic mode of production. Difference, or alternative social praxis, in Mocombe's structuration theory, phenomenological structuralism, is not structural differentiation as articulated by traditional structurationists such as Bourdieu, Sahlins, Habermas, and Giddens; instead, it is a result of actions arising from the deferment of meaning and ego-centered communication given the interaction of two other structuring structures (physiological drives of the body and brain; and phenomenal properties of subatomic particles that constitute the human subject) vis-à-vis the mental stance of the ego during the interpellation and socialization or embourgeoisement of social actors throughout their life span or cycle, which produces alternative praxis that is exercised at the expense of the threat these practices may pose to the ontological security of social actors in the social structure or society.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Based on this Mocombeian understanding, black American life is a product of their interpellation, embourgeoisement, and differentiation by the white power elites of the American Protestant social class language game. Black American social agency occurred within the dialectic of the American Protestant capitalist social structure or social class language game of racial-class inequality and its modes of production, language, communicative discourse, ideology, and ideological apparatuses, in other words. For Mocombe (2008), in refutation of the adaptive-vitality position, no African ideological apparatuses were put in place to reorganize and reproduce an African worldview on the American landscape. The African body, which embodied its initial African practical consciousnesses that were reified in Africa, were thrown in, interpellated by, and socialized (embourgeoised) in new "white" capitalist ideologies and ideological apparatuses (in place to buttress the mode of production) that they would subsequently adopt and reproduce, i.e., the black church, nuclear family, etc., in regards to the politics of their black bodies not an African worldview tied to the nature of reality as such. That is, their social agency centered on their identification as members of the society who recursively reproduced its ideas and ideals as people with black skin not as Africans with a distinct worldview (praxis, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and modes of production), represented in the discourse of whites as backwards and primitive, which they, negative dialectically, warred against, from that of their former slavemasters and colonizers. In such a social structure or social class language game, the black American sought equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the white power elites of the society by negative dialectically convicting them for not identifying with their (Protestant liberal) values given the material conditions of blacks.

Hence the pathological-pathogenic position is correct in highlighting the fact that the black American became an American, and where their practices diverge(d) from white American Protestant/capitalist norms as defined by its white power elites was/is a result of class structural differentiation, and not their African worldviews as suggested by the adaptive-vitality position (Reed, 1997; Mocombe, 2008). As such, American blacks, as interpellated (workers) and embourgeoised agents of the American

16

dominated global capitalist social structure of inequality, represent the most modern (i.e., embourgeoised) people of color, in terms of their "practical consciousness," in this process of homogenizing social actors as agents of the protestant ethic or disciplined workers working for owners of production in order to obtain economic gain, status, and upward mobility in the larger American society and the world. Whereas they once occupied the social space as agricultural and industrial workers, the former less educated than the latter, which were much wealthier because of their education and industrial work and therefore made education and industry the means to economic gain and upward economic mobility (Frazier, 1939, 1957; Mocombe, 2008). Today, they continue to constitute the social space and their practical consciousness in terms of their relation to the means and mode of production as agents of the Protestant Ethic in post-industrial capitalist America, and not as a decentered subject as alluded to by postmodern and poststructural thinkers seeking to refute both the pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality positions (Mocombe, 2008). This relation in post-industrial America differentiates black America for the most part into two status groups, a dwindling middle and upper class (living in suburbia) that numbers about 25 percent of their population (13 percent) and obtain their status as preachers, doctors, athletes, entertainers, lawyers, teachers, and other high-end professional service occupations; and a growing segregated "black underclass" of criminals, unemployed, and under-employed wage-earners occupying poor inner-city communities and schools focused solely on technical skills, multicultural education, athletics, and test-taking for social promotion given the relocation of industrial and manufacturing jobs to poor periphery and semi-periphery countries and the introduction of low-end post-industrial service jobs and a growing informal economy in American urban-cities (Wilson, 1978, 1998; Sennett, 1998). Whereas street and prison personalities, rappers, athletes, and entertainers, many of whom refer to themselves and their compatriots as "my niggas," are the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination for the latter in America and elsewhere in the black diaspora; the former, once called negroes, the "black bourgeoisie" (E. Franklin Frazier's term), and now African Americans, is predominantly influenced by preachers and educated professionals as the bearers of ideological and linguistic domination. Both groups share the same ideals and goals, i.e., economic gain, status, and upward social mobility, within the class division and social relations of production of the (postindustrial) Protestant capitalist world-system under American hegemony. However, whereas the former in the postindustrial economy of America emphasize the glorification and commodification of the self, sexual identity, entrepreneurialism, and finance capital as means to economic gain or embourgeoisement; the latter, highlight education, service work, and entrepreneurialism. As such, neither positions are progressive, nor counter-hegemonic; they are embourgeoised and reproductive.

Whereas black women are socialized to be independent feminine patriarchs, black men in this social structure are, paradoxically, emasculated and hyper-masculinized. The former, emasculation, a result of their poverty, under-education, and criminality as "my niggas" in the postindustrial social structure where they are unable to assume, like their more educated white, queer, women, and black female

17

educated counterparts, the service-worker, consumer, and entrepreneurial emasculated identity required to recursively organize and reproduce their being-in-the-world or the American (postindustrial) social class language game composed of queers and feminine men, i.e., women, etc. However, unlike their white male counterparts, the latter, hypermasculinity, is simultaneously taking place with the former, emasculation, through the streets, entertainment industry, and athletic domains, which have become the spheres they are relegated to in the inner-cities where their hyper-masculinity, as tough thugs, studs, and athletes, is overemphasized as means to the emasculated identity in a post-industrial America and West that sees the financialization and commodification of the self and identity as means to economic gain or embourgeoisement.

Future research must explore this ever-increasing emasculation and hyper-masculinization of individual black men amidst the assumption of patriarchal roles by the state, women, queer, and other others in postindustrial capitalism.

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