

# Hermeneutics of Third World and Dependency Syndrome

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## Abstract

There has been an outcry by the dependency theorists that third world and developing nations' dependency and backwardness were as a result of their integration and inter-course with the highly industrialized, capitalist and international global market economy. Using the method of hermeneutics, the paper investigates whether the dependency and backwardness were as a result of the integration of the Third World Nations into global market economy or is it psychological? The paper encapsulates the following: introduction, classification of the World, dependency theory, history of dependency theory, third world and dependency syndrome, hermeneutics of Third World and dependency, recommendation and conclusion. Among other recommendations made, the paper affirms the philosophy of depsychologization of the Third World's mind. The depsychologization is the freeing of the minds of third world from the clog of dependency considerably. It frees their mind psychologically, educationally, economically and socio-culturally. The foundation for the freeing is going back to the dignity of human person, whom naturally and intrinsically has independence. The independence to think and make rational decision could change the third world so called dependency to independence, self-actualization and realization in the global market economy.

## 1. Introduction

Countries of the world are grouped based on their levels of growth and development. These developments could be measured either economically, politically, culturally, socially and technologically-scientific advancement. These indices polarized the world into three worlds if not four as the case may be. The thrust of this paper is the third world and dependency syndrome.

The third dependency theorists claimed that the backwardness, underdevelopment, poverty was a predetermined plan to perpetuate third world dependence on the North. That is, the industrialized, rich, developed and wealthy countries of the first and second worlds. To substantiate this, Igwe S.C added, analogy that via colonialism Africa was forcefully integrated into the international capitalist order and neo-colonialism was transplanted after colonialism to sustain unequal exchange relations which enforces the continued dependency of developing economics (third world) on the west<sup>1</sup>. Even if the third world was condemned to be dependent on first and second industrialized world's through colonization, globalization and market liberalization. Can't the third world liberate themselves? Is the dependency inherent in third world? Are colonialism and globalization still the cause of dependency? Even if the answer is yes. Is there a way out? Should all the blames be heaped on the developed countries?

No matter how plausible the arguments for or against what are the causes of the dependency of the third world on the west, we believe that the causes are found in both the developed, underdeveloped and developing countries. For us still, the dependency syndrome should be blamed more on the third world for not to have done enough to emancipate herself.

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In discussing third world and dependency syndrome and the other issues raised and the ones that maybe raised in the course of this paper, we shall apply the method of hermeneutics.

## **2. Classification of the World**

We often hear people ascribed to countries as belonging to first world, second world and third world. What does it really mean? What are the preconditions for the classification? For some, the classification was full of bias and misrepresentation. The classification is not solely dependent on development although development could be used to make distinction between the developed and developing, industrialized and unindustrialized.

### **The First World**

They are those countries that aligned with United State during the First World War. First world refers to developed, capitalist, industrialized countries which also aligned with USA with more or less common political and economic interest: America, Western Europe, Japan and Australia<sup>2</sup>. The First world is also called Western world, core state and the North. For Igwe S.C, the concept has today enlarged to comprise the thirty countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which include: the EU, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, South-Korea, Japan, Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and such others countries not very highly industrialized but newly industrialized countries like Mexico and Turkey. Yet emerging industrial powers like Chinas, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong though not members of the OECD, logically fell under the umbrella of the first world, developed or highly industrialized countries, because of their high living standards and similarity of their social, economic and political structures of those of the OECD member countries.

### **Second World**

These are countries aligned to the former communist -socialist and industrialized Union of Soviet Republic known today as Russia. Formerly, the Eastern bloc. The countries are Poland, China, and Turk States. The second world has political undertone than economical. It is used to describe countries that share communist –socialist ideologies, ideals and values.

### **Third World**

The concept third world is used to describe those countries that are developing, under developed, less developed. They are economically, politically and technologically backward. It is also described as periphery states. The name third world is sometimes ascribe to rich nations for instance Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, India etc from political perspective to demonstrate their ideological alignment to first or second worlds or even to the West.

However, the third world was coined by a French renowned demographer, anthropologist and historian by the name Alfred Sauvy. It appeared in an article published in French Magazine *L'observateur* August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1952. He dualized the countries of the third world between the communist-soviet bloc and the capitalist NATO bloc during the cold war. He likened the third world to the third estate in French parlance. The third estate was characterized with the commoners, the poor, the wretched of France who fought and opposed the lords, nobles, priest, of the first estate and second estate before and during the French Revolution. He maintained that the third world is nothing and always making effort to be something. The third is associated with dependence, low usage of their natural resources, and high level of impoverishment. Infact, third world is rightly

depicted thus: .... Countries that suffer from high infant mortality, low economic development, high levels of poverty, low utilization of natural resources, and heavy dependence on industrialized nations. These are developing and technologically less advanced nations of Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America. Third world nations tend to have economics dependent on the developed countries and are generally characterized as poor with unstable governments and having high rates of population growth, illiteracy and disease.<sup>3</sup>

The above quotation stressed more of dependence of third on the first and second worlds who are more industrialized and developed. Is there hope for the dependence to turn to symbiotic one, where the worlds

relate with each other in equal capacity? To answer this, it is pertinent we look at dependency as a theory. Before we go on with dependency theory we acknowledge there exist fourth world propounded in the early 1970s by Shaswap Chief George Manuel.

### **3. Dependency Theory**

The world system, dependency theory maintains that inroads of the highly technologized and industrialized capitalist nations into the economic, social and cultural life of the third world countries have necessitated a dependency syndrome or what may be called lopsided or parasitic relationship between the developed and the developing third world. Hence, the entrenchment of under development of the third world Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia says:

Dependency theory is a body of social science theories predicated on the notion that resources flow from a “periphery” of poor and under developed states to a “Core” of wealthy states, enriching the latter at expense of the former. It is a central contention of dependency theory that poor states are impoverished into the “world system”.<sup>4</sup>

From the foregoing, it shows that the third world puts all the blames of their under development on the developed first and second worlds. The whole of free market economy was to perpetuate the dominance of the developed nations on the developing countries. Does third world pursue policies that create rooms for rapid economic growth and development? The emergence of China and India as global giants dates directly to their decision to liberalize. The current U.S expansion is powered in part by capital from abroad.

The singular achievement of the European Union was to create the biggest zone on the planet for the free trade of goods, capital and people. In the past four decades, open economics (mostly from Europe, East Asia, North America) have fared far better than closed one (Africa, Latin America, parts of Eastern Europe).<sup>5</sup> The third world should look inward to move on and cue into globalizing world.

As a reaction to modernization theory that came up around the 70s maintained that every society moves in a particular developmental stages. It means that where the under developed nations are now the developed nations were there before. So, the only functional way to alleviate the under developing countries or third world out of the abject impoverishment is to align themselves to the known and prevailing path of development which are: investment, technology transfers, incorporation or integration into the global market. Their theory is like following a universal history which at times does not apply in all case. Even if it does apply, some nations may see their model as the best paradigm to follow. On this, J. Obi Oguejiofor captures it as follows:

... its recent antecedents would include the effort the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 to transport the Marxist or communist ideology to all parts of the world with the conviction that universal history will follow the philosophy of history outlined by Karl Marx. In exporting revolution, Marxism was intent on eventually arriving at a stage when all parts of the globe will be guided in their day to day life by the communist ideology.<sup>6</sup>

Either Marxism or developed nations have been able to arrive at the stage where all parts of the world system will be guided in their day to day economic, political and socio-cultural communist or western ideologies. Every culture, people, nations, continents, developed and developing once has something peculiar to offer to each other. J. Obi Oguejiofor raps it up with this world “the failure to make such contribution meant that the culture of civilization was no longer fit for anything but Museum piece”<sup>7</sup> the proponents of the dependency theory seem to have rejected the above positions by saying:

... under developed countries are not merely primitive versions of developed countries, but have unique features and structures of their own; and, importantly, are in the situation of being the weaker members in a world market economy, whereas the developed nations were never in an analogous position; they never had to exist in relation to a bloc of more powerful and economically advanced countries than themselves ... in opposition to free market economists and modernization theorists, that under developed countries needed to

reduce their connectedness with the world market so that they can pursue a path more in keeping with their own needs, less dictated by external pressures<sup>8</sup>.

The world is characterized by interdependence and it will be unfair for the third world to heap all their backwardness and under development to the penetration of industrialization capitalist economy. For us, dependency is a situation that is both external and internal. Development should be that which is capable of emancipating the structure of unevenness both external and internal. The assumptions of the dependency exponents which state that the industrialized and rich countries of the globe need the third world in order to maintain their economic dominance, hegemonic influence and to sustain their wealthiness do not really command much applaud now. The Inroads and breathtaking success of nations like India, Malaysia, Singapore, China and Brazil show that Integration or penetration of the first world is not enough excuse for other third world countries not to developed. Third world should be able at this point look inward in other to see development as the ability to use their intellect, rationality in a more functional way both for economic, technological and socio-cultural ends. Inequality is part and parcel of human nature. In the world market economy conflicts of interest will unavoidable be displayed.

These words describe it thus:

Development is the Increasing capacity to make rational use of national and human resources for social ends. To create more goods and services, all people have fought to alter their relations with the environment. Thus development is universal process, but the rates of development are highly uneven. Add to this, there is market inequality in distribution.<sup>9</sup>

The self –reliant as regards development should start within the third world countries themselves. And which must be centered on human resource oriented approach to national development.

It is the approach of development that is proactive and reactional to the realities of world economic and political interaction. This can cushion the over dependence on the external forces.

#### **4. History of Dependency**

The Historical development of Dependency theory was attributed to the two articles published by Hans Singer and Raul Prebisch in 1949. They content that the trade relationship of the undeveloped countries and the developed countries have over period of time decreased. It implies that the under developed countries are in constant buying of the finished products of the developed countries. The underdeveloped purchase smaller finished goods from the exchange for a determined amount or their raw materials exports. This notion is described as Singer-Prebisch thesis. Prebisch is one of the renowned economists at the United Nations commission for Latin American (UNCLA). He is from Argentina. From his work, he concludes that, for the under developed nations to develop they must imbibe the culture of protectionism in their trade related activities. This is the sure way for him, for the third world to align themselves to the self- sustaining path of development. He further argues that Import-Substitution Industrialization (ISI), not a trade and export orientation was the ideal marshal plan or strategy for the third world and under developed countries. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia added that, the theory was developed from a Marxian perspective by Paul A. Baran in 1957 with the Publication of his, *The Political Economy of Growth*. Dependency theory shares many points with earlier Marxist, theories imperialism by Rose Luxemburg and V.I. Lenin, and has attracted continued interest from Marxists. Matias Vernego, a university of Utah economist, identifies two main streams in dependency theory: the Latin American structuralist, typified by the works of Prebisch, Celso Furtado and Anibal Pinto at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin American (ECLAC, or, in Spanish, EPAC).<sup>10</sup>

#### **Third World and Dependency Syndrome**

According to Advanced learner's Dictionary, syndrome is "a set of opinions or way of behaving that is typical of a particular type of person, attitude or social problem".<sup>11</sup>

Dependency as attributed to third world is an opinion predicated on the premise that the backwardness, under development, poverty and dependence of the third world were as a result of connectedness or integration to the global market economy dominated by the North, the first and second worlds.

Many have argued that the three major paradigm of dependency syndrome that contributed more to underdevelopment of the third world are economic, cultural and psychological. Economic dependence is a concept that depicts lopsided relationship or inequality between the North and the South, the core and the periphery, the underdeveloped countries and the developed countries. The concept contradicts the neo-classical model that demonstrates harmonization and cordiality in global economy. That is, economic dependency as experienced by third world. The dependency theorists believe that in reality such acclaimed harmony does not exist. That what does exist is dependence, manipulation, domination and exploitation of the third world economy by the hegemonic west. The third world dependence is because of the lack of Inter-country market place. This makes their economy to rely much on the rich and wealthy North. This unavoidably for them gives the developed nations hegemonic control and influence over the underdeveloped, developing and less developed nations' economy. The tool for the manipulation was the multinational corporations, that is, the International conglomerates that have the support of government. They have a way of perpetrating other economies with sole aim of maximization of profits. Technologico-scientific advancement of the western nations has given them advantage to control the market for the Intermediate goods manufactured from the raw materials to finished goods are externally regulated. The following gave more support to economic dependence:

Western nations, realizing their tremendous advantage in technology, and controlling the market for the Intermediate goods produced from the raw materials and assembled, probably domestically into the final product, are externally regulated the level of resource utilization in the dependent economies, which in the dependent economics, which in turn affects income distribution of National Income and the domestic standard of living. So, for most of the third world countries National Income is determined and could be controlled by external factors.<sup>12</sup>

The much talked about market liberalization could only come about when this clog is removed on the wheels of the third world.

The third world accepted the western education and culture as a universal paradigm. This does not imply that western education is bad, rather, they see it as that, which has encroached into the culture of the third world and these necessitated the dependence. Divide and rule, fragmentation or partitioning of the third world. This promotes individuality as against collectivity. This is the strength of the western countries and the new emerging economies like the Asian Tigers.

No matter how the third world wants to justify the cause of their so called dependence on the first world or developed countries is not totally accepted by us. The dependency theory need to be applauded but also has its short falls. Psychological dependency is self imposed dependence by the third world countries on themselves. It is self-defeatism. The integration and penetration into market economy have placed them where they are, therefore, they think there is nothing they can do about their situation. This attitude of their minds is also part of dependency. Antidote to this is depsychologization. By depsychologization we mean freeing of the mind from primordial sentiments that becloud it from seeing reality from positive perspectives.

### **The Hermeneutic of Third and Dependency**

Hermeneutics as science and art of interpretation was first used to interpret scripture and later used in the interpretation of literary texts and other texts that worth interpretation. Interpretation of how people, nations interact with each other and how that interaction affects their economic, political, psychological and socio-cultural lives need adequate consideration. We believe that Hermeneutic is most apt in the interpretation of that relation of nations.

In the light of discussing the third world and dependency syndrome, we employed the hermeneutic approach in order to interpret the concepts in the paper. The dependency theorists maintained that under development of the third world is fully caused because of the integration and penetration of the

industrialized, developed and wealthy nations into the economic, political and socio-cultural life of the third world. The Hermeneutics of the assumptions show that the underdevelopment of the under developed, less developed countries is not sole responsibility of the developed rich and wealthy nations. W. Rodney in his book, *How Europe Under Developed Africa*, blamed Colonialism as the cause of the under development and dependency of the less developed, under developed and developing countries of third world.

From our Hermeneutic perspective, it is quite a long time colonialization ended in most of the third world countries. Evidence available shows that third world countries have not made tremendous success economically and politically after their independence.

*Igwe S.C was right when he added:*

Whatever may have been the short comings of colonial rule the overall effect was positive for Africa. Certainly, the colonial power exploited Africa's natural resources but on balance, colonialism reduced the economic gap between Africa (third world) and the west, and planted the seed of the intellectual and material development in Africans (third world). In other words, colonialism brought enlightenment where there was ignorance such that most if not all of the resources we lay claim to – all the oil, Uranium, bauxite, etc became wealth because the white man (West) identified them and explained their usefulness to Africans (third world).<sup>13</sup>

The third world in fact, has not really done much after her independence. Colonialism may have helped in the underdevelopment but the third world should wakeup and identifies that which will help their development. The third world should align themselves to those activities that will make the human beings and society achieve substantial development. Ike F. H. Odimegwu sums it up:

It is an activity of the human person and/or

a society intended to bring change and transformation towards a state of being considered better than the status quo, but it is also a happening that happens to the human person to cause or induce change of state perceived as growth.<sup>14</sup>

Human person in the comity of nations is very vital and his activities make things to work. In those activities, his individuality is not subsumed or denied but made more manifest in the collectivity or communality. Coming together of communities imply interdependent among groups, peoples, nations, continents and world at large. The third world should stop seeing interdependence as dependence. If the dependency theorists perceive it, that is, interdependence to imply dependency they should then encourage the third world to stand alone. This is not possible. In the global village now, interdependence is inevitable. The world is globalizing. Globalization means interconnectivity or interdependency of nations. So, no country, region or continent can leave in isolation politically, economically, culturally, socially and technologico-scientifically. They need each other. "Countries and regions of the world, while exchanging their commodities depend on the other in such a way that each one takes from the other and receives some thing in return"<sup>15</sup>

Penetration and Integration of third world into the world's market economy cannot be over emphasized. In market economy or any trade interaction, conflicts and competitions must exist. This competition should not be seen as being dependent on another. Rather, it should be seen as something that will promote self-reliance in other to contribute and become relevant in the global world.

## **5. Recommendation**

➤ The third world countries should place subsidies on goods in order to promote home industries or domestic goods. This will guarantee the non exports of their raw materials. Hence, the development, promotion, sustenance of their manufactured goods.

➤ Import Restriction. We are not advocating total restriction, because it will hinder market liberalization. Rather, we solicit for relative check on the goods that could be manufactured and produced locally by the third world countries. This could also guarantee improve capital and resources.

➤ Indigenization. The third world countries' government should be able to acquire on behalf of their countries, foreign owned corporations either forcefully or through mutual understanding. Hence, keeping of profits within the state are assured.

➤ Self-reliant. The third world countries' should engage in auto-examination and human capital centredness approach. This could serve as a purveyor of national development. As existential reality, it could counter the risk of the realities of politico-economic relations that orchestrate dependency on foreign systems. To guarantee development therefore, indigenous skills and energy must be harnessed and cultivated.

➤ Depsychologization. It is a reaction to psychological aspect of dependency theory. It is a philosophy of depsychologization of the third world's mind. Its main thrust is freeing of the minds of third world countries from the clog of dependency considerably. It frees their mind psychologically, educationally economically and socio-culturally. The foundation for the freeing of their mind is going back to the dignity of human person, whom naturally and intrinsically has independence. The independence to think and make rational decisions could change the third world so called dependency to independence, self-actualization, self-reliance and realization in the global market economy. To give credence to our postulations on depsychologization-freeing of the mind, Emedolu C.C., opines:

The greatest treasure of mankind is undoubtedly the possession of the mind. Julius Caesar quite understood this fact to such an extent he declared that the greatest empire is one who can rule him-self imperia magna se ipsum est. Self-ruler ship or self-control truly begins from the mind. The mind of man, though incomprehensible, is where ingenuity and liberty must speak loudest <sup>16</sup> .

## **6. Conclusion**

The world is now is a global village. No Nation can do it all alone. The developed nations need the underdeveloped. Interdependence is the uniting factor in the world now. No matter the limitations associated with Interdependence. It is unavoidable in the new world order. The claims of the third world that the cause of their underdevelopment and dependence is their alignment to the world market economy dominated by the developed and industrialized countries. Their claim may hold some water, but what happened to other countries that have broke away from the so called dependency. The third world should stop crying about the cause of their dependence on the developed nations rather, they should look inward and see how to liberate themselves than crying.

Self-reliant model should be one of the ways to economic development. This must be centred on human person or human resources. It is human person that has the capacity to react to realities and exigencies of the world system of politics and economic relations and this will be able to cushion the risk of dependency on the international level. For the periphery nations, the self – reliant advocates for radical auto-reflection that sees actualization of development through improving skills of the indigenous people for true national growth and development. Hence, no country's economic output can increase more than the quality and employment of human persons. Promotion of domestic small scale industries and finished goods should be taken seriously. The actualization of the promotion can only be achieved by putting stringent subsidies to protect the domestic factories. This will help the under underdeveloped countries to market their goods or products rather than just exporting their raw materials.

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