

# Decoding Slavery & Anti-Slavery Systems: Their Principles, Origins and Development

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The Pan Afrikan People's Phone-in  
Every Sunday 10pm – 12midnight



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***The Pan-Afrikan People's Phone-in*** is a space for themed interactive discussions conducted over the airwaves and cyberspace. The themes are focused around issues affecting Afrikan people both locally and globally.

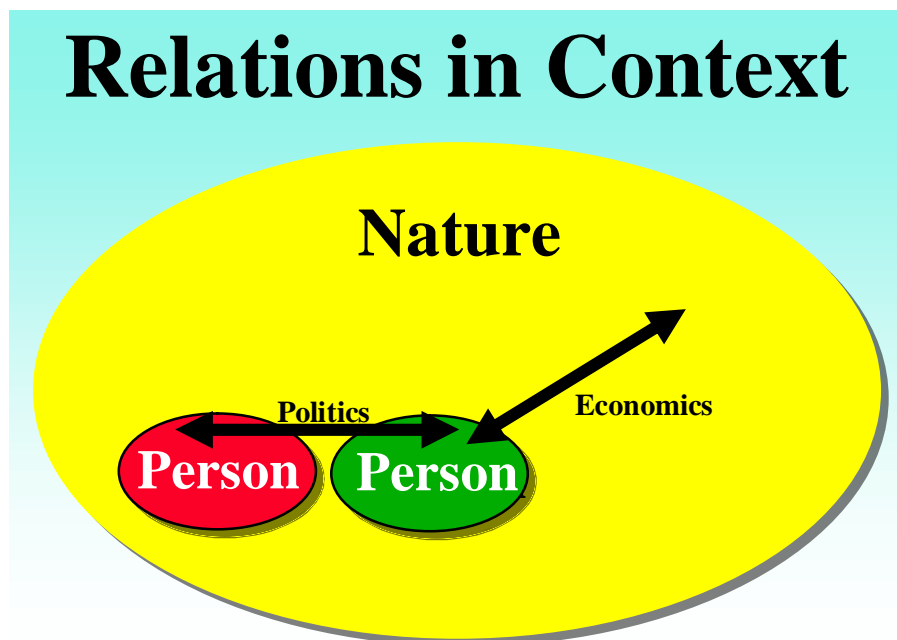
***The Pan-Afrikan People's Phone-in*** regularly features guests from revolutionary Pan-Afrikanist organisations. From time to time others including non-Afrikan guests will be invited to contribute. The activities of all guests will be examined on the basis of their relevance to Afrikan people locally and worldwide. Interviews and presentations with guests will set the scene for the more general discussion (in the second half of the programme) where listeners will be invited to phone in, ask questions and contribute.

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# Decoding slavery & anti-slavery systems: Their principles, origin and development

## The fundamental basis of human relationships

Amilcar Cabral in his book *Return to the Source* teaches us that economics at its essence is the relationship between people and nature. He also shows us that politics at its essence is the relationship between people and people (Mc Culloch, 1983, p. 84). It is the relationship between people and nature that fundamentally determines the relationship between people and people. At the same time, the relationship between people and people gives direction to the relationship between people and nature. All social systems produced by human beings are fundamentally based on the relationship between people and people on the one hand and people and nature on the other. Together these two sets of relationships determine all other types or categories of human relationship. In other words, all human relationships are reducible to some permutation of economics and politics.



*Brother Omowale*

Nature is older than people, it existed before people. People were created out of nature and are completely contained in both time and nature. Since people are contained in nature, politics must be contained in economics. In other words all politics is economics; however because the rest of nature exists outside of people, the rest of economics must exist outside of politics - therefore not all economics is politics. Economics is therefore bigger than politics; politics is really a part of economics, but it is the critical part of economics that determines the direction and levels of success of economic activity.

## **Human beings cannot exist outside of nature**

### **Nature has four elements**

Nature is composed of 4 different elements: air, water, fire (the sun) and earth (the land) – each of these elements act on and are essential to human life (Toure, No. 88, p. 133). Together they produce all of the vital ingredients which living creatures need to survive. Human beings through their consciousness have the capacity to interact with all of these elements and create even more things that they need to enhance their prospects of survival and beyond that the quality of their lives. All of these elements therefore provide a potential base for power, because they are each vital to life.

Our dependency on nature's air is total. For instance, if human beings are without air for 5 minutes, they die. However, there is no viable method for containing, controlling or claiming ownership of the air. We cannot use access to the air as a basis for claiming other people's wealth from them. We cannot make other people totally dependant upon us for access to the air. No group of human beings have been able to claim personal control of the air. Human beings are completely surrounded by the air and instinctively draw the air that they need in order to breathe. In that simple sense, the air belongs to everyone.

A similar case can be made for sunlight. If the world were deprived of sunlight for any significant length of time, plant life would die off. This would have a catastrophic affect on the food chain and would result in the extinction of human and other forms of life higher up the food chain. No one can own or control the sun. We cannot get close to the sun. We cannot even look at the sun without harming themselves. We cannot use the denial of access to the sun as a basis for claiming other people's wealth from them. Most importantly, we cannot block other people's access to the sun in order to make them dependant upon us. No group of human beings have been able to claim control or 'ownership' of the sun. Sun rays come via the sky and all human beings experience the benefits of it in some way or form. In that sense the sun belongs to everyone.

It is also observable that our dependency on nature's water is total; if human beings are without water for 5 days they die. Some control can be exerted over water which is on the ground. However, it is impractical to prevent people from catching rain water and making use of it. We cannot generally use the denial of access to water as a basis for claiming people's wealth from them. We cannot generally make other people totally dependant upon us for access to water on a consistent basis. No group of human beings have been able to claim total personal control of the world's water supply. Water falls from the sky and anybody with an appropriate container can catch it and drink it. Again, in that simple sense water belongs to everyone.

## **Land is unique amongst nature's elements**

Our dependency on nature's land is also total. If land did not exist, human life would be altered beyond all recognition. In fact human life would be extinguished because everything that is necessary for human survival is either on the land, comes into contact with the land or is in the land. Land differs from the other elements in that the wealth contained in the land is relatively accessible to people and exchangeable between people. The resources contained in the land provide the main basis for wealth in human societies. Systems can be put in place by some people to block other people's access to land and its contents. Some people can and historically have claimed 'ownership' of land and have used the land as a basis for claiming other people's wealth from them. Since land is essential to life the land 'owners' have been able to use their power over the land to stifle other people's development. Historically the 'ownership' of land had such a profound affect that it gave the alleged 'owners' the power of life and death over the other people on the land. Systems of land ownership eventually meant that the land did not belong to everyone in the sense that the other elements did. It was usurped by a small sub-group of humanity.

Land, which can also be thought of as the planet or the base of nature also existed before people. In fact people come from the land and live on and off of the land. Furthermore, whilst people are wholly dependent on the land for their very existence, neither the land nor nature relies upon people for their existence. If people are dependent upon the land for their existence and that land is 'owned' by somebody else, it means that the people become dependent upon the 'owner' of the land. The 'owner' of the land therefore becomes all powerful to the point of even being able to decide on matters of life and death for the people on 'their' land. This is the kind of reasoning that brought Malcolm X to the realisation that 'Land is the basis of all independence' (Breitman, 2002, p. 21). This statement is true because everybody fundamentally depends on the land for their survival, but unlike the other elements of nature, it can be controlled by a sub-group of humanity.

## **People, land and the development of principles**

### **Some characteristics of land**

One way of looking at land is to see land as being synonymous with the ground. From this limited perspective land becomes the surface that human beings and other animals have the ability to live on, walk on and build on (Nkrumah, 1979, p. 22). Another way of looking at land is to realise that below the ground there are other aspects of the land which also have value. Land in this instance becomes the ground plus everything in the ground. Valuable minerals can be extracted from the ground and then used to make products that can enhance the experience of life for human beings and animals. Yet another way to interpret land is to see land as comprising: the ground plus everything in the ground plus everything on the ground (and comes out of the ground). It is this third perspective on land that is most important

because to 'own' and control land is to 'own' and control all three aspects of the ground. This inclusive interpretation also confirms that people and animals etc. are part of the land.



**An inclusive definition of land requires all three elements**

**It is the manner of interaction between people, the land & other resources of nature & the immaterial that determines a people's values, principles and culture**

*Brother Omowale*

It is also important to note that land operates on the feminine principle. For instance, farmers recognise land as having similar characteristics to a woman's womb. The land is fertilised by water, in a manner similar to the way in which the sperm of a man fertilises the egg in a woman's womb. Trees, fruits and vegetables come out of the ground in a manner similar to the way in which human beings come out of the woman's womb. When human beings live in a manner that complements the principles of land, their behaviours generate **matriarchal principles**. Conversely, when human beings behave in ways that run counter to the principles of land their behaviours generate **patriarchal principles**.

### **The establishment of the true principles of humanity**

As human beings we come from the land, are a part of the land and in essence belong to the land. The land provides us with what we need; we are like parasites on the land, depending on it for our needs and our survival. In early human societies it was accepted that the land owned the people. At that stage it never occurred to anybody that people could 'own' the land (Nkrumah, 1979, p. 21). To claim private 'ownership' of the land would have been a bit like two fleas arguing about which one owns the dog. If anything the dog owns the fleas, but the fleas could never truly own the dog. People in this frame of thinking understood that if the land was 'owned' at all, it was collectively 'owned'.

When the land is collectively owned, nobody is landless and everybody has an equal right to: (i) Stand on the land; (ii) Eat the produce of the land and (iii) Build their housing on the land. The only necessary condition is that they must all agree on how to allocate portions of the

land between them. Nobody else owns us and we are each powerful (and collectively substantially more powerful). Other individuals cannot block our access to the wealth of the land and use it to control us. In this situation, there can be no separation into **classes** with opposing **class** interests. There is just one **class** and everybody is in it. Everybody gives what they can to that **class** and everybody receives what they need from that **class**. All peoples started off thinking and behaving in this way. When people accepted that they were owned by the land, rather than claiming individual 'ownership' of it, access to the land was free for everyone and as a result human beings were all free from enslavement. Under these circumstances no human being claimed 'ownership' or control of any other human being; slavery was non-existent.

This calibre of relationship with the land generated a set of **matriarchal principles** that governed human relationships. Since nobody claimed personal 'ownership' of the land: everybody shared in the wealth produced out of the land, everybody remained dependent on the land but because it was not personally 'owned' nobody became dependant upon anybody else. As a direct result of this scenario three **matriarchal principles** developed: firstly, the welfare of the people was treated as more important than individual 'ownership' of the land i.e. the source of wealth. People's welfare therefore became society's highest priority - this generated the principle of **humanism [People before property]**. Secondly, the people began to notice that by working the land together, they each gained more than they would have gained had they worked by themselves. This encouraged them to work together to satisfy their joint needs - this generated the principle of **collectivism [We before me]**. Thirdly, since adults were generally not dependant upon any other adult, everybody recognised that they were neither superior nor inferior to anybody else. They were all equal in essence - this generated the principle of **egalitarianism [We're all equal]**.

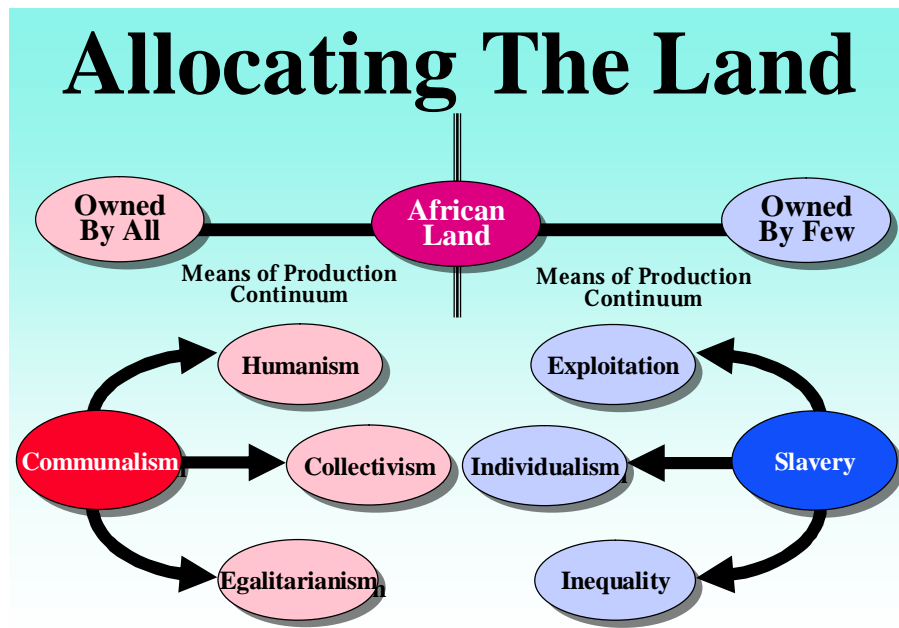
When matriarchal principles are dominant in a pre-industrial setting, the social system created is called communalism. Under communalism, it is not possible for slavery to thrive. All human societies, without exception, were originally communal societies. Every section of the human family started off in this way. Communalism, with its matriarchal principles was the social system of Afrika before the invasion of alien cultures. Even after the alien invasions communalism did not disappear, instead it retreated to the countryside and can still be found in Afrikan villages to this day (Afrikan Information Service, 1973, p. 49). Communalism does not stand as an isolated system it is part of a family of social systems which includes socialism and communism. What they have in common is that they operate on the basis of matriarchal principles.

### **The change to anti-human patriarchal principles**

As has already been demonstrated a people's principles are derived from the way in which they interact with land (and land is feminine). Since everybody is dependent upon the land for

their survival and existence, if some of the people successfully claim 'ownership' of the land, they simultaneously claim 'ownership' of the other people on the land. This is what happened historically. The culprits gained control of the land for themselves and amassed their own personal wealth at the expense of other members of the group (Nkrumah, 1980e, p. 14).

When the land is privately 'owned', landless people must ask the land 'owner's' permission before they can do anything on the land. If they stand on the land, they trespass; If they pick fruits to eat, they steal; They cannot build a house without permission because they have no foundation upon which to build. They must ask permission of the land 'owner' for anything that they need to do. They are therefore dependant upon the land 'owner' for their needs. They must pay the land 'owner' what he wants in order to get permission before they can satisfy their own needs. The land 'owner' has power over the landless: The freedom of the landless is, in all practical terms, taken away by the land 'owner'. The landless are enslaved by the land 'owner's' 'ownership' of the land upon which they have to stand. Landless people are effectively 'owned' by the land 'owners'.



*Brother Omowale*

In this situation, two distinct **classes** emerge with opposing interests. The **land 'owners'** want to use 'their ownership' of land to take the wealth of the **landless**. The **landless** want to keep their wealth by changing the land 'ownership' system to permanently ensure that their wealth will never be taken away from them. In addition, other **landless** and **small land 'owning' classes** develop in between the **major land 'owners' class** and the **landless class**. Their **class** position is based on how closely they align themselves economically with either the **major land 'owners'** or the **landless**.

These processes actually happened in some parts of the world and when they did, three **patriarchal principles** developed as a direct result of the land 'owners' selfish actions: firstly, the more the landless people produced, the wealthier the land 'owners' became. Eventually, 'ownership' of property became more important to the land 'owners' than the welfare of the other people on the land - this calibre of behaviour produced the principle of **exploitation [property before people]**. Secondly, the very act of selfishly claiming the land for themselves meant that they were thinking of themselves before they were thinking of the welfare of the other people on the land - this mode of behaviour produced the principle of **individualism [me before we]**. Thirdly, taking control of the land made them more powerful than the other people on the land. The other people owned nothing and therefore became dependant upon them as the land 'owners'. This dependency caused the land 'owners' to view the other people on the land as inferior - this mindset produced the principle of **elitism [I'm better than you]**.

These **patriarchal principles** are the core principles of **slavery**. Wherever these anti-human principles are found, they manifest themselves as some version of **slavery**. **Exploitation** is the central principle of **slavery** and like **slavery** it is anti-human and anti-nature in its very essence. Wherever we find **exploitation** we find **elitism**; wherever we find **exploitation** we find **individualism**; wherever we find **exploitation, elitism** and **individualism** we find **slavery**. **Exploitation** is the sign that **slavery** is present; it is the common denominator of all forms of **slavery**. The reason why we can truthfully assert that **slavery** has not been abolished, but rather has changed form, is because **exploitation** has not yet been defeated. **Slavery** will only be truly abolished when **exploitation** is banished from the earth forever.

## **The origin, development and methodologies of slavery**

### **Exploitation – the common denominator of slavery**

Samora Machel (Machel, 1973, p. 26/7) explains that from the moment that people began to produce more than they consumed, the problem of what to do with the excess existed. The first phase of **exploitation** happened when an individual or a small group of people claimed 'ownership' of the excess produced by the whole group. They were in effect 'stealing' from the other members of the group because the others had also participated in the process of producing the surplus. This sometimes subtle form of **exploitation** happened in varying degrees in all parts of the world. This was the subtle beginning of slavery.

### **Women were the first 'slaves': Exploitation and its impact on Afrikan women**

When the exploiting sub-group made its move to steal the surplus from the rest of the group, women hardly participated in the process. It is not that women were not interested in having a say in how the surplus was distributed, but given that their basic needs were met, women were much too busy caring for their families to fight the budding thieves for the surplus. As a result of their love, kindness and dedication, women were not oppressed into doing some of

the things, including serving others, which later turned out to be to their social disadvantage. Women willingly made some concessions for the benefit of their families and the community as a whole. Women's generosity was then taken advantage of and used against them by men. Men took advantage of the fact that women tended to have a higher level of family 'constraints'. This led to men's subjugation of women with little rebellion (Sankara, 2004, p. 260).

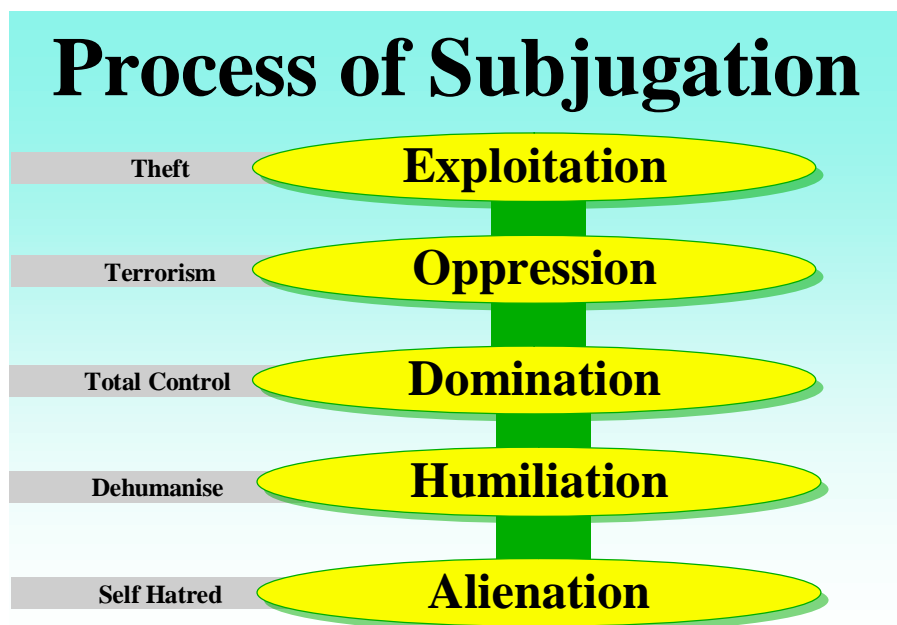
As a result, women found themselves by-passed in the quest for what became private property. This proved to be a great disadvantage to women because private property became the foundation of power in early societies. Private property came about through the theft of the group's surplus and simultaneously brought with it the enslavement of women who were too busy doing other things to fight for it. It was at the stage in the historical process, when surplus was monopolised by a minority sub-group that a subtle form of sexism was born and simultaneously, women became the 'first slaves'. The enslavement of women was to intensify later. However, once women fell into the trap of enslavement, it became necessary for men to oppress them in order to keep them there. Once this was 'achieved', more oppression was exerted and further concessions were forced from women by men. This is the proof that the European concept of 'race', a term used to justify European racism was unconnected with slavery at the point of slavery's origin. In other words, sexism is older than racism.

Using the group's surplus as the only basis for enslavement had its weaknesses. For instance, enslaved people who were dissatisfied could go somewhere else out of the reach of those that stole the surplus and start again. This early form of slavery was therefore incomplete because it ultimately relied on the enslaved person accepting their subordinate position because of their emotional bond with the group. Enslavers therefore had to move to a more secure system. They eventually moved from claiming the whole group's surplus to the next stage of claiming 'ownership' of the whole group's land. This was an important development because these societies were agriculturally based, meaning that the land was the actual source of the surplus.

In the second phase, the **exploitation** sharpened: The individual or small group successfully claimed 'ownership' of the land that their people lived on. This went beyond merely 'stealing' produce from the larger group. Since they 'owned' the land that their people lived on, they ended up owning everything on the land, including the rest of their people. This calibre of **exploitation**, known as feudalism was more pronounced in Europe than any other part of the world. Slavery therefore intensified as the minority sub-group monopolised 'ownership' of the land. They used their 'ownership' of the land to steal the labour of the other people in the group. Full blooded slavery was an internal group phenomenon before it became employed by one group against another.

The third phase of **exploitation** formed the ultimate foundation for racism. This was where one nation of people conquered and took control of the land of another nation of people. Their 'ownership' of the other people's land put them in a position to 'own' and control the other people. This calibre of **exploitation** is known as colonisation (Nkrumah, 1980e, p. 14). It was practiced by European imperialist nations against Afrikan nations and others. Crudely interpreted, **Exploitation** in this context is the process of 'stealing' other people's resources and enslaving them. In effect it separates a nation of people from their land, other associated production mechanisms and the product of their labour.

The position of Afrikan women reached a new low point when European imperialism arrived on Afrika's shores and colonised the land; with the invasion of European imperialism Afrikan men became the slaves of European men and women. Afrikan women, who were already partially enslaved by Afrikan men, were fully enslaved and became in Sekou Toure's word's "the slave's slave" (Toure, Tome X, p. 265; Toure, undated, p. 9).



*Brother Omowale*

### **How exploitation led to oppression**

When a people find that their resources are being 'stolen' or have been 'stolen', they resist: They try to get their resources back. The **exploiter** must then resort to using a combination of force and trickery to retain the 'stolen' resources (Rodney, 1981, p. 65). The use of force is to prevent the **exploited** people from rising up to take their 'stolen' resources back. The use of psychological processes utilising tools such as their religious institutions, their education system, their media mechanisms, their drug economy and the mental hospitals is to deflect the **exploited** people from even thinking about rising up to take their stolen resources back.

All of these processes are **oppressive**. **Oppression** in this context is the process of committing systematic acts of physical and mental 'terrorism' against an **exploited** people.

### **How oppression led to domination**

When the processes of **oppression** have been so successful that the **oppressors** can affect virtually total control over the **oppressed** people, the point of **domination** has been reached. The subjugation of the **oppressed** people is now nearing completion. However as Amilcar Cabral (Afrikan Information Service, 1973, p. 43) points out, this level of subjugation can only last until the subjugated people's culture has sufficiently recovered for them to throw off the **oppression**.

### **How domination led to humiliation**

When the **dominated** people are unable to defend themselves and are obliged to obey their **dominators** to the point of carrying out tasks that devalue them as human beings, the point of **humiliation** has been reached. Their **oppressors** can do with them as they choose and overt resistance is almost undetectable. The degrading nature of their oppressor's abusive practices reduces them to a sub-human status in the eyes of their **oppressors**.

### **How humiliation led to alienation**

When the **humiliated** people internalise their **humiliation** and begin to accept that they and others like them are something less than human beings, the point of **alienation** has been reached. One of the signs of the **alienation** of Afrikan people in British society comes in the form of their exclusion from society's decision making processes. In some cases they may not even dare to imagine that they could have a role in the running of this or even their own society, which in turn generates both apathy and lethargy (Machel, 1974, p. 43).

An even more intense form of **alienation** becomes apparent when **alienated** Afrikan people begin to display signs of hating themselves. Self hatred, the most tragic manifestation of **alienation** can take many forms. However, in the worse cases it brings suicidal behaviours. Behaviours that can involve Afrikan people taking their own lives or murdering others in their community that look like them (Fanon, 1990, p. 203/211/240; Afrikan Information Service, 1973, p. 45).

### **Linking exploitation and divisive barriers amongst Afrikan people**

This is a summary of the conditions of the various systems and consequences of enslavement that have affected and continue to affect Afrikan people around the world. All Afrikan people, regardless of geographical location have been subjected to the same historical and psychological process of exploitation, oppression, domination, humiliation and alienation. This exploitative process undermines the very fabric of unity amongst Afrikan people. It creates an environment in which it appears 'natural' for Afrikan people to hate and

mistrust each other. It appears 'natural' for Afrikan people to think that other Afrikan people are not worthy enough to work along side them. This is a condition that some commentators have described as 'mental slavery'.

### **Property relations: The source of all systems of slavery**

We are now in a position to clarify the role that private property plays in the enslavement process. When the surplus of the group was taken over by a sub-group, it became private property; when the land was taken over by a sub-group it became private property; when all aspects of the means of production were taken over by a sub-group it too became private property (Sankara, 2004, p. 261/2). Once these changes took place, property relations underpinned the relationship between individuals, families, groups, organisations, institutions, social systems and all permutations of these different aggregates. It followed that private property imposed the master/slave relationship i.e. the owner/owned relationship on people in their various groupings; it was the source of exploitation between all peoples:

- When exploitation was practiced between women & men of the same nation it expressed itself as sexism, patriarchy and the patrilineal system
- When exploitation was practiced between men of the same nation it expressed itself as class, class struggle and class conflict
- When exploitation was practiced between women of the same nation it expressed itself as class, class struggle and class conflict
- When exploitation was practiced between men and men, women and women or women and men of different nations it expressed itself as racism, colonialism and because Europeans carried out the invasions, 'white supremacy'.

Social class, sexism and racism are the three primary forms by which slavery has manifested itself on earth. Of these, the worse manifestation of slavery has been the various systems of slavery imposed on Afrika and Afrikan people by European imperialism over the last 500 years. Within that orchestrated process of European imperialist genocide, Afrikan women who were subjected to triple oppression (i.e. oppression on the grounds of sex, class and race) suffered most of all.

### **Slavery and anti-slavery social systems**

Principles are founded on people's relationship with nature. They provide a framework for the dominant ideas of a society. They are the highest expression of the mode of operation in a society and structure all activities in that society. They are universal in character and therefore override the personal values of individuals in the society. They are reflected in an integrated and complimentary set of attitudes which become dominant in the society. Society's principles are manifested in the behaviours of its people through the way that they treat other people (their sisters and brothers) and relate to nature (their mother). They are

directly determined by the society's dominant mode of production (Afrikan Information Service, 1973, p. 50).

Slavery, Feudalism, Capitalism, Imperialism, Colonialism Settler colonialism and Neo-colonialism are related systems because they share the same set of anti-human patriarchal principles – in their essential and central ideas they are the same; all of them are variant forms of slavery (Nkrumah, 1980e, p. 23). Communalism, Socialism and Communism are also essentially the same and are related to each other through a common set of ideas and matriarchal principles (Nkrumah, 1980e, p. 23). The two sets of principles are diametrically opposed to each other, they are the anti-theses of each other; to support one automatically means to destroy the other; where one dominates, the other must fight for its very existence.

<b>Principles &amp; Systems</b>	
<b>Matriarchal</b>	<b>Patriarchal</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<b>Principles:</b>
Humanism (People before property) Egalitarianism (We're all equal) Collectivism (We before me)	Exploitation (Property before people) Elitism (I'm better than you) Individualism (Me before we)
<b>Systems:</b>	<b>Systems:</b>
Communalism  Socialism Communism	Slavery                      Feudalism Colonialism                Capitalism Settler colonialism        Imperialism Neo-colonialism

*Brother Omowale*

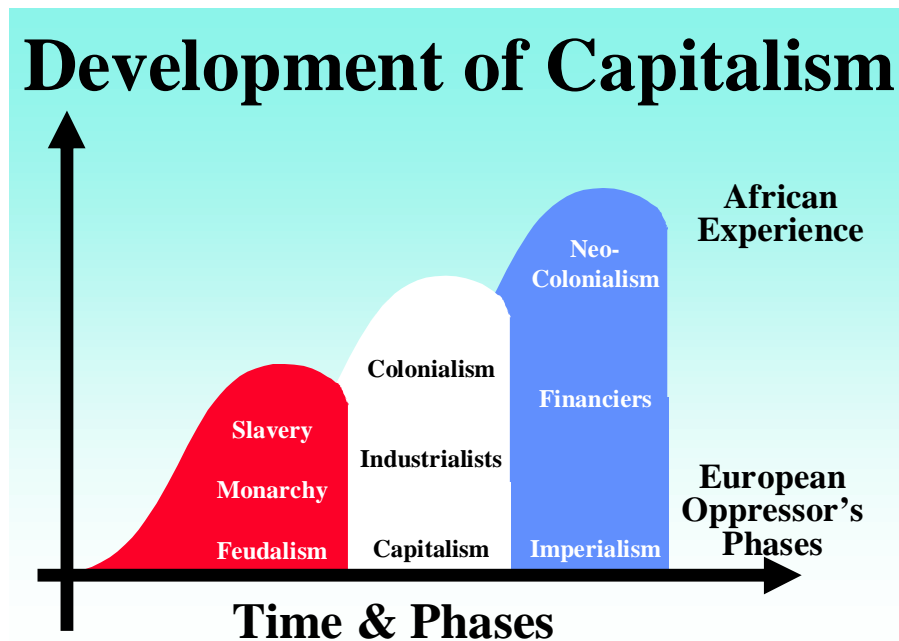
Under communalism and related systems the principles of **humanism [people before property]**, **collectivism [we before me]** and **egalitarianism [we're all equal]** become dominant. Under slavery and related systems the opposite principles of **exploitation [property before people]**, **individualism [me before we]** and **elitism [I'm better than you]** dominate. The principles of communalism and its related systems are superior to those of slavery because they encourage people to work jointly towards achieving benefits that are common to all of them. By contrast the principles of slavery and its related systems are inferior because they force the majority of people to work with little or no benefit for themselves whilst others i.e. the 'owners' of property benefit greatly from their efforts.

**Afrika's experience of slavery - in brief**

Afrika gave birth to the communal social system which successfully operated in Afrika for thousands of years (Nkrumah, 1980e, p. 13). In that sense, Afrika was free from slavery.

Afrika first experienced the principles associated with slavery as an internal change when some parts of the continent moved from communal living to the beginnings of feudal social systems (Toure, undated, p. 7). This happened in two stages: firstly, the whole group's surplus produce was usurped by 'leaders', 'elders' and others giving themselves superior positions in the community (Machel, 1973, p. 26/7); secondly, the 'leaders' and 'elders' began moving towards claiming 'ownership' of the land, but this process was never completed. However, Afrika's most profound experience of the principles associated with slavery was an external intervention by Europeans with an imperialist intent. It came in the form of a genocidal assault against Afrikan people which resulted in the murder, rape and enslavement of millions of Afrikan people (Sankara, 2004, p. 198/9).

The principles inherent in slavery intensified and then took the form of colonialism. The Afrikan continent was divided up between competing capitalist interests at the so called Berlin conference. The conference took place from October 1884 to February 1885; it was used to prepare agreements between European imperialist enslavers before they launched further savage attacks against Afrika and Afrikan people. As the anti-Afrikan genocide worsened, millions more Afrikan people were murdered, raped and enslaved with out and out war, the theft of land, indoctrination, peonage and taxation being employed as some of the tools in the process.



*Brother Omowale*

The principles associated with slavery have now transformed into neo-colonialism – an even more vicious form of enslavement where a class of Afrikan people were specifically created and used to oppress other Afrikan people on behalf of imperialism. Millions more Afrikan people are being murdered, raped and the Afrikan micro-states created via the Berlin conference are being enslaved by the policies of the World Bank, the IMF the WTO and the

UN. Afrikan people are now inflicting the face to face damage on each other whilst the capitalists manage the process through bogus leaders, puppet governments and proxy wars.

### **Defeating slavery – a brief note on the future**

In order to sort out the current mess and defeat slavery, it is necessary to embrace two critical objectives: the first is the reclaiming of traditional Afrikan culture with its anti-slavery, pro-humanity communal principles; the second is to develop a strong state supported by a strong industrial framework so as to be able to produce what we need in order to survive and thrive as well as ward off future potential aggressors. This analysis points us towards what some people have called socialism, a social system that many of us have been indoctrinated and misled into believing is alien to us and bad for us.

What we have not generally been told is the principles of Afrikan communalism i.e. humanism, collectivism and egalitarianism are identical to the principles of socialism. Socialism differs from communalism in two major respects: firstly, the socialist society maintains the use of state machinery. It is impossible for any nation to exist in the current epoch of history without state machinery. The state machinery would be used under socialism to promote the patriarchal principles of Afrikan culture as well as to prevent the re-emergence of capitalism and its anti-human slavery principles. Examples of significant attempts already exist in Afrikan history (Toure, 1979, p. 297-358). Secondly, socialism exists in an industrial setting i.e. there must be mass producing factories under socialism and these components cannot exist under communalism. Again attempts have been made in this direction by Afrikan nations, only to be thwarted by the hidden hand of European imperialism (Nkrumah, 1968, p. 83).

Put another way the essential difference between Afrikan communalism and socialism is the existence of state machinery and industrialisation. Socialism cannot operate without the existence of the state and communal systems have not yet reached that stage of political development. Similarly, socialism cannot exist without industrialisation and communalism which has not yet reached that stage, is pre-industrial. In other words, when communalism is practised in an industrialised economy controlled by national political state machinery, it is called socialism. It is the relationship between communalism and socialism combined with Afrika's history of communalism that makes Afrika a continent already adapted to socialism. Indeed, Nkrumah reminds us that socialism is the modern day guardian of the principles of communalism (Nkrumah, 1980f, p. 444).

There is no doubt that Afrika and Afrikan people gave birth to the principles inculcated in the system that others have now labelled 'socialism'. Though Afrika has never directly experienced socialism which requires a strong united state and industrialisation, it has a long and strong history of communalism. Through communalism Afrikan people have been living

by socialist principles for millennia before foreigners came along and claimed to discover it. Samora Machel for instance confirms that he came across the ideas that some Europeans call socialism, in Afrikan culture. These ideas were part of his childhood and upbringing which he experienced long before he came across the ideas of Europeans who are incorrectly treated as the 'discoverers of socialism' (Christie, 1989, p. 123).

Industrialisation and state mechanisms also help to clarify the basic distinction between socialism and communism. A communist social system can only emerge after a period of socialism has existed. These two social systems therefore belong in different epochs of history and cannot exist in the same place at the same time. This partly explains why it is that the system of communism has never existed anywhere in the world. The historical development of humanity is not yet ready for it. Communism like socialism maintains mass producing factories which result from industrialisation, but the state machinery eventually becomes redundant and is withdrawn. The communist society is essentially the same as the socialist society; the main difference being that the machinery of the state is present under socialism and is absent under communism (Cabral, 1974, p. 78).

## Matriarchal Systems: Compared

System	Principles	Agriculture	Industry	State
Communalism	Matriarchal	Yes	No	No
Socialism	Matriarchal	Yes	Yes	Yes
Communism	Matriarchal	Yes	Yes	No

*Brother Omowale*

The communist society with its matriarchal principles is therefore essentially the same as the traditional Afrikan communal society except that the communist society has mass producing factories, whilst the Afrikan communal society does not. The essential difference between Afrikan communal and communist social systems is the level of technological development. It follows therefore that the essential difference between the traditional Afrikan society and the communist social system is the difference in their respective levels of technological development. The traditional Afrikan society is therefore even closer to the communist social system than it is to the socialist system. Communism therefore draws on the matriarchal

principles inculcated in the culture of Afrika and then Afrikan culture, using technology as a tool, will adapt what others have called Communism so that it works for us in Afrika's modern environment.

Having a discussion on how the various social systems relate to each other can operate as a valuable tool in the process of raising our collective consciousness. However, since such a discussion can appear quite abstract, it brings with it the danger that we can engross ourselves in a discussion about the 'labels' applied to systems and their 'meanings'. This can distract us from dealing with issues of real substance that have developed as a result of practical work. Cabral summarises the confusions caused by discussions about the 'labels' given to social systems as follows:

"To have ideology doesn't necessarily mean that you have to define whether you are communist, socialist, or something like this. To have ideology is to know what you want in your own condition." (Afrikan Information Service, 1973, p. 88/9).

Afrikan principles and ideology which come out of Afrikan culture do not need to conform to the 'labels' that have been created by other cultures (Cabral, 1971, p. 21). Nonetheless, we do need to clearly understand where Afrikan principles, ideology and culture stand in relation to the pro-slavery and anti-slavery social systems of the world.

### **Afrikan people will abolish slavery for ever**

Afrikan people have abolished every system of slavery that alien cultures have put in their path. In abolishing chattel enslavement and colonial enslavement, they found that their efforts led not to the end of slavery (as was hoped), but to the transformation of slavery into its current neo-colonial form. Nonetheless, overcoming these barriers represented tremendous successes as milestones in the overall struggle against exploiting and enslaving systems. These successes would not have been possible had Afrikan women not come to the forefront of the liberation struggle. As we overcome the internal dimension of enslavement, part of which holds Afrikan women back, we release their energy to help combat the externally imposed systems of enslavement. Afrikan people's fight against slavery is therefore both internal and external.

Kwame Nkrumah has explained that we are now at the final frontier in the struggle to abolish the systems that enslave human beings. Once Afrikan people defeat neo-colonialism we will have inflicted a death blow on exploitation and the other anti-human patriarchal principles of slavery for ever (Nkrumah, 1974, p. ix-xxi). In order to ignite the revolutionary transition that will take humanity from the anti-human patriarchal principles of neo-colonialism to the pro-humanity matriarchal principles of Afrikan culture, the Afrikan masses will need to unite. That unity will need to be based upon two crucial premises: firstly a collective fight to the death

against neo-colonialism and its destructive intrigues and simultaneously a reclaiming of our Afrikan identity and the principles of Afrikan culture.

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