

Educating Bodies in the Ideological Apparatuses of the Age of Neoliberal Globalization

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ABSTRACT

Postmodern and post-structural theories on education highlight education as a “discursive space that involves asymmetrical relations of power where both dominant and subordinate groups are engaged in struggles over the production, legitimation, and circulation of particular forms of meaning and experience (Erevelles, 2000, pg. 30). As such, postmodern and post-structural theorists “examine the discursive practices by which [(individual)] student subjectivity (as intersectionally constructed by race, class, gender, and sexuality) is produced, regulated, and even resisted within the social context of schooling in post-industrial times” (Erevelles, 2000, pg. 25). This latter view is juxtaposed against structural theorists who view education as an ideological apparatus for bourgeois domination in capitalist relations of production (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Althusser, 1980). In this work, I argue that the former position is not an alternative to the latter. But represents an aspect of the former. That is, education in the age of neoliberal (postindustrial) globalization serves as an ideological apparatus for bourgeois domination through the identity politics of postmodernism and post structuralism.

Keywords: Ideological domination, Intersectionality, embourgeoisement, black Underclass, black bourgeoisie, social class language game, dialectic, antidialectic

INTRODUCTION

The clarion call by discriminated against others, i.e., gays, women, blacks, transgenders, etc., around the world for recognition of their humanity, under concepts such as intersectionality, double consciousness, hybridity, etc., by their oppressors, is highly problematic. That is to say, the liberal humanism or human rights they want recognized is “concerned to emphasize human welfare and dignity, and either optimistic about the powers of human reason, or at least insistent that we have no alternative but to use it as best we can” (Blackburn, 1994, pg. 171). This humanist position dominates over all other conceptions of humanism and human rights: for examples, the Renaissance conception with its emphasis on the “rediscovery of the unity of human beings and nature, and a renewed celebration of the pleasures of life”; or the postmodern/feminist rejection of humanism, with its reliance upon “the possibility of the autonomous, self-conscious, rational, and single self”, in favor of the “fragmentary, splintered, historically and socially conditioned nature of personality and motivation” (Blackburn, 1994, pg. 171). The problem for me,

which I call the humanist problem elsewhere, is that the first form of humanism as encapsulated in the concepts (the politics) of intersectionality, double consciousness, hybridity, etc., is contradictory, paradoxical, and oppressive (Mocombe, 2020). There is a contradictory and oppressive conflict wherein the intersectional, hybrid, doubled, etc., bourgeois “others” seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution, with their former white colonial masters/oppressors by convicting the latter for not applying their humanist values to the discriminated against intersectional, hybrid, doubled, etc., others who are, paradoxically, oppressed by the very humanist values they want recognized among them, which the whites/oppressors uphold for themselves while denying it for the “other.”

In light of this humanist problem, I argue that in the age of postindustrial capitalism concepts such as intersectionality, hybridity, double consciousness, etc., are not revolutionary or counterhegemonic; instead, as promoted by the bourgeois “others” for social integration in the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, they are reproductive, (post) modern, and fascist. In

other words, they are ideological and absurd concepts used by the bourgeois “other” to interpellate (via ideological apparatuses such as education) and embourgeois their “other” counterparts and convict the white, capitalist, and patriarchal power structure for not living up to their universal (human) values as recursively organized and reproduced by the intersectional other as they (the bourgeois “other”) seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution as an “other” within said power structure, which currently (via its universal humanist values, the intersectional other is convicting them for not universally practicing) threatens not only the other, with its centering of humanity and human (instrumental) reason to exploit the earth and other people for bourgeois dignity, wealth, and comfortability, but all life on earth (Giddens, 1990). Against this fascist attempt by the intersectional other to interpellate everyone in contemporary (postindustrial) society to accept their embourgeois “otherness” (identity capitalism) in light of the deleterious effects (climate change, exploitation, oppression, pollution, environmental degradation, etc.) associated with bourgeois capitalist society, I conclude the work by calling for an antihumanist practical consciousness, which decenters the liberal humanism of the oppressor and oppressed “other” for a naturalistic philosophy that speaks to the insignificance of being and the supremacy of nature, subsistence living, and reason and rationality as tools for understanding and experiencing existence.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

“Postmodern and post-structural theories on education highlight education as a discursive space that involves asymmetrical relations of power where both dominant and subordinate groups are engaged in struggles over the production, legitimation, and circulation of particular forms of meaning and experience” (Erevelles, 2000, pg. 30). “As such, postmodern and post-structural theorists examine the discursive practices by which [(individual)] student subjectivity (as intersectionally constructed by race, class, gender, and sexuality) is produced, regulated, and even resisted within the social context of schooling in postindustrial times” (Erevelles, 2000, pg. 25). This latter view is juxtaposed against structural theorists who view education as an ideological apparatus for bourgeois domination in capitalist relations of production (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Althusser, 1980). In this work, I argue that the former position is not an alternative to the latter. But

represents an aspect of the former. That is, education in the age of neoliberal (postindustrial) globalization serves as an ideological apparatus for bourgeois domination through the identity politics of postcolonialism, postmodernism, and poststructuralism. This structural Marxist dialectical perspective, I am purporting here, stands against contemporary postcolonial, postmodern, and post-structural theories, which focus on local formations, heterogeneity, the diverse, the subjective, the spontaneous, the relative, intersectional, and the fragmentary as the basis for understanding the constitution of identities and consciousnesses in the US and the diaspora in the age of neoliberal globalization. The latter positions, I argue here, are not the product of separate independent forms of system and social integration (capitalism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, etc.); instead, they are a product of one system, i.e., the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, constituted by rich, white, heterosexual men who marginalized and discriminated against alternative praxes, which arose (structurally or through the deferment of meaning in ego-centered communicative discourse) within the systemicity of their form of system and social integration. Hence all the differentiated effects (race, sexual orientation, gender, etc.) of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism as constituted by the latter group are all enframed within the class division and social relations of production in late postindustrial capitalist development and organization, and cannot offer an alternative systemicity to it, which can offset its exploitative logic of capital accumulation and destructive processes as they pertain to the environment.

Instead, contemporarily, race, gender, age, sexual identity, etc., represent real objective (structurally reproduced and differentiated) divisions within the Protestant class structure of the society. As such, the concepts, i.e., ambivalence, double consciousness, bifurcated consciousness, hybridity, *négritude*, *créolité*, and intersectionality, coming from theorists of these different groups represent the ideological and absurd concepts, psychological pathologies, and practical consciousnesses of the “other” bourgeoisies of once discriminated against others in their dialectical quest to obtain equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their former oppressors, slavemasters, and colonial administrators amidst discriminatory effects within the systemicity of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Hence, in this article, I argue that intersectionality and other

“othering” concepts are bourgeois conceptions utilized by the “other” bourgeoisies as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their former white colonial masters by convicting the latter of not universally practicing their universal human ideals, which the (intersectional) others recursively organize and reproduce in their practice. This dialectical struggle has given rise to what I am calling here identity capitalism and the humanist problem. That is, in the age of postindustrial capitalism concepts such as intersectionality, hybridity, double consciousness, etc., are not revolutionary or counterhegemonic; instead, as promoted by the bourgeois “other,” as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, distribution with whites in their ideological apparatuses by convicting them of their discriminatory effects and for not identifying with the universal values of liberal humanism within the systemicity of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism, they are reproductive, modern, postmodern, and fascist absurdities that perpetuates the enframing ontology of their oppression, which not only threatens the being of the intersectional other but all life on earth due to the deleterious effects (exploitation, pollution, and climate change) of the universal human values prescribed by the elites of the power structure. In other words, they are ideological and absurd concepts used by the bourgeois “other” to convict the white, capitalist, heteronormative, and patriarchal power structure for not living up to their universal (human) values as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution as an “other” (human) within said white, capitalist, heteronormative, and patriarchal power structure, which is reproduced through their intersectional otherness and its deleterious effects.

THEORY AND METHOD

Since the 1960s, identity and consciousness constitution in the US derives from the class divisions of the American industrial/postindustrial capitalist social relations of production and its ideological apparatuses, which created two structurally reproduced and differentiated social class language games, a bourgeoisie of educated professionals juxtaposed against the material conditions, practices, language, body, and ideology of a working and underclass segregated in the ghettos of cities where industrial work was beginning to disappear to developing countries following the end of World War II to make room for postindustrialism (Bell, 1976; Domhoff, 2002). Postcolonial, postmodern and poststructural theorists have

looked at the social relations of production of this transition and attempt to offer an intersectional approach to the constitution of identities and consciousnesses, which emphasizes the different levels (vectors of oppression and privilege) of domination, class, race, gender, global location, age, and sexual identity, by which other communities and consciousnesses get alienated, marginalized, and constituted (McLaren, 1988, McMichael, 1996). This postcolonial, postmodern, and post-structural theorizing, epistemologically, dismisses the dominant ontological status (class) of the Protestant capitalist system/social structure by which the masses of others attempt to practically live out their lives for the theoretical assumptions of the indeterminacy of meaning and decentered subject of postcolonial, post-structural, and post-modern theorizing (Mocombe, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014). They attempt to read back into the historical constitution of other identity and community life within and by the dialectic of a global capitalist social structure of class inequality the indeterminacy of meaning and decentered subject of postcolonial, post-structural, and post-modern theorizing to highlight the variety of intersecting ways or vertices, i.e., standpoints, race, class, age, sexual identity, etc., individual other subjects were and are alienated, marginalized, and dominated (Mocombe, 2012, 2014, 2015). As if the intersecting standpoint theory they are promoting offer an alternative form of system and social integration by which to constitute society and practical consciousness. It does no such thing, however. These theorists fail to realize that intersectionality is a socio-political by-product of a postindustrial (Protestant) capitalist landscape or social structure seeking to decenter the bourgeois subject and allow a diversity of identities to emerge (around their class positions) within the class division and social relations of postindustrial (Protestant) capitalist production so as to accumulate surplus-value by catering to the entertainment, financial, and service needs of these new and once discriminated-against identities and their constructed “fictitious” class-based communities (Mocombe, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2015).

Patriarchy, heteronormativity, etc., within the systemicity of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, in other words, are not the product of individuated competing systems, which are offering an alternative systemicity within which to constitute society and subjugate the human subject. Instead, as presently constituted, they are the product of one system, the Protestant

Ethic and the spirit of capitalism, initially constituted by rich, white, heterosexual men, and its current manifestation or structure of the conjuncture, i.e., intersectionality, constituted by rich, multicultural, multigendered, etc., others fighting for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the former within the systemicity and differentiation of Protestant (identity) capitalism.

Building on the structuration theory, phenomenological structuralism, of Paul C. Mocombe (2016), which posits the constitution of society as the product of five elements or structuring structures (mode of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse) that interpellate and subjectify the human actor and gives them their practical consciousness, which they recursively organize and reproduce in their daily activities as practical consciousness, the argument here is that the social phenomenon of postcolonial, postmodern, and poststructural theorizing in the language of intersectionality, hybridity, etc., occur in relation to the state and its ideological apparatuses and class divisions of *postindustrial* capitalist societies. They have their basis in the relations of production, exploitation, and organization of the state following the failed diverse student revolutions of the 1960s, which gave rise to local formations and heterogeneity as the theoretical theme for the new philosophers and social scientists of the late twentieth century who sought equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution for the diverse groups (standpoints) of the student movements within the class division and global social relations of capitalist production and organization, which became triumphant with the fall of communism or state capitalism in Eastern Europe (Fraser, 1994; Mocombe, 2010, 2012, 2013). That is to say, intersectional discourses have their basis in globalization and the postindustrial relations of production and exploitation as organized under the hegemony of the American nation-state following the civil rights and hippie movements of the 1960s, which diversified and fragmented subjectivities and social movements for the philosophy of the person, individual human rights, and freedoms to (speak, assemble, etc.) (Mocombe, 2012, 2014). These standpoint theories emerged within a postindustrial capitalism that fosters identity politics for capital accumulation via financialization and cultural consumption (Bell, 1976). Hence, the theorists themselves fail to realize that their identities and theories derive from the state and class division

within the processes of globalization and postindustrial (Protestant) capitalist relations of production and its ideological apparatuses.

Following the hippie and civil rights movements of the 1960s and adoption of civil rights legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the experience of white American capital with embourgeois liberal hybrid blacks would give rise to hybridization and identity politics as the mechanism of social integration for all ethnic, racial, cultural, sexual, etc., minorities into American postindustrial capitalist relations of production locally and globally (Mocombe, 2014). Locally, discrimination was outlawed throughout American society and its ideological apparatuses, which in theory became a color-blind multicultural, multiracial, multisexual, etc., postindustrial social setting with emphasis on individual human rights, identity politics, and freedoms to, speak, assemble, etc., amidst class differentiation. Subsequently, as Mocombe (2012, 2014) have argued elsewhere, the global outsourcing of industrial work by American capital beginning in the 1970s would be coupled with hybridization, individuality, human rights, identity politics, and *freedoms to* as the mechanisms of social integration for ethnic, racial, cultural, sexual, disabled, national, etc., others into global capitalist relations of production under American hegemony. That is, under the passage of civil rights legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to integrate liberal hybrid blacks into the fabric of American society and its ideological apparatuses, the American nation-state reinforced its liberal/conservative bourgeois Protestantism without regards to race, creed, nationality, sex, religion, disability, etc. With the advent of outsourcing or globalization under American hegemony beginning in the 1970s, other ethnic, racial, gender, and other minorities the world-over were interpellated and integrated or socialized, like the liberal hybrid black Americans, via ideology and ideological apparatuses such as human rights, identity politics, freedom, education, the streets, prisons, media, Protestant churches, World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), etc., to work for American capital within the global framework of this color-blind new world economic order with its ideological emphasis on human rights, identity politics, and *freedoms to*. In the processes of globalization, American capital sought and seeks to hybridize other ethnic, cultural, sexual, and racial others the world over via the retrenchment of the nation state and color-blind neoliberal economic legislation in order to

make social actors of other cultures known for two reasons: first, to socialize them to the work ethic of the globalizing capitalist relations of production; and second, to accumulate surplus-value as American capital sought and seeks to service the elite others of ethnic, racial, gender, and other communities as agents of and for capital, i.e., cultural producers, consumers, and administrative bourgeoisie controlling production for global capital, for their postindustrial economy (Mocombe, 2010, 2014). Conversely, the interpellated and embourgeoisied hybridized ethnic, cultural, sexual, and racial others the world-over dialectically respond by seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution within the class division and social relations of production of the capitalist world-system for themselves and their masses.

In other words, on the one hand, neoliberal globalization (1970s-to the present) represents the right-wing attempt to homogenize (converge) the nations of the globe into the overall market-orientation, i.e., private property, individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms, of the capitalist world-system. This neoliberalization is usually juxtaposed, on the other hand, against the narcissistic exploration of self, sexuality, and identity of the left, which converges with the neoliberalizing process via the diversified consumerism of the latter groups as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with agents of the former within their market logic. Hence private property, individual liberties, diversified consumerism, and the entrepreneurial freedoms of the so-called marketplace become the mechanism of system and social integration for both groups in spite of the fact that the logic of the marketplace is exploitative and environmentally hazardous.

The “other” power elites would emerge within this structure of the neoliberal global framework as structurally differentiated “other” agents of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts as either “other” right-wing conservatives or “other” left-wing identitarians amidst the deleterious effects (exploitation, pollution, climate change, consumerism, etc.) of the humanistic values they desire whites to live up to by recognizing their humanism.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Postcolonial, postmodern, intersectionality, and post-structural theories are the academic and political discourses of globalization and

postindustrial capitalist relations of production of the contemporary age. The ideological and absurd concepts, i.e., ambivalence, double consciousness, *créolité*, *négritude*, intersectionality, etc., developing from these theories represent the psychological pathologies and practical consciousness of the bourgeoisies of once discriminated against others within the (Protestant) capitalist world-system. As a result of the emergence of a post-industrial capitalism intent on allowing divergent meanings and individual experiences, which were once discriminated against, to emerge around their class positions for capital accumulation (diversified consumerism) in a service/financial economy focused on entertainment and financial service, non-class meanings and subjective/individual experiences, homosexuality, transgenderism, black feminism, etc., which were, and to some extent continue to be, discriminated against by both the working/underclass and bourgeoisie of earlier capitalist relations of production are fostered and allowed to emerge within the dialectic of the global (postindustrial) capitalist social class structure or relations of production (Mocombe, 2010, 2012, 2014). These non-class meanings and subjective experiences, homosexuality, black feminism, Pan-Africanism, etc., practical consciousnesses, i.e., standpoint theories, which (some) are both the product of structural differentiation and the deferment of meaning in ego-centered communicative discourse, contemporarily, are seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution within the dialectic of a postindustrial capitalist social structure that stratifies and commodifies these non-class (standpoints) identities, meanings, and subjective/individual experiences around their class positions or social relations to production for capital accumulation in the service economies of core, postindustrial nations, such as the US and UK (Mocombe, 2010, 2012, 2014). What has emerged, as a result, are these ideological and absurd theories of ambivalence, hybridity, *créolité*, *négritude*, double consciousness, bifurcated consciousness, and intersectionality among bourgeois academics of once discriminated against others highlighting the discourse by which these variant subjective positions have been alienated, marginalized, and prevented from achieving equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution within the global (postindustrial) capitalist social structure of racial-class inequality and differentiation. Their theories and identities are reified, universalized, and extrapolated globally

under the ideological umbrella of identity politics, the fight for social justice, truth, and love. However, by no means can these theories be viewed as the universal mechanism by which consciousnesses and communities were constituted. Their rhetoric are the by-product of the global (industrial and postindustrial) capitalist social structure of class inequality and differentiation and its ideological apparatuses, which attempts to interpellate and structure the practices of subjective experiences within class differentiation and thereby control the practices of diversity and meaning constitution, which contemporarily juxtaposes the bodies, language, ideology, and material conditions of a transnational, multiracial, multicultural, multisexual, etc., upper-class of owners and high-level executives against the bodies, language, ideology, and material conditions of a transnational, multiracial, multicultural, multisexual underclass in poverty the world-over seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the former amidst economic exploitation, pollution, and climate change brought about by the very universal human values they are seeking recognition for from whites who initially utilized these same values to oppress them (Mocombe, 2012, 2014, 2016). Hence, the postmodern, post-structural, post-colonial theories of ambivalence, hybridity, créolité, négritude, double consciousness, and intersectionality are the concepts, psychological processes, pathologies, and practical consciousness of the bourgeoisies of the once-discriminated against, and do not represent the nature of identity constitution. They are standpoint theories that do not offer an alternative form of system and social integration to the global Protestant capitalist social structure of class inequality. They simply seek to convict the initial power elites (rich, white, heterosexual, men) of the system for not identifying with their values in order to achieve equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution. As such, their theories do not speak to the nature of identity constitution in general; instead, it speaks to one aspect of identity constitution, i.e., structural reproduction and differentiation within postindustrial (Protestant) capitalist relations of production amidst its deleterious problematic, i.e., climate change, which is not address by identitarianists and their absurd fight for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution within the latter, which threatens all life on earth. To salvage themselves and the world among the pathologies of liberal humanism, humanity in general and the other in particular must decenter

human welfare and dignity for an emphasis on the superiority of nature, subsistence living, and human reason as a tool for maintaining balance and harmony between nature and existence.

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