THE MEDIA AND NEO-COLONISATION: EXAMINING THE RELEVANCE OF AFRICAN THOUGHT AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE DISCOURSE OF DECOLONISATION

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Abstract

The media and all that it represents have often had insidious content. People have often used the media to promote their own agenda be it in the area of marketing, finance, governance, entertainment and sports. In Africa, foreign media outlets have dwelled so much on Africa. On most occasions, the media content is fraught with damaging content, which only reinforces earlier existing imagery of Africa as backward continent needing forms of confrontation and actions. This is actually a form of neo-colonisation. In this discussion, we look at the media, an agent of neo-colonisation and how an appreciation of African thought or philosophy can enable a better understanding of the media. The discussion is grounded on cultural norm theory, personal observations of the media landscape in Africa and a brief content analysis of Kwaw Ansah's Heritage Africa (1989). The discussions conclude that serious regulation of the media is one of the surest ways of reducing the ills in its content and recommends that avenues to promote indigenous knowledge forms through the media be strongly supported to boost African centered media content

Keywords: Technological determinism, Representation, Narratology, African thought and philosophy, Neo-colonisation, Media.

Introduction

The media is a broad field. It can be seen as a branch of study in academia or an output from technological tools capable of communicating messages. Media gadgets or technological innovations

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through which messages are churned out are different and serve different purposes. What could be termed as the output of the technological tools of the media are pictures (both motion and still), texts, graphics, and all forms of sound. Because the media is a broad area, we will, for the purpose of this discussion, limit the scope to its components such as film, radio, and television in an attempt to examine the relevance of African thought or philosophy in the discourse of decolonisation.

Understanding what is in the Media?
Technological determinism emerged strongly in media discourse, where many people attempted to link the emergence of the various technologies to the reason why certain messages are composed in a particular way. However, a strong counter to this statement is the understanding that technology does not construct or compose messages but only transfers that which is composed by the human intellect. Giving a general view about technological innovations, McLuhan & Fiore (1967), shared:

> Many people would be disposed to say that it was not the machine, but what one did with the machine, that was its meaning or message. In terms of the ways in which the machine altered our relations to one another and to ourselves, it mattered not in the least. (p.107).

That is to say, people will always have messages they intend to send. The medium is just a facilitator of such messages and only has the propensity of reducing time and space. Giving a historical account of media in Africa, Ziegler and Asante (1992) state, it would be erroneous, "To assume that media philosophies of Africa are founded on colonial experience" (p. 3). They affirm that Africans have been communicating long before they established contact with Arabs and Europeans. Ziegler and Asante (1992) explain, "The abundance of papyrus in ancient Egypt gave rise to a culture of which exploited its natural resources to record its oral traditions which existed long before the written script (p.5).

The question of what is in the message and the purpose it serves has for some time, been a subject of discussion. One of the popular household names in the media world, Harold Lasswell (1948), has indicated that one of the convenient ways to examine an act of communication, towards which all media messages aim, is to answer the following basic questions, "Who Says What, In Which Channel, To Whom, With What Effect?" (p. 216). All over the world, there is the

constant production of messages through radio, film, and television channels. Africa suffers the worst in the ways and manner images are produced and represented about the continent by Europe and America. Most of these messages or images of Africans both internally and externally are insidious. For example, some are captured because of the exoticism of the continent's landscapes and its 'primitive' people (Geary, 2003, pp. 17-21, Steensma, 2001, pp. 250-251).

To unravel the reasons for such despicable media content will require us to look at the model proposed by Lasswell. In our case, as Africans, we may want to ask, who are those producing the messages, through which channels, to whom and for what effect? Most media messages composed about Africa aim to showcase the 'inferiority' and 'backwardness' of the continent. Within the discourse of the media and representation, it has been clearly confirmed that "Africa's detractors are to portray Africa as the continent of problems" (Eko, 2001, p. 366). Since bad images sell and draw media audiences to themselves, and since Africa has exotic and beautiful scenery, most foreign media, together with their local sister media stations or reporters in Africa, do a lot of negative reportage on Africa. As explained by Ayittey (2006), for many centuries, Africa remained a mystery or a foreboding enigma. It attracted the curiosity of explorers while fascinating and captivating empire-builders by its vast wealth. The length and breadth of Africa were explored, discovered, conquered, and colonised. (p. 11)

These forms of depiction create a sense of inferiority in the African (Bonsu, 2009) and thus can be regarded as a tool of neo-colonisation. These are the forms that it takes. Through radio news items, there are sound bites about its 'primitive' villages and outmoded cultural practices; from films, there are depiction of Africa's 'barbaric tribes'; and from television news is a showcase of famine, ignorance, diseases and the gory images of war. This reinforces the existing negative notion of the African. Furthermore, from advertising, the African is beckoned to eat and dress in a certain way and to place the white man as a master of ingenuity, with a superior culture, and the black individual, as a person of lower intellect and capabilities. Ousmane Sembene (2008) in giving the highlights of blacks in early cinema explicated,

> In the history of the cinema, particularly European cinema, you can see that if there are black people in the films made during the war of 1914-18, they appear as fleeting shadows. The same thing is true of the last war. Even American films made during these two wars feature black people only as

shadows. Even in films made during the Vietnam War without American approval, the blacks who appear are still shadows, introduced merely to justify that blacks took part in the war; they are not really central to the movie. (p. 3)

The above depictions are to indicate to the black audience member that blacks lack bravery, are not good warriors or cannot actually win wars. Above all, on a battlefield with his white counterpart, the black is inferior and is only a valet to the white soldier. For this reason, it is important to produce an 'authentic' Africa or Black image. Additionally, movies such as *The Legend of Tarzan* (2016), *Black and White in Colour* (1978), and *The Gods of Egypt* (2016), which are made by Hollywood in the recent past, have images that portray blacks in a demeaning manner. Such films have historical inaccurate storylines and the blacks serve as the milieu in an all-white film

Earlier, African scholars had developed Negritude[1] in response to the demeaning images of Africans depicted in Western literature (Mbye, 2008). Their responses in poems, novels and other pieces are reminiscent of the beauty of Africa. Currently, the new media through film, radio and television has now conveniently augmented derogatory messages and information that hitherto have been present predominantly in Western composed texts. As has been stated, "Colonialism, then, relates to the use of discourse to fashion a targeted image of a particular culture or group of people. It serves to extend the political power of the dominant culture over the subjugated Other (Bonsu, 2009, p.5). When African filmmakers realised these negative portrayals in the film message, they took steps to address such forms of representation. As far back as 1975, at the second meeting of the Federation of African Filmmakers (FEPACI), African Filmmakers indicated their commitment to intervene as a means of representing Africa from an African point of view. This was to lead to, "the development of an African cinema that would be radically different to previous cinematic representations of Africa" (Murphy, 2000, p. 240). It thus appears Africans were becoming increasingly aware that the Euro-America image had anti-Afrikan content. One of the resolutions was that, "not only should African films represent Africa from an African point of view, but they should also reject commercial, Western film codes" (Murphy, 2000, p. 240).

This call to committing time and resources to develop stories from Africa's point of view did to endure probably because as Murphy

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[1] A black cultural movement which asserted African Identity through literary work.

(2000) rightly attested, "many African directors have retreated somewhat from such radical calls over the past two decades, worrying far more about the problems of forging a popular African cinema and creating a viable African film industry" (p. 240). More importantly, the continent's filmmakers were not equipped in terms of African Thought or Philosophy so as to make the films that would have the message capable of enlightening Africa and the world as a whole. That is to say, decolonization through the media will only be possible if the African media agency is decolonised and re-Africanised. The irony, however, is that to have gained access to the tools of filmmaking, oftentimes, filmmakers had to be alienated from Afrikan culture. Perhaps, the only exception to this lack of an African consciousness in agents of the African media space is to be found among African filmmakers such as Ousmane Sembene, Idrissa Ouadreogo Souleyman Cisse, Kwaw Ansah, and Newton Aduaka. They are among the few who have made films that are pregnant with African thought and/or philosophy while still earning a reputable name for other filmmakers worldwide However, the attempts of these filmmakers to create a positive message and image of Africa appear woefully inadequate because the number of negative media content made about Africa by Africans and Western commercial filmmakers are so many that the therapeutic efforts of their few positive films which are crucial in the discourse of decolonisation are dwarfed and hence, hardly ever noticed.

The Need for African Thought or African Philosophy as a Tool for Decolonisation through the Media

Both African thought and African philosophy are extensive areas, which need separate engagement. Summarily the two are hinged on the belief that African forms of knowledge and knowledge production, virtues, belief systems, traditions and cultures, are to be extolled and upheld because they serve Africans better (Lutz, 2009, pp.314-136; Fu-Kiau, 1985, p. I; Bodurin, 1981, pp.161-162.). One of the debilitating effects of the media is, its power to forcibly enculturate. (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan& Signorielli 1986, pp. 20-30). Looking at our media landscape, the Africans, what they believe in terms of culture, history and norms are often under attack by European and American media. Most African media practitioners equally stand accused in the forms of messages or imagery they produce about Africa. This is why they themselves need a consciousness reawakening before they may be able to decolonise Africa through media. We find this an important prerequisite. In examining the causes of these forms of representation, Domatob (1988), points fingers of accusation at the form of training or media education that Africans had. He explains,

Although most African states attained political independence in the early sixties, media training to a large extent is a colonial legacy. So far the grooming of media professionals has taken three forms; the attachment of experts from the industrialised countries to media in sub-Saharan African countries, courses and attachments in industrialised states offered to media practitioners in sub-Saharan Africa and courses taken at media centres in the region. (p. 156)

Admittedly, in the colonial era, the British encouraged blacks to learn the art of media practice so as to assist them in propelling the colonial agenda through the making of instructional films (Shaka, 1999, pp. 29.32). These films most often termed as ideological films produced in the British crown colonies were, as Rosaleen Smyth (1979) indicated, were approached from two ideological viewpoints: "(a) how the cinema affected the economic and political interests of the imperial power; and (b) how the imperial power might use the cinema to promote what is determined to be the economic, social and moral welfare of colonial peoples" (p. 447). From the foregoing, it is seen that, first, the ideological underpinnings of the imperial government, their political as well as economic interest was that which informed the content of their messages. Since the mentality of filmmaking was to propagate the colonial ideology or agenda of development, the newly emerging national leaders gave the media a new thought. One of such was to shred the earlier existing mentality of the imperial government and replace it with African ideals. These are ideals they would have to learn themselves as their mis-education would leave them colonised and without a deep understanding of that which is Afrikan. Domatob (1988), stated at various times papers like the *Nigerian Guardian, the Zambian Times, Le Soleil of Senegal, Cameroun Tribune* and above all Nigeria's *Triumph Newspaper* and *The Analyst,* have vehemently lashed out against the forces of neocolonialism and the damage. It wrecks on the African continent. Similarly, radio programmes related to these topics are occasionally broadcast explaining, educating and sometimes moblilising sub-Saharan Africans on the role and the devastating impact of neo-colonialism in the region. (p. 155)

In Ghana for instance, during Kwame Nkrumah's reign (1957-1966), he was aware of the power of the media and took steps to give it a direction that will tell the African story while promoting her cultural image. Although new audio-visual materials left over by the imperial government were still in stock, Nkrumah re-invigorated the industry to give it an African purpose.

During Nkrumah's tenure, technical as well African thought accompanied the vision for the new media. Jorgenson (2001) affirms that new facilities were built for the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC). In July 1965 Nkrumah inaugurated a non-commercial public service television station at the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC). Television, film and radio were to educate and bring together the nation and at the same time support the socialist transformation of Ghana. Censorship was introduced on all foreign programmes, and the media were used for national propaganda. Nkrumah upgraded the capacity of the radio, which then transmitted 110 hours a week in English, French, Arabic, Swahili, Portuguese and Hausa to large parts of Africa and Europe to carry out his pan-African vision (p.122).

Along the lines of this technological media instalment of radio, television and film were the concepts of Sank{fa, which Nkrumah incorporated in the media practice. In his Sank{fa policy, Nkrumah stressed the cultural, "interrelatedness of past, present and future" (Jorgenson, 2001, p. 123) of Africa and African people. Later, as has been observed, the demise of Nkrumah also marked the demise of the media as a social, cultural and pan-African ideological tool that had abhorred anti-European content. As Jorgenson (2001) states that successive governments all continued to patronise film, television and radio as tools for propaganda and development. With the extension of television and radio services reaching more and more villages, the media became increasingly important tools for controlling the nation… Already in 1967 the political leaders following Nkrumah diverted from his anti-commercial, anti-American and anti-European course and started transmitting advertisements on radio and television in order to diminish the dependency of GBC on the Ghanaian Treasury. (p. 124- 124)

This later development has been the bane of our problems in the media through to current times. The commercialisation of the outlets meant the doors were opened for media content that will reap money rather than the quality of content. With the evolution from cinema, a more expensive venture, to the video which is cheaper and can easily be manipulated, and the proliferation of private radio stations coupled with the numerous television channels, a lot of the content has had little to do about the African discourse on neo-colonialism thus further aggravating the challenges of Africa. Because of this, communication authorities have gone back to put on paper, a censorship guide to protect the interest of indigenous cultures. Uwom and Alao (2013), with regard to the broadcast industry for film, radio, and television in Ghana submit:

> The public broadcaster's content shall comprise 80% of local programming of total airtime. For regular TV channels, 60% and at least 50% of local programmes shall be aired during prime time. Free-to-air commercial radio and television

stations shall devote 50% and 30% respectively of their total airtime to local content including music. Minimum local content shall rise 75% and 50% respectively for free-to-air commercial radio and TV stations for community stations, 80% of programmes shall originate from the station and target audiences, the remaining 20% shall comprise materials of national interest like a relay of the state broadcasters news. Also at least 70% of programmes shall be in the local language or the language of the target audience. (p.71)

The above censorship has been difficult to adhere to and only looks good on paper than in practice. An observation of the media landscape in Ghana and Nigeria proves that they lack the national cohesion, spirit of Sank{fa and African thought. Domatob (1988) is justified to state, "Besides the dominance of Western-trained teachers, there is almost a total absence of any impact of African thought or philosophy in communication education" (p. 157). Technology has become a little affordable for Africans and only a few persons are currently trained in European countries. As it exists now, media training on the continent of Africa appears to be structured in such a way that the technical aspect of the production takes priority over the message in the content and the effect it elicits. Abiodun Olayiwola (2007) shares that 90 percent of those who straddle the video film industry in Nigeria today have no formal education in related disciplines like theatre arts, film studies, broadcasting, or cinematography. Some of them have no formal education at all. They are only involved in a game of trial and error, leading to shoddy productions. Most films are poorly directed because the present practitioners think that all it takes to be a movie director in Nigeria is money and a handful of people. Armed with a camcorder, you are already in the business (p. 59).

Note, here again, the focus has been relegated to enhancing the aesthetics of the image but not the African value or philosophy of the story. In Ghana, the introduction of video in the early 1990s brought in its wake, a lot of media practitioners who are not properly educated on the image of Africa. And the few who go to the Western media schools, especially those who pursue film studies, are interested in learning what Eva Jørholt (2001) refers to as international film 'grammar' as a means to meeting the European conventions of filmmaking. Even though Jørholt mentions that the challenges of sub-Saharan filmmaking is due to inadequate finances and infrastructure, resulting in the continent's production of films with poor aesthetic qualities,

she further revealed that at the 23rd World Film Festival in Montreal, many European film critics saw African films to have a certain narratology different from that of Europe. Because of this distinct narrative style, she indicated, European critics assume that Africans lack the grammar of the film story techniques. Eva Jørholt, however, states that though there may be technical deficiencies in the films, Africa's story structure is often based on oral narrative structure; one which is alien to most European audiences (pp. 75-110). Moreover, partly because of misguided interests in the awards at international festivals, African filmmakers overlook some of such fundamental values of Africa. Indeed, the national laws regarding the depiction of cultural values, norms and expressions of the philosophy of African ancestors, which are desired to develop Africans are often absent in their messages.

The African media practitioner constantly aspires to European media content standards and incorporates in their messages, the European cultural values so as to remain visible among the European audience. This has dire consequences. Kwame Botwe-Asamoah (2005) reveals that the: absence of African cultural values in national policies has led to an unprecedented proliferation of Hollywood's violent and sexual-oriented films on public televisions. There is also an unprecedented proliferation of "born-again" Christian churches with massive followers. These churches and some elected officials find the pouring of libation during public functions, especially in the presence of foreign dignitaries, embarrassing, and have called for its abrogation (pp. 171-172) It, therefore, appears that money and fame have clouded media practitioners and the regulatory authorities. The media regulatory authority places priority on reaping taxes made from the media outlets than the damage the image will cause. As of 2017, the national media authority had licensed about 128 television channels in Ghana. Most of these channels are owned by individuals especially pastors and 'magic performing' individuals. They are mostly not able to provide the needed media regulation of 60% local content. Few of the media stations that provide local media content are not able to sustain it with authentic African content but rather show much of devastating black sorcery, witchcraft, blood ritual and any other anti-African information one can think of.

Most of the local language film industry has been reinforcing the earlier media messages that sought to disempower Africans. Kwaw Ansah (2002), an African filmmaker as cited in Questioning African Cinema Conversations with filmmakers, stated, When we were kids, we all identified with the heroes in cowboy and other films, and wanted to be like them. When I was young and growing up, black people in films always played the buffoon roles, and the white people were portrayed as superior; of course, we all enjoyed it. We laughed at the black people. When they rolled their eyes and ran away from the little mouse that they saw, we all clapped. When there was a movie

with white and black people on safari in the jungle, everybody sighed with grief when an enemy arrow happened to kill a white person. But when we saw thousands of black people being mowed down, we all cheered. This illustrates clearly how powerful the film medium is (p. 5)**.** The above is a picturesque description of European and American films that sought to disempower Africans. However, what Africa currently needs is media content of Sank{fa, 'Ubuntu', and 'Consciencism' that will make Africans aware of the new emerging forces of neo-colonialism.

Theoretical and Methodological Approaches

The theoretical framework of this study is informed by the cultural norm theory. Both Melvin DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach (1975) and Marshall McLuhan (1967) have given very clear arguments that media messages are cultural products with the propensity of influencing the consumers. This theory argues that the mass media selectively presents, and emphasises certain contemporary ideas or values. Accordingly, the mass media influences norms by reinforcing or changing them. According to McLuhan (1967), the business of the writer or the film maker, is to transfer the reader or viewer from one world, his own, to another, the world created by typography and film. That is so obvious, and happens so completely, that those undergoing the experience accept it subliminally and without critical awareness (p. 285). It is to be noted that there are media literates and critics who are able to deconstruct, and determine the insidious meanings, and philosophies behind the intent of the medium producer. These consumers would not accept it 'without any critical awareness'.

Apart from personal observations of the occurrences in the media landscape, *Heritage Africa* (1989) is purposively sampled for a brief discussion. It is important to state that a unit of analysis may be an animate or inanimate thing or both. According to O'leary (2004), "Populations made up of organizations might be defined by number of employees, years of operation, type of business, etc., while events are often defined by both setting and time period" (p.104). This film depicts Ghana's struggle to independence with key players like Kwame Nkrumah.

Brief Content Analysis of Kwaw Ansah's *Heritage Africa* (1989)

It is important to state that so much can be said about *Heritage Africa* than what is discussed here. Salient areas, which address the needs of this paper are highlighted for the content analysis. According to Shoemaker & Reese (2014), content analysis examines the philosophy of the producer of a media content, and their, "relationships with culture, power, and ideology" (p. 39). In this regard, one would be asking the ideology and philosophy of

Kwaw Ansah and how he translates this into the making of his film. The cultural and political philosophy of Ansah can be deduced in his comments regarding the making of the film. Ansah (2002) in his own words expresses:

> I think that the basic problem facing the African today is lack of faith, which is something very relative to one's heart. It is your well-being, it is culturally based. For instance, take religion. We have been made to believe that whatever our ancestors bequeathed to us is heathen. You go to any African society today and put on a white collar and call yourself a priest and you will be revered. But in Africa today, it is not common to find educated people like you who will stand in public to, say, perform the ritual act of pouring libation. (p. 9)

Clearly from above, Ansah believes in both African thought and religion and this largely influences his ideals which he communicates through film. Closely related to the ideals of the content generator is the context within which a film is made, and the intent of the filmmaker. As Prasad (2008) rightly submits, "content analysis is described as the scientific study of content of communication. It is the study of the content with reference to the meanings, contexts and intentions contained in messages" (p.1). In his film *Heritage Africa* (1989), Kwaw Ansah captures well the African concept of Sank{fa. In it, a teacher Kwane Akroma (Tommy Ebow Ansa), gets expelled from school because he retold the story of Yaa Asantewaa to his students through a poetic performance in honour of a British commissioner, Sir Robert Guggiswood (Peter Whitbread). A native, Quincy Arthur Bosomfield (Kofi Bucknor), is made a high-ranking British officer because he neglected the interest of his people just to please his white 'master'. Quincy Arthur Bosomfield realises a little late that he has to return to his people. In his redemptive journey, he confronts the imperial power (The British governor) and loses his life. The film espouses the African struggle for independence, the need for an undying commitment of Africans to serve their people and the call to stand up to imperial forces even if it will cost them their lives. Kwaw Ansah states clearly that we Africans are lost without our culture. He stresses this point strongly in the film in the character of the lead actor. Apart from changing his name to 'rhyme' with those of his master's, the lead actor was naked in power and in spirit. This is because he gifts the 500 year traditional heirloom his source of power, which was given to him by his mother to the British commissioner, Sir Robert Guggiswood (Peter Whitbread). He clearly disassociates himself from his culture.

The meaning of his name is rendered useless when he anglicised it to please his white master and be like them. After this change, the name does not mean anything in Akan and English. By this Kwaw Ansah is suggesting that some Africans have become bats due to this needless copy-catting. They are neither birds nor mammals. As Meyer (1999) rightly observed, "Kwesi (meaning "Sunday-born male") Atta (meaning "part of twins") Bosomefie (meaning "an illustrious ancestor who is born again"), a name he has transformed into Quincy Arthur Bosomfield in order to emphasize his closeness to the British and his new identity" (p.101). This name, Quincy Arthur Bosomfield does not make sense in the world of the Africans and that of the Europeans. In the entertainment industry as well, it is not uncommon to find 'adulterated' African names. These names have no indigenous cultural base and hardly make sense to anybody in terms of meaning.

The 'Adulterated' African Media Landscape

The messages produced these days do not attempt to address our most pressing needs. Though there have not been extensive studies to examine the percentage of foreign media that is telecasted daily, it could be rightly observed that Mexican, Pilipino, Brazilian soap operas and telenovelas have taken over African screens. In between the screening of the latter are adverts promoting exotic products of America and Europe, including those of Syria, India, and Lebanon, among others. Uche (1991) reflecting on the media in Nigeria laments, as the continent continues to depend on external media imports for information and entertainment, the cultures of its various nations are continually being eclipsed by external cultural influences due to a wholesale dependence on foreign media productions (p. 3).

The situation is not any different in Ghana. There are a lot of media channels most of which do not meet the national broadcast requirement of 60% local content. They, therefore, rely heavily on foreign content whose images are anti-African. Uche (1991) examines the effects of media output of Africa while attesting that: the formidable force, neo-colonialism constitutes to the media programming contents in Africa, leading to a lack of national ideological perspectives from which to formulate national communication policies that would reflect the ideals and perspectives of the developing nations (p. 8) Since the media is supposed to inculcate in Africans the values, thoughts and philosophy of African ancestors, which are vital to our development, their absence in the media could be a result of what we experience now. Africans are cultivating European cultures resulting in an upsurge of social vices, which hitherto, were unpopular among Africans. Kwame Botwe-Asamoah (2005) shares: the absence of African cultural values in national policies has thus led to several social vices. Unprecedented

mass misery, high unemployment, corroded health care for the people, and a sense of hopelessness have led to armed robbery, underage prostitution and narcotic drug abuse and trafficking, which were unknown in Nkrumah's Ghana (p. 172).

The incessant advertising of drugs, alcohol, vulgar languages and promiscuous dances on our radios, televisions, and films are not only European lifestyles but are unethical examples that serve as nourishment for Africans, especially the youth, to engage in all manner of profanity that can affect their lives. Domatob (1988) laments that multi-nationals have seized our media space and have been advertising consumerism. In Kenya and Nigeria as he has observed, European nationals finance 80% adverts in Swahili and Hausa. Domatob (1988) explicates,

> It is hard for sub-Saharan Africans to resist the aggressive push of the Western "mass culture", which keeps telling them day after day: "The world is cruel but, that's the way it is and it's no good trying to change it. Success comes to those who are strong; everything is admissible for the sake of success and money; sympathy and commiseration for the weak are old prejudices" In the meantime, radio and television broadcasts are swamped with Western programmes advertising by all means the best samples of bourgeois mass culture. The values, mental and life-style stereotypes praised by them are at variance not only with the national cultural traditions of people but with the universal human values as well. These values promote Western ideals and facilitate the process of neo-colonialism. (p. 162)

Thomas Sankara stated that 'he who feeds you imposes his will' (Agyekum, 2018). If Africans are made to accept European images, there will be consequences. Through adverts, we have discarded some of our cultural artefacts and food for American, European and Asian foods. The result is that, we will soon be totally controlled in the markets when, finally, our taste for foreign cannot be substituted for anything African.

Conclusion

The media is a powerful tool capable of disempowering people. Africans have for some time now become a spectacle of the world. Through the European media, the Africans have been depicted in despicable forms that project them as lesser humans in comparison to Europeans. To redeem the image of Africans is to tell the African story using African thoughts, values, culture, philosophy and narratology. The laxity of the media regulation is enough breeding ground for anti-African messages. Lack of supervision of the media channels and the inability of the authorities to regulate the media has seen the media degenerate. Media practitioners, media school owners and authorities should not only emphasise the technical qualities of the messages but also as part of their course structure include African thought and philosophy so as to empower trainees to give Africa its needed representation. Also, because funding is a major challenge in producing films of considerable cultural worth, it is strongly recommended that governments in Africa help filmmakers and other content producers to churn out national films. These films should be geared towards the promotion of Africa's culture, development ideals of the continent as well as celebrating Africa's heroes.

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