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Title:

Power: An African Fractal Theory of Chaos, Crime, Violence and Healing

Abstract:

This paper will examine classical and modern social thoughts to see why they are not very effective in explaining or predicting the problems of chaos, crime and violence around the world today but with special reference to the Caribbean. I had only been in Trinidad for one week when a journalist from the *Trinidad Guardian* (August 24, 2006) newspaper called to interview me about the root cause of the rising waves of violent crime in the country. I answered that the root cause is the abuse of power at the interpersonal, inter-group and international levels and that the solution lies in the deepening of democracy in interpersonal, inter-group and international relations. This paper will draw from my recent work to elaborate on this African Fractal theory of power to demonstrate the interconnectedness of crimes of the poor with crimes of the rich, organized crimes and international crimes in terms of their infinite scaling, recursion, self-similarity, and messiness contrary to the assumptions of Cartesian models and lineal path analysis in conventional criminology. The implications of this theory for healing, recovery, peace, love and justice will be spelled out in the conclusion.

Imperialism as the General Form of Criminality

From 1492 to the present the western theoretical imagination has been haunted by a shadowy history of racism and imperial conquest. For the most part, a lack of reflexive engagement with the methodological significance of race as a social construct has limited the critical power of even the most well-meaning of theoretical perspectives. Today, in a world where hierarchical differences between “racialized” cultures are manifest almost everywhere – from Miami and the South Bronx to south central Los Angeles and from South Africa and Bosnia to the Israeli-occupied territories of Palestine, critical theory can no longer afford the hegemonic white standpoint that has long characterized its most dominant strands. Critical theory must both help to counter the continuing violence of racism and open its ears to the voices of cultural traditions long silenced by Eurocentric

approaches to world history. These two objectives constitute the core of radical multicultural forms of critical theory (Pfohl, 1994: 453-454).

Criminology was developed primarily as a tool for imperialist domination and it continues to operate largely as a repressive technology. Other technologies of domination crafted by imperialism, such as the army, the police and the prison, have been generally appropriated by neo-colonial regimes around the world. Why has the transfer of criminological technology proved more elusive in the Third World while the discipline is enjoying an unprecedented boom in Europe and North America? Chinua Achebe (1983) is critical of politicians who shamelessly boast that they would steal, borrow or transfer technology from wherever it exists without realising that technology is a worldview and not an artefact waiting to be stolen. Achebe was reluctant to accept the usual explanation that underdevelopment is entirely due to the legacies of colonialism for, according to him, the neo-colonial regimes have had enough time to reverse the colonial legacies but have chosen to entrench imperialism instead.

In a similar vein, Wole Soyinka (1994) argues that the thinkers who are normally expected to challenge dictatorial imperialist reason in the Third World are equally to blame for abdicating their duties through convenient silence. As he put it, 'the man dies in all who keeps silent in the face of tyranny'. Soyinka was wondering why many more Nigerian radicals failed to join him in opposing the military dictatorship that unleashed a bloody civil war on the citizens. For his patriotic act of opposition to the ethnic war, he was thrown into solitary confinement. In a preface to the 1994 edition of his prison notes, *The Man Died*, he responded to criticism that his memoir was not a manual for revolution by challenging his critics to speak out against the continuing civilian use of killer squads openly as part of the police force to commit atrocities worse than what the military dictatorship did in the country. In response to his critics, Soyinka speaks for this paper too when he stated (Soyinka, 1994: xiii-xiv):

When power is placed in the service of vicious reaction, a language must be called into being which does its best to appropriate such obscenity of power and fling its excesses back in its face. Criticism of such language is simply squeamish or Christianly – language being expected to turn the other cheek, not stick out its tongue; offer a handshake of reconciliation, not stick up a finger in an obscene, defiant gesture. Such criticism must begin by assailing the seething compost of inhuman abuses from which such language took its being, then its conclusions would be worthy of notice. When it fails to do so, all we are left with is, yet again, the collaborative face of intellectualism with power – that is, the taking of power and its excesses as the natural condition, in relation to which even language must be accountable. But suppose we start accounting all arbitrary power – that is, all forms of dictatorship – as innately and potentially obscene. Then, of course, language must communicate its illegitimacy in a forceful, uncompromising language of rejection, seeking always to make it ridiculous and contemptible, deflating its pretensions at the core. Such language does not pretend to dismantle that structure of power, which can only be a collective

endeavour in any case; it does, however, contribute to the psychological reconstitution of public attitudes to forms of oppression.

This must be part of the reasons why African and Caribbean creative writers are the ones at the fore-front of the attempts to develop a relevant criminology for Africa while African social scientists, especially those of them trained in criminology, have been silenced by the imperialist reason that is dumbed down?

Samir Amin (1977) has argued that the transfer of technology is not all that difficult given the experience of Japan and Germany in the importation of machinery for reproduction by engineers in their country. According to him, Third World countries have also tried to transfer the technology of capitalist “modernization” farming from the West but with tragic consequences. Amin explains that such uncritical importation of techniques failed because:

The new techniques are developed in isolation, in the laboratories and experimental farms of the monopolies and governments. Then, when these techniques prove useful, i.e., likely to extract surplus value from the peasants’ labor, they are transmitted to the peasants, i.e., imposed by the government authorities. Dispossessed of the world, alienated, the peasants resist. They are accused of being “reactionary traditionalists.” They are sent teams of sociologists and more often, policemen. They finally give in and allow themselves to be exploited, until such time as when they rebel – unless they simply flee the towns (Amin, 1977: 175).

This warning from Samir Amin is important to criminologists who wish to transfer their imperialist technology to the Third World where criminology remains underdeveloped. As Amin suggested, it will be very easy to import Western textbooks and theories and assemble a factory line of scholars to translate them by inserting local news items, local cases and local places into the existing texts. It is likely that such an uncritical borrowing of criminological know-how would prioritise research methods, theories and policies that maximise the exploitation and repression of the masses. The main thrust of this paper is to suggest that criminology in the Third World would flourish better if it did not uncritically adopt the imperialist reason of Western criminology. For example, emphasis should be placed in the curriculum of criminology in Africa on reparations for the crimes of the slave trade, the crimes of colonialism, the crimes of apartheid and the crimes of neo-colonialism instead of following the Imperialist obsession with crimes of the poor. At the same time, the crimes of the poor would be addressed with more emphasis on how to avoid victimisation as mere punishment and how to develop the technologies of peace and love instead of being fixated on the gunboat criminology of imperialism.

Criminologists in the Third World would make a greater impact by being sceptical of Western theories of punishment instead of agreeing with the Western scholars who, according to Cohen (1988), arrogantly boast that there is nothing to learn from the Third World and that all that needs to be done is to apply the woefully failed theories of imperialist criminology to the rest of the world. In an essay published in *Theoretical Criminology*, (Agozino, 2000), I posed two related questions; what would Frantz Fanon

(1963) say about the dramatic increases in prison populations in the US and the UK? What would Michel Foucault (1977) say? My answer is that Fanon would argue that the disproportionate number of black men and black women incarcerated in the prison industrial complexes of the US and the UK is an indication that the wretched of the earth are still being victimised by white supremacist systems of power. Foucault, with his deliberate silence on colonialism in his analysis of micro-physics of power relations, would probably ignore the politics of imperialism altogether in favour of documenting the changing history of penal discipline imposed on the minds of individual offenders as opposed to corporal punishment imposed on their body in the past.

The lesson here for criminologists is clearly that of Frantz Fanon who warned the Third World (and by extension, counter colonial criminologists) that they should not follow the modernist example of the West where there is a lot of talk about humanism while human beings are subjected to abominable conditions everywhere. The Third World, in particular, could not afford the billions of dollars that America spends on the scandalous number of prisons and prisoners it is warehousing. For example, America with about 250 million residents has about two million people in jail and half of them are minority individuals, mainly African Americans. In contrast, a country like Nigeria which is demonised in the West as being full of criminals, has a population of nearly half that of America but only a fraction of its jail population, less than 50,000 in total. While America spends over 20 billion dollars to run the profitable prison industrial complex per year, Nigeria spends five billion dollars to run the whole country. And so my fellow criminologists, get real and stop assuming that all those in prison are criminals.

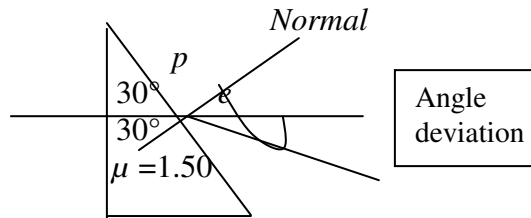
The review of criminological theories would demonstrate how modernist accounts of criminality appear unilinear in the construction of imperialist power as the polar opposite of decolonisation. For instance, Masculinity would come across as heterosexuality, as domineering force, as rational, as violent attack or defense, as muscular force in contrast to femininity and emasculation. This lineal equation of white-supremacist, imperialist patriarchy with its mythology has been maintained by modernist discourse that promises a universal classification of all living things into male and female, black and white, rich and poor, good and bad species.

This paper examines whether this modernist obsession with the delineation of the contours of hierarchy is a symptom of an identity crisis or the symptom of a crisis in modernist paradigms of science. If we accept the premise of positivistic social science – that social relations are measurable, quantifiable, classifiable, predictable and generalizable – then we should adopt any of the numerous modernist perspectives on deviance and social control as the guide for this research. If, on the other hand, our guiding assumption is that deviance and social control are socially constructed, that they are observable but not easily quantifiable or measurable, largely unpredictable and historically specific rather than universal, then we should seek alternatives to the lineal geometry of modernist correlations.

An example of this alternative to the modernist geometry of social relations is offered by chaos theory. This theory was suggested at the height of modernist philosophy of science by Goethe as an alternative to the lineal geometry of Newton but it was largely ignored perhaps because Goethe was more of an artist than a scientist. Newton experimented with a prism which broke a beam of white light into a rainbow of colours that could be observed throughout the spectrum. Newton concluded that the rainbow

colours must be the pure colours that combine to produce the colour white. There was hardly any evidence to justify this Newtonian optics except that the experiment can be repeated a thousand times with reliable results. Today, if you ask a physicist what is the colour red, he or she would state that 'it is light radiating in waves between 620 to 800 billionth of a meter long' (Gleick, 1987: 164).

An example of what Newton proposed can be illustrated with the following analogy: If a black boy is like a glass prism and masculinity is like a ray of white light, then if the light shines normally on one surface of the glass, we can calculate the angle of deviation of the ray after being refracted through the glass prism. Since the ray of light (masculinity) strikes the face of the prism (boy) normally, it will proceed through the glass (boy) until it strikes the opposite face at the point P (read politics). On emerging from the prism the ray of masculinity will be refracted away from the normal as shown. Now the angle the ray of masculinity makes with the normal in the glass boy is clearly 30° , and if the angle of emergence is e , we have, by Snell's law:



$$\begin{aligned} \sin e \text{ divided by } \sin 30 &= 1.50, \\ \text{or } \sin e &= 1.50 \times \sin 30, \\ &= 0.75, \text{ giving } e \\ &= 48^\circ 36'. \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{But the angle through which the ray of masculinity is deviated} &= e - 30, \\ &= 48^\circ 36' - 30^\circ, \\ &= 18^\circ 36' \text{ (Tyler, 1959: 107-107)}. \end{aligned}$$

Note how the angle 'normal' is placed above and the 'angle of deviation' is coincidentally placed below as if only the subaltern is capable of deviating from the norm. This is the approach that is common in criminology, where the crimes of the powerful are widely neglected while the relatively powerless are overwhelmingly the objects of criminological research. Fortunately for black boys, they are not unconscious glass prisms; masculinity is not a simple matter of mechanically shinning a white light, and normality or deviance is not exclusively found along monolithic angles. For that reason this project will not approach the subjects through the positivistic philosophy of science that privileges causal path analysis. The study of social relations is not the study of unconscious matter with no self-interests and vested interests in politicized global societies. Bearing this in mind, this paper encourages the adoption of a perspective that is sensitive to the fact that even though the attitudes of young black men to masculinity could be measured and analyzed, attitudes are ordinal level data and not interval level data. It is a common misapplication of statistical measurement to see attitudes being treated as interval and ratio level data due to the pressure for researchers to quantify their findings (Champion, 2000). If we are looking at race, class and gender constructions of

deviance and social control, the statistical precision of Newton's optics becomes increasingly untenable.

According to Gleick, one of the advocates of chaos theory, Feigenbaum, was not satisfied with Newton's optics. He looked up Goethe's book and discovered an extraordinary set of experiments on colours. Goethe also experimented with a prism but instead of casting a beam of white light through the prism, he held it close to his eyes and looked at it. What he saw was a blankness, neither a rainbow nor individual shades of colour. He tried his experiment against a background of a clear blue sky and against a clear white surface and produced the same result of uniformity. However, when a slight spot interrupted the white surface or a cloud appeared in the blue sky, then Goethe saw a burst of colour. He concluded that it is the interchange of light and shadow that causes colour. He confirmed this hypothesis by observing how people perceive shadows cast by different sources of coloured light. Whereas Newton broke down light to find out the smallest unit of colour and expressed this mathematically as a theory for the whole of physics, Goethe studied paintings, walked through colourful gardens and studied how people perceive colour in search of a grand theory of colour. Feigenbaum was convinced that Goethe was on the right track and that his theory was close to the view of psychologists that human perception is not always identical with the hard physical reality that they observe. As Gleick summarized this:

The colors we perceive vary from time to time and from person to person....But as Feigenbaum understood them, Goethe's ideas had more true science in them. They were hard and empirical. Over and over again, Goethe emphasized the repeatability of his experiments. It was the perception of color, to Goethe, that was universal and objective. What scientific evidence was there for a definable real-world quality of redness independent of our perception? (Gleick, 1987: 165).

This chaotic theory of colour is relevant especially when we are talking about the racial classification of human beings based on skin colour. The people who are commonly called black are rather brown and the people commonly called white are actually pink. Besides, some people who are called black are almost as white or whiter than some other people called white. This project will not follow Newton down the lane of formulating a mathematical formalism with which to sift through the 'mess' of multiple human perceptions and arrive at universal qualities of blackness or masculinity, for instance. Blackness and masculinity are not exactly specific bandwidths of light, as Newton's optic illusions would have it. On the contrary, masculine blackness, like any racialized-gendered-class-specific category, is a chaotic territory with hybrid boundaries that are impossible to quantify, yet we are certain that we can identify black men regularly and with empirical verifiability, as Goethe would argue. In Australia, South Africa and the United States of America, we do not need a mathematical formula with which to accurately identify young black men but we can empirically identify the young men whose racialized identity is black in the three culturally different locations.

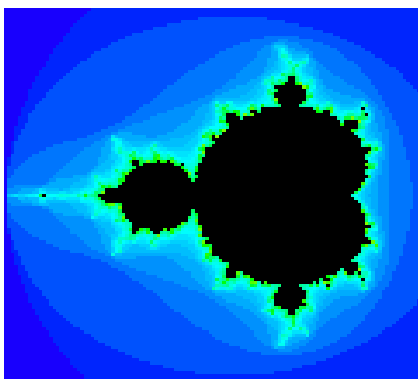
Contributing to the development of chaos theory in criminology or what they call 'constitutive criminology', Henry and Milovanovic (1996: 60) provide a critique of the criminological theories based on the Newtonian philosophy of science. According to them:

In the Newtonian paradigm, the 'point' is privileged. The individual particle, the entity 'person', can be followed through time. Actions, with the correct amount of scientific knowledge, are potentially predictable. For example in positivistic criminology consider how causation is depicted in path analysis diagrams....In contrast, for quantum mechanics, only probabilities exist (Henry and Milovanovic, 1996: 60).

They go on to outline the various insights that chaos theory has contributed towards a better understanding of society. Chaos theory is explicit or implicit in the work of postmodernist theorists. Such theorists conceptualise social order as the exception in social relations because order has to be imposed against various forms of resistance. This suggests that the social universe is characterised by disorder most of the time, rather than being clean, clear and whole as Newtonian positivism would have us believe. This model of reality appears to be more useful for understanding a phenomenon like black masculinity which is not one monolithic whole but is made up of dissipative structures that tend towards order and disorder, with variable fractals that remain unstable and sensitive to their social environment that is full of chance, spontaneity and uncertainty unlike the rational bureaucracies through which a modicum of order is attempted in the face of chaos.

The approach of chaos theory can be critiqued for privileging chaos in an imperialist, patriarchal, white-supremacist world where the people who have been suffering the effects of such chaos yearn for a break into orderly lives. For young minority men, women and the poor who are demonised as bearers of the violent criminal identity (never mind that more people are massacred daily by imperialists than by all the individual murderers in years), it is not very helpful to simply deconstruct the social construction of the hierarchies of criminality when they yearn for an end to racism, sexism and class-snobbery. If the world is essentially chaotic, it follows that the organization of change would also have to be disorganized rather than disciplined. Such anarchic view of social change could work against the efforts to eliminate oppressive practices that are very much organized, systematic and institutionalised. Henry and Milovanovic try to answer these short-comings of chaos theory by promising to go beyond deconstruction and begin the task of reconstruction. However, in their postmodernist alternative to modernist criminological theory, they offered an interpretation of the 'Outcome basins of the Mandelbrot set' that remains problematic especially for young black men (Agozino, 1999). According to them the

'area outlined in black represents convergence (those with law-breaking commitment profiles) and the area outside it in white represents divergence (those with law-abiding profiles or other forms of harm).' (Henry and Milovanovic, 1996: 166).



The Mandelbrot Set from an internet source with the area in blue being the area in white referred to above. Benoit Mandelbrot coined the word, 'fractals', to represent the normal curves of infinity that Georg Cantor mistakenly saw as pathological in the Cantor Set (Eglash, 1999).

The postmodern interpretation of the Mandelbrot Set sounds too much like the racial profiling that is increasingly being recognised as part of the reasons why young black men are over-represented in the justice system. This conclusion departs from such a reading of chaos theory by avoiding the use of representations that could reinforce existing prejudices against young black men. The approach of postmodern chaos criminology is flawed perhaps because it represents an attempt to apply to social relations, the findings of theoretical physicists about unconscious natural phenomena. Hence, although chaos theorists abhor lineal Euclidean explanations, their non-linear geometry still approximates a lineal explanation or a multi-lineal explanation. For example, chaos theorists talk about bifurcations as the things that make up the non-linear geometry of social relations. Elsewhere, I have questioned the privileging of bifurcations in chaos analysis and suggested the conception of social relations as involving, at least, trifurcations if not multifurcations (Agozino, 1997a). One of the leading thinkers of chaos criminology, T.R. Young (1992) outlines the potential contributions of chaos theory to criminology and his outline can be applied to a conclusion of a book like this. As he put it:

A. The geometry of dynamical system varies with scale of observation (this is visible in the Mandelbrot set above but it is also true of black masculinity as dynamic phenomenon that varies among its fractals)

B. Any given region at any given scale of observation is similar to an adjacent region or the larger region of which it is a part, but it is never identical (this hypothesis can be applied to black masculinities in the US, Australia and South Africa in terms of their similarities even though they are far from being identical).

C. One speaks of degrees of reality rather than Euclidean states of objectivity (are there degrees of the reality of black masculinity or is it a monolithic reality?)

D. Both order and disorder are found together in every region at every scale in fractal structures (we can hypothesise that young black men would be as normal as non-black young men everywhere with some tending towards disorder but most remaining orderly even in the face of racial profiling in the three countries).

E. The amount/ratio of order to disorder depends upon which portions of an outcome basin one samples; precision and replicability are a function of sampling decisions (and so we must endeavour to sample from different socio-economic backgrounds in the different countries before we can begin to understand why three culturally distinct fractions of black masculinity are similarly marginalized by the institutions of social control).

The above five points correspond to the five essential components of fractal geometry that Eglash (1999) found to be more common in indigenous African design and social thought compared to the more commonly Cartesian European and Euclidean Native American designs. The five essential elements are recursion (the output of black masculinity becomes the input for the reproduction of African masculinity); scaling (the variations of black masculinity do not follow smooth straight lines but have jagged edges at the margins); self-similarity (the patterns of black masculinity do not have to be identical to qualify as fractals of the same thing); infinity (although black masculinity can be scaled, it must be noted that its variations are infinite); and fractional dimensions (the dimensions of black masculinity are not only whole numbers but fractions of gender relationships).

The preferred approach in this paper has been to follow the theory of articulation as developed by Stuart Hall (1980, 1996; see also Agozino, 1997a, 1997b). Although Hall would distance himself from postmodern thinking, his theory implicitly applies the assumptions of chaos theory on the analysis of race, class and gender. Like chaos theory, the theory of articulation assumes that social relations are not isolated from one another but that they actually intersect or articulate with one another. For example, it will be impossible to explain the social relations of young black men simply in terms of gender or masculinity, exclusively in terms of race or colour, nor simply in terms of class or socio-economic relations. A poor black boy in Durban, South Africa, the Aboriginal youth in Brisbane, Australia or the African American youth in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania does not, for instance, go to one police station to experience his poverty before going to another police station to experience his masculinity and before going to a third police station to experience his blackness. Rather, all three social relations are articulated, disarticulated and rearticulated in the significant social relations that impact on the young black men who are racially profiled as violent criminals by law enforcement agents and by large sections of the public.

The theory of articulation is also useful because it presupposes that social change would have to be organized in order to overcome the disadvantages, direct and indirect, that keep some young black men trapped in violence within otherwise democratic societies where the majority of young black men remain overwhelmingly law-abiding. Instead of simply agonising over or celebrating the existence of chaos in the lives of some young black men, the theory of articulation lays emphasis on how to articulate

alternative solutions in alliance with interested sections of society through education, social action and differential social organization.

This perspective is close to the idea of the intersections of race, class and gender domination outlined by Patricia Hill Collins (1990). The major difference is that Collins adopted an individualist conception of agency by emphasizing the choices available to her as an individual middle class black woman whereas the theory of articulation emphasizes the building of coalitions and alliances along the race-class-gender axis in the struggle against injustice. What the theory of articulation and intersection share is an understanding that within certain conjunctures, one social relation could relatively disarticulate the others by becoming more prominent or more significant in certain situations or points in time. However, the theory of articulation recognises that disarticulation is always followed by a re-articulation of the disarticulated relations, giving rise to a new view of dominance and resistance. The Cartesian mathematical concept of intersectionality further differs from the fractal linguistic concept of articulation by suggesting that there are areas outside the intersections where pure race, pure gender or pure class relations can be found while articulation assumes the disarticulation and rearticulation of every aspect of the relevant social relations within an articulation of dominance and resistance.

My preference for fractal chaos theory finds support in the work of Ron Eglash (1999) who found that ‘while fractal geometry can indeed take us into the far reaches of high-tech science, its patterns are surprisingly common in traditional African designs, and some of its basic concepts are fundamental to African knowledge systems’ (Eglash, 1999: 3). I am not surprised at how common fractal designs are in Africa because the very shirt I am wearing as I type these words carry fractal designs from West Africa and as a young boy, I watched my mother paint fractal motifs on the bodies of mothers who were about to celebrate the first month (28th day) of the new born.

Eglash went on to do a cross-cultural analysis of the frequency of fractal designs and found that European designs tend to be Cartesian while the designs of Native Americans and South Pacific Islanders tend to be Euclidean. He found that fractal designs appear more common in African cultures. However, he warns against interpreting this empirical evidence in a racist manner to suggest that Africans are closer to nature while Europeans are closer to culture. This warning reminds us of debates between poststructuralists and the advocates of Africentrism. Writers like Mudimbe (1988) and Appiah (1992), writing from poststructuralist orientations, warn that Africans differ from place to place and from time to time, just like any other group of people on earth, and so we should not follow colonial and anti-colonial thinking by lumping Africans together for different ideological reasons. On the other hand, writers like Asante and Asante (1985) emphasize the cultural unity of Africa and insist that the differences among people of African descent are insignificant compared to the compelling evidence of similarities. Alternatively, bell hooks (1991) argues for what she calls ‘postmodern blackness’ by suggesting that postmodernists should conduct their discourse in a language that is not designed to exclude the masses and tackle issues of relevance to the black community.

According to Eglash, paying attention to African fractals would reveal that both sides of the argument have a point. Africa is not the same in every respect and yet there is a family resemblance among Africans the same way that a family photograph would show likeness among members of the family who are far from being identical. In this project,

there is no assumption that black men are biologically the same everywhere. Rather, the assumption is that despite the differences among black men, their historical experiences in the US, Australia and South Africa are painfully similar. Fractal analysis allows us to theorise the differences in the representation of black masculinity within the three regions of interest while also capturing the similarities. Paul Gilroy (1993) makes use of fractal analysis to explain the dynamism and diversity of African cultures and the cultures of the African Diaspora. The methodological problem that arises here is whether it is valid to compare African American men with South African men and Aboriginal Australian men? Why are these culturally distinct fractions of young black men equally marginalized and oppressed in societies structured in white-supremacist patriarchal imperialist dominance? They come from different countries but they are all over-represented in the prison industrial complex at proportions that compete to out-scandalize each other. This conclusion is not the place to deal with this question adequately. It is something that I am proposing to take up in a future project. Suffice it to warn that such a project could not be accomplished along the lines of colonialist criminology but along the oppositional perspectives of counter colonial criminology outlined in this paper.

Another social problem that cannot be completely addressed in this paper but which should not be completely ignored is the terrorist war against terrorism that is being waged by the new imperialism. Every right thinking person is against terrorism and so no one should accuse me of not being with 'us' and being against 'us'. The attempts to demonise critics with boasts about European cultural superiority or to use the grief caused by terrorists to justify the terrorising of whole populations with smart and dumb bombs is straight out of the books of colonialist criminology.

Counter colonial criminology would suggest that the military option is not the only or even the most effective way to prevent security risks to innocent citizens around the world. The colonialist criminological approach simply chooses allies who appear convenient at the moment. They are armed and trained to attack perceived enemies with terroristic tactics. Eventually, the chicken come home to roost in the sense that the same people who are trained and armed to attack the baddies often turn round to attack their mentors. What if the huge sums of money being used to seek a military solution to the crime problem was spent on paying reparations to the victims of colonialism and imperialism? Perhaps there will be less need to drop leaflets with bombs and food packages, telling the terrified citizens which packages to open and which explosives of the same colour to avoid opening in a phoney turkey-shoot war.

As usual, criminologists are not intervening in this immense perpetration of human rights crimes. If they respond at all, they will be designing commodified courses on how to win the war on terrorism rather than offering alternative theories of crime in a world where imperialism is globalised. It is left to a courageous politician like Fidel Castro Ruz of Cuba to risk his life by honouring the invitation from the United Nations to speak words of truth about the crimes committed by imperialism against the people of the Third World and against the poor minorities within imperialist countries, against the clearly stated wishes of the forces of imperialism and their lackeys who would rather that Castro did not show up. Come on criminology theorists, one more effort!

While criminologists indulge in their profitable culture of silence on human rights crimes, a Nigerian mathematician who obviously understands fractal thinking, analyses what is going on in his popular weekly column for *The Guardian*, Lagos (Thursday,

April 18, 2002). The writer, Dr Edwin Madunagu, lost his job as a Mathematics Professor when the military dictatorship of General Obasanjo sacked him and others for sympathising with students who were murdered by security agents. In the fractally titled article, 'The Invisible Encounter', he analysed what happened on March 21, 2002, when Dr Fidel Castro addressed the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico. He quotes Castro as telling the conference that 'The existing world economic order constitutes a system of plundering and exploitation like no other in history'. Castro continued his speech by telling his audience that in the year 2001,

'more than 826 million people were actually starving; there were 854 million illiterate adults; 325 million children do not attend school, 2 billion people have no access to low cost medications and 2.4 billion people lack the basic sanitation conditions. Not less than 11 million children under age 5 perish every year from preventable causes, while half a million go blind for lack of vitamin A; the life span of the population in the developed world is 30 years higher than that of the people living in Sub-Saharan Africa.'

And criminologists still focus on the POO theory – the punishment of offenders - without raising a single eye-brow as to who is responsible for the plundering and exploitation that produces such genocidal results. Such silence is actually underdeveloping criminology by tying it to the apron strings of colonialism and imperialist reason. Madunagu the mathematician was a better criminologist than most criminologists by paying attention to what Castro had to say. He concluded his column by quoting from Castro again:

In the face of the present deep crisis, a still worse future is offered where the economic, social and ecological tragedy of an increasingly ungovernable world would never be resolved and where the number of the poor and the starving would grow higher, as if a larger part of humanity were doomed. As I have said before, the ever more sophisticated weapons piling up in the arsenals of the wealthiest and the mightiest can kill the illiterate, the poor and the hungry, but they cannot kill ignorance, poverty and hunger. It should definitely be said: farewell to arms. Something must be done to save humanity, a better world is possible.

A better criminology is definitely possible too. Such a criminology would be asking why the Third World governments that try genuinely to stop these genocidal crimes are often the targets of imperialist forces. Why would Castro be harassed by his Mexican hosts and forced to leave the international conference before the arrival of the American president, George W. Bush, and why are criminologists not even interested in the implications of such undiplomatic conduct for human rights? Some might argue that Third World poverty is the consequence of the ignorance of Third World people and the mismanagement of their resources by their leaders, nothing to do with criminology.

The interconnectedness of the problems of imperialist reason and criminological theory can be made clearer by developing a decolonisation model of deviance and social control. The thesis statement of this model is that crime and punishment are instances of

imperialist power relations. Both crime and control seek to exercise colonial power over Others by imperialist force, threat of force or fraud and cunning rather than through the democratic process.

This gives rise to the spiral of imperialism that originates from interpersonal relationships and spreads to inter-group and international relations. All individuals, social classes, gender groups and racial or ethnic categories are capable of colonising the private or collective spaces of Others. Everyone is capable of attempting decolonisation as an understandable response to imperialist power.

Parents and guardians abuse children because of the imperialist power that they wield over the children. Juveniles bully others and commit offences because of the will to colonise others and exercise power unjustly. Rapists are the dominant characterization of imperialists. A man rapes a woman just as Europa rapes Africana. One rapes an individual and the other rapes masses of people. What they have in common is not the rape but the imperialism. Pickpockets and insider-traders, kidnappers and war criminals, murderers and genocidists, drunk drivers and human rights violators, terrorists and armies of occupation, fraudsters and military coup plotters, environmental polluters and pornographers, drug dealers and hate criminals are all united in the spiral of imperialism.

This is not to suggest that human nature is essentially imperialistic. On the contrary, the vast majority of the masses make society possible by adopting democratic principles in their relationships with others. It is always a minority that wishes to lord it over the majority unjustly who resort to imperialist reason. The masses individually and collectively struggle for decolonisation as part of the struggle to deepen democratic ethos within civil society.

This view can be summarised in a few propositions:

1. The exercise of imperialist power in any relationship is the general form of deviance.
2. The greater the frequency and intensity of imperialist power relations, the more deviant the outcome.
3. The more intense, enduring or persistent the imperialist power relation, the more likely that the victimised would organise decolonisation struggles.
4. The more militaristic the attempt to repress the struggle for decolonisation, the more militant the struggle becomes.
5. The more militaristic the decolonisation struggle, the more likely that the outcome would retain forms of neo-colonial imperialist power relations.
6. The more enduring the militarised power of neo-colonial imperialism, the more likely that the struggle would continue.

Fanon recognised the dangers of militarism as a solution to imperialism and called instead for reparations to be paid for the crimes of imperialism. This is in line with the African fractal belief system in the interconnectedness of humanity in contrast to dehumanising Eurocentric hierarchical reasoning that sustains imperialist hegemony. Similar ideas can be found in the consistent criticism of the abuse of power as the source of crime in the works of Chamblis (1971, 1989, 1999), Pepinsky (1991), Odekunle (1986), Angela Davis, bell hooks and many others. The solution to the abuse of power is

not disempowerment but increased empowerment through intensified democratisation of civil society.

In sum, the book from which this paper draws (Agozino, 2003) has demonstrated that the silence on the genealogical links of criminology with colonialism has produced two adverse effects: a) Criminological theory has been constrained by the shackles of imperialist reason and, b) post-colonial countries have generally shunned criminology as an irrelevant colonialist pastime even while continuing to import the nuts and bolts of 'made-for-export' imperialist technology. Both these consequences of the failure of the criminological imagination when it comes to colonialism need to be addressed in order to begin and further the decolonisation of criminology for the good of all.

One immediate consequence of the decolonisation model is that criminologists will no longer focus exclusively on the punishment of individual offenders but will join the millions of people around the world who are demanding reparations for the crimes of the African holocaust otherwise known as the European Trans Atlantic Slavery, the genocide against native Americans, Aboriginal Australians and the Maori in New Zealand, the crimes against humanity known as Apartheid, the Arab slave trade, the stolen generations of Aboriginal children, the colonial pogroms in Africa, Palestine, Asia and South America and the crimes of the Japanese colonial adventures in Asia. Such tasks will no longer be abandoned to journalists like Chang (1997) who opened the eyes of the world to the Nanking massacre while criminologists turned a blind eye. As Cohen (1993) and the Schwendingers (1970) have been harping in the wilderness, human rights crimes are also criminological problems that should no longer be left out of fat volumes that pretend to be comprehensive handbooks of criminology.

Another consequence would be the establishment of Third World schools of theoretical criminology that could teach the West one or two things about difference, deviance, defiance and social control. It is no longer credible for the imperialist countries who have the greatest crime problems and who perpetrate the greatest crimes to continue to posture as the standard-bearers of criminology from which the Third World should learn. There is an English proverb that you should send a thief to catch a thief but I have never trusted this proverb since I read it in the primary school. I have always suspected that the imperialist thieves would join hands and conspire to rob you blind. I am sure that Western criminologists could learn a thing or two by humbling themselves to listen to Other perspectives. Willem de Haan (1992) stated that there is a need for 'progressive criminology' to be indigenised in the Third World but he warned that such a project should not proceed along the line of extreme cultural relativism lest it perpetuates stereotypes of the other. This paper suggests that it is not enough to indigenise already existing criminological schools, including progressive criminologies. Instead, western criminologists should remain open to chances of learning from the experiences and struggles of others as well through an exchange of knowledge contrary to the modernist assumption that technology must be transferred from the west to the rest of us.

Codes of the Powerful:

The recent publication in the *New York Times* on black men as an endangered species (Mincy, 2006) and the commission of enquiry in the UK on black men and violent crime are saying the same thing, that black men are over-represented in the statistics on

violence, unemployment, health risks, etc. However, we must not forget how dominant the ethic of violence is in hegemonic quarters of society as well nor the lesson that black youth could teach us.

After reading *Codes of the Street* with my students, the majority of whom come from inner city Philadelphia, one critical question for discussion that I enjoy raising is how different are the codes of the street from the codes of the powerful? My students usually say that the powerful also crave respect and resort to violence whenever they feel that you are 'dissing' them. The students suggest that by choosing to go to war, for example, the leaders of the country are behaving like street-corner gangsters, especially when there are peaceful alternatives to war as always. Moreover, even scholars with all their education often behave like gangsters too, attacking each other, tearing each other to pieces all in the guise of defending intellectual turfs, just like street corner kids. Anderson anticipated such comment by making it clear that Street families crave to be seen as Decent too some day while kids from Decent families might crave Street credibility too.

This is an indication that Anderson's thinking is influenced by African Fractals rather than by Euclidean Geometry or straight lines of causation. He gave away more of this clue during his plenary speech to the Society of Black Sociologists in Philadelphia when he praised Du Bois (1995) for not writing the *Philadelphia Negro* in a straight narrative but in an elliptical style that continues to baffle publishers today. What he did not add is that this fractal way of thinking has been found to be predominant in traditional African designs, that it is reflected in African American musical forms which resist the written score, preferring the improvisational oral tradition, that voters in Atlanta were redistricted to take into consideration the fractal pattern of residence by African Americans and that the application of this line of thinking has produced faster internet connectivity in modern computer designs. In criminology, these ideas are being applied to Chaos Theory but hardly any mention of the African roots is seen in the footnotes while black students are trained to shun fractal thinking as if it is alien to Africans the way it is to Europeans. Incidentally, as Anderson spoke, I glanced at the book one of my students was reading and it was open at a page that warned against Eurocentric theories like chaos theory without mentioning that such a line of thinking is more profound among Africans.

We can join Ron Eglash in speculating why Europeans prefer the straight grids in their designs while Africans prefer fractal designs. One suggestion is that adherents of Cartesian and Euclidean geometries are control freaks, they prefer the straight grids because they are easier to place under surveillance and easier to police, lock-down or block for social control purposes. Hence when the average European comes into contact with elements of the African fractals in social organization, the immediate conclusion is that the African pattern represents backwardness and primitive tendencies that must be crushed and replaced with Cartesian designs.

Modern computer designers obviously think otherwise, having been partially influenced by a Nigerian genius, Phillip Emeagwali, who claimed that they laughed at him when he told them that he could design a computer that would break the speed records in the early days of the internet. He also admitted that he got the inspiration to do so from his native

Igbo culture, a culture that the British saw as primitive because they recognized no chiefs and upon whom the British imposed Warrant Chiefs with the disastrous consequence that Igbo women declared war against colonialism in 1929.

The problem of youth is not an African thing but a global one. The response from authority figures seems to be that of continuing with tried and failed techniques of control. Incarceration tends to turn bad kids into worse, war tends to escalate tensions, repressive policing tends to breed resistance, discrimination yields bitterness, exclusion fails to contain discontent. The example that young black men are offering is not being recognized and explored. Instead, the cookie-cutter approach of Cartesian designs is used to force young black men to fit into a mould that was fashioned without black men in mind.

The emphasis is on incarceration for the masses of youth or the alternative of creating jobs for the lucky jobless, training the unemployed in job skills but little or no attention on entrepreneurial opportunities. The Hip Hop generation has demonstrated that the black male responds more to legitimate business opportunities than to minimum wages. Without any grants or subsidies, they have created a huge industry. The government continues to pay subsidies to tobacco farmers whose produce contribute to the death of hundreds of thousands annually but do not show up in discussions of violence and killing.

Is there a reason why the grants given to rural white farmers cannot be extended to urban black musicians, scholars, film-makers, designers, shop-keepers, restaurants, researchers, to create jobs, generate wealth and innovate technology? Even on this one, black farmers had to sue the government and win billion of dollars in damages for discriminatory allocations. The support that is provided to the majority population should be extended to the minorities too to replicate the wealth and growth experienced by the dominant and for the benefit of all. This represents African Fractal thinking, the suggestion that it is not only a single way – job-seeking – that is capable of solving the problem of disenfranchisement of the youth of today and that the benefits of uplifting the downtrodden would be enjoyed by all, given our interconnectivity. This policy option is already being implemented by the rich countries in terms of support for big businesses and small businesses that are largely owned by favored ethnic groups. My suggestion is that governments should invest directly in the youth by providing more scholarships and by funding the business ideas of the young with grants.

Providing grants to the youth for investment would not solve all the problems facing the youth and the society but rather than spend dozens of thousands of dollars to keep them locked up each per year, an annual disbursement of grants could help many of them escape the colonial technology of incarceration and move in a positive direction with their lives. In the article on black men as an endangered species, only one individual indicated that he wanted to go into business for himself but lamented that he might need help with business skills. The government should fund an apprenticeship program whereby an established business takes on an unemployed black youth for a period to show him or her the ropes and then a grant is given to the young apprentice to set up his own business in the same line of trade. This methods has been perfected by the Igbo of

Nigeria even without any grant from the government but if the government should come in to support the model, it is capable of transforming the lives of many young black people today.

Next time when there is a public enquiry into the situation of young black people, I hope it will not focus exclusively on how many are dead or in jail but also on how many of them are performing wonders through hard work in different professions, businesses and careers. As Tupac asked his mother, we should ask the high achieving black youth, 'How Did You Do It?' There are lessons in their life stories that need to be celebrated and promoted. There is a need for the government to extend the affirmative action programs that have been almost exclusively enjoyed by white farmers to black youth.

What I am suggesting is that attention should be paid to black youth with love and not always with vengeance. Some would call for criminology to be used for peacemaking and I agree with that but I add that criminology should also be aimed at creating love as in the beloved community that Martin Luther King Jr. talked about. People attribute the origin of the philosophy of non-violence to Gandhi but few know that Gandhi himself attributes this to Africans who taught him the lesson in their non-violent opposition to British rule in South Africa. Nelson Mandela continues that tradition by refusing to hate or fight his unjust jailers and by seeking reconciliation instead. Like everyone else, black youth will respond more positively to acts from the government indicating that they are beloved rather than policies that emphasize that they are hated.

Finally, we must not forget the lesson that Stuart Hall taught us – that we cannot understand racism in isolation from sexism and class exploitation because people do not experience these structures of dominance in isolation. Rather race-class-gender relations are articulated, disarticulated and rearticulated in theory, experience and policy. For instance, when scholars and the mass media present an image of the black male as violent and threatening, they are packaging the poverty of the said black males along with their gender and ethnicity together instead of talking about race in isolation. To solve the problem, therefore, we cannot focus exclusively on racial discrimination in isolation from what Patricia Hill Collins called the controlling images of race, class and gender intersectionality.

William Julius Wilson (1988) suggested that focusing only on race relations could result in greater social injustice for those he called the truly disadvantaged who are left behind in the inner cities as jobs go away. More of our people are in prison today than was the case before the Civil Rights Act. Wilson suggests that jobs for black men would enable them to stay and raise their children with the baby mothers and thereby help to cut down on deviance within the black community. Bell hooks agrees but adds that black women need jobs too and childcare facilities. I am adding that we also need to become employers too and the government can help us with start-up grants the way it helps other communities. To the students protesting a new labour law in France, this is one insight that you could borrow from Africans, demand grants from your government to set up your own businesses and become employers. Then you could be in a position to treat your own employees like family.

Conclusion:

The causes of crime in Trinidad and Tobago are no different from the causes in the rest of the Caribbean or the rest of the world – power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. The poor people who commit crimes against other poor people are frequently those who have power resources more than other poor people and the rich people who commit crimes are obviously not relatively deprived as theories of social strain would have us believe. It follows that the major solution to violent crimes can be found in efforts to deepen democratic accountability at all levels of social relations rather than increasing authoritarian power that could be further abused. For instance, instead of continuing the war against drugs that breeds violence of unprecedented proportions, the policy makers should consider the advice of the Jamaican Ganja Commission and legalize drugs the way alcohol and tobacco have remained legal despite causing more social harm than all illicit drugs put together. Making drugs a free democratic choice by adults would remove them from the control of drugs barons and reduce the violence considerably. Drug users who become sick would then be treated by medical doctors the same way they treat alcoholics and tobacco-induced cancer patients.

Other violent crimes like kidnapping, murder and rape might also be reduced by making sure that only violent offenders spend time in prison as an alternative to the current policy whereby non-violent offenders are jailed to be corrupted and made worse in prison under the influence of more hardened criminals. The solution being offered here is to recognize the interconnectedness of all human beings and therefore to avoid discarding some people as jetsam and flotsam since they will come back to our communities eventually after being socialized into a life of violence in prisons.

Rather than accept the fatalism that modernization always results in increased criminality and violence, we should carefully study the history of industrialized countries that have remained low in the rates of violence and crime. One example is that of Japan which recorded declining prison rates and declining crime rates since the Second World War despite being one of the most industrialized countries on earth. The way they did it is through community policing and community corrections by which most crimes are detected, most defendants are convicted but few convicts actually serve time in prison given the overwhelming use of suspended sentences for non-violent crimes. No country is perfect but most countries would give anything to approximate the record of Japan in violent crime reduction over such a sustained period. The Scandinavian countries have similar records and the former socialist countries went from low crime to high rates of violent crime in less than a decade of the restoration of capitalism.

The gendered nature of violent crime cannot be over-emphasized as Mincy (2006) and others have demonstrated. More black boys are likely to drop out from high school and those who drop out from high school are more likely to be unemployed while also being more likely to serve time in prison before they are 30 years old. This is what alarmed me on noticing that young men are not ending up in UWI as much as their female counterparts. I suggested that this should be integrated into the strategic planning

document to find ways of extending tertiary education to the men wherever they might be (prison, communities, trading) and also to have an outreach and mentorship program for the male students in high schools. I have started the mentorship program by visiting four high schools in Trinidad and giving motivational speeches to high school students but the task is too huge for one person and without funding it will be difficult to bring in other mentors and extend the program to all schools in the country and the region.

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