

I. Diamond Trading and Neo-Capitalism in *Blood Diamond*

This research takes Edward Zwick motion picture *Blood Diamond* released in 2006 to observe the impacts of neo-capitalism in the of developing nations. The movie is based on political chaos and insurgency rampant on Sierra Leone during the 1990s. During the 90s, Sierra Leone was marred by insurgent groups claiming their stakes over the vast diamond mines spread over the nation. This instability is further fuelled by the neo-capitalists' supply of weapons to the insurgents in exchange of diamonds. In consideration to the crisis faced by Sierra Leonian, the present researcher takes on the various aspects of neo-capitalism to depict its exploitation on the people of developing nations.

Sierra Leone, the second largest country on the African continent is abundantly wealthy in natural resources. Unfortunately, violence surrounding the extraction and exploitation of natural resources in the various parts of the nation has been a recurrent feature in Sierra Leonian history. There are few regions on earth which contain as many treasures as is found in Sierra Leone. However, according to John W. Cell, the nation is:

. . . severely exploited and underdeveloped during Belgian colonial rule, the DRC had little infrastructure when it gained independence in 1960. Its political and economic instability were aggravated by civil and ethnic conflicts both inside and in surrounding areas. (Microsoft Encarta [DVD], 2008)

Largely, due to internal chaos and insurgency, fighting escalated in the early 1990s and the nation suffered increasingly bloody and brutal conflict which “has claimed nearly four million lives since 1996” (Microsoft Encarta [DVD], 2008). This is of course due to the easy accessibility of arms and ammunition to various rebel groups in

the region. Thus, the intervention of neo-capitalists has further enhanced arm conflict and continues to be threat to life and property in the region. This is a scenario fuelled by the so-called economic aid being poured to the government and insurgents by the smaller groups of capitalists.

Neo-capitalism is an indirect way of intervention into the matters concerning Third World economies in the interest of smaller groups of wealthy persons. *Blood Diamond* exposes the role of neo-capitalists in exploiting the developing economy in the form of depiction of crisis faced by the government and people of this fragile nation. However, this is merely a tip of the iceberg because there are ample new capitalists who continue to plunder the wealth of developing economy to meet their personal demand fulfilled.

The story reflects all the problems associated with illegal diamond mining and the proceeds which finance insurgencies against governments and harm civilian population. The issue is magnified in poor African nations which are unable to enforce the law because of ineffective administration, corruption, poorly paid officials who are susceptible to bribery etc. This situation coupled with the presence of significant national mineral wealth gives opportunity to war-profiteers, who easily access arms from an underground black market. Danny is one such mechanism of these war mongers who are in turn aided by the neo-capitalists.

Neo-colonialism is a term widely popularized by Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first post-independence president. Nkrumah in *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* deals on the issue how African nations are under the hit of rampant access of wealth entering into the African nations. Sierra Leone is one suitable examples in which Nkrumah's book rightly entitles as neo-colonialism as the last stage of imperialism. However, whether neo-colonialism is the last resort of

imperialism or not, might be an issue to debate; but neo-colonialism is definitely a process that is eroding the natural resources of the developing nations. He says that “Part of a burgeoning consciousness developing among postcolonial elites in Africa is having its toll on the African economies” (34).

This scenario is present in *Blood Diamond* where societies are shattered and people are forced to migrate from their home in thousands. Life in rural Sierra Leone is increasingly under the threat of gun power which has been exported from the Western powers. It is obvious that Sierra Leone has no arms and ammunition factories; or certainly those modern weapons as shown in the movies. So, it is definitely the Western influence that is taking its toll on the already fragile economic status of the nation. As such, Nkrumah rightly depicts that the awareness of gaining independence and national sovereignty by African states is purely ‘token of love.’ It has in no substantial way altered the relationship between the colonial powers and the colonized state. In effect the formal granting of independence created a more Manichean system of dependency and exploitation.

Nkrumah opines that neocolonialism is a worst of imperialism because there is no explanation for the cultural exploitation it is making around the globe. He argues his ideas in the following manner:

Neo-colonialism is the worst form of imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress. In the days of old-fashioned colonialism, the imperial power had at least to explain and justify at home the actions it was taking abroad. In the colony those who served the ruling imperial power could at least look to its

protection against any violent move by their opponents. With neo-colonialism neither is the case. (xi)

While Nkrumah does not provide a solution to neocolonialism in *Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* he makes a number tacit suggestions, including the need for pan-African unity in making the task more difficult for neocolonialism.

The history of neocolonialism can be traced to the outcome of colonial rule that existed in the country prior to its independence. According to *The Sage English Dictionary and Thesaurus*, colonialism is “the exploitation by a stronger country by a weaker one; over its resources to strengthen and enrich the stronger one” (31).

Sierra Leone, an African nation was once a colony of British rule, and hence its aftermath is still visible. This once colonial nation and such colonies are often subject to harsh exploitation of both mental and physical nature. This is because of their dependencies on their imperial lords, even after the colonial era has ended. Citing the history of colonial expansion and exploitation of the local people, Cell writes:

The Europeans were the first to do so; which they did by luring and enticing the elite class of colonial nations to a sophisticated way of living and, entrapping them in the dazzle of superior complex. A large numbers of permanent European settlers came to different parts of Asia and Africa, including India, and people were enslaved during the imperial reign. Europeans went to these colonies primarily as planters, administrators, merchants, or military officers. (Microsoft Encarta [DVD] 2008)

In exploitation colonies, foreign powers established political control, if necessary using force against colonial resistance, but they did not displace or kill native

societies. They also did not, for the most part, intentionally destroy indigenous (native) cultures. Thus, the geographical circumstances and historical dynamics of exploitation of colonies were profoundly different from those of colonies of settlement.

The fact is that the world politics is largely based on economic power. Every citizen of the developing economies are already brainwashed by the Western way of life and living. This is a bitter, yet a true fact because the notion of development is determined by the Western ways of life and living. As such, the citizens of third world country take themselves as poor and, even inferior to the West. As such, there is a flow of Western culture coming to the third world and so does its citizen believe in as the basis of development. In turn, the neo-capitalists rampantly exploit the most valuable resource – diamonds of Sierra Leone.

Diamonds are Sierra Leone's most abundant resources which; however are traded illegally to fund rebellion and perpetuate conflict. While armed warfare has subsided considerably, fighting between the national army and rebel groups continues, particularly in the rural area where the government forces have less control over it which is depicted in the movie. As such, a diamonds mines in Sierra Leone Africa are prone to being traded in exchange for arms which are used in civil wars, coups and cruel military dictatorships in volatile African states.

The colonizing nations are losing their direct impact on the nations, as used to be previously. However, they are ruling such nations indirectly through investment of capital to fund various projects and development works. Africa with its rich and varied mineral wealth is also a target of 'colonizing' corporations which are backed up by governments of several developed economies and African politicians. This is how the neo-capitalists are making their ends meet in this war-ravaged nation. Since

the atrocities of wars financed by illegal diamond trade have been publicized the diamond trade has become a heavily albeit imperfectly regulated business.

Neo-colonialism is also to deal with the status of Solomon and his family before the political chaos hit Sierra Leone. People of several status, class and race were living in Sierra Leone, and who could say that they were not as happy as the Europeans. There were people from extreme of poverty to filthy rich aristocrats and tycoons. However, the essence of human being does not change despite the vast difference in economic status. The neo-capitalists; however, are treating people of inferior economic class as subject of material importance. As such, dignity of people residing in very poor nations are similar to that of saleable object and objectification of mortal beings is courtesy the super economists who alter national policies in accordance to their will and wish. Thus, a historical diversity is engulfed by policies introduced for the welfare and facilitation small groups of elite economists.

The modern theory does not deny cultural diversity; however, in action is imposing the Western notion of culture over the cultures of the third world nations. Frederic Jameson in "The Anti-Aesthetic" opines this scenario, as:

While modern theory may not deny diversity or change, it views diversity and change from a historical perspective in which they are seen as coherent, concrete, focused to target and ideologically grounded in unity. Culturally, modernity stressed the purity of each art and the autonomy of culture as a whole. (5)

The neo-colonialist emphasizes on purity of each culture; however, the root of imperialism can be clearly witnessed in the new form of colonial expansion that is through the economic support.

As such, the primary concern relating to exploitation invited by neo-capitalism, as to Jameson is can economic forms of organization fundamental importance within a cultural theory that (as will emerge) infuses cultural texts with a political force. Jameson proposes then that singular cultural texts (e.g. popular films, paintings, architecture) provide the everyday person with the means possible for evaluating the political landscape and recognizing their position within it.

Even though our Danny Archer can complete his quests, he has his own faults. From innocence to experience throughout stories we see our hero's fault, but by the time they realize their faults it is too late to change. Danny knew that diamond smuggling was illegal and also wrong, but he does it anyway. However, it should not be forgotten that he is a Western product and, it takes time for him to realize the fact of the third world people, and mentality of his Western mentors.

Neo-colonial theory then, relies upon a centered and unified subject, upon objectivity, upon and inherent rationalism and upon an apodictic truth. This centered notion in turn is introduced by a small group of elite capitalists, who in turn rule the nation by imposing a theory that s/he or the small community desires for. This small community desire in long turn is dissolved in the fast track of Western music and cultural nuances. The long run of Western economic subsistence is to brainwash the mind of the people of the developing economics. This is how people in most Western nations would like to invest for the people of the third world nations.

This investment in turn makes young boys like Dia, the son of Solomon, into a child soldier. Dia is brainwashed to the extent that he reaches a point when he does not hesitate to threaten his father for being an anti-nationalist element. But, the twist and turn of events at the end of the movie makes Dia realize his mistake. As such, Dia is reunited with his brainwashed son, whose experiences and actions in battle have left

him scarred. However, the ending is definitely Western notion, as we notice that Solomon takes his wife and children to the English way of living and life. The fact that Solomon finds his identity in the West and in Western costumes depicts in a way his acceptance to Western culture and mores. And with the help of Archer, Maddy gets her inside scoop on the blood diamond trade, leading to the incrimination of a top businessman. As such, the movie takes a minor step in dismantling the reign of neo-capitalists

Despite a tragic end in the form of demise of Danny Archer, *Blood Diamond* is a successful victory of the people of the third world economies. Danny receives a sense of peace in the form of his demise fighting the Western forces. The hero's death takes place in the form of final accomplishment of his task, to reunite Solomon with his son, and providing exclusive diamond smuggling story to his West based journalist, Maddy.

There are several critics who have taken the movie as bearer of flagship of Western values. One such critic is Walter Rodney who opines that the West is playing a double role in the entire process. In *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, he opines:

The movie is yet another depiction of supremacy of West. Through a tragic event in a Third World nation, the West depicts the hegemony of West as the messiah even at the cost of excessive damages caused by the Western capitalist. It is an irony that on one hand the West is responsible for culminating internal chaos, and on other hand it acts as if applying ointment over it. (76)

It is because the happenings in the Third World nations are in both ways linked to the West. Initially, they explore East in the name of development and charity, and slowly

invite internal intrigues, so that they can be doubly benefitted. So, when they are in charity they carry out few works of humanitarian issues, like bombarding the rebel area where children and men are imprisoned under forced labor.

In the wake of these events, Dia earns his freedom from the hands of the rebels. Thus, the notion of neo-capitalism could now be accounted for under universalizing and all-encompassing claims, as the economist claim that such change is for the local public and focused to the poor. These changes in policies invite a new form of theory, called neo-capitalism. This modern theory, in fact, has its root in the historical background and is associated with colonial expansion of the then colonial nations. It was during the colonial rule that the capitalists started pouring their investments in the Third World nations.

In line of these incidents and ideas discussed above, the present research takes on the notion of 'neo-capitalism' to expose the true mentality of the Westerners. To achieve diamond from this war-torn nation is the real objective of the neo-capitalists investing and smuggling guns in this fragile nation. As such, the research will discuss in brief the motives of the neo-colonialists in the movie, *Blood Diamond*.

The first chapter, "Diamond Trading and Neo-capitalism in *Blood Diamond*" discusses how the neo-capitalists are still in the spree of exploiting the third world economy. Similarly, the second chapter 'Exploitation of Neo-Capitalism in *Blood Diamond*' deals on incidents and references as provided in the movie that depicts the rampant exploitation of resources in developing nations. Finally, the last chapter "Conclusion: Exposition of Neo-Capitalists Mentality" will conclude the research.

II. Exploitation of Neo-Capitalism in *Blood Diamond*

Neo-capitalism literally means new-capitalism. It is a process through which people with economic power and influence rule over the rest of the people of the world. This is process through which limited people, or precisely called capitalists, will influence and rule and world in their favor. This is the scenario in regards to diamond mining in Sierra Leone, a South African nation where the internal conflict has been fuelled by Western capitalists in forming policies and plans.

Edward Zwick depicts this mentality of the people and the rulers through his blockbuster hit *Blood Diamond*. This Hollywood movie directed by released in 2006 revolves around two major characters; Daniel Craig, a Western mind-set smuggler and, Solomon Vandy, a local fisherman who are ventured together in a journey to trace a rare pink diamond. Through this, the movie ventures into the internal conflict of Sierra Leone and how it has been marred by conflicts among the various internal tribes fuelled by attempts to posses over the diamonds fields spread around the country.

According to Peter Hessler in “The Road Ahead” Sierra Leone has been a ripe ground for the capitalists to expose the land with their economy and influence. The journal writes, “Sierra Leone is a nation rich for its several diamond mines spread in North-East part of the nation. However, the this very source of natural gift has invited curse to the people of Serra Leone as it has invited internal clash added by the intervention of the West” (*National Geographic* 176). It has been often found that such poor nations are target of capitalists who not only exploit their resources but also add to the existing woes of its people. In concern, it is the rampant external influence that is causing to the chaos and intrigues in many of the developing nations, around the world. This external influence is one of the central causes inviting many of the

internal disputes and bloodshed in many emerging economies, one of the gifts of neo-capitalism.

Frederic Jameson is a theorist who analyzes a highly diverse selection of narratives that are detrimental in shaping the economic destiny of people living away from the economic facilities. He uses “late capitalism,” yet another term to show the rampant exploitation of the economist to show the impact of capitalism (The Anti-Aesthetic, 2). In *Blood Diamond* the term late capitalism can be appropriately fit in the picture of such people who have taken over the vacant post and attitude of the previously colonial rulers to exploit the locals through the sponsored wealth of the West.

As such, neo-capitalism becomes like a master dictating its slave to act in accordance to his will, so that he will be further powerful. However, when the powerful ceases to rule, there are others who come to the place to continue with the foregone traditions. Various insurgent groups in Sierra Leone are the leftover of this tradition that were formally trained for opposing the system, but now have gone rampant on their own in use of power and exploitation of the natural resources of the area. This is what gives further ground to neocolonial concept and accelerates the already worse social and political scenario.

The story of Sierra Leone, one of the world’s least developed nations is similar to that of “third stage capitalism” according to Frederic Jameson (2). Jameson periodizes the history of capitalism by linking different cultural styles to different stages of capitalist development. He opines that there are various stages of capitalism. According to him, its features are associated with cultural levels, as:

Realism, modernism, postmodernism are the cultural levels of
market capitalism, monopoly capitalism, and multinational

capitalism. Nevertheless, while these cultural levels, they are dialectically related to the particular capitalist economic organization of their time. They are distinct logics in their own right. (4)

In order to develop his idea of cultural level of capitalism, he attempts to show how postmodernism, though it originated in opposition to modernism, has evolved into various stages.

The cultural notion of capitalism is associated with influence the capitalist impose on third world nations. In most developing nations, the First World players are free to set the rules for the economic game and even redefine the existing cultural and social norms. There is some agreement that the older modernism functioned against its society in ways which are variously described as critical, negative, subversive, opposition and the like. It is seen that there is a way in which neo-colonialism replicates or reproduces and reinforces the logic of consumer capitalism. As such, there is a significant question, whether there is also a way in which the colonial subject is allowed to work and make decision on their own.

This debate whether the local denizens are involved in decision making or not is one of the most contested issues in concern to expansion of neo-capitalism. Depiction of Captain Poison as the head of air strike bureau in Sierra Leone shows the presence of Western power in influential position in third world country. This further shows the importance of West in major decision making position of the developing nations. The neo-capitalists when providing aid to the developing economies, they generally remain at the helm of the social, political and economic activities. This is one of the open secrets of neo-capitalists. In fact, this is a form of modern colonialism where the imperial powers are still ruling, though not

physically but mentally.

According to John W. Cell, “colonialism is one country’s domination of another country people usually achieved through aggressive, often military action – and the territory acquired in this manner” (*Microsoft Encarta DVD 2008*). The terms colonialism and imperialism are sometimes used interchangeably, but scholars usually distinguish between the two, reserving colonialism for instances where one country assumes political control over another and using imperialism more broadly to refer to political or economic control exercised either formally or informally.

A colony of exploitation had an economy based on products of the labor of local inhabitants, working either on their own land or on plantations. These colonies usually produced cash crops such as spices, cotton, palm oil, or rubber. Colonies of exploitation included Indonesia and Malaya in Southeast Asia, and Nigeria and Ghana in West Africa.

Complete innocence describes the hero to be dignified, because of their innocence. Their pride and strength is overpowered by something they cannot control. In the movie *Blood Diamond*, Solomon walks his son to school. It is the remnant of the ideal world far from the madding crowd of capitalistic desire. He wants his “son to be a doctor” which seems a distant dream in the circumstances in which he is brought up. However, Solomon is a father and he has every right to dream for a good future to his. This is the depiction of typically ideal way to show complete innocence in a land marred by violence and internal conflict. This is a perfect showing of father/son relationship before all the rebels came.

With this scene showing a father and his son sharing a joke on the way from the school to home, director is portraying the lost arcadia of humane relationship. When young and innocent people first encounter realities of adulthood it is known as

inexperience. A central character will live so the action closes with an adjustment to mature experience. In the movie when Danny was young he was brought up believing that the war was just about fighting against communism. However, Danny has now discovered that the conflicts are neither for communism or justice, but for oil or diamonds. It is the capitalist desire that rules the reason for war rather than the notion of providing justice to the meek, weak and the deprived ones. When Danny goes to see his friend, Colonel who is one of the sources of diamond smugglers from Africa to the market in Europe and America, he seems to have attained maturity. He realizes that he is mere a commodity raised by the capitalists to ferry the wishes of these capitalists. Danny is mere a means of transport of ferrying diamonds out of this war-torn nation, Sierra Leone.

The movie, *Blood Diamond* initially features an idealist world which is free of the Western influence and people still believe in small dreams. The fisherman Solomon Vandy preserves a small dream of rearing his family, making his big son into a doctor, and such. He is a humble fisherman, until the tragedy occurs in the form of RUF coming to the village. The members of RUF are famous for amputating the villagers and abducting young boys who are later brainwashed and made to work for them.

Blood Diamond is an attempt to show that within humanity there is moral fiber which stands above greed of monetary gain and accumulation of power through economic activities. In the ground reality and experience, it is the humane aspect that sells over the material prospects. In order to substantiate his claim, Zwick is weaving a portrait depicting the methods in which these stones are attained. Wrapping all the bloodshed and pain into one neat package, presented for the rest of Hollywood's elite

to wallow in. They will in turn rally by his side, proclaiming that they will no longer wear diamonds, along with the previously banished furs and animal vivisection.

As such, *Blood Diamond* is a saga surrounding the moral challenge of the international gem trade. Based in Sierra Leone, Africa, in 1999, it depicts the story of two mercenaries fighting to locate a rare blood diamond the size of a golf ball. The local region, engulfed in a civil war between the government and the RUF, is a backdrop for indiscriminate torture and murder, all propagated by the illegal diamond market. It recruits young soldiers are army men and use them in mining and, even killing and torturing the tribal people.

Blood Diamond portrays Africa as the most violent, scary, and apocalyptic hell on earth, teeming with tribal rivalries, unimaginable atrocities, genocide, murderous dictators, poverty, disease, corrupt governments, and children transformed into brutal, stoned killers. The movie is an action-adventure thriller set in the greed-ridden and dangerous world of South African gold mining also features a story of capitalist villainy. An international syndicate plots to flood a gold mine in South Africa thus forcing up the price of the precious commodity on the world gold markets.

In the context, the role played by famous Hollywood hero, Leonardo DiCaprio depicts the intention of the West. He is a missionary actor whose sole intention is to smuggle diamond out of this fragile nation. He can go to any extent for the case of obtaining gold. His intentions are very clear, as he has hired a friend to take him off the land, once he own diamond. His friend owns a helicopter that has permission to fly within this nation, all time round the clock. The character of DiCaprio, Danny Archer is person who loves adventure and is in greed of violence to obtain power. His parents have died, when he was still a boy and, now the Western Army has reared him to go to any extent for acquiring money and power.

Mr. Archer in the movie represent the Western intention of greed, adventure, action, violence, evil international cartels, love-interests, black-white buddies and many more. His actions are volatile to the fact that the West can do any act to obtain absolute hierarchy over the West. They are also well intentioned about showing how Africa's mineral resources are exploited and used for the benefit of the developed world. *Blood Diamond* uses a little guilt trip political message, while diamond ignores the grim realities of mine life and glosses over the white-black relationships in apartheid South Africa.

There is a symbolic resonance given to African blood in the soil. Indeed Solomon dons suit and tie, and with Maddy's help becomes a poster boy for conflict diamonds with the international diamond cartel, and presumably buys a flat in London. Also Archer tells Maddy that his parents were brutally murdered during the war for African liberation in Rhodesia, perhaps explaining his nasty disposition exhibited in the early parts of the film. At one point, Vandy wonders about whether his country would have been better off if whites still ruled. Not a very sophisticated way of looking at the decades of colonial rule in Africa. However, Mr. Vandy's notion is typical of African dream who still take the Westerners as their messiah. But, he hardly knows that these messiahs are still acting beyond the curtain to destroy, Sierra Leone, the once paradise.

Many characters are shown working behind the curtain to make sure things do not remain good in Sierra Leone. The diamond traders in Europe are obviously not taking role as a responsible citizen of the so-called developed society. Similarly, in the beginning of the movie, probably an international committee is shown active in conference in regards to the poor situation of the Africans working in diamond mine and others ravaged by the brutal violence. However, things are not as intensely taken,

as should have been. It is revealed that two gentlemen who are initially shown as providing donations to war ravaged nation are the ones who are exporting diamonds from the war torn nation. They are the ones who are enticing war torn under developed nations into the land of blood and violence.

This shows the true nature of neo-capitalists. These traders are mere representatives of such capitalists who are engaged in exploring maximum advantage from the resources of the third world nations. This reality is one of the bitter realities; however, is the most pertinent issues as far as the nature of neo-capitalists is concerned. There can be hardly any businessmen who are working for charity. When they claim to have donated certain amount or goods to a certain community or nation, they are also the ones who make sure that the return comes to them, in or the other way.

Then on other hand, *Blood Diamond* also contains these elements that are unrealistic if not downright silly. First of all, the lead characters seem bullet proof. And then there is the scene where Maddy disarms the Kamajor, a warrior sect of the Mende tribe, characterized by animist beliefs and superstition, by posing for photographs with them. She reminds of the fact that the White skin holds the charm and is at the centre of attraction even during the insurgency.

Sierra Leone is marred by internal conflict between the government and insurgent forces fighting to lay their claim over the diamond fields scattered over the Northern part of this fragile nation. The movie revolves round three major characters; Danny Archer, a mercenary raised smuggler of diamond and arms, Solomon Vandy a local fisherman and a Western based journalist, Mandy. When Archer is a machinery tool used by the Western forces to gain over the mines, Solomon is a humble family man who wants a simple but meaningful life to his wife and three children. The plot

of the movie accelerates when, one day these two men meet and venture into the journey of retrieving a precious diamond. However, within this journey there are several stakeholders who are laying their claim on the precious stone – the largest diamond, said to be retrieved from the mines.

In the process, Edward lays bare the mentality of the Westerners who are directly or indirectly playing a role in exploiting the natural resources and beauty of, Sierra Leone, once the paradise of Africa.

Neo-colonialism has its foundations on such principles as a faith in progress and the belief that the world can and ought to be changed by human reason. These beliefs were thought to be universally applicable and totally compatible. Therefore the modern theory built upon the foundations of Reason was not conceived as limited to a particular context or set of conditions but applicable to all people at all times. As such, the process of modernity can be seen both as an economic change resulting from the Industrial Revolution and an ideological change resulting from the French Revolution.

Practically, neo-capitalism has its root in modernity which can be seen as embodying socialism and liberal democracy as the two competing systems of state control. Progress was not only a theoretical ideal but the factories of the Industrial Revolution led to mass production and mass consumption delineating an advancing economic setting. Society began to conquer and control its resources, manipulate and outline its destiny and create a world mastered by humans.

A Neo-capitalist utopia would also have a functioning system of direct democracy, where the state would be partitioned into small administrative units, consisting of a single village or city district; people of those administrative units could meet and decide local policy together.

Modern neo-capitalists advocate the use of technology, such as a direct computer connection, allowing all citizens of a nation state to attend the same meeting, thus participating in policy creation on the state level. Other neo-capitalists suggest that shares of the state would be sold just as stocks or shares of companies are. They argue that the state would thus be in capable hands, and those who were disinterested in ruling, incapable of ruling, or financially indigent would not. At the onset, all would be given an equal share. Under the tenets of neo-capitalism, there would be no taxes and hence no profits of ruling the state, and therefore shares wouldn't be needed or of any value.

Criminals would be tried by the citizens of the administrative unit where the alleged crime was perpetrated, assisted by the unit of the victim(s). Civil order would be kept by the people themselves, who would be armed. In territories and companies needing additional security mercenary security could be hired from private security agencies.

Neo-capitalism is more or less implemented and still exists in Free Lithuania. There are neo-capitalist parties in other states too, but they are usually considered radical, and minorities. While the critics of neo-capitalism are unable to completely denounce the possibility of a neo-capitalist society they claim that neo-capitalist society is only possible where there is egalitarianism that is hardly changeable (due to such things as climate, lack of foreign relations or natural resources). Also a united political opinion and isolation are sometimes considered a prerequisite for a functioning neo-capitalist society by them. They claim that in case egalitarianism would be challenged in a neo-capitalist market more capable people would accumulate wealth while without social guarantees the remaining people would starve and as they would be larger in numbers they would destroy neo-capitalism.

Proponents of neo-capitalism denounce such claims by noting that a neo-capitalist society would itself remove people incapable of contributing by such means as expulsion. In a complete neo-capitalism which is not yet implemented anywhere in the country would be owned by shareholders. This notion would be a natural process as ones who would be unwilling to live in the society would sell their shares and move elsewhere for the money received, whereas the shares would be bought by those willing to live in the society. Hence this is the safeguarding of a uniform positive opinion on neo-capitalism within the society.

Critics see neo-capitalism as an impossible utopist doctrine, and say that in practice it would become immediately corrupt. Some neo-capitalist proponents agree with this criticism and suggest the creation of various systems to avoid corruption. Several versions of these suggestions exist. Critics suggest that such a system would create huge disparities, ballooning the number of poor persons. Another frequent complaint is that such a state without an army would be quickly occupied by other surrounding states. Proponents counter that with an armed populace, such invasion would be easily deterred.

Neocolonialism is a term used by post-colonial critics of developed countries' involvement in the developing world. This is in simple understanding a way through which the First World (developed) nations interfere into the social, political and economic affairs of the Third World (underdeveloped) nations. Writings within the theoretical framework of neocolonialism argue that existing or past international economic arrangements created by former colonial powers were or are used to maintain control of their former colonies and dependencies after the colonial independence movements of the post – Second World War period.

Critics adherent to neocolonialism contend that multinational corporations continue to exploit the resources of post-colonial states, and that this economic control inherent to neocolonialism is akin to the classical, European colonialism practiced from the 16th to the 20th centuries. In broader usage, neocolonialism may simply refer to the involvement of powerful countries in the affairs of less powerful countries; this is especially relevant in modern Latin America. In this sense, neocolonialism implies a form of contemporary, economic imperialism to which powerful nations behave like colonial powers of imperialism, and that this behavior is likened to colonialism in a post-colonial world. It is truer in Indian case, where there was almost two and half century of imperial rule, and the characters in *Blood Diamond* are still under the influence of colonial mentality.

The widening prosperity of Western Europe has altered not only the Continent's face but its mentality as well. This is nowhere truer than in the field of economics, where Europe is witnessing a transformation that ranks in importance with the birth of the Common Market and the march of American firms into Europe. The phenomenon needed a name-and the Italians have given it one.

The era of globalization' is fast becoming the preferred term for describing the current times. Globalization has brought many good things to the world, such as the ability to travel, the wider distribution of educational resources, HIV-AIDS awareness, the use of Internet and other technologies and international sporting competitions just to name a few. However, it also has brought with it some detrimental consequences that have significantly impacted upon the developing world. In the case studies that follow the term 'neocolonialism' (or 'new-colonialism') is used to describe the re-colonization of Africa that is taking place through the 'capitalist market controllers' – namely, the corporations. Historically, when

colonization in Africa took place in the nineteenth century, the colonial powers extracted Africa's precious resources to build up their own empires at the expense of African people. In words of Schraeder, this is possible "through direct colonial rule" and a "policy of divide-and-conquer" (57).

As major corporations continue to carry on their names as traditional household favorites on one side of the world, on the other, hundreds of thousands of West African farmers work hard under the pressure to supply the demand for cheap cocoa, keeping busy around 12 500 child laborers who present signs they have trafficked (Global Exchange 2007).

The root cause of this human rights issue is poverty, and what causes it. It is argued that the farmers of West Africa do not get fair prices for their cocoa, and the problem is that they do not know what the fair prices should be. Rural farms do not have access or understanding of reading the global market prices for their produce, which arguably, often leads to them selling their cocoa far below the fair price, thus giving food conglomerates the upper-hand bargains, as they later can sell their products to consumers at prices that are attractive and cheap. This is where supporting fair trade initiatives can play an important role. Often, the chocolate found on supermarket shelves is a result of these unfair trade prices, which keep cocoa farmers poor and needing to cut costs, and this has left some of them resorting to buying children and forcing them to work to keep up with Western demand.

The plot of the movie develops through Danny Archer played by Leonardo de Caprio in the lead role. Archer is a man with strong survival instinct, and has made himself a key player in the business of conflict diamonds. Political unrest is rampant in Sierra Leone as people fight tooth for tooth. Upon meeting Solomon Mandy, a victim of conflict and the beautiful Maddy, a reporter to a Western based news media,

Archer's life changes forever. Amid these developments, luck provides him with a chance to make peace with his past in the form of arrival of Solomon, the fisherman.

Solomon has his own dreams. He wants to make his eldest son Dia Vandy, a doctor. His dreams are shattered when the rebels invade his village and kidnap him to work in the diamond mines. Solomon finds a huge pink diamond and while hiding it, the commandant of the rebels sees, but the rebels are attacked and Salomon is arrested by the government army. While in jail, the wounded commandant tell the prisoners that Salomon found the stone, and the mercenary smuggler Danny Archer from Zimbabwe releases Salomon and proposes to exchange the diamond by his missing family. Using the idealistic American journalist Maddy Bowen, Danny locates the wife and daughters of Salomon in a refugee camp, but is informed that his son has been recruited by the rebels. Salomon and Danny consolidate a partnership, with Salomon looking for and finding his son, and Danny looking for the diamond and finding redemption.

According to Kwame Nkrumah in *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, the term neocolonialism is a trend of modern capitalist market policy of the previously colonized nations. It is a scenario where foreign powers continue to make an impact in the social and political scenario of the nation, through the economic powers. About neocolonialism, Nkrumah argues:

It is a combination of critique of current actual colonialism where some states continue administrating foreign territories and their populations in violation of United Nations resolutions and a critique of the involvement of modern capitalist businesses and entrepreneurship in nations which were former colonies. (47)

So, it is a scenario where the indirect presence of a body and power control the far away land – a sort of indirect imperialism.

More than three decades after most African nations became independent there is no consensus on the legacy of colonialism. With most African countries still only tottering on their feet and many close to collapse, some people ask whether the problem is due to Africa's colonial experience or inherent inadequacies of the African? For apologists of colonialism the answer is simple. Whatever may have been the shortcomings of colonial rule, the overall effect was positive for Africa. Sure, the colonial powers exploited Africa's natural resources but on the balance, colonialism reduced the economic gap between Africa and the West, the apologists argue. Colonialism laid the seeds of the intellectual and material development in Africans.

However, it is also responsible for bringing enlightenment where there was ignorance. It suppressed slavery and other barbaric practices such as pagan worship and cannibalism. Formal education and modern medicine were brought to people who had limited understanding or control of their physical environment. The introduction of modern communications, exportable agricultural crops and some new industries provided a foundation for economic development. Africans received new and more efficient forms of political and economic organization. Warring communities were united into modern nation-states with greater opportunity of survival in a competitive world than the numerous mini entities that existed before. Africa is in political and economic turmoil today, defenders of imperialism say, because it failed to take advantage of its inheritance from colonial rule. It was, they summarize, Africa's inadequacies that made colonisation necessary and the outcome of post-independence self-rule suggests that the withdrawal by the colonial powers was premature.

Critics of colonialism dismiss such arguments as racists. They maintain that colonial rule left Africans poorer than they were before it began. Not only were African labor and resources super-exploited, the continent's capacity to develop was undermined. Guyanese historian Walter Rodney in his book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* contends that under colonialism the only thing that developed were dependency and underdevelopment. As far as Rodney and other critics was concerned "The only positive development in colonialism was when it ended" (53). Under imperial rule African economies were structured to be permanently dependent on Western nations. They were consigned the role of producers of primary products for processing in the West. The terms of trade in the western controlled international market discriminated against African nations who are unable to earn enough to develop their economies. Poor economy is one of the central causes of ill-happenings in Sierra Leone, as most youths are in the vicious circle of poverty and lack of opportunities.

This is a powerful message, sent to an audience of millions, which has monetary and socio-political implications worldwide. Unlike the cave painters of Lascaux or the hieroglyphic pictographs of Mesopotamia, this message will be heard by many, not just idle passersby. This new art form, the Hollywood movie, compared to methods used in the past to depict the message of its author, is dynamic in its theme and presentation. Never before has there been such a way to convey the aspect of human emotion; all previous attempts seem mono-dimensional at best. The new multi-dimensional aspects of film, allow the audience to see facial expression and hear vocal conversation; all while being surrounded by the interactions of the world around them. If the humanistic tradition is our cultural legacy then the diamond trade would not have invited such fury over its business, inviting bloodshed in Sierra Leone

which is in fact the Western's idea of creating a state of insurgency and making their ends meet.

The movie is set against the backdrop of civil war in Sierra Leone which lasted from 1991 up to 2000 between the government and the RUF over control of the nation's diamond mines. Conflict with the RUF arose because multinational organizations operating in Sierra Leone are not investing their profits into the local economy, thereby starving it of development. The RUF come to terrorize the local population, especially in rural areas to make the selfish ends meet of some people. The RUF were notorious for amputating villagers and recruiting young boys as soldiers, as one of the victims is Dia, son of Solomon.

The use of the term, neocolonialism, is one such manifestation of this ongoing nature of imperialism. Yet it is in itself extremely contentious because it is multifaceted and loosely used, is often used as a synonym for contemporary forms of imperialism, and in a polemical way is used in reaction to any unjust and oppressive expression of Western political power. Lying underneath all these various meanings of neocolonialism is a tacit understanding that colonialism should be seen as something more than the formal occupation and control of territories by a Western metropolis. Hence while formal methods of control like the implementation of administrative structures, the stationing of military forces, and most importantly the incorporation of the natives as subjects of the metropolitan government, neocolonialism suggests an indirect form of control through economic and cultural dependence. In this case neocolonialism describes the continued control of former colonies through ruling native elites compliant with neocolonial powers, populations that are exploited for their labor and resources in order to feed an insatiable appetite for finished physical or cultural commodities made by the metropole.

In disrupting pre-colonial political systems that worked for Africans and imposing alien models, colonialism laid the seeds of political crisis, say its critics. By redrawing of the map of Africa, throwing diverse people together without consideration for established borders, ethnic conflicts were created that are now destabilizing the continent. The new nation-states were artificial and many were too small to be viable. Less than a third of the countries in Africa have populations of more than 10 million. Nigeria, the major exception to this, was imbued with ingredients for its self-destruction. Western multi-party democracy imposed by colonial powers polarized African ethnic groups into several conflicts and chaos. "It was the introduction of party politics by colonial administration that set off the fire of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria," wrote one Itodo Ojobo in the New Nigerian newspaper in 1986 (7). The scenario was the concept of democratic freedom rose voices of several derailed and subaltern groups, all at a time inviting violent conflict in the continent, almost a similar case in former Asian colonies, as well.

It is difficult to give an objective balance sheet on colonialism. Those who contend that it made no positive impact are as dogmatic as those who present it as the salvation of Africa. What is unequivocal is that it was an imposition of alien rule. Whatever may have been its pluses and minuses, colonialism was a dictatorial regime that denied peoples' right of self determination. It brought death, pain and humiliation to millions of its victims. The notion that colonialism was a civilizing mission is a myth - the system was propelled by Europe's economic and political self-interest. However, to meet their economic and administrative needs colonial powers built some infrastructure, like railway to carry export commodities, and they educated a few Africans to help them run the colonies. But nowhere in Africa were positive contributions made to any substantial extent. Countries like Nigeria and

Ghana, which were among the better endowed colonies were left with only a few rail lines, rudimentary infrastructure and a few thousand graduates. This was better than others. For instance, the Portuguese left their colonies with very little. At independence in 1975, Mozambique had only three dozen graduates.

Danny Archer is an ex-mercenary from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and an independent contractor trading in conflict diamonds. Danny's former mentor - Colonel Coetzee employs the street smart but recalcitrant ex-mercenary to deliver arms to rebel groups, and to cross over borders into Liberia with contraband diamonds. Like all other fortune hunters – Danny is trying for a big score to escape away from the troubles of Africa and into a life of comfort. In the beginning of the story Danny is caught trying to smuggle diamonds, which are confiscated by the authorities. It becomes his responsibility to repay his principal for the lost diamonds.

On the other hand, Solomon Vandy is a proud father of two and a fisherman in Sierra Leone. His world is turned upside down when his village is attacked by the (RUF) militia and he is separated from his family and taken to mine for diamonds. He doesn't know that his captors have recruited his young son into their army. Theft is rampant in the diamond mines despite punishment upon discovery being fatal. However Solomon manages to hide a rare pink diamond. Before he can think about what to do about it, government forces raid the mine and throw the RUF along with their slave miners into a prison in Freetown (the capital of Sierra Leone) in the same prison in which Danny is also imprisoned for offence of smuggling. Captain Poison of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) knows Solomon's secret and lets him out in the prison.

Once out of prison Archer tracks down Solomon and offers a deal but Solomon is only interested in reuniting with his family. After a tough sell he agrees to

show Archer where the diamond is but only after he has his family with him. Archer's attempts at locating Solomon's family fail and he has to end up recruiting journalist Maddy Bowen who until recently he tried hard to avoid. He agrees to give her inside scoop on the illegal diamond trade that she is researching if she helps track down Solomon's family. Maddy is initially unaware of the diamond factor in the deal.

Solomon is reunited with his wife and daughter at a refugee camp, but is driven to rage and depression when he learns of his son, Dia's fate. Determined not to lose his son, he tries all desperate means available to him along the route to the diamond that he must now show Archer. This journey turns out to be an adventure for all as they encounter local tribes, the RUF and Colonel Coetzee - each with a singular objective.

The rise of conflict is largely due to the legacies left by the colonial power. If the legacies of the different colonial powers are to be rated by Africans, the greatest amount of western culture is seen transferred to the colonies. It is impossible to say what would have been the shape of contemporary African history had colonial rule never taken place. Some Western historians have argued that most less developed regions of the world, particularly Africa, lacked the social and economic organization to transform themselves into modern states able to develop into advanced economies. According to Cambridge historian D. K. Fieldhouse "If they had not become European possessions the majority would probably have remained very much as they were" (98).

However, African nationalists dismiss this claim. Many differ to this opinion that Africa could not have developed without colonialism. A simple example of this would be, if without a colonial history nations would not develop, then there is something wrong with the rest of world which developed without it. Africans point

out that Japan, China and parts of Southeast Asia were never colonized, yet they are today major world economies. These countries, however, had certain attributes in the nineteenth century that enabled them to adapt more easily to modernization than might have traditional African societies in the same period. The Asian nations had more educated labor force and were technologically more advanced than those of the Africans. Most importantly, their ruling classes were more ideologically committed to social progress and economic development.

It is a presumption that neo-colonization is desirable. Pre-colonial African societies were materially less developed than societies in other regions of the world, but they were no less balanced and self-contained than any elsewhere. Africans were no less happy or felt less accomplished than Europeans or Japanese. So, the fact that western society is more complex than traditional African society does not necessarily mean that it is better. Complexity does not equal human progress.

On the other hand, there could be claims that had Africa not been colonized, the likelihood is that its elites would still want to consume the products and services of western industrial nations. Thus, the trend of colonization of the third world subject would still prevail. It is unlikely that African chiefs and traders would have been content with the simplicity of communal life to shut off their communities from Western advances. If during the slave trade, rulers and traders happily waged wars and sold fellow humans to buy beads, guns and second-hand hats, one can only imagine what they would have done if faced with offers of cars, televisions, McDonalds etc. Undoubtedly, without colonization African societies would still have sought industrialization and western type modernization, as have peoples in virtually every other region in the world.

Moreover, the development of print and visual media has largely made the world a small place to live in. As such, with or without colonization, the capitalists would still have continued to rule this world. As such, there could be no basis to assume that Africans would have independently developed electricity, the motor engine and other products of advanced technologies; it is fair to suppose that if Africa had not been colonized it would today still have to grapple with problems of economic development. Africa would have needed to import western technology and therefore would have had to export something to pay for it. Like other pre-industrial societies, African nations would invariably have had to trade minerals and agricultural commodities for western manufactures. So Africa's position in the international economy, particularly as a producer of primary products for industrialized countries, should not be blamed solely on colonialism. It is largely a function of unequal development.

Particularly, in the concept, it is Nkrumah sought to develop the idea of imperialism advanced by Lenin in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. In this case it makes no sense to claim that imperialism sustains itself because of the continued lust for power after power but that there exists a higher logic driven on by capitalism and the never ending need of accumulation and production, now sustained on a global scale. Nkrumah picks up on these Marxist themes by noting how capitalism and its problems (like class conflict) occurring at the metropolitan centers become transferred onto the peripheries.

Apart from Nkrumah, the idea of neocolonialism has also been used in other contexts. Robert Young, for instance, sees neocolonialism as being advanced first through "development and dependency theory" and then through "critical development theory" (49). At issue in development and dependency theory is the

difficulty for the Third World states in escaping from the Western notion of development.

Similarly, classification, economic growths are the ways of economic output measured. They are progressive linear model of development have been so deeply entrenched that neocolonized states have no other recourse but to be part of that system. Consequently dependency theorists depict a world made up of developmental inequities, noting that metropolitan centers, in seeking to be even more developed, "under-develop" the peripheries through trade exploitation. More recently critical development theory goes beyond its predecessor because the notion of neocolonial actions in the periphery cannot be so easily explained, especially with the economic successes of Asia. In this regard development can no longer be theorized in purely economic terms but has to incorporate other dimensions like culture, gender, society and politics as well.

In some circles, neo-capitalism is seen as similar to anarchism, although in practice the two are quite different. Neo-capitalism, according to its supporters, should be implemented in several stages - gradually - rather than all at once. They recommend privatizing various institutions. For instance, at the first stages of the implementation of neo-capitalism, Education and Medical Sectors should be privatized if they aren't already; in the next stage - roads and highways, in the latter stages more and more functions of the police would be given to private security agencies, the police becoming a supervisory agency of the security agencies themselves, and so on.

In variations of critical development theory like post-development theory, Young asserts that there has been a movement towards popular development. This is the empowerment of usually non-governmental, civil actors to address fundamental

human needs, hence an emphasis on sustainable development, self-reliance, and “cultural pluralism and rights” (55). A number of post-development theorists have even advocated development outside the framework of the Enlightenment logic and by so doing look towards postcolonial politics as the future direction development theory could take. It is at this juncture that Young notes the potential convergence between developmental theory and post-colonialism.

One of the best examples of existence of colonial power can be taken for nations of Africa. The implication is that western powers still control African nations whose rulers are either willing puppets or involuntary subordinate of these powers. The economic theories supporting the neo-colonialism concept come from the dependency school developed in the late 1950s due to apply here. It was initially thought that independence would free them from the colonial lords, but things have gone even worse when there are new lords taking over the old ones. As witnessed in the form of civil war in many of the South African nations that are ravaged by the struggle for attempt to colonize these nations through material possession.

The ending of colonial rule centre would not permit the underdeveloped and recently independent nations to achieve development. As such, the most important thing is to give away with the colonial mentality that exists in the form of economic, social and political domination. As rightly commented by Said, these nations are ‘satellite nations’ because they continue to be ruled and dominated by the external forces, and there will never be any true independence of the nations.

As such, *Blood Diamond* is a saga of bloodshed and chaos invited on the ‘satellite nation’ by the notion of neo-capitalism. This is rampant exercise of power by the capitalist nations on the developing economy of third world nations.

III. Exposition of Neo-colonialist Interest

Blood Diamond is a saga exploitation of the natural resources of the developing economies by the neo-capitalists. Capitalists are people whose central vision has always been to amass wealth. So, they sell dreams in a developing nation and supply their products, and of course the outcome is economic boosting of the investors. In the process, it is often seen that many nations have entered into a vicious circle of conflict and chaos. In the process, *Blood Diamond* depicts the fall of a nation, Sierra Leone because it has been the playground of the Westerner capitalists. They are the ones who supply arms and ammunition to the insurgents, because simply the government does provide them and they are not able to make them on their own. So, the zeal for money ravages the nation into political instability and civil war.

Most of developing nations like Sierra Leone are the victims of rampant foreign investment. The foreign investors often have a vested interest. In the case of Sierra Leone, the target of the westerners is diamond. They want to capture and smuggle as much diamond, as they can to the European market. However, in the entire process, the government is often left with no proper clue to handle the crisis invited by excessive of capitalists entering to the nation. And, when these investors have entered to the nation, they manipulate the government to take steps and policies according to the interests of these capitalists.

One of the bitter facts about the neo-capitalists is they Largely due to the fact that there is rampant access of the capitalists who in the name of empowering the public are exploiting such nations. One of the bitter realities in such cases is the poor economies have to depend largely to the investments coming from capitalists; however, they soon take a different turn and, the natural resources are the first stake of exploitation by these neo-capitalists.

Then there are characters like Danny Archer who is a tool of the economic power who is a weapon being used by these capitalists to make their ends meet. They are mere a weapon to ferry diamond out of the war ravaged nations, and bring in weapons to the nation. This in turn leaves the nation in a vicious circle of never ending conflict and, it is the simple people who are its victim. Thus, it is clear that in the game of economic power there are manipulations on the government policies and the general public of the developing nations are its immediate victim.

Similarly, characters like Solomon Vandy stands in representation of exploitation being carried on them in an indirect manner. His simpleton life and dream is shattered by the insurgents and their gun. His son, Dia becomes one of their child soldiers. Young boys are often brainwashed by the leaders of the insurgent groups and made to take part in such wars which basically will empower some rich bureaucrats in far away Western land. This is a tragic irony on the people of the third world nations because the capitalists are playing harsh on innocent dreams of the local people of these nations.

The general public becomes an easy victim in the clash between the government and the capitalists. In the name of economic empowerment, the public are often the first victims, as they are the ones to be victimized. Similarly, the economic resources of the Third world country are also the target of these new capitalists who take everything for granted, condition they have money to buy or exploit them. In this course, poor people are often exploited and their dreams are shattered. They are left in lurch of never ending social and political chaos. The development dreams provided by the new capitalists are often a maze inviting further problems to people and government of the developing economies.

As such, Edward Zwick's *Blood Diamond* is the story of blood-drenched diamonds because many of the local tribal leaders are using the local people in diamond mines without minimum facilities, and often are amputated once the diamond is obtained. Similarly, villages and communities are in the verge of being extinct because they are gathered to work in diamond mines. In fact, everything in Sierra Leone seems to be centered in the mines, and the diamonds. From smugglers like Danny to insurgent leaders and local and humble general public like Solomon are a part of this vicious circle of violence and killings. Thus, *Blood Diamond* depicts the reality of neo-capitalists coming to the developing nations, and also inviting with them the loss of dreams and life of innocent people.

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