

Ideologies' Role in Africa's Political Underdevelopment

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Abstract

Ideology is the theoretical and practical mirror through which the society is viewed. It gives social, political and economic direction to governments and their policy makers. But a particular ideology could be of disservice to a particular people at a particular time. And in the African situation, some ideologies, instead of serving the good of the black people, were rather promoting underdevelopment and divisions among the people. Africa, naturally had an ideology, namely Conceptual democracy, but which has been substituted by those that played negative roles in Africa's political development namely: leftist, Rightist, Center leftist and Center rightist ideologies. All these are examined peri-pasu, the Third-way theory, which this paper believes is serving the end of neocolonialism. The objective of this article is to critically examine the roles of different ideologies and classes in the Africa's political underdevelopment. We shall examine the collapse of consensual democracy and review the roles of the rightist, leftist, centre leftist, centre rightist ideologies in the underdevelopment of Africa. We shall take a critically look on the Third way theory.

The collapse of consensual democracy

African nations are going through crises. This is because a lot of values have been lost and a lot of civilizations in governance, economics, agriculture and technology have equally been lost and submerged by the flood of westernism and neocolonialism. In the political plane, one of

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the ancient African wisdom in governance is consensual democracy. Democracy by consensus is a variant of democracy and a concept of political governance. If one thinks of Democracy as an ideology, one could be right in the sense that there are variants of it as forms of political cultures. Similarly, it could also pass as a form of governance when viewed as specie of political practice organization and rulership. Consensual democracy is one of the highly retarded ancient African heritages. Its historical and systematic displacement from the political turf is the handiwork of colonialism and the lost of prestige of everything about Africa in place of everything western. Kenneth Kaunda captured this extant knowledge of the African saying: "In our original societies we operated by consensus. An issue was talked out in solemn conclave until such a time as agreement could be achieved" (Wiredu. 1995:57). There are of course necessary questions about the problems of Representative Democracy, about the issue of political instability and ultimately about the destruction of Consensual democracy from the ancient zenith or apex of ethnic or intertribal politics to the lowest level of family meetings or kindred organization. Questions and problems in the indigenous democracy in Africa have resulted in the vacuum of sustainable democracy, worsened by the borrowing of West-minister and American Presidential democracies and the consequent political turmoil on the African continent all of which aide and accentuate African enslavement to the west.

Consensual democracy is a process of settling arguments or disputes without resorting to the classical Greek type of raising of hands or the western modified version of representative or collegiate opinions while reflecting the right, left, centre right and centre left. It is a process of arriving at conclusion or agreement on an issue by compromise on the parts of the parties who have stakes on that question. Consensus is a political game with rules that are based on communalism, good will, conscience and contract. In an African society like the Igbo society, a consensus opinion or candidate is one that has pedigree or antecedent that is not suspicious, in which case there is never a room to doubt its credibility, transparency and openness. An average village or family

meeting illustrates this dynamics of consensual democracy.

Since there is no competitive, elective or representative democracy in the traditional African societies, and since there is no class war among the different segments of the population of ancient African society, the kind of bickering and acrimonies rampant in post colonial Africa was absent. In a family meeting, an issue was debated exhaustively, and was approved or rejected on the basis of what was right or worth doing or appreciated without the recognition of differing voices as it would be the case in a class society or without the autocratic voices of the petty bourgeoisie or bourgeois. In African democracy in action, village elders heave signs of 'Let him go', 'Let him be', and 'He is qualified!' 'It will be the turn of the other next time', 'Let there be peace', and so on. These are declarative phrases and statements that signal consensual democracy in traditional African societies. *Traditional African societies tried eschewed all forms and manifestations of confrontation, conflicts and unhealthy competition because they are inimical to progress and stability.* Any vaunted or haloed position shall definitely reach the turn of qualified persons in space and time. This is the cosmic world view from where consensual democracy derives its strength. The reasons for the subsistence of consensual democracy are metaphysical and moral. There is the believe that the ultimate reality is positive and in here into all existent things on earth just as man as a rational animal is expected to be moral and have moral responsibility to ensure peace and responsibility in the society. Peace and societal stability cannot be sacrificed for conflicts of opposites. There were no class conflicts and no rule of competition as yardstick or determinant of who is who and what. Ascendancy to the rank and files of economic, social, religious and political positions is a function of age, group affiliations and compromise selections. This is the wisdom and civilization of the cradle of mankind, Africa.

But the post colonial Africa is witnessing increasing extinction and dilapidation of the moral and spiritual sustenance of consensual democracy as an ideology and form of governance. First, the erosion of this value system is facilitated by colonialism as a political, social and perhaps religious force as well as global economic alienation engendered by western capitalist

order. Secondly, the poison of false consciousness injected into the minds of the colonized has expedited the retrogressive action in adopting western governance and ideological models at the expense of the indigenous African consensual democratic order. Thirdly the pervading and endemic poverty, greed and corruption among the African people compounded the colonial psychological and social disorder which created chaos, political instability, economic backwardness and wars.

What is the meaning of African freedom or renaissance in the context of a lost democratic value structure? The foundation of African political civilization and its springboard for launching into the mainstream of international diplomacy, trade, investment and finance has been skewed and tilted out of balance. The metaphysical and epistemological foundation of development in science and technology, and which is also that of the philosophy of will enshrined in consensual democracy, has been submerged by alien political culture. Much as we agree that the Western representative democracy has a salient advantage of taking care of the complexity of modern societies, yet it is a linear development from the Western root. Whereas a similar development in Africa could have been better from black root and similarly along black linear growth with only a synthesis, if need be, with the Western, in the neutral and level field of interplay of comity of nations.

However, the concept of Western Democracy is not the problem of Africa *per se*. This is because as a philosophical concept, it is ethnic or race neutral and can subsist in a man in as much as it could be internalized for good. But problem arises when and where there are contradictions in adaptability of concepts and practices. Some of these contradictions surfaces in the conflicts between African model of consensual democracy and the rightist, leftist, centre rightist and centre leftist ideologies. Even more grave is the cankerworm of conflicts that grow within the rank and file of these groups of ideologies and which have prominently remained the cause of conflicts, wars and underdevelopment in Africa. Their ideological roles in African freedom require examination. But Professor Kwasi Wiredu analysis of the African Consensual democracy seems to have posited how the African logically and dialectically escapes the

contradictions and conflicts in belief and disbelief. He says:

.... Decision-making in traditional African life and governance was, as a rule, by consensus.... This is not to say that it was always attained. Nowhere was African society a realm of unbroken harmony. On the contrary, conflicts (including mortal ones) among lineages and ethnic groups and within them were not infrequent. . . . Where there is the will to consensus, dialogue can lead to a willing suspension of disagreement, making possible agreed actions without necessarily agreed notions (Wiredu, 1995:52).

Hence it is imperative to examine how colonial and post-independent Africa is ideologically hamstrung in terms of economic and political independence for neo-colonial and imperialist interest.

The rightist political philosophy

Hardly can you, at any period of African history identify the Right wing political ideologues or actors in the progressive role aimed at Black African emancipation – not even in the struggle for the multiracial democracy in South Africa and the dethronement of apartheid. There were the Right wing politicians, beaurocrats, traditional rulers who preferred and protected the status quo. In the independence struggles in Algeria, Nigeria, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Congo, Uganda and so on, there were elites and monarchs, Emirs and politicians who found the liberation of Black Africa loathsome. The Rightists are the conservatives who detest radical changes of the socio-economic system in which they are involved not so much because they want to protect the internal fabric and value structure of the society but because they have vested interest in the socio-economic formation. "Rightism" is the view to the effect that all attempts to transform societies in accordance with principles (whether they are want-regarding or ideal-regarding principles) are pernicious, dangerous and self defeating at once (Brain Barry, 1965:54).

While the conservatives in the political spectrum of the advanced

and colonial countries want to retain the purity of their national ethos and protect their interests, the conservatives of the colonized societies cared less of their national integrities because of carrot and stick considerations flowing from the system of hunger and colonial mentality. Unlike the conservatives of Britain and United States of America who love their nations to the detriment of any other state, the African nations' conservatives lack commitment and patriotism to their national survival. Unlike the conservatives of the Israeli state who would wish no compromise in the Israel's occupation of West Bank, Mount Sinai and Gaza strip, the average Black African Conservatives would lease off parts of their territories, oil fields, gold mines and other natural resources to the imperialists and neo-colonialists to preserve their vested and selfish but neo-colonial interest. Among the people of Akan, the Yoruba, the Hausa, the Igbo, in the colonial and in neo-colonial times, it was the Conservatives elites that eventually became the nobilities and the well-to-dos and who *ipso-facto* have the capacity and the will to hold back African freedom and emancipation from the clutches of colonialism and neo-colonialism.

The Rightist political philosophy is definitely tangential and contrary to Black liberation as history shows in its political and nationalistic praxis. The British policy of indirect rule in Africa and precisely in Nigeria is a policy of using the Rightists, the so-called Conservatives against the progressives or the radicals to achieve the domination of the people. Its aim was to reach the grass roots, so to say, but with the arms twisting political dishonesty of creating the nobles and the less privileged, the oppressors and the oppressed, the princes and principalities and ultimately divide and rule policy for the sustenance of the colonial interests. Similarly, the French policy of Assimilation was in concept and practices a method of domination via the destruction of the values, pride and authenticity of African people through complicity with the traditional elites otherwise best described as the Conservatives or the Rightist. All in all the inestimable value of African liberation was not familiar or comprehensible to the Rightist politicians and the privileged elite of African societies either now or then. The Rightists or the Conservatives are the comprador appendages and the *parvenu* and *nouveau riches* of western cultural, social and economic

imperialism. They were and are protected by the western imperialist or colonialists. Future is ensured by the colonial power and capital. They and their children were and are the privileged few who received western education and traveled beyond the shores of their countries to the white man's land to obtain the Golden Fleece. With these colonialist made elites and nobilities, the ideology of white superiority was cultivated to the chagrin of African cultured political and economic freedom. So also is the case with the ideology of western values, education, cultures, religions and capitalism.

It is not surprising that in view of the differences in beliefs between the Rightists, mostly the traditional and wealthy elites and progressive radicals and nationalists, there were always conflicts between the goals of the former and the later, which was the emancipation of Africans from the clutches of colonialism. The Rightists who were the kings and the nobility desired the perpetuation of their privileged status through the power of the colonialists. They believed in the traditional system which they were the custodians. If anything could protect and ensure their vested interests and positions in the societies, let that thing be. Colonial powers readily provided these securities through indirect rule and assimilation policy and they were accepted by the nobilities on behalf of the people. Indeed the history and dispositions of the conservatives in political actions and nationalistic and independence struggles coupled with their presumptions shows that the Rightist political philosophy could not and cannot provide the vanguard for African revolution. In the nationalistic struggle for African independence, the Rightists or the Conservatives belonged to the bourgeoisie who scuttle the efforts of the Marxian proletariats and the revolutionary vanguards. They were the exploiters, the capitalists and the slave owners. They surrounded themselves with the immortal auras of gods and sacred cows and acted as intermediary between the people, the rule and the colonialists. In fact the Rightists or the Conservatives saw some similarities between western capitalist philosophy and African traditional capitalist philosophy, which they never hesitated to use in justifying the status quo. The African societies had a pre-capitalist origin. Some of these societies were monarchical and others

were republicans. So, there were inherent the distinctions between classes of the rich, the nobles, the rulers and the less privileged. This was effectively utilized to stave off African revolution through the internal compradors called Rightists or the Conservatives.

In the present day Africa, after colonialism, the right wing political parties and rightist thinking elites and privileged people are the contemporary clog in the wheel of the total liberation of African nation states from the neo-colonial and imperialist capital of the west. Among these classes of individuals who have constituted themselves as appendages to neo-colonial policies are the pro-democracy groups, western installed head of states, business men and organizations with links in the international capitals and other non-governmental groups that are on the payroll of the imperialists and neo-colonialists. In the colonial and imperialist pressures in Africa, the ultimate aim is to make the people ultimately dependent on the West.

The leftist political philosophy

Thus the ideological spectrum could be Communism (or Socialism). This is because the Left is an ideological pole or wing largely noted to be communist and radical in orientation. It is associated with the notions of radical change and revolution. In my university days, that is, the 80s and before it, the leftist students were the radicals, the Marxists and the revolutionaries. They are also identified as such in politics and among the politicians. They are usually armed with Marxist grammar, notions, nuances and idioms. And they are all-knowing. Of all the different shades and arrays of opinions in politics and governance, we might want to know the roles of the left in making Africa develop and free itself from neo-colonialism and imperialism and what the communist could have done towards Pan Africanism in the hay-days of struggle against colonialism. Today, African states are still not free and are characterized by economic, social and political upheavals. The political ideology of the left, the communists, the socialists, and the radicals are still actually existing political variables and determinants. The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles (Lenin 1959: 26) Marx wrote in the

communist manifesto. This is with the exception of primitive community. Engels, the friend of Karl Marx, subsequently said: "Freeman and slave, Patrician and Plebian, Lord and Serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed stood in constant opposition to one another. . ." (Ibid). This conception of history is based on the philosophical outlook of dialectical and historical materialism. Dialectical and historical materialism collectively enables us to increasingly change the world once we have understood the laws of motion which are historically at work in its development. Dialects alert us to the need for change while materialism relates to the importance of bringing this change into line with the objective circumstances which actually prevail.

Armed with dialectical and historical materialism, socialism as a leftist ideological weapon means complete abolition of exploitation of many by man, liquidation of all national and colonial oppression, the struggle against the domination of world capital, the destruction of colonialism, the struggle for the independence of nations oppressed by imperialism. Marxist gospel of humanism is the grounding of all laws, all motions, and the totality of existence in matter. The theory of the primacy of matter as the monistic explanation of all that exists presupposes the equality of man, the inalienability of human right, the meaning of man as end in himself and the historical process as agent of economic and social change in the world of matter.

The Black Africa has come a long way. It is experiencing more instability and dislocation than at any time since the end of colonial rule. It is more than ever tied to the apron string of the neo-colonialists and imperialists. Without any equality with the Whiteman there will be no freedom from the international capital, IMF, Paris Club, World Bank and so on. The reason for the betrayal of Marxism and leftist cause is whereas during the anti-colonial struggle the petty bourgeoisie, as the leading class, had played a progressive role, but later it betrayed the nationalist cause. The petty bourgeoisie accepted a subordinate role to imperialism and neutralized or eliminated Marxists and other leftist wing elements from official arenas. Reactionary regimes have taken control of African geopolitical landscape today with multinational and sub-regional

organizations like the AU, West Africa, East Africa, Southern African and North African sub-regions and Great Lake Region created for the purpose of solving petty squabbles. Frantz Fanon unveiled the true role of the indigenous bourgeoisie in Algeria as an unproductive, parasitic class confined to the role of intermediary between the indigenous people and imperialism. And Amilcar Cabral criticized the post-independence and neo-colonial society of Guinea-Bissau western culture. Yet but the terrorism and violence that has ruled Nigeria since independence and the current killings, maiming and refugee problem in Guinea-Bissau as a result of fighting between Government forces and rebel soldiers have re-echoed Fanon and Cabral. Also there are disparities between rhetorical Marxism and actually existing Marxism. In Senegal, Tunisia, Morocco, Lesotho, Congo, Sudan, South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, Nigerian, Burundi, Sao Tome and Principe, Guinea, Seychelles, Algeria, there were either Communist or Socialist parties but they never went beyond the achievement of independence from colonialism.

For Africans the struggle for emancipation continues against neo-colonialism and imperialism, after emancipation from primitive state and colonialism. These stages of history are characterized by the oppressor and the oppressed. The post-independence neo-colonial era is marked by the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, a necessary and important stage in Marxian historical materialism. The problem of this stage is the class differences which got exacerbated after independence. The bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie are castigated as having betrayed the independence struggle and used their new powers within the state to gather the fruits of political independence and become increasingly comprador appendages of foreign capital. Therefore full blooded leftists had no real basis for an alliance with the bourgeoisie against imperialism. The libertarian left, as a truly communist political ideology would be called, has the problems of actually existed Marxism in the former Soviet Union and the problem of proletarian revolution to confront in the liberation of Africa from the clutches of imperialism and neo-colonialism. The problem of the actually existed Marxism in the former Soviet which is mainly economic shows no promising prospect of the left successfully

championing the economic independence of African states from the international European capital. If the left in Africa cannot establish a classless state and a system of production and distribution where everyone would contribute according to his needs with the means of production and distribution totally under the control of the state, it is hardly possible that Africa can be independent of the international finance capital. The collapse of the Soviet Union and Socio-economic problems in the former communist blocs like Yugoslavia, Cuba, China and so on reveals the problems inherent in the ability of the left to liberate Africa and untie her from the Western economic and capitalist system. Obviously one of the challenges of the left in Africa is an economic one. Without meeting this challenge the western capital will continue to rule Africa. Another problem of the left in Africa is that the expected proletarian revolution is inherent with a lot of problems. There are hardly existing revolutionary proletariats. Instead, what dominates the economic and political scene are the petty bourgeoisie who masquerade as proletariats and who at the slightest opportunity would seize the control of means of productions and distributions for their selfish ends. There is no revolutionary consciousness among the peasants and the working class who are supposed to be the leftists and revolutionaries. The revolutionaries who are more often than the petty bourgeoisie are not really desirous and committed to the liberation of Africa but are looking for ways of replacing the existing capitalist compradors and align themselves with the capitalist order.

However, there is no doubt that the left and Marxist ideological learning contributed a lot to the gaining of African states' independence from the colonial masters. The issue is whether the left still has much to contribute to the liberation of Africa from neo-colonialism and imperialism. However Marxism and leftist ideology would always have insight to the problems of unemployment, hunger, strikes, social stress and political instability. But the problem has always been the so-called proletariat, which is the working class, the peasants, the farmers; whether they are committed to any revolutionary zeal and goal and not to become petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie.

The centre right political philosophy

In the philosophy of African economic and political freedom from neo-colonialism and imperialism, the centre right philosophy shares some ideas with the centre left, that is, social democracy and the extreme right, that is, the conservatives. They agree with the socio-economic ideas of the right that is, maintaining the status quo but would modify them with some measures of reforms to the extent that they would partake in the socio-political ideology of the social democrats, that is, the centre left. Karl Marx or Communist would describe them and the social democrats out rightly as the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeois. The Centre rightists, therefore, were and are not straightforwardly out for full-blown African revolution. The Centre right philosophy is definitely easily amenable to the interest of the imperialists in both socio-economic and political praxis.

Like the centre left, the centre right is a compromised political philosophy. Its relevance to the concept of African liberation is not clear as very often it would be seen to be used as a spring board for the clamor for freedom from imperialism and almost immediately it would be seen to be a tool for the preservation of the status quo. In most cases members of this class ended up as appendages to western imperialism and almost always they end up neither defending their fatherland nor fighting the invaders. Again a clearer picture of the role of the adherents of centre philosophy could hardly be discerned during the struggle for liberation from colonialism. The only thing that can be certain is a judgment that the philosophy was non-existent and that those that could be said to be Centre rightists were at best those playing hide and seek game in the struggle. The colonialists definitely could not utilize them either for the realization of the divide and rule policy or the Assimilation Policy. If the centre right philosophy seemed not to have existed it may probably be because of the people's ignorance of the possibilities of, and or particularly the existent of the relevant political action available in the struggle. It is not ruled out that probably the only political and ideological learning known and articulated among the peasant and elite groups in the traditional Africans societies were the Conservatives (the right) and the social democrats that often pass as the leftist or the revolutionaries. Perhaps, it

is obvious that the Centre right philosophy was not relevantly articulated by the culture, history and people of Africa. Such may have been the reason for the near absence of a clear role of the philosophy and the prevalence of the conflict between the peasants, and the petty bourgeois evidenced in the political and economic behavior of the centre left and the bourgeoisie and implicated in the socio-political and economic behavior of the Rightists or the Conservatives.

In the context of the colonial struggle, the role of the Centre right if articulated would have had some impact. It would have liberalized the conservative philosophy of the Right wing traditional rulers and elites who made the policies of Assimilation and Indirect rule possible. A little departure from conservatism would have made it possible to question some of the policies of the Whiteman. The Centre right philosophy could have been used to educate the public on the need to preserve the authenticity of African culture as well as appropriate the best in western culture for the advancement of African civilization. It should have been a philosophy of emancipation from the primitive, ancestral and unscientific African environment for a better future and scientific advancement. It should have been a philosophy for the education of the people and the peasants on their rights and obligations in the state as well the limit of authority, kinship and the state in governance. In the struggle for independence, all political behaviors and actions, political activists and actors would have had different feelings, attitudes and disposition towards issues, the colonial power and the status quo in different ways. So much so that an x-ray of the political and social spectrum would have revealed those who had centre rightist attitudes in their relation to the authorities and the colonial power. It would not be far from the truth to say that a good number of this Centre rightists were the nationalists and those who desired independence for their countries without much education on the Marxist or liberal capitalist doctrines of the East or West respectively. They may be opposed to the colonial rule and would definitely proclaim pan-Africanism and pursue the cause but only to the extent to which it would affect their material beings. As players of hide and seek game in political actions and nationalistic struggle, they change their ideological

stand very often from the rightist wing to the centre leftist wing just to suit their bread and butter considerations.

As it were in the colonial days, so it is even after independence had been won. There were no clear boundaries among different political and philosophical point of views. The Centre rights, the Rightist, the Centre leftist and the leftist are less distinguishable as the petty bourgeois and the bourgeoisie. The peasants and the working class were not the revolutionary class anticipated to carry out any revolution and if entrusted with leadership could predictably carry out the predestined role of the revolutionary proletariat. The political instability, twist and turns, chaos and violence across the length and breadth of African political landscape are all the inevitable evidence of the vacuum of philosophical and political vision and desirable roles of political and ideological options among the political actors and the intelligentsia in Africa. All analysis of social and ideological options available for the accomplishment of the much historical desired African revolution would show that the Centre right have little or nothing to contribute towards this goal in the present socio-economic world order because an ideological middle road tilting towards the right is as good as yielding to imperialist pressures on Africa.

The centre left philosophy

In the struggle for emancipation from colonial rule, it is not only the ideological left popularly noted as Marxist or communist that held sway in the nationalistic space. There are other contending ideological strands that competed for relevance in the way forward for Africa. Of course, apart from the extreme left, there was and there is the Centre left, popularly identified as Democratic Socialism. The social democrats or members of the centre left in the days of nationalistic struggle were those who wanted to make Scientific socialism or Marxism or Communism relevant to African condition and culture having seen the alien nature of communism, albeit, they were caricatured as reformist by the few who professed to be communists. They were the class of African intellectuals and politicians who were branded the petty bourgeoisie who, though as socialists were on the struggle for independent African states, did not waste time to

reap the benefits of independence by discarding their socialist pretensions for capitalism. However the social democratic philosophy is believed to be amenable to African socialism. And today's Democratic socialism is upheld by its exponents as an alternative to capitalism and socialism and definitely a solution to the recurrent miasma of political and economic instability in Africa.

Centre left political philosophy is encapsulated in "authenticity" or 'humanism' '*Ujamaa*' and 'Negritude' as expounded by Nkrumah, Nyerere and Senghor, respectively, all of them being variants of African socialism. Notwithstanding this fact, the ideological arrow bearer of the Centre left philosophy is democratic socialism borrowed from the philosophy of commercial Kant and Karl Popper as well as the philosophy of historical materialism.

The historical materialist understanding of social development asserts the inevitability of socialism in the sense that it is something automatic and absolutely independent of human activity. They (the democratic socialists) claim that this inevitability leaves no room for conscious activity by the people and excludes freedom and democracy (Gubanov 1980:2).

Indeed it is the pivotal elements of 'people', 'freedom' and 'democracy' that the Centre left or Democratic socialists in African revolution found enticing and congenial to African philosophy and so amenable to the cause of African Revolution.

The Centre left ideologists in African nationalistic struggle and in the liberation from neo-colonialism and imperialism called their ideological philosophy African Democratic Socialism. This is a tacit rejection of scientific socialism and acceptance of European social democratic ideas. At the root of Senghor's concept of African democratic socialism lies the idea of the unacceptability of a scientific class analysis of African reality, in so far as the "exclusiveness" of the 'African individual' and the historical destinies of the African communities make them not susceptible to general historical laws. African socialism or what can be precisely called communalism denies

the class division of society, ascribing to African society on inherent socialist character. Thus it rejects the class struggle and the leading role of the working class and its party in the building of socialism with the peasantry as the chief subject and object of socialist construction. The blend of African democratic socialism is such that it is supposed to be a 'middle way' to capitalism and communism, which is supposed to be a non-Marxist alternative to capitalist development.

But critics of African socialism have observed what amounts to a sell out of African freedom and cause to the west in the context of the ideology. For one thing Senghor's 'middle-way' amounts to a form of capitalism that is decked out in socialist phraseology and based on state control of a mixed economy, which leaves private foreign and national capital untouched. Also in some cases theoretical justification is given for compromise and co-operation with neo-colonialism as well as for a policy of encouraging national capitalist elements. Again Senghor and a number of African leaders favor a one party system with guaranteed democratic freedoms believing that this form of political organization is most suited to Africa, which is not. On the contrary political freedoms were not guaranteed and political stability not achieved. Essentially the African version of democratic socialism is just a variety of national reformism which opposes scientific socialism and has an anticommunist orientation. It is an ideology of the national bourgeoisie which is formed during period of the increasing popularity of socialist ideas. It has been argued that some of the for-sighted African leaders like, Senghor, Kaunda, Nyerere, Awolowo, Azikiwe, and so on renounced overtly bourgeois slogans, took rather the slogans of right-wing social democracy and altered them to suit their tastes. One of the banes of African freedom is the mixture of incompatible concepts and theories. Take for instance, Democratic socialism as applied to Africa, is an unwarranted blend of Democracy and socialism. In the original African political thought, the practice is communalism which defines social and political actions. The idea of democracy in the communalistic set-up is a consensual one, otherwise, called consensual democracy and never Democratic socialism.

It is obvious from the trail and spread of economic and political

instability in Africa, that no where has Democratic socialism contributed in making African nations politically stable and economically buoyant. Just like many theories and ideologies that have been used or proffered as solutions to African predicament, the African version of Democratic socialism which is supposed to be a centre left political philosophy of Democratic Socialism is contrary and never a contradiction to both capitalism and communism. You have in it the bourgeoisie class like in Capitalism and the petty proletariat like in socialism. In African socialism there are so many contradictory ideological elements like the non-revolutionary proletarian class, the bourgeois class and the petty bourgeoisie in the operation of the political economies of the social democratic countries which have weakened their resistance against neo-colonialism and imperialism. It should be noted that Democratic socialists in African politics have not been able to establish or perceive congruence between the market economies of the state and the real political economy of Democratic Socialism or even its equivalence of African Socialism.

The third way theory

Mr. Tony Blair the U.K. Prime Minister and leader of the Labour Party authored socio-economic and political thesis, *The Third Way: New Politics for a New Century*, (Blair, Tony 1998) which is a response to the global financial and socio-economic crises currently rocking Britain and Europe in general. Ideologically it is a pungent, solipsistic and tactical withdrawal for self preservation, soul searching and preparatory for the challenges of the 21st century and the continued domination of the west over the third world.

The socio-economic and political background is arguably the gale and sharp blowing wave of crime, terrorism, unemployment, inflation, budgetary deficit, critical politics in the West and the financial crisis, conflicts and poverty in the third world countries especially in Asia, Russia and Africa. "Global capitalism, whose triumph once seemed inevitable, is in full retreat" (Samuelson 1998:8) says Robert J. Samuelson. The implication of this statement is 'crony' capitalism which prescribes corruption, conflicts and political instability for poor countries in Africa and Asia. The present

financial and banking crisis raging and upstaging the third world countries and Russia is, at least, theoretically and graphically linked to the centre of the global economic system which is Europe and America. What this means, therefore, is that Africa is at the receiving end of crony capitalism and Europe and America are retreating just as the global capitalist system is retreating.

Is history, after all said and done, purposive and dialectical? Is Karl Marx right now in the face of overwhelming evidence of crony capitalism and 'capitalism in retreat' and the response of the *Third Way* Theory. The end of world war brought cancerous but affable and promising values of prosperity and democracy. It became a ready made tool of neo-colonialism in Africa and Asia and weapon of destruction of communism and its effervescence in the former Soviet colonies. Globalization of trade and investment is sold to all former colonies and present neo-colonies as a means of hegemonizing the entire world under the tutelage of the imperial northern Europe and the industrialized nations of seven or ten. The idea was to open up all markets to trades and foreign investments. World trade and investment did indeed surge but without expected consequences. Now markets are being shut resulting in Malaysian and Russian Banking crisis with yet the dormant and non-resilient African markets. Global capitalism is now dialectically restive while destroying the economies of poor countries and inflicting large losses on investors in rich countries. In the current world economic order, therefore, the historical and dialectical thesis is apparent. At the optimum level and maximum utilization of capitalist system, capital flowed freely while optimism and self-deception prevailed even as capital flight and digital inflation ravaged African nations with simultaneous negative indices of socio-economic milieu in the West. While everyone enjoyed profits, there was a suspension of disbelief. Now is the time of reckoning, capital flight has forced most developing countries to have bad choices in economic policies. The explanation for this economic reality is that market capitalism is a set of cultural values that emphasizes virtue of competition, the legitimacy of profit and the value of freedom. But these values are not universally shared. This set of cultural values is that of the West but transplanted to

the consciousness of the African who adulterates it as he tries to make it his own.

The Tony Blair's 'new ideology of European tactical retreat, withdrawal, and eventual re-emergence in a neo-capital offensive and neo-colonialization, I suppose, is a response to the global economic and social changes which, by all standards, is spawned by the knowledge and scientific awareness of the satanic and Lucifer propelled Europe. Capitalism has given Europe a maximum wealth as predicted by Adams Smith. But the current order is an era of diminishing returns which the Third Way of Tony Blair is to contain. Yet the sing song of capitalism is being adumbrated and rehearsed among the elements of British Think Tanks in a manner that affirmed and expressed the ineffable, implacable and self righteous faith of European intelligentsia on the primacy of market economy in world politics, and trade. But European world capitalist system is not an equitable and just system for all the participants in the world trade and diplomatic protocols. It is ravenously partisan and close in motif and motive to the internationally discredited apartheid system in South Africa. So 'Third Way' ideology can only be an answer for European socio-economic problem and the phobia and nightmare to Africa and Third Worlds of 21st century.

It is selfish in origin and ideologically vacuous, and perhaps, it is a ploy by western nations, albeit fabricated by the Britain's Blair, to drain resources of developing countries and prepare them for decolonization. The issue or question of, for whom is 'the Third Way?' exposes the hypocrisy of Britain and her allies. The treatise soared its way into global recognition even as there are steady and orchestrated resource outflow and currency devaluation in Africa as well as the foreign invasion of third world stock markets by multinationals from developed economies under the guise of foreign direct investments. Given the present setting, there is no way the Third Way will respect the African and addresses the improverisation of the African continent. The reality of the present world economic order which stands to contradict the Third Way is 'resource outflows' which subsists under the subterfuge of aid, grants, loans and unfair nature of world trade. Most of the loans are short-term and with

high cost with the result that Africa hardly has the opportunity to device any benefit from these facilities before she starts payment.

The problems with the Third Way theory, is that it cannot solve African economic problems. Firstly, it is not a universally equitable ideology and secondly it is a partisan theory meant for the third face of colonizing the developing world. Ideologically it cannot change a situation where bilateral loans to Africa are tied to purchases from specific donor country that provided the loan, thus making the costs of goods and services purchased much higher than could have been obtained if purchases were made in the open market. The theory cannot address the conditions of African and Third World nations where multilateral loans are accompanied with conditionalities that ensure that companies of African origin, for instance, are rendered ineligible to compete and hence the profits resulting from the use of these loans flow back to the developed countries. However, the Third Way theory is, no doubt, a super welfarist and socialist programme of action to redress the loopholes in capitalism and extreme leftist socialist economy. But it cannot temper with justice a situation where developed countries use all avenues including dumping and market differentiation to undermine African manufacturing industries. At the end most of these enterprises or manufacturing firms are being purchased by foreign multi-nationals. The Third Way, if it is not neo-colonial must be concerned with the plight of Africa which before was a net exporter of food, but now a net importer of food as well as the threat to wipe out African agriculture.

The Third Way should appreciate the fact that it is the assault on the currencies and stock markets of the previously rich nations in East Asia that led to widespread poverty and depressions in those nations. Where before in Africa and Asia there was wealth and plenty, where before in Africa and Asia there was political and social stability, we see today extreme deprivation, turmoil and confusion. Certainly, the Third Way will not and cannot allow a level playing field that will allow for fair competition in all trade without any of the competing interest wearing the banner of developed or developing country. The theory seems to be affirming market economy and denying market society. It is believed to be an

alternative to capitalism. Indeed the cliché “yes to the market economy, no to the market society” exposes the treachery, debauchery, hypocrisy and the dog in manager approach to the problem of capitalism as an unjust economic system. It also shows what the imperial masters intend to do to the ominous and lugubrious nastiness of capitalism, how to escape from it and leave the rest of the world tottering and battered by the phenomenon of capitalist stress in the context of the lopsided world order. The Third Way has ideological and conceptual difficulties which exposes mischievous intent to re-colonize the developing world. Logistically and ideologically speaking market economy means capitalist socio-economic order and none market society means a socialist or communist economy. A welfarist state allows some freedom in the system of production and distribution of goods and right of ownerships in landed and movable properties but does intervene sometimes to cushion any adverse economic weather and bridge the yawning gap between the poor and the rich. If this is what The Third Way theory means then I am suspicious of it because this is the welfarism which Britain and some European countries had been practicing. But Tony Blair says it is a modern Social democracy. To that extent, the Third Way is an embodiment of philosophical and political ambiguity. The traditional African practised Social democracy as communalism while the African nationalists called it Democratic socialism which is a system where the right of ingenuity, achievement and ownership is exercised in the means of production, distribution and consumption; the society bridges the gap between the rich, the privilege and the poor, the less privileged by redistributing the surplus and excess in goods and privileges to the later. This pristine and extant philosophy of the traditional Africa was however eroded by Western colonial capitalism. Now that capitalism is in distress and in a point of diminishing returns, those concerned are revisiting the long neglected natural and African political philosophy of Democratic Communalism or African socialism using the Third Way theory as a subterfuge but which is lacking in originality and at worst conceptually and ideologically confused.

The Third Way according to Tony Blair is the route to renewal and success of modern social democracy. Is it a compromise between the left

and the right? Or is it the centre right or centre left? According to Blair, it seeks to take the essential values of the centre and centre left and apply them to a world of fundamental social and economic change. A combination of the ‘centre’ and ‘centre left’ is sought here, but what is the ‘centre’? Is it the centre right? There is obvious ambiguity. Formal analysis of ideological classes recognizes right, centre right, centre left and left. Or symbolically speaking R, CR, CL, L. “Third Way” introduces another ‘centre’ or C which it seeks to combine with CL (centre left). But C is a strange element in the calculus of ideologies and it serves no clear cut ideological purpose which has not been captured by both CR and CL. C or the Third Way is an intrigue against formal and logical thinking. It calls itself Social democracy or Democratic Socialism. But within the formal categories of ideological beats, R, CR, C and L, Democratic Socialism is encapsulated in CL and CL only. This means the democracy of the centre right (CR) and socialism of the centre left (CL). Therefore, seeking another Social democracy in the centre (C) different from CL (centre left) and CR (centre right) is either mischievous or another imperialist bourgeois capitalism. Is it a fake consciousness designed to hoodwink the entire developing nations and re-colonize them? The purported challenge that this new imperialist theory is targeted to face is a refraction of the existing socio-economic problems of Africa and the Third World in the sense that continued poverty and social seclusion; rising crime; family breakdown; the changing role of women; popular hostility to politics and demands for deeper democratic reform; and a host of environmental and security issues requiring international action are seen as peculiarly African or Asia. The Third Way is an existentialist and selfish doctrine of Europe in the present dispensation. The theoretical and ideological benefits of the Third Way are parasitic of the centre left with the imperial aim of white-washing the liberal pathos and ethics governing the decaying capitalism. Its precepts are repetitively meaningless as it inadvertently affirms the virtues of the centre left. Thus that, “Third Way marks a new departure within the centre left... it draws vitality from uniting the two great streams of left of centre-democratic socialism and liberalism... is neither laissez faire nor one of state interference.... The Third Way means reforming social security

to make it a pathway into work... strives for a new balance between rights and duties... stands for democratic renewal and restoration of faith in politics... (Blair Tony op cit) portrays a mischievous permutation and commutation of the variables of the centre left ideology or the Democratic Socialism to suit the western imperial interest. In German literature, it is called "Neue Mitte". "It is in the Neue Mitte — Third Way, that the mainstream European debate is now taking place".¹⁰ The process of European assault on Africa and Asia has passed through discovery, colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism and now to Re-colonialism in the "Third Way".

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