Decolonization in Africa and Pan-Africanism

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Abstract

This paper critically examines the origin of Pan-Africanism and various decolonization projects to reconstruct African identity and destiny battered by slavery and colonialism and the dynamics of their aftermath. The underlying principle of these celebrated pan africanists is captured in the cliché 'united we stand, divided we fall' as unity stood out as one of the hallmarks of these pan africanists and proponents of decolonization. The extent to which these projects were successful is central to this paper within the context of how these efforts have been able to change the course of development across Africa. Such reconstruction of decolonization ideology in Samir Amin's view is the vibrant force that enables a people to define their existence and all they do in that existence. Central to this project is the question of development which quite ironically was the orchestrated raison d'etre projected by the apologists of the colonial system that the need to develop Africa is a justification to colonize the continent. Though the veracity of this claim left much to be desired, they had contended that it was the duty of the higher civilization to conquer the lower civilizations so as to bring prosperity and progress to all parts of the world. Such declarations were often couched in such racial phraseologies as the "civilizing mission" or the "white man's burden", as held by some Europeans. This paper uses the analytical and critical tools of philosophy to review the pan African and decolonialization efforts in the light of their vision, aspirations and successes. The paper concludes amongst other matters that words should be matched with actions and commitment.

Keywords: Pan-Africanism, Decolonisation, Africa, colonialism

Afrika'da Dekolonizasyon ve Pan-Afrikanizm

Özet

Bu çalışma, Pan-Afrikanizmin kökenlerini, kölelik ve kolonileşme ile yıpranmış Afrikalı kimliğinin ve kaderinin yeniden inşası için çeşitli

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dekolonizasyon projelerini ve bunun sonucunda meydana gelen dina-mikleri incelemektedir.Bu meşhuır pan-afrikanist ve dekolonizasyon destekçilerinin dayandığı temel prensip 'birlikte ayakta duruyoruz, ayrı-lırsak düşeriz' klişesiyle birlikte karakterize edilmiştir. Bu projelerin ba-şarısının boyutları, bu çabaların Afrika'daki gelişimin seyrini nasıl de-ğiştirdiği çerçevesinde ele alınarak çalışmanın temel noktasını oluştur-maktadır. Samir Amin'in bakış açısına gore, dekolonizasyonun yeniden inşası ideolojisi, insanların varoluşlarını ve bu varoluşta ne yaptıklarını tanımlamalarına olanak sağlayan en itici güçtür. Bu projenin temelin-de, ironik olarak, Afrika'nın gelişimine olan ihtiyacın yalnızca kıtayı sömürgeleştirmenin meşruluk kazanması olduğunu düşünen kolonyal sistemin savunucuları tarafından planlanmış varoluş nedeni projesinin ne şekilde gelişeceği sorusu vardır.Her ne kadar bu iddianın doğruluğu yetersiz kalsa da, üstün uygarlığın kendinden düşük seviyedeki uygar-lığı fethetmesinin bir görev olduğunu ve bu sayede tüm dünyaya zen-ginlik ve ilerleme getireceğini ileri sürmektedirler. Bu açıklamalar sık-lıkla, 'uygarlaşma misyonu' veya bazı Avrupalılarca desteklenen 'beyaz adamın sorumluluğu' gibi ırkçı söylemlere bürünmektedir. Bu çalışma, Pan-Afrikanizmi ve dekolonizasyon çabalarını, bunları vizyon, ilham ve başarıları ışığında, felsefenin analitik ve eleştirel araçlarını kullanarak incelemektedir. Çalışma, kelimelerin eylem ve taahütlerle eşleşmesi ge-rektiğini söyleyerek sonlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Pan-Afrikanizm, Dekolonizasyon, Afrika, sömür-gecilik*

Introduction

The idea of "united we stand, divided we fall" gives credence to various efforts across the world as attempts were made at various times not only to liberate a people from any form of domination but also to make room for development predicated on self-defined terms. Africans are not left out. The idea had underlined various efforts; Pan-African and decolonial projects to change the course of development across Africa predicated on the preponderance of external factors as responsible for the state of affairs in Africa. Several European nations ruled different people in Africa during the days of colonialism who today are now independent nations. How-ever, colonialism has ended but left its structures are quite effective best described by Post Colonial scholars (to include Annibal Cabal, Walter Mi-gnolo, Enrique Dussell, Ramon Grosfoguel amongst others) as coloniality which has continued to impact significantly on the developmental efforts of many African nations. In response to this challenge various means and platforms were used to achieve such goals, ranging from literary works, cultural, socio-political organisations to educational and religious activi-ties. The rapid process of decolonization was driven primarily by the faith,

will and extraordinary determination of the nationalist leaders. The question remains: what has become of their lofty dreams and aspirations today, in a global context with opportunities and challenges in the face of African leadership that is largely yet to be responsive and responsible? This is important when one takes a clue from the saying that "when one points an accusing finger, one must not forget that the other fingers indict one. This paper strongly argues that although Pan-Africanism and decolonization projects are steps in the right direction, but beyond rhetoric and lofty ideals, action and commitment of the leaders and the people of Africa are what matters in the final analysis.

Decolonization and Pan-African: Issues of Interest

The 15th century marked a significant moment in the history of the world with the birth of renaissance. In fact, the European renaissance of 1400 marked a watershed in the systematisation of slavery and colonial expeditions by European nations. The renaissance which started in Florence in Italy as a cultural movement occasioned the translation and spread of much of ancient classical knowledge. This gradually ushered in the Enlightenment (age of reason) era that saw philosophers and statesmen apply the enormous knowledge arising from the intellectual movement stimulated by scientific revolution to greater freedom of the individual in thoughts and rights. Though, many philosophers and statesmen arose during this era with the hope that similar feats seen in the scientific revolution will also be achieved in the socio- political aspects of human civilisations.

This interest of this present engagement is to establish the intellectual basis for the experiences of slavery and colonialism. And so, the concern is to isolate philosophers whose contributions had direct bearing of racial categorisations and the gradual build-up of ideology that underpinned the experiences under review. The slavery and colonial experiences were influenced by the mechanistic philosophy of Thomas Hobbes and other materialistic philosophers who view matter as something that is malleable and could be worked upon. With such a materialistic understanding, it is no surprise that the human person is seen and treated as a means rather than as an end in itself.

Njoku notes that Western judgements on Africa have been based on mere cultural bias and arrogant ignorance, which grew into a formidable two-pronged historical reality: slavery and slave trade on the one hand,

and academic expressions on the other hand[1]. The latter was aimed at justifying the slavery experience; thus, providing so-called rational justification and later to justify the colonial adventure on the continent of Africa. The implication is that, there was a deliberate and articulate intellectual ratiocination for the slavery experience and the reality of colonialism across Africa. According to Makumba, one of the first philosophers to lend academic expression to the cultural prejudice of the West against Africa was Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). In his work *Von den verschiedenen Rassen der Menschen (Anthropology from A Pragmatic Point of View)* (1775) he held that mankind consisted of only one race and the original human species was white, appearing as dark brown. The black race came as result of humid weather conditions that bore upon the original white species. He went on to maintain that the indigenous Americans and the blacks are spiritually inferior in human species. He discerns four races: white, yellow, Negro, and American (Red), with a decreasing mental and general ability in that order[2]. The derogatory things Kant says about black people leave a lot to be desired of a man of his critical intellectual depth, more importantly as a philosopher who ought to be a disinterested thinker. His successor, Hegel in his work *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* excludes Africa from the movement of history. This effectively excludes Africa from the realm of rationality because history, as Hegel understood it, was none other than the manifestation of the spirit (Reason). According to him, "the only Thought, which philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of history, is the simple connection of Reason; that Reason is the Sovereign of the world; that the history of the world, therefore, presents us with a rational process"[3]. For him, Africa does not belong to this historical rational process. Hegel was convinced that in Negro's life consciousness has not yet attained to the realisation of any substantial objective existence. His sources were largely circumstantial reports and copious accounts provided by missionaries who were not unbiased against black peoples. Reflecting on such intellectual contributions, Hountondji notes that Hegel's philosophy of history provided a powerful philosophical base to the chorus of denigration of the non-white races which accompanied and buoyed up the European colo-

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1   F.O.C. Njoku (Ed.) *Basic World Political Theories*.

2   Maurice Makumba, *Introduction to African Philosophy* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2007), 37-38.

3   Georg W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibre (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956), 8-9.

nial white adventure all through the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century. And to this effect Africa was arguably the hardest hit[4].

With the foregoing brief on the intellectual convictions about the superiority of the white race; the heart of Europe (Germany, France and England) they arrogated to themselves the responsibility to assist and to civilise other races who they considered inferior. It is important to also note that in their estimation, other European nations of the South of Europe to include Spain, Portugal and Italy were even considered to be less superior in this project. Spain particularly suffered this designation most because of its brutal activities in colonial world in Latin American region and the infiltration and mixture with the Muslim civilisation. According to Dussel, Hegel in all of his University lectures, espouses his subjects against the background and horizon of a specific categorisation of world history. Dividing history into four moments; 'The Oriental world ', 'The Greek world, The Roman world and 'the Germanic world'. In this Hegelian picture, it is evidently Eurocentric schematic significance of this ideological construction; and what's more, it is Germanic-centric from the North of Europe (since the negation of the South of Europe had already occurred)...[5] As a follow up to the colonizing mission; the countries of Europe that considered themselves superior (in their own terms) explored and colonised North America. The investments in this new found world were heavy. Though investments did not yield so much return as the aborigines and others in the new found world given the American Revolution predicated on the democratic implications of Rousseau's political philosophy, in defence of their identity declared the popular American independence that celebrates equality, freedom and fundamental rights.

The frustration and bad feelings arising from these experiences accompanied these European colonial powers in search of other lands and territories where they could achieve their aims and meet their interests. The emergence of these occupying colonial powers was characterised by inordinate exploration and wanton exploitation of the continent of Africa of her resources to service the industrial needs and markets of their home industries. To put an end to the clash of interests by these occupying nations; the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 was convened to formalise the territorial boundaries within which each colonial power could operate so as to

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4   Paulin J. Hountondji, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality* (London: Hutchinson University Library for Africa, 1983), 11.

5   Enrique Dussel, *Anti-Cartesian Meditations: On the Origin of the Philosophical Anti-discourse of Modernity*, the 2nd Annual Conference of the Caribbean Philosophical association, 2005), 3.

end the scramble among the various colonial powers. In their scramble for Africa; the continent of Africa was carved up on drawing board in Berlin to guarantee each power an unimpeded and unmonitored freedom to loot as much as they could in their area of influence[6]. Sylvain referring to the historic scramble for Africa regretted that whenever Europeans thought about Africa it was to carve out portions of that continent for themselves with the result that international conferences had come to have no other purpose than to demarcate boundaries of territories the great powers had awarded themselves[7]. In fact, Meredith adumbrates thus "the maps used to carve up the African continent were mostly inaccurate; large areas were described as *terra incognita*. When marking out boundaries of their new territories, European negotiators frequently resorted to drawing straight lines on the map, taking little or no account of the myriad of tradition-al monarchies, chiefdoms and other African societies that existed on the ground"[8]. He goes ahead to add that, nearly one half of the new frontiers imposed on Africa were geometric lines, lines of latitude and longitude, other straight lines or arcs of circles. In some cases, African societies were rent apart: the Bakongo were partitioned between French Congo, Belgian Congo and Portuguese Angola; Somaliland was carved up between Brit-ain, Italy and France. While in other cases, Europe's new colonial territo-ries enclosed hundreds of diverse and independent groups, with no com-mon history, culture, language or religion. Nigeria, for example contained as many as 250 ethno-linguistic groups[9].

According to Esedebe, Pan-African thinking originally began in the new world, becoming articulate starting from the American declaration of independence in 1776[10]. It represented a reaction against the maltreatment of the Blackman and the racial doctrines that characterized the era of abo-litionism. Pan African thinking also found expression in the independent church movement in the new world and Africa as well as in resistance to European colonial ambitions in Africa. Following the dark cloud of slavery and colonialism, visionary African leaders realised that it was imperative

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6   Franklin Ogbunwezeh, "Africa: The Ontology of Failed States". http://www.dawodu.com/ogbunwezeh1.htm Accessed January 2, 2013.

7   Sylvain Benito; nicknamed "Aristocrates de la Peau". He was one of the last note worthy exponents of pan African ideas. A delegate to Brussels Anti-Slavery Convention of April 1891; his paper 'L' Evolution De La Race Noire', coloured with sentiments of pan African ideas and dimensions.

8   Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa* (London: The Free Press, 2006), 1-2.

9   Meredith, 2.

10   Olisanwuche P. Esedebe, "The Emergence of Pan African Ideas" in Onigu Otite (Ed.) *Themes in African Social and Political Thought*. (Ibadan: Fourth Dimension Publishers. 1978), 75-103.

that all Africans wherever they might be should unite to end the holocaust which began with the European Renaissance in Italy in 1400. In about 1900, Sylvester Williams, a lawyer of African descent named this coming together of Africans, 'Pan-Africanism', but as a movement it began around 1776. It was however, the 5th Pan-African congress held in Manchester, United Kingdom in 1945 that advanced Pan-Africanism and applied it to the decolonisation of the African continent politically[11]. There is therefore a mutual relationship between Pan-Africanism and decolonisation. Though, they are very different in essential terms since Pan-Africanism is a kind of ideology while the other decolonisation is a social process that is all involving. That these two interrelated concepts have been part of the history of most African nations does not necessarily translate to better life for these African nations and people.

Nkrumah makes a similar observation that the colonial system and structures evolved the means whereby the cultural policies were directed towards the satisfaction of their ends. That is the exploitation of the subject territories for the aggrandizement of the metropolitan countries. The major works of Nkrumah as a foremost theorist of Pan-African unity are concerned with colonialism and neo-colonialism on the Pan-African scale. Since independence was achieved before Pan-African unity, colonialism was replaced with neo-colonialism, the state of national political independence but real economic control. Nkrumah goes ahead to add "in the context of the new independence mounting in Africa, imperialism has begun, and will continue, to assume new forms and subtler disguises"[12]. In *Towards Colonial Freedom*, Nkrumah stressed that the colonial power would not grant independence on 'a silver platter'. The essence of colonialism is economic exploitation. To protect their economic interests, the colonial powers are willing to fight. If they have granted political independence without a fight, it means that their economic interests have been preserved. Given the rational calculation of the colonial power, it means in fact that they considered 'independence' a less costly option than fighting. Since decolonization is not complete with the mere achievement of political independence but remained economically dependent in a neo-colonial state. No wonder then, Makumba asserts that tragically the attitude of the colonialist/imperialist met with phenomenal success, at least in its ability to make the locals lose confidence in themselves and in their culture[13].

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11 Motsoko Pheko, "Road to Pan-Africanism" in *The Sowetan*. November 15, 1999), 1.

12 Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (London: Panaf Books, 1970), XVI.

13 Makumba, 111.

To effectively continue to benefit from newly politically independent African states, erstwhile colonial powers created states which were simply neo-colonial dependencies. And to run these states, freedom fighters that championed the fight for independence who took over leadership responsibilities were rather political amateurs. To complement the paucity of men they have on the ground, as emergent leaders, they became the collaborative vehicle of neo-colonial exploitation. In the same vein, Ogbunwezeh (a scholar in social ethics who has written profusely on the state of affairs of Africa) lends credence that colonialism compromised the trajectory of African socio-economic, geopolitical and even cultural evolution no doubt. And it represents a major pillar supporting the African predicament, when one considers its long, hidden tele-guidance of African destiny, which echoed strongly in neo-colonial waves during the cold war. Today, it daily loses validity as an exonerating punch bag for African failures. As African leadership continues to acquit itself terribly, colonialism no longer suffices as an excuse. As one African leadership after another fails in its primary responsibilities, reason and commonsense withdraws some of its patronage and validity from colonialism, as a major scaffold of blame for Africa's retrogress, since some other ex-colonies and colonized countries like India have continued to record and post rampaging advances in development[14].

The complicity of many emergent African leaders in the early days of independence and even post independence era collaborating with erstwhile colonial powers and with the neo-colonial structures deeply entrenched it meant that de-colonial and Pan –African ideals were a far cry from reality. In spite of the role of African leaders in what became the story of development in many African nations, the place and import of the experiences of slavery and colonialism are immense and worth examining. Thus, one must appreciate the impact and the hangover packages of the experiences of slavery and colonialism and all the intrigues and manoeuvrings in granting independence on the emerging leaders so as not to unnecessarily absolve the perpetrators totally from culpability where there is. A scholar, Mene summarises the impact of slavery in these terms:

> *no group in history, not even the Jews suffered more than the Africans. Africa is the only continent that was subjected to the slave trade, both of the Arab and the Atlantic versions. The slave trade did incalculable damage to the cohesion, industrial and production capacities and the physical environment of African communities. This*

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14 Franklyn Ogbunwezeh, *African Poverty As Failure of Leadership.* A paper presented at the Afrikan Wissenschaft Tag, organized by the African Development Initiative, Frankfurt am Main, on 22nd October, 2005, 1-18.

> *was effected through spoliation, depopulation, promotion of constant warfare and indiscriminate slave raiding[15].*

Colonialism on its part engendered the loss of independence by the various peoples of Africa and in the process arrested the political development of Africa. On the economic front, colonialism consolidated the destruction of Africa's industrial and technological foundations and integrated the continent into the world capitalist system as a subordinate entity. The type of economic system which colonialism and capitalism produced in Africa was and is still characterised by monumental disarticulation, dependence, contradictions, ruthless pillaging and exploitation of the continent's economic resources, all of which combined to under develop Africa[16]. The thinking of most nationalists was that political independence meant an all-round development of the people of Africa. In fact, as Nkrumah told his followers, "seek ye first the political kingdom, and all else shall be added unto you". Indeed, the march of African nationalism seemed invincible. Africa, so it was thought, once freed from colonial rule, was destined for an era of unprecedented progress. African leaders even spoke of building new societies that might offer the world at large an inspiration. The circumstances seemed auspicious. Independence came in the midst of an economic boom. In the post-war era, world prices for African commodities- cash crops like cocoa and coffee and mineral products like copper- soared to new levels. Between 1945 and 1960 the economies of colonial Africa expended by between 4 and 6 percent per annum. West African groundnut production doubled between 1947 and 1957; cotton production trebled. Tea production in southern Africa doubled, amongst other indices of economic growth and boom. The advent of independence also brought about a cultural revival as African music, literature and art expended into new forms. The study of Africa ranging from politics, history, archaeology, sociology became serious discipline in universities around the world and on the global stage; African states excited the attention of the world's rival power blocs. The position that each newly independent country adopted in its relation with the West or the East was viewed as a matter of crucial importance[17]. In the period that followed this tangible decolonization of the control of borders, several attempts were made at attaining nationhood; that is, efforts were made at nation-building in the

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15   Charles Mene, "Ake on the Obstacles to African's Development" in Andrew Efemini (ed.) *Ake and African Development: Selected Issues*. (Port Harcourt: Paragraphics Publishers, 2002), 46-47.

16   Charles Mene, 47.

17   Meredith, *The State of Africa*, 141-143.

erstwhile colonial states. But the first wave of impressive accomplishments in this regard in many African states soon gave way to pessimism and disorientation. The signs of hope and promise of many post-independence African states fizzled away due to many disputed reasons. Among such reasons is what Ogbunwezeh characterizes thus:

> *almost all the Modern states in Africa today were built on political ontologies, oozing from this engineered political metaphysic. The people never dialogued their differences as a basis for federating. They never talked to each other about a political union. They woke up one morning, and saw themselves conscripted into geopolitical constructs they neither chose nor bargained for…[18]*

The idea here is that many emergent African states were rather conscripted together without the consent and will of the people to live together. Meredith's experience of the surge and enthusiasm that accompanied independence in the continent of Africa remains invaluable. While as a young reporter and the international correspondent on the *Times of Zambia* and as a research fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford; has documented his in-depth perspectives on modern Africa. In his work "The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence" notes that "other kingdoms such as Asante in the Gold Coast (Ghana) and Loziland in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) were merged into larger colonial units. Kingdoms that had been historically antagonistic to one another, such as Buganda and Bunyoro in Uganda, were linked into the same colony. In the Sahel, new territories were established across the great divide between the desert regions of the Sahara and the belt of tropical forests to the south-Sudan, Chad and Nigeria- throwing together Muslim and non-Muslim peoples in latent hostility"[19]. This has had phenomenal impact on the cohesion needed in fashioning out the way forward in their newly found states. In a similar vein, Keller opines that at independence, the first waves of African states to secure independence from European colonizers were bequeathed political institutions patterned on those of their former masters[20]. There was great expectation among observers that these new African states would simply take the best institutions of western democracies and use them to form efficient, effective, and equitable models for their own societies. Not quite long, it became apparent that it was not easy to graft these institutions and patterns of behaviour onto Africa. One African state after the

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18   Cf Ogbunwezeh Franklyn, *Africa: Ontology of Failed States.*

19   Meredith, 2.

20   Edmond J. Keller, "Decolonization, Independence and the Failure of Politics" in Phillis Martin & Patrick. O. Mabi (Eds.) *Africa.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 166.

other began to reject these forms and to create hybrids of their own. In some places, dominant political parties became single party systems in the service of authoritarian civilian regimes. In others, competitive party systems were replaced by authoritarian military regimes. For example; Parti Democratique de Guinee (PDG) led by Ahmed Sekou Toure, Guinean leader, Bloc Democratique Senegalaise (BDS) led by Leopold Sedar Senghor and Movement National Congolais (MNC) led by its prime minister Lumumba and Hastings Banda of Malawi who ruled Malawi as his personal fiefdom for thirty years.

Meredith opines that many reasons were adduced for the justification of one-party system. He writes "new states facing so many challenges, it was said, needed strong governments which were best served by concentrating authority with a single, nation-wide party. Only a disciplined mass party, centrally directed, was an effective means to overcome tribal divisions, to inspire a sense of nationhood and to mobilise the population for economic development. Multi-party politics, it was argued, usually deteriorated into a competition between tribal blocs and alliances. Since opposition parties tended to rely on tribal groups for support, they undermined the cause of nation-building and weakened the efficiency of the state. They were thus a luxury which new states with limited resources could ill afford"[21]. Julius Nyerere was one of the most eloquent advocates of a one-party system. The British and American tradition of a two-party system is a reflection of the society from which it evolved. The existence of distinct classes and the struggle between them resulted in the growth of this system. In Africa, the Nationalist movements were fighting a battle for freedom from foreign domination, not from domination by any ruling class of our own. Once the foreign power- 'the other Party'- has been expelled, there is no ready–made division among the people. The Nationalist movements must inevitably form the firm governments of new states. Once a free Government is formed, its supreme task lies ahead- the building up of the country's economy. This, no less than the struggle against colonialism, calls for the maximum united effort by the whole country if it is to succeed. There can be no room for difference or division.

At independence, it appeared as if the energy needed to set development on its proper footing were rather totally expended in the struggle for independence. It appeared that the cultural identity and African personality at the base of self determination and destiny were almost in a state of jeopardy. It appeared that the negative aspects of race and ethnic

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21   Meredith, *The State of Africa*, 167.

matrices had predominated most issues across the continent of Africa. In fact, those who have been competing for political power in Africa since 1960 are products of colonial system. This ruling class is made up of the elites of different ethnic groups and economic interests. When it fought against the colonialists, it came together under common grievances but it has continued to remain disunited as a result of the metaphysics of the conscription of most African states and the resulting distrust arising from such arrangement. Thus, Ekeh remarks that the bourgeoisie comprising of Africans who emerged from the European colonial rule of Africa lacked home grown basis for rule and so their legitimacy to rule remained weak largely because it was based on the legitimacy provided by the European colonial rulers of Africa[22]. It would seem that the struggle against the colonial system was not waged with the aim of changing it but to inherit it. The colonial state which the new African leaders took over was an oppressive, exploitative and omnipresent state. The logic of the colonial state was also to produce a ruling class which was weak and has had tried to re-enact the logic of the colonial legacy. In an interview with Kenneth Kaunda in April 2008, he states that "freedom comes from inside us - it is within ourselves"[23]. Decolonization is not simply a legal process but also a cultural and social process which has only partially been achieved.

Pan-Africanism and Decolonisation: Nature and Historical Developments

Pan-Africanism can be said to signify a set of shared assumptions expressing the desire for the unity of all Africans whether on the continent or those in the Diaspora. The movement tends to view all Africans and descendants of Africans as belonging to a single "race" and sharing cultural unity. Pan-Africanism posits a sense of a shared historical fate for Africans everywhere in the world centred on the Atlantic trade in slaves, African slavery, and European imperialism. Cultural and intellectual manifestations of Pan-Africanism have been devoted to recovering or preserving African "traditions" and emphasizing the contributions of Africans and those in the Diaspora to the modern world. Pan-Africanists have invariably fought against racial discrimination and for the political rights of Africans and descendants of Africans, have tended to be anti-imperialist,

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22   Peter P. Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Development of Citizenship in Africa: a study of ideologies of legitimization" in Onigu Otite (Ed.) *Themes in African Social and Political Thought,* 302.

23   Snow Whitess interview with Kenneth Kaunda in April 2008 preceding the writing of his essay titled "Why Did the Decolonization in Africa take place so rapidly Around the years of 1960's?" sourced from http://hubpages.com/hub on October 02, 2010.

and often espoused a metaphorical or symbolic (if not literal) "return" to Africa. Thus, the effects of slavery and colonialism made Africans desire to establish a new identity as they wanted to unite Africans in a common cause; they wanted political and psychological liberation.

The modern conception of Pan-Africanism dates from at least the mid-nineteenth-century. The slogan, "Africa for the Africans," popularized by Marcus Garvey's (1887–1940) Declaration of Negro Rights in 1920, may have originated in West Africa, probably Sierra Leone, around the 1920s. The African-American Martin Delany (1812–1885), who developed his own re-emigration scheme, reported in 1861 the slogan after an expedition to Nigeria during 1859–1860 and Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912) adopted it when he arrived in West Africa in 1850. Blyden, originally from St. Thomas, played a significant role in the emergence of Pan-Africanist ideas around the Atlantic through his public speeches and writings in Britain, and the United States, and proposed the existence of an "African personality" resembling contemporary European cultural nationalism. Blyden's ideas informed the notion of race consciousness developed by W. E. B. DuBois (1868–1963) at the end of the nineteenth century.

The growth of Pan-African sentiments in the late nineteenth century can be seen as both a continuation of ethnic, and "pan-nationalist," thinking and a reaction to the limits of emancipation for former slaves in the Diaspora and European colonial expansion in Africa. There are a number of reasons why black internationalism had particular resonance during this period. African contact with Europeans, the slave trade in Africa, and the widespread use of African slaves in the New World colonies were the most salient factors, leading first those in Diaspora and then many in Africa to envision the unity of the black "race." At the same time, as abolitionist movement spread gradually around the Atlantic during the nineteenth century, Europeans increasingly viewed race as a biological and, thus, inherent difference rather than a cultural one. This, it could be argued that Pan Africanist ideas are linked to the contributions of African-Americans and European-educated Africans whose exposure to the metropolitan culture during the late 19th century had immense impact. No doubt these people were numerous and had varying perception of what Pan-African ideas mean; despite these differences, scholars agree on the important role that the African American intellectual W. E. B. DuBois played in developing the idea of Pan-Africanism and marshalling a transnational political movement around it. Indeed, DuBois contributed significant speeches to the proceedings of the Chicago Congress and the Pan-African 1900 conference. In his "Address to the Nations of the World", DuBois declared:

> *the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour line, the question as to how far differences of race … are going to be made, hereafter, the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to their utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization[24].*

Thus, Pan-Africanism, a uniquely cultural and spiritual movement for the promotion of negritude, assumed a political dimension in such extensive usage as popularised at pan African congresses by William Edward Burghards DuBois of U.S.A and Henry Sylvester Williams of Trinidad, both of African descent. As some historians have noted, the All-Africa People's Conference at Accra in 1957, attended by some 250 delegates, established the basic tenets of Pan-Africanism for decades to come: the attainment of political independence, assistance to national liberation movements, diplomatic unity between independent African states at the United Nations, and nonalignment. It is instructive to quickly note as Motsoko states that it was at the 5th Pan-African congress in 1945 held in Manchester that advanced Pan-Africanism and applied it to the decolonisation of the African continent politically[25].

These two concepts, Pan-Africanism and decolonization do however, overlap. While Pan-Africanism can be seen as authentically African movement, decolonization is not peculiarly African. In this regard, John Kufuor former president of Ghana in an address titled "Africa's Renaissance: Dream or Reality" presented at the launch of Thabo Mbeki Foundation states that "the story of Africa's renaissance in itself is not a new one. It is as old as Africa itself. Ever since the era slave trade followed by colonisation, Africa has tried at various levels to reinvent itself with varying degrees of success. There is ample evidence put up by our forebears throughout the slavery and the colonial era which bear testimony that Africans have always tried to assert themselves and break loose from bondage. A defining moment was reached about 50 years ago when almost all of Africa gained independence from colonial rule with the last historic and significant liberation being the collapse of apartheid in 1994". Cultural decolonization has a wider international perspective, covering all the countries labelled the third world. Its genesis took place once political independence had been acquired and when this independence had revealed that there were no real changes in the living conditions of the African population. It was not long before intellectuals like Chinweizu noticed that the colonial authorities had been replaced by corrupt governments, which merely reinforced

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24   W. E. B Du Bois, *A Reader Edited by David Leavening Lewis*. (New York: Owl Books, 1995).
25   Motsoko, 1.

the situation of poverty and economic, political or social dependency. The feature is not a feature exclusive to African republics but it is present in many other areas such Latin America, Asia, etc[26]. To overcome the above challenges, the search for African personality attracted nationalists or African elites trained in European traditions and who were at the fore front of the emergence of socio-political philosophies predicated upon basic values and principles of traditional African society. According to Keller, Africa's quest to maintain territorial integrity, engage in constant struggle to develop her society, and manage or control political conflict; Pan-African ideology emerged as a common instrument in manipulating political behaviour as well as for organizing society in the 1970s and 1980s.

A Panoramic Overview of Selected Pan-African and Decolonization Movements

Keller in his work "Decolonization, Independence and the Failure of Politics"[27] did an incisive analysis of the background, nature of decolonization and the various patterns it assumed in each of the colonial context and question of politics in Africa.

The transfer of power in British colonies was a gradualist approach. But, with the popular wind of change speech of Macmillan in 1960, there was a dramatic change as the growing national consciousness was a driving force of decolonization process. Sometimes, the presence of white settlers in some of these colonies played a significant impact on the character of the process itself. Where there were white settlers the nature of the process had a tint of violence. In these areas, the idea of government to be formed was that of partnership tended towards white dominance and black subordination. For example, in colonies like Algeria, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Zaire, Namibia and Zimbabwe there were records of violence because of white settlers' interests in relation to weather, and fertile highlands amongst other matters. Settlers' interests were of little consequences in areas without substantial white population, so the process of decolonization was not as violent as in the above examples. The idea is that where there were no significant settlers, the colonizing powers looked more favourably on the notion of self-government by Africans. The case of Gold Coast (Ghana) clearly demonstrates the point. The cases of Nigeria, Uganda and Cameroon bear similar testimonies like that of Ghana.

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26 Chinweizu, *The West and The Rest of Us* (Lagos: Nok Publishers, 1978)
27 Edmond J. Keller, 168.

French colonies in Africa, with the exception of Algeria, were not characterized by substantial European settlement. In Algeria, the nationalists were able to wage a determined guerrilla campaign that forced France in 1962 to abandon its plan to make Algeria its most prized overseas possession. In other francophone Africa, the pattern of decolonization was different; thus, independence became possible through the use of referendum in territories of West and Equitorial Africa in 1958. On September 28, 1958, a referendum was held in which African colonies were asked to vote on whether they wanted to remain part of the French community. It was felt that most colonies, recognising their political weakness and economic vulnerability, would accept to remain French. Guinea alone voted for independence at that time. Only two years later, the other colonies revisit their decisions and were thus granted independence. There was no need for constitutional conventions as had been the case in Anglophone Africa since francophone African nationalists had participated and quite familiar with the French brand of politics and governance.

The pattern of decolonization in regions occupied by Belgium was characterized by white settler involvement. Africans were only involved in politics through their association with European political groups that had branches in the colony and via ethnic associations. Pragmatic paternalism informed the colonial rational of Belgium claiming that it dominated Africans only to serve them better. The colonial welfare state was supported by a 'Platonic Trinity', which included the colonial bureaucracy (controlling the social behaviour of Africans), large foreign economic concerns (employing Africans to do menial jobs) and the Catholic Church (socializing and educating Africans to accept the subordination). Influenced by the wind of change in other parts of the continent, the demand by Africans could not be ignored. Given the pressures, a conference to discuss the possibility of independence was held in Brussels in January 1960 and six months later, in spite of European settler protest, the independent state of Congo was born. In the same vein, within the next two years, Belgium was forced to abandon its colonial experiments in Rwanda and Burundi.

As they set out to achieve their goals of economic development and socio-cultural progress, emergent African leaders chatted and settled on a sundry of blueprints for the future. Thus, we shall now examine some emergent socio- political ideas which were directed to reposition the lost African values, shared ideals and customs that unite the Africans and the overall future of the continent. Some of them include:

I. **Negritude**: sets out to undertake a project of rehabilitation of indigenous cultural manifestations. In an attempt to show the peculiarity of the

African and African culture from the western culture, Senghor chronicles the African mindset in these words: the life surge of the African, his self abandonment, to the other is thus actuated with reason. But here reason is not the eye-reason of the European; it is the reason-by-embrace which shares more the nature of logos than ratio. Negritude refers to basically to a black consciousness which asserted the unique contributions, values and characteristics of black people and their civilisation. It served as an intellectual precursor to nationalism. Through this philosophical configuration, Senghor sought to develop ideas about an African road to socialism; reworking European socialism into an African idiom, emphasizing the importance of African communal traditions[28].

II. **African Socialism** (Consciencism): for Nkrumah, the idea of egalitarianism remains as the core of his socialist reconstruction. He sees each man as an end and not as a means in himself and thus there is the guarantee of equal opportunities for man's development. In his terms; what we need is not to recapture the structure of the traditional African society but its spirit, for the spirit of communalism is crystallized in its humanism and in its reconciliation of individual advancement with group welfare[29]. Meredith supports the idea that most governments opted for the umbrella of African socialism, believing that it held the potential for fast growth after the years of exploitation by Western capitalists. For Nkrumah, socialism is the only pattern that can within the shortest possible time bring the good life to the people. In contemporary African society however, that has become quite complex, it remains to be relevant in a pluralist society where there are numerous communities with different outlooks about life. In this regard Ekennia has this to say; the encounter of African traditional society with Islam, Christianity, and western civilisation created tensions and conflicts in the traditional system… the modern African communities are not in any way identical with traditional communities. Consequently any realistic modern theory for Africa cannot neglect the forces of pluralism and modern criteria of justification of it is to be rational and authentic. Those who claim that a rational moral theory can be proposed to modern Africa by neglecting the reality of its diversities and pluralistic nature and projecting a formal common moral attitude to modern Africa have sold rationality for a dead ideology of the Africa of the 1960s[30].

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28   Meredith, 145.

29   Kwame Nkrumah, "African Socialism Revisited" in *Africa National and Social Revolutions* (Praque: Peace and Socialism Publications, 1967), 89.

30   Justin Ekennia, "African Communalism and Political Rationality: A Critique" in *Africa: Philosophy and Public Affairs*, ed. Obi Oguejiofor. (Enugu: Delta Publications, 1998), 348-365.

III. *Ujamaa*: Julius Nyerere advanced his form of African socialism with a human face and referred to his form of socialism as *Ujamaa* meaning familyhood or brotherhood. For him, the foundation and objective of African socialism is the extended family. The true African socialist… regards all men as his brethren – as members of his ever – extending family[31]. Nyerere sees in traditional African society as having high sense of familyhood with strong features of communalism and humanism. *Ujamaa* then or familyhood describes African socialism. It is opposed to capitalism, which seeks to build a happy society on the basis of exploitation of man by man; and it is equally opposed to doctrinaire socialism which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between man and man[32].

According to Nyerere, the idea of socialism has its foundation in the principle of human equality, which equality has to be applied to the different sectors of society, namely, economic, social, and political – he is an equality of benefits[33]. No wonder then, Njoku writes that the principle of equality is a determinant principle of every democracy properly so–called. Democracy is, therefore, at the root of *Ujamaa* socialism, since it is itself a democratic system. Nyerere argues that the people's equality must be reflected in the political organization; everyone must be an equal participant in the government of the society. It is the right to equality in democracy that gives the people the right to choose their own representatives and legislators, which assures them of political suffrages. Actually, it is the will of the people that gives meaning to democracy[34]. The prospect of such a normative recommendation for the contemporary society remains to be seen; hence, Nyerere's appeal to familyhood is more of a utopian ideal. Whichever way one examines Nyerere, true Pan-Africanism leads to Pan-Humanism, for *Ujamaa* dictates that the sense of familyhood be extended universally to all. Both forms of African socialism as developed by Nkrumah and Nyerere were predicated on the commonly held claim that African societies traditionally included many indigenous aspects of socialism. Such involve the communal ownership of land, egalitarian character of village life, collective decision making, and extensive networks of social obligation.

IV. **Violent Resistance**: this movement was championed by Frantz Fanon, a black psychotherapist and a second war veteran fighting in the

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31 Julius Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1973), 170.

32 Main issues discussed in his *Ujamma*, Essays on Socialism. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

33 Julius, 79.

34 F.O.C. Njoku, 251.

French army. He believed that violent revolution was necessary to throw off the hold of colonial past in order to attain true socialism. Fanon was very critical of the European demeaning conception of the Negro and of the black person's attempt to find refuge in white personality, which he understood, was the fantasy of the negritude movement despite its positive value to free native intellectuals from dependence on metropolitan culture. Fanon sees the return of violence for violence as a refusal to be treated as animals, and the only way to recapture one's humanity from the hands of the oppressor. In the beginning of his work, decolonization is always a violent phenomenon because it is the meeting of two forces opposed to each other by their very nature, forces which, in fact, owe their originality to that sort of substantification which results from and is nourished by the situation in the colonies. Makumba warns that Fanon should not be read as advocating violence for its own sake for as Fanon himself notes after delaying the writing of his book *Black Skin, White Masks*. His words "this book should have been written three years ago… but these truths were a fire in me then. Now I can tell them without being burnt. These truths do not have to be hurled in men's faces. They are not intended to ignite fervour, I do not trust fervour"[35]. A situation where there is identity crisis, the only true liberation of the coloured person as he understood it was the liberation of the self from the self. That is, the liberation from the desire by the black to become white. This is the context in which the understanding of Fanon's violence should be read; violence as bringing the colonised person from a situation of alienation to the discovery of the true self – the restoration of things to their proper places[36].

The various nationalists that championed these platforms upon which to base the definition of an African identity and hence development of their various nations were hardly successful as these visions of theirs were too ambitious as they lacked discipline and restrain in the handling of these ideals and which ultimately landed them in confused strife. The haste and anxiety with which these emerging nationalists went about championing these ideals that were not thoroughly and deeply thought out were partly responsible for the failure too. No wonder then, much of the commitment needed to transform these visions into action and reality were met with mere lip service and consequently their inability to give the pragmatic dimension to these ideas and ideals.

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35 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles L. Markmann. (New York: Grove Press, Inc. 1967), 9.

36 Frantz, 12

Of these selected Pan-African movements; the need to address the true nature of the encounter in history that defines the contemporary African cut in-between two or more worlds remains unattended to; in other words, the promotion of African traditions and culture should be alive to the value of remaining open to world culture.

More than that, some scholars are of the view that these various approaches are outdated and have lost touch with relevance. Such scholars like Ramirez writes that concepts like negritude and Pan-Africanism have lost their relevance, while cultural decolonization has also been affected by the deep crisis in the Marxist approaches upon which it rested[37]. And for Soyinka, most of these ideological approaches have simply served to offer a simplistic and distorted image of Africa; an image in which the supposed unity of the whole continent was given primacy over its diversity[38]. In the considered view of these authors, the replacement of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) by the African Union (AU) and the emergence of NEPAD with the African Renaissance essayed by Cheikh Anta Diop in series as "Towards an African Renaissance: essays in Culture and Development 1946-1960" championed by Thabo Mbeki were platforms that were geared towards the reinvigoration of the African spirit, African identity, and African values in developmental discourse within the scheme of globalisation. The elements of this idea include social cohesion, democracy, good governance, economic rebuilding and growth and the establishment of Africa as a significant player in global affairs.

Africa in the Context of Globalization: AU and NEPAD

The nature of modern African states makes it necessary for a proper evaluation and critical assessment of the various attempts to salvage the problems facing it. At the core of such evaluation is the place of the continent of Africa in a fast globalizing world. In fact, the encounter and interaction of the African continent with the Western world and currently the deepening and growing relations with China follows that Africa not only have the Western culture to grapple with but with a cacophony of cultures. Caught in the vortex of globalization, the continent of Africa faces the threat of marginalization and she cannot but grapple with the realities of the contemporary world. To find relevance therefore; there is need to engage in

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37   Paula Garcia Ramirez, "Cultural Decolonization as an African Literary Movement: The Case of Ngugi Wa Thiongo" Jean Universidad de Jaen, (2007): 4-5.

38   Soyinka, Wole, "Neo-Tarzanism: Poetics of Pseudo-Tradition". *Transition*, 48, (1975): 38-44.

what Gyekye perceives as the critical analysis, interpretation, and assessment of the changes that traditional values and ideas are going through in response to the pressures, internal and external, weighing heavily on them through the ethos of contemporary life[39]. Africa is constantly torn between being part of a world that is fast moving towards globalization, and the need to set her own agenda so that she is not hoodwinked again at a time the wounds caused by the blows of the heinous events of the previous century are just healing. Thus, with the benefit of hindsight that economic liberalism must go hand in hand with political liberalism; multi-party systems emerging to operate constitutional governments with better understanding of the international scene in view of better life for the people; African leaders in the contemporary time reviewed the charter of OAU at a meeting in 1999 and established AU to accelerate the process of integration and enable Africa play its role in a fast globalising world while attending to multifaceted social, economic and political issues[40] as a disunited Africa faces a greater risk of being obliterated.

African unity has been stressed as one fundamental principle upon which the future of the continent is dependent. Consequently, there have been concerted efforts to address the needed socio-political and economic challenges militating against the authentic unity of the continent to make for genuine interaction and participation of the continent of Africa and Africans on the global stage. This has far reaching implications for the scientific and technological, educational spheres that are needed to guarantee the preparedness of the continent to compete on the global stage. Efforts to eradicate poverty, get African countries integrated in the global scheme in a beneficial manner and endeavour to empower women are among the ideals African leaders in the contemporary era are poised to transform the continent. Such is the vision of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the new onslaught to undo the crises on the continent of Africa and the adoption of Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as the political anchor for the sustenance of good governance and democracy in Africa[41]. With the values of modern technology and information dissemination, the visionaries of these aspirations, dreams and ideals must not allow history to repeat itself as once again, history and posterity present themselves for African leaders to demonstrate that indeed there is a truism in the saying that 'once beaten twice shy'. If Africa and Africans lost

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39   Gyekye, "African Philosophy" in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 12.

40   John Kufuor, "Africa's Renaissance: Dream or Reality", an Address presented at the launch of Thabo Mbeki's Foundation in South Africa, September 20, 2011.

41   John Kufuor, 2011.

so much in the past, the new opportunities and policies developed and sung everywhere across the continent should translate from the realm of speeches to the realm of pragmatism so that the interests of the people and continent remain uppermost in all transactions as evidence of a truly Pan-African and decolonised continent and people.

Conclusion

The wisdom of united we stand, divided we fall cannot be eloquently louder than Pan-Africanism with its clarion call of the African to realize his identity and personality not to be eternally lost courtesy of slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and of course, globalisation. Pan-Africanism and decolonization celebrated African identity and personality and were able to usher political independence. Though colonialism has gone; political independence has been experienced; Africa is yet to experience decolonization in other important spheres and so critical steps need to be taken so that Africans can live meaningfully in the global context of today.

The question of development has remained very central and germane in understanding contemporary Africa especially from the perspective of the readiness of today's leaders and the commitment of followers in bringing about the development of the African people in general. In contemporary Africa, media reports focus on generalities rather than on specifics; thus, giving the impression that things were rather better under colonial system or rather that things have not so much changed. In fact, the situation seems quite embarrassing when one hears in some quarters that a number of states in Africa should be leased to some corporations to manage for some time before finally handing over the management of such states as things would be better. The idea here underscores the point that the task of fixing Africa is Africa's and for Africans. Thus, Africans must be more critical of their place and interest in global interactions with reference to issues of manpower and technology transfer/development.

Thus, issues of respect for life, economic security are to be at the forefront of governments across the African continent so as to check the high spate of brain drain or better put, educational and economic migrations; and poor media reportage be checked in an urgent manner by providing and making functional medium that is representative of the African viewpoint that has the spread and reach of the Western media. These are critical issues of respect for life, security and economic well being of citizens amongst others; when taken care of, the drive to assert African identity

will not remain as a historical exercise alone but will become a thing of pride to the young Africans on whose hands the future and survival of the continent lies. At the practical level, the Pan-African and decolonial movements leave a lot to be desired, for the question still remains; how independent is the independence that most African nations gained at a time in history? Political and economic dependency has increased and the corruption of the governing elites has consolidated the conditions of miserable poverty of the population, creating social phenomena of enormous importance.

It is indeed true that many African governments led by individuals who wished to wield power rather than to serve their people descended into the maelstrom of neo-colonial simulation such as the Congolese experienced under Mobutu, Ugandians under Idi Amin, and a host of other military dictators across the continent of Africa.

The Pan-African and decolonial movements have acted and should continue to be acting as transforming tools in revealing the basic truth about the relationship between Africa and the rest of the world whereby the full and total control of the financial support for, and the commercial exploitation of, African resources has never been in the hands of Africans. When issues of corruption and improper disbursement of revenue are deliberated upon, it is not often mentioned that the core of the formal and informal structures of African economies are moulded and controlled by outside forces. Such undercurrents are to be challenged and it is in the spirit of true Pan-Africanism and decolonization that Africa's response to globalisation must be one that puts the people's interest first beyond other considerations and this must be matched with unwavering commitment. But to be honest, efforts undertaken with prominence in Africa frequently are more self-serving critiques or unabashed acceptances and more rhetoric than resolves. Until the politics is got right and correct in Africa, the socio-economic, educational and religious life in Africa will continue to be very low and discouraging. Therefore, the renewed determination and momentum shown by emerging leaders in contemporary Africa through the founding of African Union to replace OAU, the NEPAD and its review mechanism must translate into action and real life betterment for the people of Africa, the interests of the people and continent cannot again be betrayed in a truly Pan-African and decolonial Africa.

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