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POLITICS AND ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION OF TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PAN- AFRICANISM

Ambrose Ihekwoaba EGWIM

Department of Political Science & Public Administration,
Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun state, NIGERIA

Abstract

The paper examines the political and economic forces that are driving the new Pan-Africanism - the forces that determined the change from OAU to AU. It sheds light on the forces from Direct Foreign Investment emanating from neo-liberal ideology termed globalization; the consequences of the demise of former Soviet Union which left African weak states at the whims and caprices of the West. It is our contention here that with the forces of democratization and liberalization, the abandonment of socialist ideology in the Eastern and Western Europe, which necessitated the loss of allies for the African leaders, (Socialist apologists), changes in the nature of African unity depends on the happenings in the West. One major cause of concern is whether AU has met a setback in the face of seemingly resistance against globalization in the West: UK leaving the EU, US returning to trade barriers/tariffs. If argued that it is the forces from direct investment emanating from neo-liberal ideology termed globalization that is driving African continental unity in the 21st century, it is assumed that a push back against the core tenets of the globalization process being witnessed in the west will have an adverse effect on the said unity. The task of continental Africa is not being pushed by African political leaders per se, but by international economic forces.

Key Words: AFCTA, African Politics, AU, Anti-globalization, OAU, Pan-Africanism,

Introduction

On September 9, 1999, the Heads of state and government of the O.A.U (Organization of African Unity) issued a declaration (the Sirte declaration) calling for the establishment of an African Union with a view, to accelerating the process of integration in the continent to enable it play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political problems compounded as they are by certain negative aspects of globalization

(<https://au.int/en/history/oau-and-au>). 'The advent of the African Union (A.U) can be described as an event of great magnitude in the institutional evolution of the continent'. But by targeting to play 'rightful role in the global economy' and containment of 'certain

negative aspects of globalization' it is obvious that the task of continental Africa is pushed by international economic forces.

The move to establish a union of African countries dates back to days prior to the birth of the O.A.U in 1963, with two powerful schools of thought: the Casablanca group and the Monrovia group. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana led the former. Some other notable African leaders in that group include Abdul Nasir of Egypt, Sekou Toure of Guinea and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. The Monrovia group comprised Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria, King Hassan of Morocco, Houphet Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, among others. Incidentally, the Monrovia group tinkered with the idea of the moderate group that favoured gradualism in the movement towards African Union. The position of that group then was that African nations needed to appreciate and benefit from rewards of the independence before getting into a larger union, that for Africa to be united, it must start from regionalism within West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa, North Africa and Southern Africa. The thinking was that with time an African integrated union would come into being. The late sir, Abubakar Tafawa Belewa, (Nigerian Prime Minister 1960 to 1966) expressed a widely held view by the divisive elements when he proudly stated in 1960 "a United State of Africa? Surely is premature to start talking about anything like this. Nigeria has not the slightest intention of surrendering her sovereignty, no sooner has she gained her independence to anyone else... (in Mutiso and Rahio, 1975).

It should be borne in mind here that by 1963 Nigeria had a great share of the world raw materials based on agricultural products; cocoa, groundnut, oil palm, cotton etc. The population, size and other potentialities presented a veritable ground for power and wealth for the narrow-minded nationalists. Therefore, African unity becomes a farce in as much as it will deny them this opportunity; they preferred loose union in form of O.A.U. The intents and prospects of acquiring political power and wealth, which it portends, kept African leaders divided and made unification impossible. Nkrumah's position then was that Africa would be better by having a united state of Africa under one umbrella government. Rather than see Africa divided into the number of countries, (fifty-four/five countries as at date), there will be just one government like the United States of America. Nkrumah's view was seen as a radical one, going by its framework and general concepts. Many leaders then were not prepared to pass over the autonomy of the countries to a supra-national body, the workings of which they were not familiar with owing to their perceived economic selfish interest that were guaranteed by their accession to political power in their given individual countries. O.A.U. as emerged in 1963 was a halfway approach to the radical demands of one continental government and the other demand from the Monrovia group that sought for separateness.

Table 1: NIGERIA MAIN EXPORT COMMODITIES, 1963

S/N	Commodity	Value in Million ₦N	% of Total Export
1.	Groundnuts	36.6	19.8
2.	Cocoa	32.3	17.4
3.	Palm kernels	20.8	11.2
4.	Petroleum	20.2	10.9
5.	Rubber	11.8	6.3
6.	Cotton	9.6	5.2
7.	Palm oil	9.3	5.0
8.	Tin, metal and concentrates	9.0	4.9
9.	Groundnut oil	6.5	3.5
10.	Timber, logs	5.4	2.9
11.	Hides and skins	4.2	2.2
12.	Groundnut cake	2.7	1.5
13.	Sawn wood and plywood	2.3	1.2
	Total above	167.6	90.6
	Total domestic exports	184.8	100.0

Source: Nigerian Trade Summary December, 1963 (in General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 1965:19).

Three Nigerian export groups amount to more than 20% of total world exports of these commodities (groundnuts and oil, 33% in 1963; palm kernels 49% and palm oil 24% in 1962); in addition, cocoa export from Nigeria represented, in 1963, 17% of world cocoa export. The need to unite against common enemy - colonialism - necessitated O.A.U; the forces of loose union from Monrovia group won because there had been no condition for strong union as economic interests of the West were on the primary products in the immediate post-colonial African states. This constituted the external force that counteracted African unity on continental base and the emergence of shaky unity in the form of O.A.U in 1963. Things have since changed in the neoliberal dominated era of the 21st century. The Nigerian economy; a typical example of other African economies, is now driven by mineral fuels including oil which is dominated by foreign capital.

The present globalization era; the change in the economic interest of the West from primary products to direct investment necessitated and formed external force for the formation of A.U. With the end of the cold war it becomes difficult for a country to negate the private sector as the engine of growth of the economy more especially in the dependent economies of Africa. Steger, (2002:8-9) identified the concept of 'globalization' as the new, dominant buzzword of a capitalist, neoliberal ideological project that draws largely upon

the economic philosophies of Adam Smith (1723-1790), David Ricardo (1772-1823), and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903).

Table 2: NIGERIA MAIN EXPORT COMMODITIES, 2017

S/N	Commodity	Value in US\$	% of Total Export
1.	Mineral fuels including oil	39.1 billion	96
2.	Ships, boats	253.5 million	0.6
3.	Cocoa	238.1 million	0.6
4.	Oil seeds	180.9 million	0.4
5.	Fertilizers	149.8 million	0.4
6.	Tobacco, manufactured substitutes	102.4 million	0.3
7.	Plastics, plastic articles	78.1 million	0.2
8.	Fruits, nuts	76.1 million	0.2
9.	Raw hides, skins not furskins, leather	67.9 million	0.2
10.	Rubber, rubber articles	55.4 million	0.1

Source: <http://www.worldstopexports.com/nigerias-top-10-exports/>

According to Steger, the guiding principles of this neoliberal project include “the primacy of economic growth, the importance of free trade to stimulate growth, the unrestricted free market, individual choice, the reduction of government regulation, and the advocacy of an evolutionary model of social development anchored in the Western experience and applicable to the entire world’ (Steger, 2002:8-9). Steger (2005:26) asserts “that globalism not only represents a set of political ideas and beliefs coherent enough to warrant the status of a new ideology, but also constitutes the dominant ideology of our time against which all of its challengers must define themselves”. The dominance of the neoliberal ideology is made possible by “the rapid descent of conventional ideologies largely caused by such cataclysmic events as the information revolution, the collapse of Soviet-style communism, the 9-11 attacks, and the ensuing US-led global War on Terror”

By the mid-1990s, large segments of the population in the both the global North and South had accepted globalism’s core claims, thus internalizing large parts of an overarching normative framework that advocated the deregulation of markets, the liberalization of trade, the privatization of state-owned enterprises, the dissemination of ‘American values,’ and, after 9-11, the support of the global War on Terror under US leadership (Steger, 2005:14).

The global dominance of capitalism as the preferred system of economic organization, means most of the world’s countries have adopted some variant of capitalism – whether the America’s free market capitalism, China’s state-led capitalism or Nigeria’s crony capitalism...” (Usman in Nwangwu and Onuegbu, 2014:63). The driving idea behind

globalization is free-market capitalism - the more you let market forces rule and the more you open your economy to free trade and competition, the more efficient your economy will be. "Globalization means the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world" (Friedman in Steger, 2005:17).

This neoliberal economic pressure towards integration has not been a feature in Africa alone; Europe also emerged in the 21st century strong with the European Union (E.U). Writing on the imminent dangers of the changing world political and economic system on bifurcated Europe Attlee, cited in Mackay (1961) notes: "There must be recognition of an international authority superior to the individual states and endowed not only with rights over them but with power to make them effective, operating not only in the political but the economic sphere, Europe must federate or perish".

Europe cannot be said to be in a more precarious situation than Africa in the prevailing world order - Globalization. An integration of Africa in its precise form will broaden the basis of her economy; eliminate customs barriers and competing currencies and enable the basic industries to serve a larger market. By changing from O.A.U. to A.U. African leaders thus, intends to build stable polity, minimize crisis and military rule, to provide a fertile ground for Western capital investment, proffered by IMF and World Bank as the only solution to Africa's underdevelopment. The new African leaders are trying to give the Union power to deal with political and economic questions that affect economic relations with the West, hoping to increase economic prosperity and political strength, which are important in the prevailing world order. Thus, the target is to build a market sphere.

The study examines the forces that are driving the 21st century neo pan-Africanism. Our attention is focused on the forces from Foreign Direct Investment emanating from neo-liberal ideology termed globalization, policies from institutional agents of neo-colonialism, IMF, World Bank, and the demise of former Soviet Union. One major cause of concern is whether A.U has met a setback in the face of seemingly resistance against globalization in the West: UK leaving the EU, US returning to trade barriers/tariffs. If argued that it is the forces from direct investment emanating from neo-liberal ideology termed globalization that is driving African continental unity in the 21st century, it is assumed that a push back against the core tenets of the globalization process being witnessed in the west will have an adverse effect on the said unity.

The West and Developments in Africa

Karl Marx in his book 'Capital' theorized that society evolve through contradictions and revolution (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/>). Lenin, writing in his book 'Imperialism as the last stage of colonialism' (1917) revealed why revolution did not occur in Europe as predicted by Karl Marx (European expansion through imperialism and colonization improved the condition of workers in Europe and transferred the contradictions abroad) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/>). In his

book *Neo-colonialism* Nkrumah, (1965) depicts why the expected revolutionary development in the post-colonial Africa did not occur. The departing imperialists have planted her agents of neo-colonialism in forms of puppet government, multinational companies' among others to continue the perpetual exploitation of the former colonial economy. This explained why development and structural change in Africa that was expected to be revolutionary became reactionary: depending on the happenings in the West.

Dependency theory explains the post-colonial African politics in terms of their dependent economic structure and parasitic class development; according to Ake, (1981) 'an economy is dependent to the extent that its position and relations to other economies in the international system and the articulation of its internal structure makes it incapable of auto centric development.' In that regard Chabal, (1992:223) notes that the relevance of the model lay in the historical similarity between post-colonial countries 'dependent' for their economic development on the capitalist core of which the former colonial countries were the central part.

Coined by Brazilian sociologist Fernando Henrique Cardoso, dependency simply states that crucial economic decisions are made not by the countries that are being 'developed' but by the foreigners whose interest are carefully safeguarded. Thus; by dependence, African states are incapable of self-sustained development and massively unable to meet the needs of local population. 'Power' is in the hand of the ruling classes whose economic hegemony derives from their role as the hand maidens of the capitalists from the core countries (Chabal, 1992:21). Decolonization was seen not as the prelude to economic self-determination, but merely as a process by which political control passed from colonial masters to dependent African rulers - a process dubbed neo-colonialism. The rulers became agents of neo-colonialism; the state structure ensured they became the local managers of the dependent economy.

The price of dependence is that the structure of African states must adjust whether they like it or not to meet the changes in the western capitalist economies. The Africa's leaders have not; in fact, made a revolutionary change by transforming the OAU to AU but changed to play complementary roles in a rapidly globalizing world. In the light of the above assertions, the primary moving force for the formation of A.U. may not be seen in the problems in Africa or attempts to integrate to solve the problems by her leaders but the moving force of globalization. The change in the main stream interest from primary mineral and agricultural products in Africa to direct investment necessitated a change in the role of the comprador bourgeoisie ruling class in Africa, to maintain peace and stability that will encourage foreign investments.

Forces of Change

Our major argument is that all attempts to tinker with Africa's peripheral marginal location and role in the world capitalist system can at best be reactionary. The gist of the

whole thing is that the 21st century ushered in the period of neo-globalization, which goes with increasing interdependency and Direct Foreign Investment. The role and structure of the dependent dominant class and socio-political and economic system in Africa must undergo a change. It is; thus, our contention here that with the forces of democratization and liberalization, the abandonment of socialist ideology in the Eastern Europe, which necessitated the loss of allies for the African leaders (Socialist apologists), changes in the policies of African states depended on the happenings in the West. The future of African unity; therefore, will depends on the fate of globalization in Europe and America.

Declining Earnings from Main Export Crops

The interest of western collaborator is no longer on raw materials but direct investment. Africa's share of and earning in world trade for its main export crops suffer continuous decrease, and the demise of the Soviet Union means aid loss to socialist apologist.

Table 3: AFRICA'S SHARE OF AND CHANGES IN WORLD TRADE FOR ITS MAIN EXPORT CROPS, 1970

Crop	1970-79	1980-89	1990-97	Annual Change 1970-97
Banana	6	3	4	-3.3
Cocoa	59	45	40	-2.0
Coffee	28	22	14	-3.1
Cotton	13	11	12	-0.2
Groundnut	40	8	5	-10.2
Rubber	6	6	5	-0.5
Sugar	6	6	8	-0.2
Tea	15	15	19	1.3
Tobacco	8	9	12	1.7

Source: World Bank Report, (2000:192)

Compared to the period of 1970-79 one will see a drastic fall in quantity and value of exchange in Africa's main raw (Agric) materials. 'Over the years from 1970-1997 there had been both decreases on the metric tons export of agricultural products and the export value. Where there is increase in production the percentage of total merchandise export value had been decreasing owing to the poor stand of agricultural products and fluctuation of price in the international market' (The World Bank, 1989:249). 'Africa's share of world trade has fallen from about five percent in 1980 to about 2.5 percent in 1993' (Odozi, 1997). Technology change continued to put long-run pressure on primary commodity prices. 'The region accounts for barely 1 percent of global GDP and about 2 percent of world trade. Its share of global manufactured exports is almost zero. Over the past 30 years, it has lost

market share in global trade-even in traditional primary goods and failed to diversify on any scale' (The World Bank, 200:2008).

Table 4: PERCENTAGE SHARE IN AFRICAN EXPORTS BY SECTOR, 1995; 2010

Exports	% Share in African exports	
	1995	2010
Live animals and animal products	2.8	1.2
Vegetable products	6.9	3.6
Animal or vegetable fats and oils	0.7	0.4
Prepared foodstuffs and beverages	5.9	4.2
Mineral products	41.2	58.9
Products of chemical industries	4.9	3.6
Plastic, rubber and articles thereof	1.1	1.1
Raw hides and skins, leather, and articles thereof	0.8	0.5
Wood and articles thereof	2.5	0.8
Pulp of wood and articles thereof	1.3	0.8
Textiles and articles thereof	9.5	3.7
Footwear, headgear, umbrellas etc; feathers and articles thereof	0.5	0.3
Articles of stone, plaster, cement etc.	0.3	0.4
Pearls, precious stone, metals and articles thereof	8.7	6.7
Base metal and articles thereof	7.9	7.4
Machinery and mechanical appliances; electrical equipment	2.9	3.7
Vehicles, aircraft, vessels and transport equipment	1.3	2.4
Optical and medical instruments; clocks and watches; musical instruments	0.3	0.2
Arms and ammunition	00	00
Miscellaneous manufactured articles	0.6	0.3
Art works and antique	00	00

Source: *Extracted from International Trade Centre (ITC) (2012:4).*

Highlighted are sectors which have increased their share in African exports or where Africa has increased its market share in the world. Significant increase can only be seen in the mineral products sector which attracts mainly foreign capital.

OAU Charter

Certain key principles that were advocated by the O.A.U Charter became irrelevant with regard to prevailing realities of globalization which thrives in a stable environment. These principles as stated in Article 3 of the O.A.U Charter are: a) non-interference in the internal affairs of states, b) respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence, c) Affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocs. The first of these three principles implies the non-involvement of

either the O.A.U or member states in the internal affair of other member states. The second principle implies the recognition of the sovereignty of African nation states and the maintenance of territorial boundaries as they were inherited from colonial powers. The third principle is premised on the existence of alliance and contending ideological blocs in the international system. All have become irrelevant in the face of new world order.

The Demise of the Soviet Union

The abandonment of socialist ideology in Eastern and Western Europe, the sudden and unexpected collapse of the socialist socio-economic system and the ideology attracted triumphant reaction of capitalist over socialism from the west and marked an end to cold war and arms race. The effect of these on African countries that have for long heavily relied on the political and economic support of the Soviet Union and the removal of threat of communist expansion, which influenced United State/Western aid to Africa over the years cannot be overemphasized. 'The collapse of Soviet Union and socialist ideology left many third world countries in a dilemma. The developing societies characterized by lack of dynamic modernizing class, weak colonial institutional inheritance and poorly integrated national economies were left with option of abandoning the state centered development strategies and renegotiate a new insertion into the global economics of 21st century' (Onu, 2003:123).

After World War II, Africa became a strategic and ideological battleground where external powers sought reliable allies rather than effective development partners. The end of the cold war signaled a reduction in external support for peace keeping and in aid flows due to waning geopolitical competition. The democratization of Eastern Europe and some of them joining E.U. and NATO reduced African competition for aid. 'Since 1990 foreign assistance from the United States has fallen 20 percent in real terms. The composition of aid flow is shifting from project assistance and structural adjustment loans toward humanitarian assistance and peace building. Competition for aid has intensified, partly because transition economics in Eastern Europe are now also competing for aid. Africa has been a loser in these trends. 'In 1980s, it was envisaged that aid to Africa would grow in real terms. But net transfer per capita has fallen sharply from \$32 in 1990 to \$19 in 1998' (The World Bank, 2000:236). 'U.S. aid to Africa has undergone a steady decline in recent years. Whereas sub-Saharan Africa receives an average of \$700 million from the U.S 1990-98, down from \$841 million in 1992, Israel's aid increased from \$3 billion to \$5.5 billion in the same period. What is more revealing is that in Fiscal year 1999, sub-Saharan Africa is allocated only \$155 million compared to \$225 million to Bosnia alone' (Adar, 1998:40). One major factor is Africa's lower strategic importance since the end of the cold war.

Crisis of Globalization

The current crisis of globalization in the west, Brexit, Trump economic policies is going to slowdown the pace of greater integration in Africa. Brinded, (in Cox, 2017:10) notes that

'Brexit, President Trumps victory are cause for worry, as well as the recent rise of 'anti-system, populist' and 'quite extreme political parties' in western Europe not just because of the threat it posed to Europe alone but to globalization more generally'. 'Brexit heralds not just Britain's exit from the European Union but the decline and maybe fall of the twentieth century ideal of a liberal, globalised world' (Micheal, 2018:20). The tenets of globalization are now being questioned in the rich and democratic west which clearly constitutes a threat to the world order and will definitely slow down the pace of African integration.

In US, Donald Trump is advocating protectionist trade barriers, renegotiating NAFTA, (The North American Free Trade Agreement) and raising import tariffs against Chinese goods and goods from other selected countries. The ripple effect on African unity driven by the market forces is obvious. Ray Dalio (<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/01/the-end-of-globalization-davos-disagrees/>) has predicted more protectionism, perhaps the reversal of the trend in the 90s of trade agreement and globalization as one of the implications of US President Donald Trump's economic policies. This is already happening in Africa. Countries are backing out of signing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCTA). Eleven countries including Nigeria, South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia, Burundi, Eritrea, Benin, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau did not sign the deal. South Africa later signed. 'The AFCTA is an economic imperative to address the challenge of small and fragmented markets. It is also being established at a time when the multilateral system is facing challenges' (Davies, 2018), the time of 'popular backlash against open markets' in the west, an 'era of deglobalization' (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jul/28/era-globalisation-brexit-eu-britain-economic-frustration>). It is not just Trump who has attacked trade deals such as NAFTA and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). In Europe too there would seem to be less and less support for TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership), while the UK, voted to get out of the largest single market in the world (Cox, 2017:10).

According to Benedict Oramah, the Afrexim president, (<https://www.ft.com/content/1c153802-2d0f-11e8-9b4b-bc4b9f08f381>), 'Africa had little choice but to integrate because most economies on the continent were too small to compete globally, particularly in a climate of rising isolationism. 'Africa is in a very, very strong position to buck the anti-globalization trend, to grow its market even as others protect themselves'. The fact still remains that AU is as a result of the change in the global international economic order which is generally referred to as globalization – where direct investment replaced the sought for raw materials and mineral resources. It is our contention that forces of globalization and its promotion of direct investment which thrives in a peaceful environment pushed Africa to unite more in the form of AU. With the current happenings in the West: nationalist politicians seeing globalization as the source of closed factories, stagnant wages, and unwanted migrants; the U.S. pulling out of international pacts on

climate change and turning protectionist on trade; and the British abandoning European Union, the effect of these new trends will slow down the pace of greater African unity.

Conclusion

The major argument in this paper has been that though A.U. marked an improvement in attempt to integrate Africa; the driving forces are external - to meet the change in the capitalist derived neo-liberal world order – globalization. The commitment to dependent industrialization based on direct foreign investment, and the ability to attract transnational capital into African society pushed African leaders to a greater unity in the form of African Union. It seems; though, we are already witnessing post - neoliberal or post-globalization era. The tenets of globalization are now being questioned in the rich and democratic west which clearly constitutes a threat this vision.

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Biographical Note

Ambrose Ihekwoaba EGWIM, PhD., is a lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun state, Nigeria.
Email: egwima@run.edu.ng, ambroseegwim@yahoo.com Mobile: +234 8032750131