

Book review: African Political Thought

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The book begins with a critical analysis of the Political ideology of indigenous African Political systems and institutions from antiquity to the nineteenth century. The author begins with a claim that highly advanced civilization had existed through out the continent even before the advent of the Christian era. African institutions were based on kingship and lineage system sanctioned by founding myth in all African societies. Thus, it is believed that religion is not separable from social and political life in sacred and secular spheres. Thus, political organization was governed by rules and procedures not formally documented but known and respected by all- even Kings could not make laws on their own without the consent and approval of the council. The Political system also adopted democratic principles such as checks and balances, majority rule where even commoners were free to express their opinion in public gathering, principle of organized succession devoid of ethnic and family competition and rivalry which helped to eliminate the unfit from the corridors of power

Chiefs mediated between the past, the present and the future and their legitimacy and authority was ancestral while other leaders were appointed from the royal lineage and they constituted the inner or privy council. The author notes that the pre-colonial African society operated a decentralized Political system where each clan was allowed to manage its own affairs. This ensured balance between the Central authority and the Regional Governments in decision making. Thus, rulers ruled only as long as they complied with customs and the will of the people. This made leaders accountable to the people they ruled.

An elaborate system of checks and balances meant that the leader must take the advise of two principal bodies representing the aristocratic class and the commoners

respectively but when agreement is not reached, the village assembly is summoned. Women also played a key role on African societies and political system and institutions. Various institutions were created for the peaceful resolution of conflicts with emphasis on the principles of customs, tradition, fairness and promotion of social harmony.

The author analyzed the influence of Islamic values and ideas of indigenous African Political system and institutions from the nineteenth century. By 1100, Islam had ceased to be the exclusive Arab religion. It had acclimatized with many African regions making the 7th to 11th century the Islamic age in Africa. Egypt was the starting point of the conquest of Maghreb and the centre of cultural life leading to the introduction of Islamic government in the caliphate. This, according to the author is closely linked to the fact that Egypt was a trade route from the Mediterranean and the Indian sea. To prevent being sold as slaves, many Africans converted to Islam. Thus, Berber sold Islamism to North Africa and western Sudan by first introducing it to the commercial class before the elite class. Thus, both class became part of the Islamic movement thereby fusing Islamic values with African culture and practices. Though Islam spread by conquest, this was only popular in lake Chad region, Southern Ethiopia with the Dyula, Soinke, Hausa and Dyakharke being the first converts to Islam. Since it was born in the commercial city of Mecca, Islam provided a set of ethical and practical rules to business activities. Thus, the blue print for the formation for a moral community of business men was provided by Islam.

Thus, Islam in West Africa appeared in series of urban-commercial centres with the peasants mainly influenced. It had to contend with many non Islamic traditions but gained popularity when it was adopted by kings, chiefs and emperors who mixed the religion with their tradition or forcefully imposed it on their people where necessary by waging the holy war on infidels. As such, jihad became a blend of the book and the gun. This led to social, religious and political revolutions that saw the establishment of theocratic states in Futa Jalon, Sokoto and the Central Niger Bend which existed and thrived until the British took over. In Mali, Islamization of the rulers was facilitated in the 13th century by the general security that prevailed, the activities of Mushin Scholars and the use of language and other culture elements that gave it the colouration of African religion.

In Nigeria, Islamic missionaries who came from Mali by the second half of the 15th century established strong trading presence in such cities as Kano and Katsina. It was not initially

accepted but gradually it gained prominence among the people. As such, Islam became part of African civilization by the activities of the Arabs and Berber with such practices as community life (umma), a cult of diviners and healers (Sulfism). These elements of metaphysical convergence that combined culture, religion and life to form a single whole made it easy for Africans to quickly fit into the Islamic faith. Some areas of conflict like changing from matrilineality to patrilineality, morals and ethics and the introduction of some Islamic values by Sonni Aliber between 1496 and 1528 to govern western Sudan brought the severest conflict between Islam and indigenous African practice.

The author turns to the works of a foremost Islamic cleric Ibn Khaldun who is largely regarded as the father of the social sciences, history and political realism. His works essentially provided the transition from classical theory to modern theory. Khaldun rejects the notion that contemporary civilization was better than the past. For him, it was simply the decay of the power of Political organizations and power of government. Thus, casabiyah was the emergence of the state driven by reason rather than passion.

It would have suffice to highlight all efforts (If any) made to introduce Islam in other parts of Nigeria and how these attempts were greeted and if no efforts were made at all, the criteria used by these missionaries to secure the acceptance of their religion in the Northern area where it was introduced would have been noted also.

The Europeans had conceived Africa as the dark continent occupied by primitive and backward people to whom they owe the duty of civilizing. The real motive of the imperial colonial project was disguised and justified under humanitarian principles and the benefits of western civilization to Africans. The ideas of France and that of Britain were essentially similar. While France claimed the superiority of its values over the rest of the world with the adoption of assimilation and association to govern its colonies. Britain was essentially interested in economic expansion thus adopted indirect rule system. Accordingly, the works of classical scholars led to the introduction of political liberalism requiring the administration of states like a business venture thereby limiting the function of the state to maintenance of law and order because of the innate goodness and perfection of man. By the end of the nineteenth century, two development alternatives were opened to Africa. First, was the complete rejection of modernization. Second, was the acceptance of modernization that is grounded on African culture and traditions. According to Edward Blyden, Africa had a unique tradition that was in no way inferior to that of the whites. He sought to create the unique African personality and the unity of

African people. James Horton campaigned for Africa development along European lines. Thus, he openly campaigned for self government by west African states pointing to the various progress made by African slaves in Sierra Leone. This led to the formation of the Fanti Confederation. Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford advocated for a regional west Africa that necessarily maintained the African nature and content. This led to the establishment of the National Congress of British West African made up of nationals from these West African states. He advocated the reform of the colonial system rather than self determination or independence. Kofi Abrefa Busia noted that most African states are authoritarian, with weak opposition which is a colonial heritage of the British imperialist. Thus, what is considered western democratic principles are universal and can be institutionalized in any culture including Africa but this has remained illusive in Africa because of the inability to integrate different tribes into a modern democratic nation. Kenneth David Kaunda's political ideology was hinged on non-violence and humanitarianism which was mainly influenced by the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mahatma Ghandi and Kwame Nkrumah.

The discussion on Pan Africanism and African Unity from ideal to practice concerns the first 15yrs of African struggles for a federation. From the author's work, it is clear that the reasons offered for the failure to reconfigure the African state by different scholars are tenable but why that of Sheik Anta Diop or any other African theorist was not adopted was not clearly stated. Though there are contending views on pan Africanism, its central thrust is the regrouping and mobilization of Africans to reclaim their cultural, political and economic heritage that came in two key phases. The ideal and the home coming. It moved from ideals to practical Politics following the return of Kwame Nkrumah to Ghana in 1947 and Ghana's attainment of sovereignty. Thus, the ideal of this radical movement was contained in the African Charter of 1961 with Nkrumah's 'Africa must unite' serving as its political manifesto. Thus, Pan Africanism was aimed at achieving Continental African Unity based on common banking, economy, money, military, parliament, foreign policy, common market. It is to be pointed out that no mention or emphasis was made on common religion or ethnic parameters which are ordinarily balkanizing tendencies wrecking the political and economic stability of member states. Though, these issues were later addressed by Cheik Anta Diop. Notably, the radical pan Africanism conceived by Muammar Qaddafi became unrealizable as the union resulting therefrom was modelled after the European union.

The gradualist which the 1963 OAU represented, advocates African integration based on cooperation in non controversial technical and economic areas guided by the principles of sovereignty, noninterference, and inviolability of borders. This was a victory for the gradualist. Thus, there would be need to reconfigure Africa into a federal state that unites the Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone Africa with a common African language for all official relationships. His ideas as well as that of Nkrumah were informed by their pan African stinct but they differed because of their profession-the former a scientist the later a politician. This brand of African federalism would be confronted with some theoretical challenges. This was the focus of the work of Mac Ropivia who proposed a bistrate nuclei or a federative dyad where two states that share common historical antecedents would form a nucleus which eventually lead to a federal state in Africa. Thus, six of the dyad was recommended. The Kenyan activist Makauwamutua recommends the collapsing of the present 55 African states into 15 viable federations on the basis of historical commonness. Arthur Gakwandi proposed a seven state instead arguing that the current weak stance of Africa in work politics is political rather than economic hence the need to redraw African map. Joseph ki Zerbo adds his three pyramid citizenship and language to it. The idea of Daniel Kle draws from the pan African dream of Nkrumah but adds that an African High Command and Youth Organization should be formed to support the drive. Mwakikagile felt the solution is in the formation of an African confederation or African federal government that will begin with economic integration and eventual political union.

PelleDanabo on the other hand pulled together the key elements of earlier theorists and concludes that an African democracy rooted on African values and traditions hold the key because what is common to all African states and capable of binding them together is their collective history of suffering and affliction in the modern world. (Page 66, paragraph 1,line 5). Apart from this commonness, what happens to such other dynamics like population, economic viability, language and culture that normally creates superiority of one state above and over the other. This issue was left unaddressed.

The author proceeds to discuss the socialist-ideology. Part one covers the period of Patrice Lumumba to Samora Machel. Amilcar Cabral sets the tone for the discussion with the assertion that nobody has ever had a successful revolution without a revolution theory. The concept of populist-socialism was borrowed from Crawford Young who defined it as states that espouse the socialist ideology without necessarily discarding

Marxism. The focus here is on socialist thoughts. The author begins with the ideas of Patrice Emery Lumumba who led the struggle for the independence of Congo but was murdered six months after the country gained independence. The Murder Which was masterminded by the Belgian and their U.S allies under the watch of Moise Tsombe made Lumumba a symbol of anti colonial struggle in the world. His political ideas moved from moderate to radical position as was greatly influenced by the likes of Nkrumah, Fanon, Toure etc. Moves were essentially aimed at liberating Congo from external domination. Hence, he advocates the revalorization of African culture with a mixture of the positive element that brings all Africans in unified parties based on the peculiarity of the African personality. All these according to Lumumba would be embodied in concrete decision and actions. The author highlighted some facts about Ahmed Ben Bella and the adoption of the one and only party of progress in Algeria rooted on the Marxist and socialist ideology. The adoption of agricultural policy that favours the peasant majority and a foreign policy thrust rooted on neutrality was also advocated. Bella believed in South-south cooperation and this helped in the formation of the Organization of African Unity.

In our opinion, the overthrow of Bella's regime by the west through the military in June 1965 should not be left to guess or speculation as the author opines. Western antecedents relating to the overthrow of regimes in the Maghrebs and other African countries more often than not is tied to oil and any state policy that runs counter to this western interest will certainly attract the fight of the west. Hence, the collapse of the regime cannot be unconnected to the anti-west policies of Bella.

Amilca Cabral died a year before the independence of Guinea Bissau from Portugal in 1974 following a successful coup that brought his brother- Luis Cabral as the first President. According to Amilca Cabral, it is difficult if not impossible to run a revolutionary movement without strong ideological standpoint rooted in the local historical experience of the people. This is to be rooted in violence since that was the very nature of colonial rule. Like Frantz Fanon, he emphasized a return to the source and a destruction of imperialist domination characterized by cultural oppression to which Africans were subjected. This would create the new man and new society polished by the socialist path to development. Thus, nationalism not communism was his goal but this was to be rooted on what he called developmental nationalism based on the material advancement of the people.

To Samora Machel, without reactionary theory that is all inclusive, there was no basis for revolutionary movement that would achieve the perceived goals. He was one of the foremost revolutionary thinkers and activists in Mozambique who made serious efforts to lift Mozambique from economic and political independence from South Africa and Portugal respectively. His adoption of mixed economy in place of the doctrine of Marxism contributed to the collapse of his administration. Machel like his counterparts, was influenced by the effects of the repressive colonial policies of Portugal mixed with the dialectical relationship between Theory and practice. To him, power belongs to the people and those who exercise it on behalf of the people are at all times servants of the people. Thus, he speaks of military, politics and economic democracy but emphasized the primacy of politics over other realms of national life. Again, Machel stressed the need for internal democracy, self-reliant development strategy rooted on the interests of the masses in form and contents with strong base in village or community participation.

Suffice it to note that all the countries surveyed in this chapter (Algeria, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique) achieved independence through armed struggle but those who led the struggle to enthrone socialist-populist ideology never lived long to fully pursue their goal or enjoy the gains of their struggles.

The socialist populist ideology adopted by African leaders to administer their territories was considered in a second phase in chapter six. Kwame Nkrumah and Sekou Toure were more autocratic than other African leaders. They believed that the economic problem in Africa requires political solution. Nkrumah believed in nationalism that is rooted in the works of Karl Marx and stressed the need to practice one's ideology. Accordingly, Marxism was a tool to solve the local problems of Ghana rather than an end in itself as it offered solution to the problem of organizing the anti colonial struggle. Nkrumah summarized socialism as common ownership of the means of production and exchange, planned method of production by the state, Political power in the hands of the people and the application of scientific methods in all spheres of production. But the independence of Ghana would be meaningless unless the entire Africa is emancipated from colonialism. With his background in Christian theology, Nkrumah stressed the need for the emergence of an indigenous humanistic African principles that caters for the needs of all. This he called philosophical consciencism. Nkrumah also canvassed African socialism and democratic centralism that revolves around the people. Closely linked to this ideological stance was the ideas of Ahmed Sekou Toure who for twenty six years

ruled Guinea as one of the most controversial leaders Africa ever had. Though greatly influenced by the Marxist-Leninist philosophy, Toure refused to launch Guinea on any ideological platform-capitalism or socialism. Thus, he argued that, rather than dissipate energy on ideology, whatever ideology they are should serve as a tool to mobilize the mass of Guineans towards economic and political development. However, in 1967, socialism was adopted as the official state ideology and seen as a means rather than an end in itself. As such, the Democratic Party of Guinea which represents the people's party became the custodian of the popular will, the refiner of the people's interest and the incarnation of the collective thought of the people. Thus, operated democratic centralism which allows for popular participation at the highest decision making level. Guinea's development was based on the principles of mixed economy since the leader himself has a mixture of African, Western, Marxian and Socialist political thought. He adopted a rulership style that was highly personalized; built on a political party that was stronger than the state itself and this collapsed his administration.

Modibo Keita became the first President of Mali after occupying series of political positions in the French government. Under his leadership, Mali took the path of socialism but this only lasted between 1960 to 1968. The brand of its socialism was based on agricultural workers rather than a non-existent peasant; a vibrant private sector and respect for Malian spiritual and cultural values. It was a modification of socialism to suite the Malian context. As such, one party state was adopted and highest decision making body was the executive arm of the party-The National Political Bureau. The granting of political power to a militia group led to the overthrow of the political system by the military which lasted for over 23 years. This gradually snowballed into the break up of the short lived Federation of Mali and its subsequent independence in 1960.

Julius Kambarage Nyeyere was born in 1922. He became one of the most respected African intellectuals that ever lived comparable only to Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. In 1964 he formed the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) which became the platform for his political ascendance. Nyeyere like his Malian, Ghanian and Guineans counterpart adopted socialism built around one party state. In 1977, he announced the merger of TANU and Zanzibar afro Shirazi party into a single national party called Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). In 1967 he proclaimed the Arusha declaration encapsulated in the concept of family hood (Ujamaa) as the guiding principle for the brand of socialism that Tanzania will pursue. This to him was neither capitalism or

socialism but a peculiar way of life adopted for Tanzanians. On this basis, Nyeere differed significantly from Nkrumah and Keitta in their ideological constructs. He opposed private land ownership-a basic feature of capitalism and argued that land in all African society belongs to the community and can be used by private persons on the permission of the king albeit on need basis. Thus, socialism like democracy to him, was an attitude of the mind that centres on the man himself. This should return African states to how it was originally organized before contact with external dynamics. The Arusha Declaration was therefore based on satisfying the basic needs of man in the society and to achieve this goal, the state must have effective control over the means of production. This however failed because of forced villagization, absence of participation, alienation from the state, bureaucritization, class differentiation, low production among others. The foreign policy thrust was based on two action plan: the support for the liberation movement in Southern African and the dethronement of dictatorial Ugandan Idi Amin which he frantically pursued with success. The author rightly noted that Julius Nyeere was really one dedicated, humble and hardworking leader Africa ever had that was committed to justice, equity and socio economic development but these features alas were not enough to ensure that Tanzania would continue along the road mapped out at the beginning of his career. From the author's view, it is clear that Nkrumah, Toure, Keitta and Nyeere had a common deep abiding faith in the power of African socialism to radically and durably transform their societies in a way that would satisfy the basic economic and social needs of their people.

Page 99 paragraph 3, line 6 should read " Nyeere did not hesitate to create...and not "did not hesitated to create..." page 101, paragraph 3, line 1 should read ...and 'as' NOT ... and 'has' Nyeere himself later acknowledged.

The populist-Socialist ideology was extensively discussed in chapter seven. The focus of the study was essentially a detailed discourse of the political, economic and cultural dimensions of the populist socialist ideology from a populist perspective from early 1960s till date. The author began with the Algerian scholar, activist and philosopher- Frantz Fanon. At the tender age of 36, Frantz Fanon had made his mark in the history of Algeria before his death. Fanonianism is practically divided into two: that which focuses on Fanon's social and political thought and that which centres on the life, times and thought from postmodernist and post colonial perspectives which is the main stay of the author of this book. Practically, Fanon notes that the main danger that threaten African states is

the absence of ideology. Fanon supported the adoption of socialism because man was the most precious of creation. Fanon's populist conception of democracy is based on accountability, decentralization and political education. The party itself should be decentralized in order to be the concrete expression of the will of the people. To Fanon, the existence of national culture, national life and cultural innovation is only conceivable in a country that is totally liberated from all forms of colonial domination. Thus, decolonization is the creation of the new man that gives equal room to women, youth and sports in nation building process.

Thus, Africa's development will ultimately be bottom up and people-driven. The author observed that this line of thought is similar to Nyeyere's Ujamaa and Nkrumah's call for a United State of Africa. By this, Fanon opened to African people an alternative path to development aside western liberal democracy. He emphasized a complete breaking away from European values to the creation of indigenous ideas, culture, institutions and practices base on the peculiarities of African values.

Like Fanon, Thomas Sankara was a perfect blend of thought and praxis. From the works of Lenin especially the state and revolution and his exposure in various military academies, Ankara was able to stage the coup that brought him to power. On assumption of office, he changed the country's name from Upper Volta to Burkina Faso meaning the land of the upright men at the age of 35years and subsequently launched the first five years development plan ever had in the country. However, fractions of disagreement on the nature of the proposed single party and who will be in charge of Sankara personal security led to a counter coup that brought his friend Blais Campaore to power in 1987. The author observed that Sankara upheld the significance of Political ideology as a tool to analyze societal realities. This ideology was not communism as portrayed in western media.

Like other Pan Africa theorists, Sankara believes the people are the main actors and should be the main beneficiary of the revolution in Burkina Faso. Its aim was to build a free and prosperous society by taking power from the national bourgeois allied with imperialism and giving same to the people that make up the popular class. Women will be equally involved. The National Revolutionary Council and the Revolutionary Defense Committee were the two major institutions to help actualize this mandate. Thus, Sankara's conception of African Unity was based on the fact that it will be brought about

by the people not by the government. Unfortunately, Sankara did not live long to actualize his dream in Burkina Faso but blazed a trail that would surge blithely forward.

The author turns attention to Muammar Qaddafi. Born in Sirte, Libya, he seized power from king Idris 1 in 1969 and since then remained in power until 2011 when he was forced out of office by western military intervention. Qaddafi changed the country's constitution and introduced a set of laws based on the Third Universal Theory contained in his green book. This theory was to serve as a viable alternative to western liberal democracy, capitalism and Marxism which Libya had before now. It had three basic strands that includes solution to the problem of democracy, solution to economic problem and the social basis of the third universal theory. With few evidences especially the bombing of a pan-Am airliner in 1988 resulting in the death of over 270 persons, Qaddafi was branded a terrorist and the mad dog of the Middle East. This led to the forceful overthrow of his government and the taking over of power by a weak, ineffective National Transition Council.

Thus, Qaddafi's green book denounced representative democracy and presents direct democracy instead. This type of democracy gives political power and rulership to the most powerful-the people. Qaddafi proposed socialism as the way out of economic problems. From a detailed criticism of capitalism, he argued that the entire productive effort in a state must be directed to satisfying the needs of the people but this cannot be realized except in conditions of spiritual and material freedom of man. The third universal theory argues that the national factor and the social glue that ensures the cohesion of every social group in the society is the prime mover or factor of progress in the history of mankind. He believes in gender equality but division of labour based on sex. Educationally, students should be free to choose their subjects and the black rule should be preeminent in the world. Qaddafi advocated the existence an African union that is not modelled after the European Union with such institutions that perform the exact role their western counterparts play in the sole interest of Africa. He took some practical steps to ensure the unity of African states liking the grand scheme of linking African rivers, roadnetworks and oil refineries as well as the return to the gold standard as the international media of exchange and specifically the adoption of Libya's currency as the currency for Africa states. This move which was attempted by former French President, Charles de Gualle was perhaps the cause of his death by U.S led NATO and

allied forces. The rule of the people by themselves was Qaddafi's greatest legacy for the Libyan state.

With this perfect attempt by the author to marshal out the ideological persuasions of Muammar Qaddafi, a step further would have been necessary to enlighten readers of his achievements. An attempt to chronicle the goals he was able to achieve in view of the length of years spent in the office before his eventful demise would have sufficed. This notwithstanding, the chapter is a critical survey of the intellectual prowess and praxis of these African stars.

At age thirty, Bantu Stephen Biko, founder of and ideologue of African Consciousness died in South African Prison resulting from brain damage having being detained on grounds of terrorism. Thus, works done about him by Richard Attenborough and Donald Wood brought the focus of his activism to a world wide audience. Basically, his concept of Black Consciousness was a synthesis of the Political philosophy of the three main black nationalist movements in South Africa. From this synthesis, Biko proposed it's successor. Black Consciousness thus became both psychological and cultural liberation of South Africans from white domination. It dealt with rebuilding and reconditioning the mind to demand what was rightfully theirs.

The second step would involve creating for themselves a new identity and pride. It involves invention revaluing of their culture, religion, values and so on and the simultaneous rejection of the white establishment of those as negative and primitive. He saw the present state of South Africa as an extension of Europe into Africa. Thus, black theology became necessary to pursue the intents and purposes of black Consciousness. In fact seminary students were the most ardent pursuers of the black theory and it's application. Through the agency of South African Students Association, black Consciousness became institutionalized. It fought against fake integration and Liberal ideology pursued by the white and pursued vigorously the ideology of self definition, self determination and self reliance enforced by the use of the term black and rejection of the term non whites. To be black transcends pigmentation to reflect mental attitude. Biko's greatest legacy to South Africa and the black race in general was perhaps the black Consciousness that was synonymous to freedom for the black men which he vigorously pursued.

The Africanist-Populist ideology with particular focus on Democracy and Development in Africa was considered in Chapter eight. The call was essentially on Africa to discard all forms of dependence since the solution to their problem lies within. Theorists here refused to operate within the western, socialist or Marxist-Leninist persuasion. Daniel Tetteh OsabuKle notes that only a democracy that is compatible with the African cultural environment can work to develop Africa. As such, African leaders must work hard to modify and adapt indigenous African political systems and institutions to fit the circumstances of modern political life. He suggests a consociational arrangement that is all inclusive and responsive to the needs of the people. Thus, the reformed political system he called jaku democracy would possess some features which Daniel Kle clearly discussed and supported from his six country sample study. All this will be facilitated by the fostering of a truly African man through mass education programme as opposed to ethnic or nationalistic mindset. This call is similar to that made by Steve Biko and Franz Fanon and the afrocentrism and United States of Africa of Kwame Nkrumah.

From this, the author turns to the works of Claude Ake. Ake was one of Africa's most brilliant, original and prolific Political Scientists who emerged to prominence in the 1970s. He was first among many to openly challenge the nature and contents of western Social Science scholarship brazenly bequeathed to Africa. With sound background in Economics, Ake carefully blended theory and practice especially that rooted on revolutionary commitment in the socio economic empowerment of the African people. Ake's brand of Orthodox Marxism was influenced by the uncommon concentration of Marxist scholars in the University of Dares Salaam where he was a visiting Professor. His paradigm shift was Africanism. The idea of representative democracy to him repudiates the very core of the traditional meaning of democracy. He argues that the political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediments to development. Ake shares the same thought with Kofi Busia that the states in Africa were imposed from without -being institutions engrafted from the core to the periphery. Thus, the development agenda was also the product of expatriates who thought that the idea of development was implicitly a matter of being western. This results in a weak African elite and failure of the development project in Africa. Thus, African development must be people centered and driven and must be based on popular development strategy, self reliance and self realization. By this, Ake reveals the source of Africa's social, economic and political crisis and propose the broad outline that would lead her out of this condition. This line of thought links up with that of Godfrey Mwakikagile. He was a Tanzanian prolific author

whose major interest was on post colonial African history, politics and economy. From the statist approach, he argued that African states in spite of formal independence, still retains the essential features of colonialism. Clearly, African states have pockets of military formations to protect and preserve its suppressive tendencies and this has become the most dominant variable in contemporary African politics. This and many other problems of Africa calls for a practical solution along federal lines with strong emphasis on devolution of power to regions and ethno states. This federal union will begin from economic integration and would follow the stipulations recommended by Mwakikagile to ultimately become a political union. To him, secession and other forms of civil unrest in Africa will be laid to rest if power eventually returns to the people in a truly decentralized fashion. He claimed that all his recommendations are practicable but failure to adopt them would eventually lead to the collapse of Africa because of her inability to forge unity on a democratic basis.

This led the author to discuss the political thought of Mueniwa Muiu. She has been active in many academic circles and a receiver of many awards. Her work titled 'Fundi wa Africa': a new paradigm of the African state. She argued that no previous works have dealt with the paradox of African development and the way out. Thus, wamuiu attempted to interrogate why Africa is the most backward continent in spite of the amazing natural resources and foreign aid and capital poured into it. The paradigm is considered new because it adopts a long term historical perspective and a multidisciplinary approach to analyzing the African state. Muiu and Martin argue that the post colonial state has been structured in such a manner that dependence on the west is inevitable; a position similar to that of Ake and Mwakikagile. The way out of this problem was articulated in sixteen points anchored on the federation of African states that would be divided into five super states with head quarters at Napata. Following an exhaustive survey of the major submissions of Mueniwamuiu, the author provided a discourse on the transformative powers of ideas and values to achieve lasting development and democracy in Africa. Page 149, paragraph 1, line 9 should read 'and' NOT 'ant'.

It is worth stating the fact that the book 'African Political Thought' written by Guy Martin and published by Palgrave MacMillan in 2001 remains one of the very first attempts to carefully synthesize African Political Thought into a single thematic volume. Written in very simple and organized pattern devoid of spelling and grammatical tumbling, the

book endears itself to all. It presents itself a model reference material that delivers to the reader knowledge sought about African political thought from cradle till now. Thus, the 158 page book with additional 27pages author's note written by Guy Martin is a must read for all Social Scientists and Political Theorists in particular.