Nkrumah and the Triple Heritage Thesis and Development in Africana Societies

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Abstract

The need for ideology as catalyst of social and political development of African societies has been central to the efforts of colonized people to attain nationhood. One fundamental assumption embraced by leaders in these countries is that they cannot achieve this worthwhile goal if they still lean heavily on the ideology of their colonial masters. However, the starting point and the ingredients of this ideology differed from one leader to another. Thus while some believe that such ideology should be rooted in the traditional culture of these societies, others believe that the traditional culture alone cannot constitute a viable basis for such ideology given the fact that the traditional culture has become anachronistic and therefore it could not ground an ideology for development of the modern African state. These positions have been supported by arguments from all sides, including, of course, many scholars of African social and political thought. Taking a clue from the dialectical elements in Nkrumah's notion of philosophical consciencism, this paper argues that given the contemporary social and political realities in the world, a distinctive ideology for development of African societies could only emerge from the synthesis (creolization) of the traditional and modern elements of African space. The paper suggests the necessity for a synthesis of the old and the new elements of African socio-cultural realities as the paradigm of development of these societies in the Twenty First Century and beyond.

Introduction

Societies that have been colonized are negatively affected in many ways, most important of which is the erosion of their cultural values. A society whose cultural values have been eroded also looses its identity because culture defines who we are, how other people see us and how we are able to relate to our natural and social environments in order to ensure survival in a social environment that has been bedeviled by unbridled contestation for political and economic supremacy. Given the fact that African societies are longing for development and development has been linked to the notions of culture and identity (Falola 2003) how do these societies map out plans for development in such a way that they are not seen as mere appendages of their erstwhile colonial masters/mistresses? The answer to this question can readily be found in the adoption of certain plans of action which political leaders in African societies believe could be grounded on particular value orientations of the people. Given the fact that culture is a conveyance of values which make certain people what they are, it follows that what ever plans of action that is put in place in order for such societies to develop must have inherent connection with culture.

However, the problem which arises in this connection is that culture is dynamic and as such how can an element in flux grounds what is regarded as an identity indicator? Our concern in this paper is to suggest a model by which efforts at developing African societies could yield fruit given their history and the present racial and economic relationship existing between these societies and their Western and Asian counterparts. The question of which we are concerned has been clinically formulated by Falola (2003). The question is this: How can African societies use their identity to develop? Can it construct progress without a vision of its past, or can it link its future development with its historical tradition? Such a question requires the adoption of certain ideologies that are grounded on the culture of the people. This was how the fist generation African leaders conceive the plans for development of their new states. However, given the current global environment, how can African societies pursue the goal of development without loosing their identity? Three strategies suggest themselves:

  i.   African societies should move on with globalization
  ii. They should exit globalization and look inwards to develop an alternative way of thinking and acting that are home grown and which are in tandem with their historical past
  iii. They should develop a synthesis of the past and the present.

This paper aligns itself with the third option, which has been referred to as the Triple Heritage model of development, of which Kwameh Nkrumah was a major advocate. In other words, the paper suggests the necessity for a synthesis of the old and the new elements of African socio-cultural realities as the paradigm of development for such societies in the Twenty First Century and beyond.

The concept of ideology

The concept of ideology always carries emotional connotation. This is because it is related to certain motivating principles of change within a social and political system usually brought about by agents that are not comfortable with a current state of affairs. Perhaps, it is this view of ideology that motivated Mannheim (1960) to distinguish between ideology and utopia. According to Mannheim, ideologies are thought systems that serve to defend a particular social order, and broadly express the interests of its dominant or ruling group. Utopias, on the other hand, are idealized representations of the future that imply the need for radical social change, invariably serving the interests of oppressed or subordinate groups. The politics of this distinction is clear. Ideology represents a term of approbation in the sense that it is used by the dominant ruling class, while utopia stands for a term of disapprobation because it is a leftist term that can be used by that group that wants a change in the status quo. This explains why liberal writers abhor the term 'utopia'. For instance, Popper (1991) observed that utopia is a dangerous attitude, for it breeds violence; while Arendt (1966) described it as glorification of violence. Those who have seen ideology in a negative way could be said to have identified ideology with utopianism, because both are action oriented phenomena. As action oriented phenomena, their impacts lie in the future. Such phenomena operate on means-end relation. Like, the Machievellian aphorism, "the end justifies the means", this suggests that political actors can use any means available to them in order to achieve their goal. Such means might include violence, whether overt or covert. This is how ideology has been identified with political absolutism and totalitarianism.

However, the latter part of the Twentieth Century witnessed the growing claim that ideology has become irrelevant. Thus, Bell (1960) is well noted for his "end of ideology" thesis. Bell's argument is that some political "isms"- socialism, communism, conservatism have become irrelevant as social and political movements and the only relevant action oriented political order is that which can deliver economic growth and material prosperity. In the same vein, Festenstein and Kenny (2005: 431) have observed that the argument of the protagonists of 'the end of ideology' thesis is that the conflict between socialist and liberal ideologies in Western Europe and North America had been decisively resolved in favour of 'pragmatic and socially concerned version of liberalism'

Despite the position of the end of ideology thesis, it may be observed that ideology has become a useful tool for understanding social and political movements in the 1960's when colonial territories were struggling for independence. This position is exemplified by Watkins' (1964) notion of ideology. According too Watkins, ideology is often opposed to the status quo (in this instance, colonialism). For him, ideologies propose an abrupt change in the existing social order; therefore, they are usually militant, revolutionary and violent. Watkins sees ideology as an optimistic phenomenon because it involves a great faith in humankind's potential for finding success and happiness. Consequently, for Watkins, any social and political order that supports the status quo is anti-ideology.

We may note here that ideology has been interpreted so narrowly to mean a contrasting points of view, for instance between capitalism and socialism as exemplified in the politics of the cold war and to some extend as espoused by first generation African leaders who were pushing for the dismantling of the capitalist oriented colonial institutions. However, since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the late eighties, it was widely believed that ideology has indeed ended. That this position flies in the face of reality is witnessed in different ways by which leaders in the developing countries of Africa and the Caribbean have been using the concept of ideology for political, social and cultural engineering. In this regard, the ideology of African socialism in the wake of struggling for independence by Africana countries is a case in point.

The concept of development

Like the concept of ideology, the concept of development is multidimensional. The narrow and received conception of development in economic terms that can be measured statistically has become obsolete. The contemporary understanding of development links the concept with the value system of various societies; and in so far as there are various value systems, it follows that there will be different notions of development. However, Gordon (2006:93) has observed that development is a relational and teleological term.

According to him, "to be developed implies achieving more than an end but an end that ***ought*** to be achieved". From Gordon's view, it follows that development is often linked with worthwhile goal. There might be different values which different societies consider as worthwhile, given their belief system and their general ontological, epistemological, ethical, aesthetical and spiritual orientations. Even when scholars like Sen (1999) identifies development with freedom, it can be said that there are different meanings and conceptions of freedom and what freedom means within a tradition of thought will determine what development means in that context. What is important in the contemporary meanings of freedom is that development signifies a qualitative change from one level of human existence and experience to another. Thus in social terms, development is a process in which an entire social system could move away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory towards another condition regarded as materially, morally and spiritually better.

Different theories of development have been identified by scholars. For instance, Martinussen (1997) identified such theories to include: development as economic growth, development as human development, development as modernization process, development as elimination of dependency, development as dialectical transformation and development as history. Development theorists have applied these theories of development to specific interpretations of human experience. Even when there might not be a Form of development in Platonic terms, there are certain things to which these different theories of development relate to which make them to be relevant as ways through which human beings pursue worthwhile goals. Within the context of this paper, the theory of development that is of immediate relevance to us is development as dialectical transformation. This is because it is the kind of theory that can explain best the kernel of Nkrumah's Triple Heritage Thesis is ideology of development in Africana societies.

According to Martinussen, the idea of development as dialectical transformation is concerned with the synthesis of traditional and modern aspects of a given society in an attempt to produce a new system which combines the good elements in the old and the new aspects of the society. This means that the traditional and modern elements of society are complimentary to one another. It is in this connection that one can see the interconnection of this theory of development and Nkrumah's philosophical consciencism, which is the philosophy which advances the triple heritage thesis.

The dialectical nature of philosophical consciencism is seen in Nkrumah's position that in order for the African continent to develop, Her thought pattern should be directed towards the unification of the elevated ideals underlying the traditional African society with the modern tradition bequeathed to her by her erstwhile colonial masters. We shall discuss the content of this position in a subsequent section of this paper. For now, it suffices to recognize the affinity which this theory of development has with Nkrumah's philosophical consciencism.

Ideology and African social and political thought

The African continent is one of those societies that are regarded as the Third World, in which their peoples have been making spirited efforts to re-discover themselves after so many years of enslavement and colonization. In order to do this, they usually embark upon the employment of certain ideologies, which they believe will achieve the goal of social, economic and political freedom. More importantly, the advocates of these ideologies believed that their opinions and expressions amounted to political theories/philosophies which could be said to have predictive and prescriptive values respectively.

However, certain authors have raised issues in relation to the status of these ideologies. Clapham (1970) has suggested that there is need to critically examine the various opinions and expressions by African practitioners of politics in order to discover whether they indeed match up with the realities on ground in African countries. Having analysed the use to which ideologies were put by African leaders, Clapham concluded that statements and opinions of politicians do not meet the standards of what can be regarded as political theory or political philosophy.

In order to argue for this position, he identified two views of ideology. The first is ideology as blueprints and the second, ideology as attitudes. Ideologies as blueprints represent a conceptual map with which to order the confused post-independence scene, whose function is systematically to explain the present situation of the new states, and to guide and co-ordinate their planned development. One essential problem with this kind of ideology is that the principles and ideas canvassed by these leaders do not reflect the realities on ground and consequently, one can question the coherency and consistency of such positions.

One of the reasons which Clapham cited as supporting his position is that while ideologies are based on the fact that the African peoples form homogeneous group and hence there is the assumption that all the peoples are united, the realities on ground suggest the opposite and consequently, there is gap between theory and practice and if it is one of the intentions of ideologies to link theory with practice, ideologies as blueprints will fall abysmally in this regard.

The second view of ideology, according to Clapham, is ideologies as attitudes. Here, the term 'ideology' is used to denote a set of political attitudes rather than an explicitly formulated theory. The advantage that this view of ideology has over the first is that it does allow that the theory is at variance with reality and therefore the charge of incoherence and inconsistency levied against ideologies as blueprints do not apply. But this advantage turns to be a weakness in this view because political attitudes can hardly be put together to form a coherent and consistent theory which can be relied upon for political action, given the fact that various political attitudes make sense to different segments of the population. Thus, in a campaign rally, a politician would want to promise different things for different peoples at different times and occasions and one can hardly find any reliable connecting principle among all the promises.

However, it has to be observed here that what Clapham is doing was to assess or evaluate the political ideas of African leaders in terms of Western standard of political theory and political philosophy (a form of disciplinary decadence, a la Gordon) . For him, the ideals of coherence and consistency mark out political theory and political philosophy and because these African political ideas do not respect these ideals, they cannot be regarded as ideas that can yield any explanatory and justificatory imports. Consequently, Clapham suggested that the statements and opinions of African leaders should be interpreted from a different perspective. The perspective suggested by him is that these statements and opinions should be seen as responses to certain situations that confront these leaders. In other words, Clapham is suggesting that alleged ideologies of African leaders are more reactive than proactive.

To some extent, Clapham's observation is essentially correct but based on wrong premises. The positive side of his view is that the various ideologies of first generation African leaders were responses to colonialism in the sense that they were able to analyze the colonial situation and attempted in their various theories to put forward an alternative theory that is relevant to the social and cultural realities of their peoples. It was also true that the different ideologies that were enunciated were based on the specific situations of the different countries that make up the African space. However, the reactive model of political theories and philosophies is not peculiar to the African continent; rather it is a feature of political theory and political philosophy in general. For instance, the contractarian political philosophy put forward by Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau was a reaction to the medieval view of divine authority. Furthermore, the charge of incoherence and inconsistency can hardly be sustained; for, on one tradition of political philosophy, the concern is to set up ideals or standards for practicing politicians to emulate. However, what actually happen in practice are often at variance with what political philosophy prescribes. The conclusion from this analysis is that African theoreticians and practitioners of politics were attempting to grapple with certain and specific situations in their countries, especially during the post-colonial era; and they bothered less, with justifiable reasons, about philosophical ideals of coherence and consistency.

One useful insight that could be gained from Clapham's critique relates to his view that ideologies put forward by African leaders are meant to perform certain specific duties/functions. In connection with this position, it has been noted by scholars of African social and political thought that by means of these ideologies, African leaders want to bring their nation to mainstream of events in the global arena, depicted by modernity's model of development. In doing this, they have come up with ideologies that will motivate diverse and diversified peoples to come together and create a political nation. In order to fulfill this purpose, they had to use pragmatic means, a position that does not put much premium on coherence and consistency but on the practical workability of these ideologies. This situation could be discerned in Hunt's (1982) paper on Nkrumah's Consciencism where he accused him of advocating an ideology with a "materialist theory and idealist practice".

African Socialism: Ideology for Development of the African continent

The need to break way from capitalist ideology embraced by the colonizing powers on the African continent was the main idea that bound first generation African leaders together. An alternative socialist ideology had therefore been embraced by them.

However, there were varieties in interpretation of what constitutes "African socialism". According to Sprinzak (1973:629) the thesis regarding African socialism is that village society was traditionally communal, and that consequently the introduction of socialist regimes in newly established African states might not pose major difficulties.

The kernel of African socialism relates to the fact that traditional African peoples were socialist by nature and therefore there is no need to dissipate energy on arguing for a socialist ideology as a fitting ideology for the African continent. The essential features of this socialism include: equality among the peoples, the idea of sharing, which include burdens and privileges, community ownership of land and identification of the individual with the community. Thus, Senghor (1959) one of the foremost first generation African leaders, claimed that "We should learn that we had already realized socialism before the coming of the European" (1959:49)

However, some commentators (Kopytoff 1964: Clapham 1970) have observed that the 'socialist' interpretation did not square with the empirically discovered/observed reality. According to these commentators, facts on ground depicted that African peoples are diverse in several ways such that they cannot be identified with only one ideology. Furthermore, observation revealed that there were features of individualism, which is the major feature of the capitalist ethos, among some African peoples.

These positions are by far not strange to contemporary scholars of African social and political thought. Thus, Taiwo (1985) and Hountondji (1996) among others have denied the unified thesis of African cultural distinctiveness on empirical grounds. Their view is that it can be observed that African peoples are so diverse as their beliefs, norms and practices and it is therefore fallacious to claim that there is one people called an African and one reality, called African reality.

The response to these two corollary positions takes the form of what some scholars of African social and political thought have termed the socialist thesis (Sprinzak 1973; Kronenfield 1975) According to this thesis, the claim that African peoples are socialist by nature is not a scientific thesis and therefore it cannot be falsified by means of empirical fact. Rather, the thesis is more of ideological commitment which is supposed to motivate political action. It is therefore the belief of these scholars that the anti-homogeneous view about Africa and its people falls to the ground on the basis of lumping together of two different models, that of science and ideology. It is the suggestion of these two scholars that the socialist thesis should be understood as making important theoretical and philosophical distinctions. Thus, Sprinzak suggested that the communal thesis should be understood as an ideal type explanation in the sense of grouping together a cluster of properties that distinguish African traditional society from the western modern way of life. He also went further to suggest that African ideologies do not hold that African societies are homogeneous. Their claim is that the dominant feature of social life before the advent of the European was the kinship group with its special social interactions. But more than this, it is the views of Sprinzak and Kronenfeld that the communal thesis is suggesting that there is an essential difference between traditional and modern societies as regards their social thinking and knowing. The social thinking of modern societies is predicated upon individualism while in traditional societies, it is communal way of thinking that enjoys the pride of place.

Nkrumah's Triple Heritage thesis as ideology for African development

The Triple heritage thesis has been identified with Ali Mazrui. However, there is evidence that Mazrui himself derived the term from Nkrumah's doctrine of philosophical consciencism. The Triple Heritage Thesis, according to Mazrui (1986) refers to the three main cultural influences on Africa: traditional African culture, Islamic culture and Western culture. Nkrumah linked the Triple Heritage Thesis with his doctrine of philosophical consciencism. According to him, (1995, 55) the main concern of philosophical consciencism was to develop a new kind of socialism that is in tune with the original humanist principles underlying African society. Thus philosophical consciencism is the "map in intellectual terms of disposition of forces which will enable African society digest the Western and Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements in Africa, and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality". According to Nkrumah, the African personality is defined by the cluster of humanist principles which underlie the traditional African society. Philosophical consciencism is that philosophical standpoint which, taking its start from the present content of African conscience indicates the way in which progress is forged out of the conflict in that conscience (p.56) The above view brings about the dialectical nature of the doctrine of philosophical consciencism. As a matter of fact, Nkrumah believes that his doctrine has its basis in materialism, the view that asserts the absolute and independent existence of matter.

The dialectical aspect of the materialism is that matter is a plenum of forces that are in antithesis to one another. It does seem to follow that Nkrumah rejects any explanation of natural and social phenomena that is based on divine/mythical beings. The application of this dialectical materialist thesis is that matter is one, even when it manifests itself in different ways. By the same token, human beings are one even when they are manifested in different cultures and different historical situations. This is the egalitarian ingredient in philosophical consciencism.

The identification of the unity of the human species with a non spiritual element, thus by passing forms of relativism that can vitiate attempts at finding certain commonalities in human societies has been noted by Wiredu (1996) According to Wiredu, even when human beings are cultural beings, there are certain biological things that human beings share in common. He identified such commonality as human communication. According to Wiredu (1996:21) communication is an existential necessity. Without communication there can be no human community…in the total absence of communication we cannot even speak of human *persons*. The implication of this view for the triple heritage thesis is clear: it is that human beings, no matter our cultural orientations, we are bound together by certain (physical, biological) elements that make us distinctively human. That some segments of the human population had denied this is an exemplification of 'disciplinary decadence', which has become a slogan in some philosophical circles. Thus the traditional, the modern, Christianity and Islam cultures can coexist, even though there are certain disparities among them.

The ethical arm of consciencism proclaims that ethical rules that are not permanent but depend on the stage reached in historical evolution of society. However, Nkrumah observed that no matter the change experienced in the ethical rules of a society, the cardinal principles of egalitarianism are preserved. Following Kant, egalitarianism holds that persons should be treated as ends in themselves and not merely as means. The next question to be asked is how does this doctrine constitute an ideology for development of the African continent? Given the fact that socialism is the favoured ideology among the first generation of African leaders, of which Nkrumah was a frontrunner, what kind of African socialism was embraced by him? The response to these questions is that Nkrumah rejected what has been regarded as the romanticism of the African past. Rather he held the view that given the present realities of the African continent, ideology for African development can only emanate from the synthesis of the humanistic features of traditional African society coupled with the doctrines of the Christian and Islamic religions.

If we are to follow the Nkrumah's triple heritage thesis, then we can suggest that the egalitarian principle seems to be connecting principle among three traditions. Thus, the egalitarian nature of African traditional society derived from equality among all the segments of the population, Christ the Jesus preached that the rich should sell their belongings and give the proceeds to the poor (economic redistribution) and the Islamic religion believes in equality as depicted in the plea of one of the Northern Emirs in Nigeria, that the rich should help the needy around them. Egalitarianism, therefore, is a universal principle that defines person as persons without recourse to age, status, race and creed.

There are certain conceptual and practical issues that could be raised in respect of Nkrumah's notion of egalitarianism as a cardinal principle of philosophical consciencism. One of the conceptual and practical issues relates to the attempt to derive an ethical principle from a materialist and scientific ontology. In other words, the perennial problem of the dichotomy between fact and value is once more rearing its ugly head.

One possible response to this critique is that one does not expect an ideology to be free from certain philosophical infidelities; after all, ideology is supposed to motivate political action and in doing this certain philosophical ideals/ standards may be violated. What is important for practitioners of politics, like Nkrumah, is to appreciate that they are not political theorists in the scientific understanding of the term; rather they are praxian who have to use different genre in articulating their message. What is important for them is that their message gets across to their audience, who they expect to act appropriately in relation to the purpose of the message.

Another line of criticism against Nkrumah's egalitarian principle relates to the view that the three components of the new ideology- the African traditional humanism, the Christian and Islamic religions- all hold the belief that human beings are not only material beings; they are also spiritual beings. Consequently, Nkrumah's materialism is at variance with the realities depicted by his ideology. Barring these criticisms, philosophical consciencism represents a response to certain situations in Nkrumah's Ghana and he wished to extend same to other African countries (Pan-Africanism) which were formerly under the yokes of colonialism.

Thus according to Nkrumah, philosophical consciencism was a response to colonialism, imperialism, disunity and lack of development (1995: 58) For Nkrumah, the first major task of the ideology is to liquidate colonialism in all its ramifications. Such liquidation is premised upon political action. Political action, according to Nkrumah, "is the constant struggle for emancipation as an indispensable first step towards securing economic independence and integrity" (1995: 59). It would be noted that Nkrumah vacillated on what form this struggle would take. Like Marx, it might either take violent or non violent means, depending on the historical situations that obtained at a particular time.

The implications of Nkrumah's Triple Heritage Thesis for Development in African societies

One can hardly severe the various attempts of current African leaders to develop their countries from what had gone before, especially in the immediate post colonial era. It is along this view that one can situate the relevance of Nkrumah's triple heritage thesis. It is one of the unfortunate facts in African history that the path of development channeled by first generation African leaders were truncated by the African military organization, an organization that is a product of colonial institution. This however does not detract from the fact that a lot of lessons could be learnt from the ideologies of these leaders towards the development of African societies in the 21st century and beyond.

One of the lessons that could be learnt from Nkrumah's triple thesis ideology relates to its dialectical nature. Here one can use dialectics in such a way that it carries another meaning different from its materialistic interpretation. In this connection, 'dialectical' might mean the synthesis of seemingly antithetical realities. No doubt, traditional African society is in some ways is different from Christian culture and Christian culture is in some senses different from Islamic culture, but given the unique realities of their being the product of both the traditional and the modern, there seems to be no other way than to accommodate the realities presented by these traditions. In other words, the African person can no longer be identified with her historical past as depicted by the traditional African realities, for such historical realities cannot be 'rewind'. A viable alternative to defining the African person is to see him or her as product of the historical realities around him/her. Such realities suggest that she cannot dispense with the colonial history which brought in its wake the existing contact with Western and Arabic cultures. This stark reality is evidenced by Nkrumah (1995: 55) view that "the traditional, the Western, and Islamic, coexist uneasily; the principles animating them are in conflict with one another". But in order to define the African personality, a product of these conflicting cultures, there is the need to discern the commonality among them. Such commonality, according to Nkrumah, is the cardinal principle of egalitarianism- the idea of treating persons as ends and not as mere means.

Consequently, in order to have a meaningful development in African societies, there is the need to fashion out an ideology that can motivate the establishment of institutions which are the product of the fusion or synthesis of these three segments; or at least to see them as complimentary to each other. We suggest here that different institutions- politics, economy, education, medicine, communication, agriculture, could be established along the line of development as dialectical transformation, in such a way that the policies emanating from these institutions are directed at furthering the worthwhile goals of Africana peoples. In the next and final section of this paper we shall attempt to outline how development as transformation can be applied to the strategy of the notion of Vision that has been adopted by such African societies like Nigeria

The idea of a Vision in the Development Agenda of Africana Societies

Nigeria: Vision 20: 2020

In this section of the paper, we shall, without delving into the contents of what have been regarded as the strategy of VISION in some African societies, attempt to apply the triple heritage thesis to the various attempts at developing Africana societies. Our example shall be taken from Nigeria. The basic and fundamental ideology of the Nigeria's Vision 20: 2020 is *about the quest to join the league of 20 industrialized nations by year 2020. The thematic areas of this **VISION** include agriculture, foreign policy, minerals and metals, health, education, water and sanitation, culture and tourism, business environment and employment*.

In applying the idea of the Triple Heritage Thesis to realizing this VISION, attempt shall be made in the remaining section of this paper to outline how the application of the synthesis of the old and the new dimensions of African realities to the conceptualization and execution of the institutions that are components of the VISON.

Educational institutions- synthesis of non formal (traditional) education and formal (Western) education. Here, attention should focus on both the learning and the moral aspects of education. The moral aspect of education ensures that the learner is able to utilize his/her formal education to effect positive changes in his/her own life, the lives of others as well as the total upliftment of the good values of the community.

- Health- incorporation of traditional medicine with orthodox medicine or to see them as complimentary to another. Here a certain amount of understanding is required among traditional healers and their counterparts in the orthodox medicine sector. In order for this synthesis to work, both traditional and orthodox dispensers of medicine should see themselves as partners in progress. They should understand that they are pursuing the same goal- that of catering for the health needs of the people. Given this ultimate goal, the methods of dispensing health care could be ironed out without the usual name calling against one another.
- The idea of cultural engineering as the application of culture to technology.
- The existence, side by side, of traditional micro -economic institutions like, *esusu, ajo* (type of traditional cooperation in which assistance is rendred to one another in labour and financial matters) cooperative financial institutions of various forms and sizes and macro-economic institutions like modern commercial and other specialized banking systems. Recently, in Nigeria, the current Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria has advocated for Islamic Banking in Nigeria. Although there was resistance against the idea, coming from the Christian communities, such resistance has ignored the pragmatic wisdom behind the proposal. If Nigeria wants to develop, then it has to use all the means available to do so. The rejection of this proposal represents a religious sentiment, which has to be waved aside at this point of the development of the nation.
- Political institutions- the contexualization of the democratic form of government to reflect traditional democratic political institutions, where the autonomy of individuals is harmonized with the value of community life.
- Judiciary- Swearing with traditional implements before a judge in a court of law. Traditional ways of dispute resolution, rather than recourse to law courts in all cases.
- Agriculture- Cash and export crops along with modern sources of export, like oil.
- Communication- oral and written traditions as means of effective dissemination of information.
- Security- Incorporation of local security outfits like the case of incorporating of local hunters in Ekiti State of South Western Nigeria with the other modern security agents like the police and the army.
- (It has to be noted that the above represents just an outline, which development will require a full paper).

Conclusion

This paper has been an attempt to recognize the relevance of the social and political thought of one of the first generation African leaders, Kwame Nkrumah. The relevance of Nkrumah's triple heritage thesis lies in the fact that it recognizes the dynamism in human nature. The dynamism epitomizes the metaphysical fact that reality is always in the process of becoming and that it is this metaphysics that can ground visible realities in the social and political realms.

Nkrumah's socialism, just like that of Awolowo of Nigeria, takes traditional African society as a point of departure and argues that the traditional African past along with its contents cannot be brought into existence as other theorists of African socialism were apt to suggest. This unique nature of the thesis as an ideology of development for African societies is its insistence that the traditional and the modern have to work in a complimentary/synthetic relationship with one another. After all, the African person is now both a product of the traditional and modern. Insofar as all development efforts are geared toward realizing human welfare the (metaphysical/existential) realities of the person have to be put into consideration.

Nkrumah's triple heritage thesis also recognizes that in the midst of change, there is also some stability. In the context of the present paper, this is connected with the egalitarian principle in human society. Most of the developmental efforts that have been made by past leaders in Africa have been stunted by the fact that political leaders have not taken into consideration this ethical aspect of Nkrumah's philosophy and this has led to the formulation of policies that have little or no relevance on the development of African peoples and their societies.

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