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Neoliberalism in Africa: Is there a Pan Africanist Response?

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Abstract

This study examines the nature of neoliberalism in African economies with a critical focus on the extent of pan-Africanist resistance strategies to the challenges of neoliberal measures implemented so far on the Continent. Neoliberalism often presents policy measures that promote economic growth instead of development. Neoliberal policies do not take African socio-economic realities into consideration. It is argued that up to the present times, they have continued to hinder socio-political and economic progress of Africa. It is further argued that neoliberalism does not serve the interests of Africa but rather the economic concern of the advanced capitalist countries, being the reason for its somewhat rejection by contemporary Pan-Africanist scholars and activists. Also, the study substantiates the pan-Africanist resistance to neoliberal projects underlined by the 2018 commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the 1958 All African Conference in Ghana, that attracted young Pan-Africanists who passionately shared the ideas of earlier Pan-Africanists. It was a platform to revisit the unfinished projects of Pan-Africanism for the sake of Africa's development. The study concludes that the emergence of conscious and visionary leaders like Nkrumah, Nyerere, Sankara etc, who were committed to African solidarity and development is imperative to reduce the effect of neoliberal economic paradigms on the continent. Too, there is the need for states to take assertive and superintendent role in the economy to mediate relationship between state and economy in the interest of the state, among others. Finally, pan-Africanism

remains a veritable platform for emancipating Africa from the crisis of neoliberalism and pave the way for Africa socio-economic development.

Keywords: *Neoliberalism, Pan-Africanism, Africa's development, African economies, Pan-Africanist agenda*

Néolibéralisme en Afrique : y a-t-il une réponse panafricaniste?

Cette étude examine la nature du néolibéralisme dans les économies africaines en mettant l'accent sur l'ampleur des stratégies de résistance panafricanistes aux défis des mesures néolibérales mises en œuvre jusqu'à présent sur le continent. Le néolibéralisme présente souvent des mesures politiques qui favorisent la croissance économique plutôt que le développement. La politique néolibérale ne prend pas en compte les réalités socio-économiques africaines. On prétend que jusqu'à présent, il a continué à entraver le progrès sociopolitique et économique de l'Afrique. Il est en outre soutenu que le néolibéralisme ne sert pas les intérêts de l'Afrique mais plutôt les préoccupations économiques des pays capitalistes avancés, ce qui est la raison de son certain rejet par les universitaires et les militants panafricanistes contemporains. En outre, l'étude corrobore la résistance panafricaniste aux projets néolibéraux soulignée par la commémoration en 2018 du 60e anniversaire de la Conférence panafricaine de 1958 au Ghana, qui a attiré de jeunes panafricanistes qui partageaient passionnément les idées des panafricanistes précédents. C'était une plate-forme pour revisiter les projets inachevés du panafricanisme dans l'intérêt du développement de l'Afrique. L'étude conclut que l'émergence de leaders conscients et visionnaires comme Nkrumah, Nyerere, Sankara, etc., qui étaient engagés en faveur de la solidarité et du développement africains, est impérative pour réduire l'effet des paradigmes économiques néolibéraux sur le continent. De plus, il

est nécessaire que les États jouent un rôle affirmé et de surintendant dans l'économie pour arbitrer les relations entre l'État et l'économie dans l'intérêt de l'État, entre autres. Enfin, le panafricanisme reste une véritable plateforme pour émanciper l'Afrique de la crise du néolibéralisme et ouvrir la voie au développement socio-économique de l'Afrique.

Mots-clés : Néolibéralisme, Panafricanisme, Développement de l'Afrique, Économies africaines, Agenda panafricaniste

Introduction

The global political economy being driven by neoliberal thought, has for so long remained an avenue induced to the extent of providing a basis that sustains its legitimacy and leadership. Nonetheless, as a political–economic ideology driving the global economy, it underpins fortunes of both advanced and developing states in contemporary world (Usman & Bashir, 2018). Therefore, manifestation of neoliberalism is no longer a strange phenomenon in African economic systems, but recently it is assuming the status of normalcy. Since the early 1980s, neoliberalism has had a tremendous effect on most people around the world. It penetrates private homes through the dominant media, shapes working environments in form of fierce competition and anti-lab of our legislation, increases the gap between rich and poor and determines the architecture of public and private spaces in form of gated communities and increased surveillance systems. The World Economic Forum at Davos was the locus for promoting the theory, which took form as a policy known as the 'Washington Consensus' (Wallerstein, 2004). This consensus is a convergence of the policies of the World Bank, the IMF, US Treasury, and subsequently other institutions such as the World Trade Organisation and the European Central Bank. Neoliberalism cannot be analyzed in isolation of imperialism that neoliberalism is a part of. Indeed, globalisation is a hegemonic

project, which concentrates power and wealth in local and trans-national elite groups around the world by transferring state owned assets to private people and Trans-National Corporations (Saad-Filho & Johnston, 2005). For the proponents of the neoliberal project, economic growth and development, through free market economies and free trade, is the way ahead to ensure freedom, democracy and sustainable peace (US National security report, 2002). For most critics, neoliberalism is a trans-national elite project, which under the guise of a seductive rhetoric transfers power and wealth from the public sphere to a small elite, by rolling back the welfare state as the redistributive power and privatizing public assets. However, outside the academic environment and the business community, the term neoliberalism and the powers behind the project remain obscure and largely unknown (McChesney, 1999). To this extent, neoliberalism has completely gained entrance into our vocabulary of ideas for comprehending Africa's improvement in the course of recent years.

However, the statement of problem for this study is that the role of state is being undermined by the harsh impact of neoliberal practices in African environment. The policy recommendation of neo-liberalism has been considered a failure in the region of Africa because it promotes economic growth rather than economic development. Manifestations of which have become serious issues that hinder socio-political and economic prosperity in African region. In fact, it contends that the basis of economic crisis in the African states has been the excessiveness of government intervention in market structure of these states (Simutanyi, 2006). For instance, the cuts in government spending on the social area and evacuation of endowments on basic products and ventures, the state had thought that it was hard to halt out its usual role of providing social welfare services to the people (Adepoju, 1993, p. 6). Nonetheless, neoliberalism has now

occupied the centre stage of policy in economic planning, political development, and educational reform even up to environmental regulation. Indeed, neo-liberal policy has failed to address a number of fundamental issues, including those of poverty, unemployment and social inequality, all of which are crucial for economic development. The imposition of neo-liberal agenda by the Western financial institutions, such as the problem of the debt burden, which has become unsustainable for African countries, has succeeded only in aggravating economic crisis in Africa. Also, the economic reforms have been executed at high human costs and sacrifices, hence essentially increasing the degree of socio-economic problem of income inequality in the African society. Hence, this study is a significant departure from most studies on neoliberalism and even Pan Africanism in Africa development. This is because a plethora of issues has been examined within the purview of neoliberal discourse. Perhaps, very limited studies have been carried out on the Pan Africanist approach to this intervention policy from the west. It is the recognition of these gaps in knowledge that underpins the significance of the study. The broad aim of the study is to examine the dynamics of neoliberalism in Africa with a view to interrogating Pan-Africanist resistance to the neoliberal challenges in the region. In this case, three (3) specific objectives are designed below:

- i. to examine the nature of neoliberalism in Africa
- ii. to investigate the relationship between neoliberalism and Pan Africanism in Africa
- iii. to evaluate the prospects of Africa's development in the era of neoliberalism

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research paradigm and employs both Primary and Secondary data. The Primary data were collected purposively from a number of conducted Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The Secondary data were drawn from textbooks, newspapers, journals, magazines and equally electronic source, most especially internet. Qualitative method of research is perceived according to (Bryman, 2004) as one that is limited to words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. For him, social reality is a constantly changing object or phenomenon involving individual's interpretation, and repudiates the tradition and norms of the natural scientific paradigm and of positivism in specific preference for an emphasis on the ways in which social world is constructed based on individual's interpretative approach. The choice of this approach is because the subject matter is not amenable to quantifiable data that tries to test hypothesis for the purpose of theory testing, but rather the approach tends to build on the existing theory. Essentially, narrative approach was deployed to discuss the generated data on neoliberalism within the context of social reality in Africa and the extent of its relationship to Pan-Africanist resistance. The choice of this is that narrative approach usually aims for an in-depth consideration of the meanings people assign to their experiences.

Neoliberalism: A Conceptual Clarification

Neoliberalism has been perceived by scholars, analysts, commentators among others from varying perspectives and viewpoints. For instance, Usman and Bashir (2018) were of the opinion that neoliberalism is a return to classical liberalism where the market plays a dominant role in the production process; it has assumed different titles such as neo-conservatism, market fundamentalism e.t.c. In other words, neoliberalism specifically

refers to new liberalism. Therefore, to clearly understand neoliberalism, we need to understand classical economic liberalism. According to Aborisade (2018), economic liberalism in its continental European sense, simply implies 'free market economics' or the orthodox 'laissez faire' economic ideology that prevailed until the great slump of the 1930s. It insists that free market economies will run smoothly, steadily producing more wealth. Any problems that may arise are attributed to 'unnatural monopolies' particularly the influence of organized labour, which, it is claimed, tends to prevent the free movement of prices and wages based on the forces of demand and supply. It becomes more specific and emphatic when Akhaine (2020) perceived neoliberalism as capitalism in its perfect structure. It requires the least interference from government, the opening of local markets to outside challenge, and permitting funding to go to where it will be optimally utilized. Practically speaking, this implies contracting the state and lifting the hand of administrations, privatizing endeavors, adjusting spending plans, opening household markets to worldwide challenge and allowing cash to move across fringes with insignificant limitations. To this extent, it advocates: de-regulation, commercialization and privatization of existing Public Enterprises (PEs) and the promotion of the private sector as the engine of economic growth; an international free market for the major companies, removal and/or reduced subsidies and attacks on trade unions.

As maintained by Munck, (2005), the possibility of a 'self-regulating market' is a core assumption in classical liberalism, and an important presumption among neoliberals as well. Efficient allocation of resources is the most important purpose of an economic system, and the most efficient way to allocate resources is through market mechanisms. Acts of intervention in the economy from government agencies are therefore almost always undesirable, because intervention can undermine the

finely tuned logic of the marketplace, and thus reduce economic efficiency. As ‘the dominant ideology shaping our world today’, neoliberalism wields, according to Munck, great power over contemporary debates concerning reforms of international trade and the public sector. One is forced, basically, either to take up a position against neoliberal reforms, or else contribute to their diffusion and entrenchment. According to Saad-Filho and Johnson (2005, p. 1), ‘we live in the age of neoliberalism’. It was argued that power and wealth are, to an ever-increasing degree, concentrated within transnational corporations and elite groups, as a result of the practical implementation of an economic and political ideology they identify as neoliberalism. On the volume’s back cover blurb, the author of the book goes even further, and describes neoliberalism as ‘the dominant ideology shaping our world today’. But in spite of its purportedly overshadowing importance, Saad-Filho and Johnston find it impossible to define neoliberalism in pure theoretical terms (Ibid.)

Essentially, neoliberalism is associated with radicalism which began in continental Europe with focus on rule of free enterprise and monetary belief system, leaving the economy in the hands of private people while giving the job of guard dog to the state (Aborisade, 2018). In emphasis, neoliberalism is the political ideology which resulted from a few efforts at reinvigorating classical liberalism in the period immediately before and during World War II (Cros, 1950). To Cros, the key argument basically is that these neoliberals have sought to redefine liberalism by reverting to a more right-wing or laissez-faire stance on economic policy issues, compared to the modern, egalitarian liberalism of Beveridge and Keynes. He generally applauds these neoliberals for speaking out against totalitarianism at a time when only few people did so, especially among intellectuals. He remains skeptical, however, to their central thesis, common to most classical liberals, that individual liberty depends on there being a

free-market economy, where the state has voluntarily given up its ability to control the economy for the good of society as a whole, or the interests of its own citizens (Ibid). In this regard, Mclean and Mcmillan (1996) maintains that neoliberalism in the advanced world is frequently connected with Thatcherism which developed against Keynesian economic philosophy. In this sense, it experienced early opposition to the improvement systems dependent on import substitution industrialization which had overwhelmed the period 1945 to the mid-1980s, the center components of neoliberalism are exemplified in the purported 'Washington Accord', in particular, privatization and deregulation; exchange and budgetary advancement; contracting the job of the state; empowering remote direct speculation and to the basic change projects advanced by the World Bank and IMF. All the more fundamentally, it has been utilized by the counter globalization development to portray the monetary belief system behind industrialist globalization (Mclean & McMillan, 1996, p. 368). In short, it alludes to a lot of market-liberal monetary strategies. Again, Heywood (2003) opines that it is a counter-revolutionary ideology aims 'to halt, and if possible, reverse the trend towards 'big' government and state intervention that had characterized much of the 20th century'. Heywood further argues that neoliberalism is a form of market fundamentalism and thus goes beyond classical liberalism in that it opposes any form of political control. More interestingly, Harvey has aptly captured the essence of all the component elements of the theories of neoliberalism when he posits:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights,

free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force, if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit (Harvey, 2005, p. 2).

Harvey suggests with his definition to view neoliberalism, not as the rejuvenation of liberalism in general, but as a distinctive economic theory which in current times has replaced a more mild-mannered entrenched liberalism, that is, Keynesian approaches to macroeconomic governance informed by contemporary liberalism. In this light, Kingfisher and Maskovsky (2008) presents the core principles of neoliberalism, among which are:

- privatisation of state enterprises

- profits sought through lowering of costs whether through improved productivity, seeking workers who accept lower wages or laying off workers
- open international trade and investment, without any barriers or tariff

However, accompanying the belief in free markets and the idea of cutting costs is a tendency to impose austerity measures that cut government expenses. This will mean reduced public spending on social services such as healthcare, education and so on. In actual sense, neoliberal policies have promoted removal of subsidies on social services, deregulation, and privatisation. Nonetheless, it is one of the main arguments of the neoliberals that free markets are a way out of the devastating problem of corruption in state-controlled industries.

Conceptual Issues in Pan Africanism

There are several notions of Pan-Africanism. This notion has evolved over time, changing from one focus to another and broadening in definition and practice. These diverse visions about continental Africa are all in attempt to give Africa a visibility and importance. However, Pan-Africanism was conceived as a movement for political change with deep emphasis on the identity and oneness of Africa (Momoh, 2003, p. 44). This conceptualization simply depicts that Pan Africanism is concerned with socio-political struggle to unite and promote africanness. The concept of Pan-Africanism is associated with the movement of some African intellectuals' who deserved befitting histories for Africans at home and in the Diaspora in terms of political, social and economic advancement in all aspects of their existence. The idea of Pan-Africanism was intended to challenge the main activities of European imperialist domination, notably, the slave trade European colonization of Africa and racism. These activities

were at peak in the late 19th century (Tondi, 2005). As a broad concept, Pan-Africanism has also been articulated to reflect Afrocentric interpretation. This interpretation traces the struggle of Africans from self-assertion dating back to the era of 3200 BC. Meanwhile the Eurocentric assumptions on the other hand lay emphasis on Pan-Africanism as African response to slavery and colonialism. The deep desire by Africans that their brothers and sisters who were taken out of the continent should be safely brought back was a manifestation of a Pan-African spirit. It has also been taken down to the nationalist struggles in individual African countries like the spirited fight that YaaAsantewaa of the Gold Coast and Shaka Zulu of South Africa put up against European colonial domination and traders (Kumah-Abiwu, 2013, p. 125). In critical sense, Momoh (2003) delineated two points. One, Afrocentricity was often the old intellectual fundamental of the pan African struggles. However, to a large degree this approach of knowledge and awareness, in spite of the fact of the modifications of it, not racist; although the racial issue is a core question on its agenda. Secondly, is that Afrocentricity, which developed from Pan-African struggle and indeed complemented it, is an ideology of optimism and not anguish, of inspiration and not lamentation. Part of the reason for this is because pan Africanism was an ideology of struggle and Afrocentricity in this sense helped to delimit and shaped the nature of that struggle. It is in this sense that (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2017) perceived Pan-Africanism as an ideology of African self-affirmation and a political movement for the emancipation of peoples of Africa descent from imperialism and all forms of oppression which was instrumental in the agitation for African independence.

In more specific term, the African Union (AU) has aptly captured the vision of Pan-Africanism. For this, regional body which is the successor to Organization of African Unity (OAU), Pan-Africanism is:

An ideology and movement that encourages the solidarity of Africans worldwide. It is based on the belief that unity is vital to economic, social and political progress and aims to 'unify and uplift' people of African descent. The ideology asserts that the fates of all African peoples and countries are intertwined. At its core Pan-Africanism is a belief that African peoples, both as the continent and in the Diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny (Kumah-Abiwu, 2013, p. 124).

This position depicts that pan Africanism is rooted on African solidarity and integration with a view to promoting the values of blacks in the world today.

However, (Chepkwony, 2013) considered Pan-Africanism as a calling for blacks in the diaspora to come together and advocate for their own rights as well as other blacks across the globe. This further inspired leaders in the African continent to perceive solidarity as the only way through which they could liberate themselves from oppression by their colonialists. To this extent, a more robust definition of Pan-Africanism was offered by Campbell (1996, pp. 218 - 219) as a body of thought and action, shared but not uniform or dogmatic. A dynamic movement continually transforming itself and gaining new ideological perspectives in the light of changing circumstance. Enriching itself through its own experience. Flowing from masses, groups and occasionally leaders of government. Tend to the goal of the restoration of freedom and dignity for Africans at home and abroad. For him Pan Africanism is linked to welfarism of Africans anywhere in the world and as such it relies on the foundation of the social reality of the society.

Pan-Africanism was both an intellectual, social and political resistance against the enslavement of the African person. Initiated by former slaves (as already noted), the movement spread like wild-fire and got acceptance from old and new Africans whose social and economic relevance had been enhanced by the education which they received from the West. In other words, it can be argued that the West sowed the seed, albeit unknowingly, of the movement that would later challenge and upend its totalitarian rule over the black race (Oloruntoba, 2015).

In the main, Pan-Africanism can thus be said to signify a set of shared assumptions expressing the desire for the unity of all Africans whether on the continent or those in the Diaspora. The movement tends to view all Africans and descendants of Africans as belonging to a single race and sharing cultural unity. Pan-Africanism have also stressed on greater collaboration and union of African countries on certain issues such as climate change and terrorism. Others views are at the centre of disunity and conflict within and between some African countries like South Sudan, Somalia, Mali, Nigeria among others. To this view, it should be argued that Pan-Africanism is a global movement to unite Africa and its people against racial oppression and exploitation associated with European hegemony. M'bayo and Okhonmina also opined that Pan-Africanism involved efforts to mobilise continental Africans against colonialism and racism and was the philosophical grounding for the unity of Africa through the AU (Kumah-Abiwu, 2013, p. 24).

Dynamics of Neoliberalism in Africa

Neoliberalism announced its presence in Africa in the 1980s, when the World Bank/IMF mainstreamed stabilization and structural adjustment in several countries in Africa, which were geared towards the reduction of demand and expenditure within the

economy of the debtor country. It however became clear that the stabilization and adjustment remedies for the economies of Africa based on the conditions of removal of state subsidies, currency devaluation, restraint on wages and public sector employment, reduction of public spending and limits on credit expansion. All of these were not addressing the economic crises of Africa as obviously intended, they instead plunged them more into debt traps and political instability (Egharevba, 2008). To this effect, neoliberalism in the African context as initiated via the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) critically transformed the role of state into a gatekeeper of the neoliberal gospel and market; attempting to ensure a stable atmosphere for investment and keeping in check those marginalized by neoliberalism (Afenah, 2009), which confirms trends in sundry African states borrowing a wholesale thrust of the neoliberal policy. In fact, State (2010) examines that even when the imperfections of the neoliberal measures are known, most of the flaw is rather put on African states, which are either accused of not having the political will or creating the enabling atmosphere required for the better implementation. Nonetheless, we maintain that the failures of neoliberalism in Africa are neither due to lack of sufficient information and skill regarding of how to execute it nor the political will to do so, but because the measure is being introduced, without due modification, to social realities of African states. On this basis, (Stiglitz, 2002) stresses that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) strongly pursued privatization and liberalization at a pace and in a manner that often imposed very real costs on countries ill-equipped to suffer them. In this instance, the Report of Africities indicates thus:

Over the last 30 years, poverty in African countries has barely fallen, whereas worldwide poverty has reduced from about 40% to under 20%. Over 40% of people living in sub-Saharan

Africa still live in absolute poverty. 75% of the world's poorest countries are in Africa and include Zimbabwe, Liberia and Ethiopia. Approximately one in three people living in sub-Saharan Africa are undernourished. In sub-Saharan Africa, 589 million people live without electricity. 273 million (37% of the 738 million people globally) lack access to clean water. Every year, \$28.4 billion lost due to water and sanitation problems. Fewer than 20% of African women have access to education. Approximately one in 16 women dies during childbirth or pregnancy. More than one million people, mostly children under the age of five, die every year from malaria. And 38% of the world's refugees are located in Africa (Africities Report, 2015, p. 5).

In this perspective, as earlier mentioned, the main aim of these so-called economic adjustment programs was not to develop the economies of these African nations but to ensure their continued ability to pay their debts to the rich nations (Egharevba, *Ibid*). Indeed, there are 'concerns about an impending debt crisis in Africa are rising alongside the region's growing debt levels. As of 2017, 19 African countries have exceeded the 60 percent debt-to-GDP threshold set by the African Monetary Co-operation Program (AMCP) for developing economies, while 24 countries have surpassed the 55 percent debt-to-GDP ratio suggested by the International Monetary Fund. Surpassing this threshold means that these countries are highly vulnerable to economic changes and their governments have a reduced ability to provide support to the economy in the event of a recession. While debt is a global issue, Africa's past debt crises have been devastating' (Onyekwena & Ekeruche, 2019, p. 1).

It is crucial to argue that the objectives of neoliberalism are the same largely for most African countries simply because the basic thrust is that African states are similar, experiencing equal crises and similarly demand solutions. Neoliberalists identified the reasons for the economic failure of most African states to include the overvaluation of local currencies, state regulation of the import licensing system, subsidisation of oil products and various social sectors of the economy, inefficient state-owned enterprises and corruption. It was claimed that the primary cause of the failures was over-regulation of the African economies, which hindered the interaction of market forces of demand and supply in efficient allocation of values (Konings, 2011).

Given the reasons that the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) offered for African economic crises, the assumption of the policy of neoliberal programmes became the reduction in the responsibility of the state by depending on market forces of demand and supply. The conditionalities have been applied rather uniformly and mechanically by various African countries regardless of prevailing socio-cultural conditions within each country. Externally introduced neoliberal policies have been put forward as the only credible recipe for African progress. Despite the fact that for some three decades, the implementation of the neoliberal programme instruments has resulted in worsening economic woes in most African societies, the proponents of the programme insist that there are no alternatives to it. Taking into cognizance data from Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa among other African states, Tobias (2012) demonstrates that because of the extensive application of neoliberal measures, these states had now become focus to many of the same inducements and restraints that works in the global North, without corresponding prospects to engage immigrant labour as derived in much of the global North.

Pan Africanist Intervention and Neoliberalism in Africa: A Critical Review

A. Anku in historical-comparative perspective captures vividly the socio-economic reality of Africa as occasioned by infiltration of neoliberal measures:

The neoliberal order has railroaded Africa into yet another economic conundrum reminiscent of the socio-economic dislocation wrought on Africa during the chattel slavery and classical colonialism. The First Decade of Africa (immediate independence) saw a relatively significant economic performance with 2% of global economic output. However, Africa's economy faces dramatic nose-dive at the onset of neoliberal economic policies introduced to the continent under the aegis of Bretton Wood institutions (International Monetary Fund and World Bank). These policies teleguided from metropolitan capitals of the West were supposedly meant to mitigate the socio-economic malaise confronting the continent at the time. Ironically, Africa is now hovering around 1.4% of the global economic output despite over five decades of dutiful servile adherence to Western prescriptions (personal communication, March 19, 2020).

According to G. Nzongola-Ntalaja, Pan Africanism eventually developed in the era of imperialism and colonialism; pan-Africanism is basically an anti-capitalist ideology. This is evident when one looks at its major figures, Dr. W.E.B. Dubois, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Amilcar Cabral, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and Professor Walter Rodney among others.

He extends the argument further:

Pan-Africanists reject neoliberalism as an ideology of the rich and the superrich of today's world, systematized by their organic intellectuals in universities and think tanks all over the world to celebrate the triumph of capitalism as "the end of history," or the only socioeconomic system for which there is no alternative for humanity. This is an anti-democratic position, as it denies human beings the freedom of thought and expression to imagine a better world than the one in which a small percentage of the population controls most of the wealth at both the global and the national levels. The gap between the rich and the poor globally and in particular the scandalously high level of inequality in richly endowed countries like Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Africa and the USA are a good indicator of the failure of neoliberalism as a social system. The poor in America, the last station of the train to modernity and abundance, according to neoliberals, have yet to enjoy the 'blessings' of liberal capitalism (personal communication, March 17, 2020).

This presupposes that neoliberalism has continued to increase the poverty level of Africa while keeping the capitalist countries at an advantage in economic development because the logic is capital realization which is being sought from the poor countries. L. Arogundade shares the view that pan Africanists tend to see neo liberalism as the political and economic face of the second slavery. He insists that neo liberalism impoverishes the people by

placing collectively produced wealth in the hands of few while ensuring continuing dependence of African economic structure on the west. That's why the champions of neo-liberal policies are the western –dominated institutions, namely, IMF, World Bank (personal communication, March 15, 2020).

In concrete term, the response of A. Anku is detailed and critical, to him, Pan-Africanists have generally opposed neoliberalism in all its forms since it undermines the sovereignty, dignity, economic independence and development of African countries and peoples. Neoliberalism is a rehash of liberalism espoused by the Bretton Woods and imposed on African countries in the form of SAP and its subsequent transformations such as Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD), Employment and Social Affairs Platform (ESAP), Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), etc.

Pungently, A. Anku in his view, contends:

The disastrous impact of neoliberal policies saw mobilization of concerned bodies and Trade Unions up in arms against the unbridled and wholesale implementation of economic dictates by the Bretton Woods. Counter proposals were adduced by progressives and Pan African activists across the continent. These people had articulated pragmatic viewpoints intended to cure the problems engendered in various economies. There has been individuals and groups agitation against neoliberal economic policies implemented over the decades and all those efforts were impregnated by some individual Pan African activists who were mostly intellectuals using student movements, trade

unions and professional bodies as a counter force (personal communication, March 19, 2020).

Asides, he argued in affirmative sense that that there have been appreciable Pan-Africanist solutions to the neoliberal cankerworm in Africa such as concretization of African unity through the formation of a Continental Union Government as crusaded by Nkrumah and later by Muamar Gaddafi.

More interestingly, while citing Kwame, Nyerere, Zik as they have tried to provide a preferable forms of socio organization like Ujaama by Nyerere, H. Soweto observes that neoliberalism is about survival of the fittest, everyman for himself, a case of dog eats dog whereas concept of Ujaama reinforcing the need to utilize societal wealth collectively. As he submits:

All these points were necessary to indicate that there were many Africans who have initiated different thoughts against neoliberalism and other ideas western powers were propagating. But there were equally pan Africanist leaders who embraced neoliberalism of western powers that when they negotiated with west, they then had to shift ground for them and that is why one can understand the dynamics of the struggle of power transfer to some elements of the North especially in Nigeria (personal communication, April 3, 2020.).

To this extent, G. Nzongola-Ntalaja insists that Pan-Africanism has been so instrumental in fighting for socio-economic development in Africa but it is regrettable that many of the proponents of Pan-Africanism have always been subjected to serious humiliation and all of that. Comprehensively, he submits:

Most of the great Pan-Africanist leaders were undermined or simply assassinated by the imperialists and their lackeys in Africa. I am thinking here, in order of their disappearance, of Ruben Um Nyobe of Cameroon, Barthélemy Boganda of the CAR, Dr. Félix-Roland Moumié of Cameroon, Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, Tom Mboya of Kenya (the trade union leader chosen to preside over the Accra 1958 Pan-African conference), Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt (who died of a heart attack in the midst of so much externally orchestrated destabilization), Amilcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso, John Garang of Sudan and, in spite of his sometimes erratic behavior, Muammar Qaddafi of Libya. I should include Mwalimu Julius Nyerere in this list of Pan-Africanists, since he shared with them the commitment to the independence and sovereignty of the African continent, economic independence and Pan-African solidarity continent-wide and with the African diaspora worldwide, but he did not pose a major threat to imperialism because his ideology of African Socialism was much closer to European social democracy than the more radical views of the other leaders mentioned above. When you analyze the circumstances leading to the physical elimination of the latter, you will see how critical political independence and sovereignty appear to be. Thus, economic independence and Pan-African solidarity are the major components of Pan-Africanism as a useful tool for socio-

economic development in Africa (personal communication, March 17, 2020).

He added that Pan-Africanism is the answer to the economic, political and social problems created by neoliberalism in Africa. As he puts it:

This would mean, as Samir Amin, Claude Ake, Bade Onimode and other African scholars have argued, the construction of a *democratic developmental state* in each of our African countries to replace the fake democracies that we now have, based on corruption, electoral fraud and authoritarian rule by leaders who pretend to be democrats. Such a state will have as its top priorities the eradication of poverty, and not simply its ‘alleviation’ or ‘reduction;’ the establishment of genuine democracy at the central (or federal), provincial (or state) and local levels, with leaders accountable to legislative bodies, civil society and the people at large; and the use of African wealth in natural resources to build prosperous economies to raise the standard of living of the population as a whole.

Prospects for Africa’s development in the age of neoliberalism

On this question, A. Anku was pessimistic and made it abundantly clear when he contends:

Frankly, I don’t think there are any prospects for Africa’s development in the age of neoliberalism. This is due to the proven fact that neoliberalism does not serve the interests of Africa. History has proved that neoliberalism is a Trojan horse gift by the West for Africa. That is why contemporary true Pan-Africanists reject it totally. Neoliberal

order is not fashioned to aid Africa resolve the economic gulf created by inherent imbalances in global trade system rather, it is meant to keep Africa as hewers of firewood and drawers of water (personal communication, March 19, 2020).

Similar but more explicit to the above is located in the views of H. Soweto when he notes that “neoliberalism and the system that underpins capitalism unless overthrown, the future of Africa would even be worse than ever imagined”. That is because right from the period of industrial revolution in Europe, Africa and other Third World Countries have been considered in an arrangement whereby they would continue to be dependent on the world market which is led by the advanced capitalist states, a situation which would mean that Africa would be permanent producers of raw materials and while they serve as the market for the manufactured products of super powers. Specifically, this kind of arrangement we mean that Africa would never develop beyond the primary producer of unprocessed goods and market for the capitalist economic system” (personal communication, April 3, 2020.).

At the risk of standing pessimistic, M. Aderemi argues that the way the current global political economy is structured, neoliberalism is not going to advance African economies. It is not going to take us out of the crises. With emphasis, he added by saying that neoliberalism has not gone beyond the western societies, the Anglo-Saxon countries, neoliberalism has not lifted any country’s economy from underdevelopment to development. Perhaps, it has never happened. In his words:

The Asian tiger did not develop because of neoliberalism. In fact, they have to seriously breach the rules of neoliberal economy praxis to

develop, so unless Africa also do the same. If we rely on a free market and perfect market democratic model, the system is already unequal and the way it is structured Africa by virtue of our very composition, we absorb more than a fair share of global shocks. We are very susceptible in the current system. We do not even fix prices for our commodity. So we do not have any voice in the international market, we do not impact stock exchange, no any convertible currency. Now in the United Nations, if we don't have any permanent security members, we cannot influence the management of conflict on the continent (personal communication, April 15, 2020).

So, all of those things would show one that in the neoliberal setting, Africa has zero voice. Neoliberalism is about competition, there is no way, Africa today cannot compete with Europe of the twentieth century. The competition is not even at all, is like ant fighting an elephant. So that is capitalism, neoliberalism, is about profit, about competition, about market and all of those things and we are not ready.

Aderemi's position is to the effect that unless we have a system that is not neoliberal but at least sensitive to inequality, favourable to the underdeveloped countries, Africa cannot develop under a neoliberal economic framework.

Meanwhile, "Africa, for example, cushioning packages of the effects of SAPs such as the Social Dimension of Adjustment (SDA) in Zimbabwe and Programme of Action to Mitigate Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD) in Ghana have been experimented in Africa (Mkandawire & Soludo, 1999, p. 90). In these countries macroeconomic stability is far from being achieved, and they

have remained in the vicious circle of indebtedness” (Konadu-Agyemang, 2001, p. 8). They insist the challenge with most of these designs is that they are stuck in the ideological constraints of neoliberal policies.

Therefore, L. Arogundade posits that as long as African economy remains unproductive and dependent on Europe and America for survival, the prospects of Africa’s development in the age of neoliberalism “are not that bright as it requires a social revolution. Hopefully Pan Africanists and others fighting for the liberation of Africa will come to that realization sooner than later” (personal communication, March 15, 2020).

Summary and Conclusion

The core of the argument in this analysis is that Pan-Africanism emerged as a belief that Africans generally (i.e those in the region and diaspora) were united in oppression and shared common destiny as victims of socio-political and economic repression and cultural oppression by the West. It has become an instrument deployed to resist capitalist ideology in Africa and especially in recent time. Neoliberalism revealed its deleterious self in the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) implemented in the continent. The study underscores that pan-Africanism repudiates neoliberalism and its evils in Africa as symbol of the struggle for unification and liberation of Africans from the western “neoliberal virus”. Nonetheless, certain numbers of challenges are still critical to the realization and continuation of Pan Africanist projects in Africa. The most important among them is the problem of citizenship rights encompassing the protection of political, economic and cultural rights of citizens across African states, crisis of rule of law, dictatorial character of leaders, committed leaders to human capital development, issue of decent livelihood for the people and so forth. Yet, Pan-Africanism

is a vital instrument in the struggle against underdevelopment in a sense that it provides an intellectual guide to action. Therefore, it remains a veritable tool for spurring socio-economic development in Africa.

Recommendations

For adequate realization and sustenance of Pan-Africanist project against neoliberalism in Africa today, the following should be considered necessary:

1. The need for African states to be ruled by men and women of impeccable identity and strong character as Pan-Africanists and unbending credence for the Pan-Africanist values as engaged by intellectuals like Walter Rodney, Amilcar Cabral, Thomas Sankara, Kwame Nkrumah, including Nelson Mandela and others.
2. State should take an assertive and superintendent role in the economy to mediate relationship between state and economy in the interest of the state. This is because for instance Asian tiger did not develop because of neoliberalism and this neoliberalism has failed in Africa.
3. The need to include Pan-Africanism in the curriculum of higher institutions in Africa for critical learning and orientation inculcation and development.
4. There should also be leadership motivation for mass-based mobilization like the 2018 commemoration of 60th anniversary of First All African Conference. In fact, this should be sustained and continued to further the engagement of African solidarity and Pan-Africanist advocacy for the transformation of the continent.

5. Furthermore, as a matter of urgency, a project needs to be initiated, where African should begin to reduce the effect of neoliberal economic paradigms on the continent.
6. African states should be prepared and ready within the setting of Pan-Africanism to break the iron logic of imperialism as usually expressed inform of international division of labour, where Africans have been made to produce raw materials for the capitalist states so that the prospect for African development will never materialize. It is this situation that is hoped to allow easy diversification of economies that is needed for the socio-economic development of Africa.
7. The need for conscious and visionary leaders in Africa like Nkrumah, Nyerere etc.

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