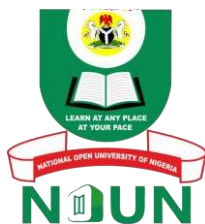


**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

<b>Course Code</b>	<b>PHL 435</b>
<b>Course Title</b>	<b>African political theorists</b>
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## **PHL 435: AFRICAN POLITICAL THEORISTS (3 Credit Units) C**

### **General Introduction**

Welcome to **PHL435 – African political theorist**. PHL435 is a two-credit unit course that has a minimum duration of one semester. The course is compulsory for all B.A. philosophy degree students in the university. The course is meant to introduce students to a number of African political theorists. The writings of Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Obafemi Awolowo, Frantz Fanon, etc. will be studied. This is important for the need to understand how the struggle for political independence in Africa started and what kinds of ideology were available for the realization of the independence drive in order to see how African states can be liberated.

Specifically, most of the African political theorists that will be discussed in this course are instrumental to the formation of some popular ideologies and political doctrines that continue to command some serious influence in contemporary times. In other words, there are some political doctrines or ideologies that are associated with them individually, such that when they are mentioned, what they proposed can easily be recalled. For instance, at the mention of Philosophical Consciencism, Kwame Nkrumah (1964) comes to mind. When Ujamaa is mentioned, former Tanzanian statesman, Julius Nyerere (1968) immediately comes to mind. Awolowo (1968) is known for his doctrine of democratic socialism. Senghor is Negritude whereas Frantz Fanon (1986) is popular for his advocacy of decolonizing Africa. He saw violence and alienation as attributes of colonization.

These theories are importance to the comprehension of the uniqueness of African political theory especially in the understanding of some of the African socio-cultural factors and ways of living that inspired their theorists. Another interesting theme which runs through all these theorists is that they are critical of the capitalist mode of running the state (Omoregbe, 2010). Given this, they seem to have a sympathetic appeal to socialism, which most of them find to be a popular idea within African traditional communities before the advent of the colonialists. So for them, capitalism and the accumulation of wealth by an individual is not so much popular in traditional African communal lifestyle, so conscious effort for the return to this communal way of living in a more sophisticated way was largely advanced by the early African theorists.

From the general overview of the contentions of the theorists, there are some questions that we need to consider: Does this mean that there are no individuals who accumulated wealth in pre-colonial times? Were these African political theorists not glorifying the African past to the point of overlooking its limitations? How adequate were their ideas and how practicable would those ideas be in contemporary time? Would those ideas have had any significant effect in the social, economic and every other aspects of living of the Africans? These are some of the considerations that this course explores.

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- explain the main idea of each of the African political theorist that will be examined;
- examine the point of intersection or departure of the philosophical ideas of the political theorist discussed;
- discuss the extent to which their theories truly reflect the African past; and
- analyse the relevance of these theories in contemporary African politics.

## **Working through this Course**

To successfully complete this course, read the study units, do all assessments, participate in discussion forums, read the recommended books/texts and other materials provided and participate in on-line facilitation.

Each study unit has introduction, intended learning outcomes, the main content, conclusion, summary, self-assessment exercise and references/further readings. The introduction will give an insight into what you should expect in the study unit. The intended learning outcomes pose questions that will prepare you for what you should be able to do at the completion of each study unit. The main content provides a deeper analysis of issues discussed in each unit, while the summary is a recap of the issues discussed in the unit. The self-assessment exercise contain questions meant to test your understanding of topics taught in each unit. These questions will assist you to evaluate your learning at the end of each unit and to establish the extent to which you have achieved the intended learning outcomes. To meet the intended learning outcomes, knowledge is presented in text, arranged into modules and units. Click on the links as may be directed, but where you are reading the text offline, you will have to copy and paste the link address into a browser. You can also print and download the texts and save in your computer or external drive. Do not also forget to consult the texts recommended for further reading.

## **Study Units**

This course comprises of 16 study units that are divided into 5 modules. These 5 modules have 2-6 study units each. The entire contents of these units are situated below:

### **Module 1: The Communitarian Basis of African Political Philosophy**

Unit 1: On the Subject Matter of African Political Philosophy

Unit 2: Eurocentrism and the Question of African Identity

Unit 3: Communitarianism and African Political Philosophy

### **Module 2: Julius Nyerere and the Concept of Ujamaa**

Unit 1: The Basic Tenets of Ujamaa

Unit 2: Nyerere's Problem with Capitalism

Unit 3: Critical Evaluation of the Doctrine of Ujamaa

### **Module 3: Kwame Nkrumah and Leopold Sedar Senghor on Negritude**

Unit 1: The Main Idea of Philosophical Consciencism and Africa's Development

Unit 2: Nkrumah's Consciencism and African Developmental Framework

Unit 3: Afrocentrism and Negritude in Senghor's African Socialism

Unit 4: Critical Examination of Senghor's Doctrine of African Socialism

### **Module 4: Obafemi Awolowo's Theory of Democratic Socialism**

Unit 1: Obafemi Awolowo's Democratic Socialism

Unit 2: Awolowo Democratic Socialism and Marxian Socialism

Unit 3: Evaluating Awolowo's Democratic Socialism

### **Module 5: Frantz Fanon on Political Violence**

Unit 1: Fanon on Violence and Terrorism

Unit 2: Interrogating Fanon's Doctrine of Political Violence

### **Further Readings**

Ake, C. (2001) *Democracy and Development in Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.

Ake, C. (1981) *A Political Economy of Africa*. London: Longman.

Awolowo, O., (1968) *The People's Republic*, Ibadan: Oxford University Press.

Fanon, F., (1986) *Black Skin White Mask*, England, Pluto Press.

Biney, A. (2011). *The Political and Social Thoughts of Kwame Nkrumah*. New York: Palmgrave Macmilan.

Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*. Trans C. Farrington. New York: Grove Press.

Gyekye, K. (1998) *Tradition and Modernity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Masolo, D.A., (2004) "Western and African Communitarianism: A Comparison" in K. Wiredu (ed.) *A Companion to African Philosophy*, New York: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Nkrumah, K., (1964) *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization*, London, International Publishers.

Nyerere, J. K. (1968). *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism*. London: Oxford University Press

Ogundowole, E.K. (2011) *Self-Reliance: Philosophy of a New World Order*, Lagos: Correct Counsels Ltd.

Omeregbe, J.I. (2010) *Socio-Political Philosophy: A Historical and Thematic Study*, Lagos: JOJA Publishers.

Rodney, W., (1970) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Dares Salaam, B'ogle L'Overture

Schumpeter, J (1942) *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, London, Harper Perennial

So, A.Y., (1990) *Social Change and Development*, Newbury Park: CA, Sage Books

Steele, D (1992) *From Marx to Mises: Post-Capitalist Society and the Challenge of Economic Calculation*. USA, Open Court Publishing Co.

The following links can be used to access materials online:

- [www.pdfdrive.net](http://www.pdfdrive.net)

- [www.bookboon.com](http://www.bookboon.com)
- [www.sparknotes.com](http://www.sparknotes.com)
- <http://ebookey.org>
- <https://scholar.google.com>
- <https://books.google.com>

## **Presentation Schedule**

This course has two presentations; one at the middle of the semester and the other towards the end of the semester. At the beginning of the semester, each student undertaking this course will be assigned a topic by the course facilitator, which will be made available in due time, for individual presentations during forum discussions. Each presenter has 15 minutes (10 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes for Question and Answer). On the other hand, students will be divided by the course facilitator into different groups. Each group is expected to come up with a topic to work on and to submit same topic to the facilitator via the recommended medium. Both attract 5% of the total marks.

**Note:** Students are required to submit both papers via the recommended medium for further examination and grading. Both attract 5% of the total marks.

## **Assessment**

In addition to the discussion forum presentations, two other assignments/paper presentation are required. The paper should be typewritten in 12 fonts, double line spacing, and Times New Roman. The preferred reference is MLA 6<sup>th</sup> edition (you can download a copy online), topics will be made available and each of the papers carries 10% of the total mark of 100%. To avoid plagiarism, students should use the followings links to test run their papers before submission:

- <http://plagiarism.org>
- <http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>

Finally, all students taking the course MUST take the semester examination which attracts 70% of the total marks.

## **How to Get the Most Out of this Course**

For students to get the most out of this course, he/she must:

- Have 75% of attendance through active participations in both forum discussions and facilitation;
- Read each topic in the course materials before it is being treated in the class;
- Submit every assignment as at when due; as failure to do so will attract a penalty;
- Discuss and share ideas among his/her peers; this will help in understanding the course more;
- Download videos, podcasts and summary of group discussions for personal consumption;
- Attempt each self-assessment exercises in the main course material;
- Take the final exam;
- Approach the course facilitator when having any challenge with the course.

## **Facilitation**

This course operates a learner-centered online facilitation. To support the student's learning process, the course facilitator will, one, introduce each topic under discussion; two, open floor for discussion. Each student is expected to read the course materials, as well as other related literatures, and raise critical issues which he/she shall bring forth in the forum discussion for further dissection; three, summarizes forum discussion; four, upload materials, videos and podcasts to the forum; five, disseminate information via email and SMS if need be.

**Module 1: On the Subject Matter of African Political Philosophy**

Unit 1: The Communitarian Basis of African Political Philosophy

Unit 2: Eurocentrism and the Question of African Identity



## **Unit 1: On the Subject Matter of African Political Philosophy**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 What is Politics?
- 1.3.2 What is Philosophy?
- 1.3.3 Africa: Conceptual Clarification
- 1.3.4 Focus of African Political Philosophy
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE)

### **1.1 Introduction**

The principal focus of this unit is to attain two objectives. First, it provides a critical analysis of the key terms that are central to the study. These primary terms are ‘politics,’ ‘philosophy,’ and ‘Africa.’ The aim is to explain these terms in a way student can understand them. Second, this unit also provides an avenue for comprehending the main idea of African Political Philosophy. It explores what makes African Political Philosophy unique and different other branches of Philosophy.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, the student must have been able to:

- Understand the key terms that are central to African Political Philosophy; and
- Have a commanding grasp of the main tenets of African Political Philosophy

### **1.3.1 What is Politics?**

Politics refers to almost any activity associated with government. It can also have a narrower definition that means anything associated with people who seek to govern or are currently serving in the government. The word “politic” derives from the Greek word *polis*, which means “city” (Petrarca 2022). If we accept the idea that politics is “the art and science of the government of a state” (Cayne, 1992:777), then it is safe to infer that every group of persons that have formed a society has one way or the other being involved in politics. To then say that Africans lack the ability and innovation of political cohesion, as some Western intellectuals hold, is the opposite of the truth.

When the word politics is used in English-speaking countries, it usually refers to elections. In the United States, politics centers on the national, state, and local elections (Petrarca 2022). The most important election is the presidential election, which occurs every four years. During a presidential election year, political activity in the United States is at its height. There is a great deal of effort exerted by the Democratic and Republican Parties to get their candidates elected to office in

Washington. Billions of dollars are spent on advertisement. Politicians engage in debates, make trips to visit the electorates and work hard to get their message across to the voters. Most citizens over the age of eighteen (18) have the right to vote in the US, but even younger citizens can get involved in some type of political activity (Petrarca 2022). This means that politics and other terms like elections, governments strike similar meanings in the mind.

### **1.3.2 What is Philosophy?**

Philosophy, as the etymology informs is clearly the “love or pursuit of wisdom” (Cayne, 1992:755). Again, there is an implication of this term. Does it mean that anyone who studies philosophy must necessarily be wise? Theodore Oizermann (1973) has usually raised an objection to this form of conception. Are all wise men necessarily philosophers?

Most scholars often claim that philosophy is the base and apex of any endeavor of study. This is why regardless of whatever one has studied, the highest academic qualification one can have is the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). On the meaning and nature of philosophy a prominent Philosopher, Professor J.I Omeregbe is of the view that “philosophy is essentially a reflective activity.” (Omeregbe, 1985:1) We agree with him because to philosophize is to reflect on any human experience, to search for answers to some fundamental questions that arise out of man’s continuous curiosity. Philosophy is imbued in every man as it arises out of wonder. Based on this analysis, it will be foolhardy to agree with the West which categorized Miletian Thales as the father of philosophy, or what other authors have termed the first philosopher. But this claim is totally wrong. By positing that Thales is the first philosopher, logically means that no one before him had done any reflective activity. We must recall that human experience is the source of the reflective activity known as philosophy. If we agree with this statement, then it becomes important to reject the claim that Thales is the first philosopher as ill-founded and logically out of place. This argument is usually made to denigrate the ability to philosophize in non-Western zones of the world by intellectuals who are the mouth-piece of imperialist propaganda.

In our own opinion, philosophy began with man’s existence. There are many obstacles, challenges, wonder, curiosity that causes man to reflect deeply. J.I Omeregbe (1985:4) on the nature of philosophy argues that:

To reflect on such questions in search of explanations or answers is to philosophize. There is no part of the world where men never reflect on such basic questions about the human person or about the physical universe. In other words, there is no part of the world where men do not philosophize. The tendency to reflect on such fundamental philosophic questions is part of human

nature; it is rooted in man's natural instinct of curiosity  
– the instinct to know.

The above extract makes our point more obvious. There is no particular race that is endowed to philosophize while others lack this gift.

### 1.3.3 Africa: Conceptual Clarification

Who is an African? What does it take to say one is an African person? Is it because one is a Negro? Could it be because your descendants derive from Africa? These are the questions that we intend to investigate in this unit. Africa is the world's second-largest and second-most-populous continent. At about 30.3 million km<sup>2</sup> (11.7 million square miles) including adjacent islands, it covers six percent of Earth's total surface area and 20.4 percent of its total land area (Sayre, 1999). With 1.1 billion people as of 2013, it accounts for about 15% of the world's human population (Sayre, 1999). The continent is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, both the Suez Canal and the Red Sea along the Sinai Peninsula to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. The continent includes Madagascar and various archipelagos. It contains 54 fully recognized sovereign states (countries), nine territories and two *de facto* independent states with limited or no recognition (Sayre, 1999).

Africa's population is the youngest amongst all the continents; the median age in 2012 was 19.7, when the worldwide median age was 30.4. Algeria is Africa's largest country by area, and Nigeria by population. Africa, particularly central Eastern Africa, is widely accepted as the place of origin of humans and the Hominidae clade (great apes), as evidenced by the discovery of the earliest hominids and their ancestors, as well as later ones that have been dated to around seven million years ago, including *Sahelanthropus tchadensis*, *Australopithecus africanus*, *A. afarensis*, *Homo erectus*, *H. habilis* and *H. ergaster* – with the earliest *Homo sapiens* (modern human) found in Ethiopia being dated to circa 200,000 years ago. Africa straddles the equator and encompasses numerous climate areas; it is the only continent to stretch from the northern temperate to southern temperate zones (Sayre, 1999). Africa hosts a large diversity of ethnicities, cultures and languages. In the late 19th century European countries colonized most of Africa. Most present states in Africa originate from a process of decolonization in the 20th century.

All of the foregoing clearly gives some insights into the geography and demography of Africa. It is important to begin our conceptual clarity in such a manner so as to allow for objectivity. Whereas the term 'Africa' stands for all of the foregoing, when one mentions 'African' it could mean anything that is peculiar or synonymous with all of the things and entities mentioned. In other words, to be 'African' signifies having ties with the continent. This tie could be by blood or immigration so long as

it is original (Isichei, 1983: 21). In this connection, the term African covers every part of the continent.

For the purpose of this course, we shall be employing the term 'African' to signify the part that is below the Sahara. This is because, the struggles of this part of the continent is different from that of the other. While the one is considered self to be part of the Arab-Islamic world, the other is an admixture of cultures and ideas. It is not a surprise why Kwame Nkrumah infers that the sub-Saharan part is having the tension of Arab-Islamic invasion, Euro-Christian civilization and her own traditional identity (Nkrumah, 1964). With this comment in mind, we shall now concern with the subject matter of socio-political philosophy in the next section.

### **1.3.4 Focus of African Political Philosophy**

African political philosophy is mainly concerned with the critical engagement of political theories and doctrines that are emergent from Africa. Mostly, it is an aspect of African Philosophy that deals with the political theories of some of the dominant thinkers which this course concerns with. Is it not the case that political philosophy is a derivation of philosophy and even ethics where serious efforts and emphasis are given to "moral examination of political concepts?" (Gewirth, 1970) This not only call into question the existence of political philosophy that is indigenously African but it also raises the dust regarding some moral underpinnings employed to assess political concepts. In this connection, does the African have an indigenous means to assess their political life that is distinctly theirs?

There is no doubt that the sole aim of political philosophy is about the ordering of the state, how people should interact for the sake of peaceful co-existence. Political philosophy begins with the question: what ought to be a person's relationship to society? The subject seeks the application of ethical concepts to the social sphere and thus deals with the variety of forms of government and social existence that people could live in – and in so doing, it also provides a standard by which to analyze and judge existing institutions and relationships (Gewirth, 1970).

Although the two are intimately linked by a range of philosophical issues and methods, political philosophy can be distinguished from political science. Political science predominantly deals with existing states of affairs, and insofar as it is possible to be amoral in its descriptions, it seeks a positive analysis of social affairs – for example, constitutional issues, voting behavior, the balance of power, the effect of judicial review, and so forth (Stumpf, 1979:325). Political philosophy generates visions of the good social life: of what ought to be the ruling set of values and institutions that combine men and women together (Gewirth, 1970). The subject matter is broad and connects readily with various branches and sub-disciplines of philosophy including philosophy of law and of economics (Gewirth, 1970).

So when discussing African Political Philosophy, the ideas of African scholars or ideological philosophers such as Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Obafemi Awolowo, Frantz Fanon etc. usually come to mind. There are some unique features that run through most of these theorists that fall under the prism of African political philosophy. Two of these are paramount: (1) They all maintain that capitalism is bad and inimical to African development; and (2) They maintain that socialism or common ownership of the means of production and distribution is the way forward to African development following political independence of African states.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. Senghor, Nkrumah, Nyerere, Fanon are all African political philosophers (a) True (b) False (c) Determined (d) None of the above
2. Pick the odd one out: (a) Leopold Sedar Senghor (b) Malcom X (c) Elijah Mohammed (d) Martin Luther King Jr.

### **1.4 Summary**

This unit has succeeded in discussing the extent to which African political philosophy which is the aspect of African Philosophy where popular ideas such as those of Nkrumah, Senghor, Kaunda, etc. can be found. A crucial factor to deduce is that African political philosophy is not political science since it does not in any way share the same subject of inquiry with it. Though it shares some of the critical tools and analysis of Western political philosophy, this unit has shown that African political philosophy is unique in that it is able to apply these philosophical tools to the African political space. In this unit, we have been able to discuss the ways through African Political Philosophy can be understood. This unit started with a conceptual clarification of some key concepts that are central to the understanding of what African Political Philosophy connotes. This is clearly expressed in the conceptual analysis of the terms: ‘Africa’; ‘Politics’; and ‘Philosophy.’ Following this, this study then proceeds to show that main contention of African political philosophy and its fundamental goal of providing a basis or platform for African development.

### **1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

- Cayne, B.S (1992) (ed.) *The New Webster’s Dictionary of the English Language*. New York: Lexicon Publishing Ltd
- Gewirth, A., (1970) *Problems of Political Philosophy*, New York: Macmillan Publishers.
- Isichei, E. (1983). *A History of Nigeria*. Ibadan: Longmans
- Oizermann, T., (1973) *The Problems of the History of Philosophy*, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

- Omeregbe, J.I (1985) “African Philosophy: Yesterday and Today.” In P. Bodurin (ed.), *Philosophy in Africa: Trends and Perspective*, Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press
- Petrarca, R. (2022). “What is Politics?” Available at <https://study.com/learn/lesson/what-is-politics.html> (Accessed April 29, 2022)
- Sayre, A.P. (1999) *Africa* New York: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Books.
- Stumpf, S.E. (1979). *Elements of Philosophy: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw Hill

### **1.7 Possible Answers to SAE**

1. (a); 2. (a)

## **Unit 2: Eurocentrism and the Question of African Identity**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 Eurocentrism and African Personality
- 1.3.2 Scholarly Reactions to Eurocentrism and the African Identity Question
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

This unit aims to consider critically, the factors that may have led to the need to developing authentic and original political theories that can be called African. This is not to be confused with the understanding that political philosophy in the West generated out of wonder and the need to rectify society (Kenny 2006). The development of African Philosophy and then African socio-political philosophy goes beyond this. It needs to be said that the major issue related to the development of African political theory/philosophy is connected to the need to overcoming the identity problem that was placed on them by Westerners. Africans, for them to be seen as normal humans therefore possess the need to establish themselves as human beings to their former colonisers who see them as lacking the powers of logic and criticality.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, it is the case that students would have been able to:

- Understand the reason why the African identity question surfaced in the first place; and
- Understand how African scholars have reacted to the identity question.

### **1.3.1 Eurocentrism and the African Personality**

What is Eurocentrism and how does it help with the African personality? Simply put, Eurocentrism is the outlook that Europe and America are the places where the real knowledge resides. Other places must look to these parts of the world and see if they are able to measure up. This means that whatever they do must conform to the ideas or knowledge base of the West, otherwise it does not qualify as knowledge. All of these commenced with the experience of colonisation and the drive for civilization.

Perhaps, we can commence by understanding that Africa is a continent with vast natural resources that has not helped the people grow. It is an open secret that colonialism truncated the development of Africa. Colonialism brought capitalism which penetrates any market to shape the productive forces mainly for the benefit of profits. Hence, the continent became a battle ground among countries of the West

for resources and cheap labour culminating into the Berlin Conference of 1884 which legalized the partitioning of Africa. Claude Ake (1981: 83) reacting to this idea retorts that:

... more emphasis was placed on the justification of colonialism as a service to the colonized people. What service? Essentially the service of civilizing them. That is why colonialism was ‘popularly’ referred to by colonizers as a civilizing mission. According to the theory, the civilization of the native, includes among other things, bringing them Western Education, the benefits of Western technology, bringing them into the stream of human history, getting them to discard their ‘barbaric culture’ and generally redeeming a way of life captive to ignorance, poverty and disease.

The above analysis from Claude Ake reveals the deep-seated feature implied in globalization as conceived today. What we have in the above excerpt is internationalism. We shall soon make efforts to expatiate on this later. To put in another way, the foreigners may put a claim thus: “we have helped a barbaric people realize their potentials and have initiated them into our quest to making the world a global village”. But as is well known the colonization of a people will usually involve a brutal process: the military expedition to liquidate dissident indigenes and sometimes whole villages. The colonial process disarticulates a people’s culture, makes use of force to make people toil under inhumane conditions sometimes leading to their death, the devastation of the environmental as is the case with the Niger Delta where oil spillages causes crop failure and cessation of aquatic biomes. Is this the civilization that they purport to have brought to Africa? How does the foreigner perceive human lives in Africa?

### **1.3.2 Scholarly Reactions to Eurocentrism and the African Identity Question**

Before considering the ways that scholars reacted to the Eurocentric idea and how much they affect the African, identity, it is helpful to first provide a brief summary of the statements that put the African identity question in a tight situation. As stated earlier,

The strength of Eurocentrism lies primarily in the assertions of Western intellectual giants who passed destructive criticisms on the ability of Africans to think deeply. One of the most respected Western giants with strong emphasis on Eurocentrism is Friedrich Hegel.

As we know, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), who was not a historian, but a great philosopher, stated in his lectures delivered in the winter of 1830–1 on the philosophical history of the world: “Africa is no historical part of the world; it



has no movement or development to exhibit. . . . Egypt . . . does not belong to the African Spirit” (1956: 99). This view of the Hegelian philosophy of history has become almost a common opinion and an academic paradigm in Western historiography. A great culture or civilization cannot be produced by African (Black) people. Moreover, African people have never made any kind of contribution to world history. Even some brilliant African minds still accept as true Hegel’s incongruous statement (Obenga, 2004:32-3). Several other scholars such as Jean Bodin, Thomas Jefferson, David Hume etc. have called for the lack of any intellectual achievement of the African man.

In his essay “On National Character”, David Hume exhibited his aversion and contempt for the black man. Because of his belief that a person’s intellectual ability or otherwise is a function of his or her nativity or racial descent, Hume, held that the African (the black-man) is incapable of logical thinking and is therefore intellectually unproductive, among other inadequacies. David Hume has absolutely no respect for the black man. He believes very strongly in the idea that Europe is the model of humanity, culture and is history itself. It is this type of belief; that led Hume to declare thus:

I am apt to suspect the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites. There scarcely ever was a civilised notion of that complexion; nor even any individual eminent in action or speculation... (Quoted in Wiredu, 1980: 198).

From the above, it is clear that Hume attaches great importance to complexion (the color of a person’s skin), and accords it a prominent role in the determination of a person’s rationality or irrationality. Here Hume falls into the same error of causality which he earlier refused in his philosophy, by saying that there is a causal relation between a person’s skin colour and his intellectual capacity. Thus, he identifies skin colour as the uniform, constant difference between two races of men. This is categorically as incorrect as it is contradictory. According him “it is because an object lies contiguous and prior to another that we say there is a necessary connection”. For him “there is no causation or succession, all objects are co-existent” (Wiredu, 1980). Furthermore on the black race, Hume asserts that any African who is respected by his people for his intellectual achievement, must be seen as a mere parrot who cannot say anything coherently. In his words: “in Jamaica, indeed they talk of one negroe as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely that he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot who speaks a few words plainly” (Wiredu, 1980: 199). This attitude of Hume puts a question mark on his philosophical disposition and leaves one wondering how genuine a philosopher he was since he lacks the philosophical attitude of open-mindedness and tolerance. This is because as corpulent as his ideas are, David Hume seems to maintain that people with black skin lack the capacity for creative thinking even when he was

advocating for a philosophy that should be true for all time and places. David Hume is therefore fundamentally wrong as his argument is based on a weak logic.

As a result of these demeaning warrants and castigations, some scholars of African descent rose to the challenge of attempting to quell the impending identity implication. And one of the weapons involves the valorisation of blackness – the locus that being black-skinned does not make an individual a lesser human being. William du Bois responds to the charges of Eurocentrism that we concerned about in the preceding section. He proposes the theory of ‘double consciousness’ as a true reflection of the man of colour. Double consciousness describes the individual sensation as though your identity is divided into several parts, making it difficult or impossible to have one single identity. He speaks within the context of race and identity in the United States. Double consciousness forces blacks free themselves from their unique perspective but also to view themselves as they might be perceived by the outside world (Du Bois, 1989).

Bell Hooks (1992) is popular for her attempt to transform ‘black’ into a positive idea via decolonization. To decolonise the term ‘black’ for Hooks means that one must appreciate the inherent value in the term as used to refer to native Africans. For her, to decolonise does not mean to “negate the value of blackness” (Hooks, 1992: 17) or “to have contempt for blackness.” Similarly, to decolonise to decolonise is “to define black positively, to reclaim black identity that has previously been denied and to hold the conviction that black is beautiful” (Hooks, 1992: 18).

On his part, Leopold Sedar Senghor puts forward the philosophy of Negritude which has close interface with his African socialism. Although he did not give it a clear definition, Senghor thought of African socialism as part of his humanism which, in turn, is a function of Africa’s Negritude. He commenced with what he perceived as a clear distinction between the Negro-African society and what he called “the collectivist European society”, in the following words:

I would say that the latter is an assembly of individuals. The collectivist society inevitably places the emphasis on the individual, on his original activity and his needs. In this respect, the debate between “to each according to his labor” and “to each according to his needs” is significant. Negro-African society puts more stress on the group than on the individual, more on solidarity than on the activity and needs of the individual, more on the communion of persons than on their autonomy. Ours is a community society. This does not mean that it ignores the individual, or that collectivist society ignores solidarity, but the latter bases this solidarity on the

activities of individuals, whereas the community society bases it on the general activity of the group (Sengor, 1964: 93–4).

As revealed in the above, Senghor explains how the African perceives people and world. It is the way he feels and thinks, in union not only with all other people around him but “indeed with all other beings in the universe: God, animal, tree, or pebble” (Senghor, 1964: 94). Senghor’s earlier work including his definition of Negritude, had addressed the naturalness with which Africans embrace and participate in nature rather than relating to it cognitively from a distance. In other words, for him, the communitarian habits of Africans are not acquired; rather, they are part of the African way of expressing being.

Besides individuals, movements soon erupted to both justify and correct the misleading and demeaning presentation of black Africans. One of the most prominent here is the Black Consciousness Movement. This Movement is one of the liberation movements that emerged in apartheid South Africa. The movement did not find anything wrong symbolically with the use of black. The aim however is to use the concept for the restoration of the dignity of the native African “whose pride, life and humanity had been taken from them by apartheid in South Africa and more generally by colonisation of the African continent” (Tsri, 2016a: 153). In the words of Steve Biko (1978: 48) blackness in Black Consciousness “is not a matter of pigmentation – being black is a reflection of a mental attitude.” In this regard, the essence of being black is located in the experience of racial oppression and not in relation to skin pigmentation (Tsri, 2016a: 153). The Movement has three cardinal ideas. Firstly, it maintains that “blacks were made to fit into patterns determined by whites” (Biko, 1978: 18). Secondly, it contends that “most of the so-called African intellectuals lacked a depth of insight into what can be done to radically transform the unenviable state of existence of the majority of Africans” (Biko, 1978: 18). Thirdly, it also the admission that “the same questions are asked and the same naiveté exhibited in answering them” (Biko, 1978: 23). The Movement therefore seeks to put blacks in their rightful place. The Movement do not find anything wrong especially with the symbolic use of the colour to characterize African nature and personality.

What has been discussed thus far, in this unit are the ways through which scholars who are mostly African descendants have tried to respond to the charge of Eurocentrism and to disclose how the intellect of the African is not to be underestimated.

## Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1 That Africa is not part of the world's history is an assertion traceable to \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Pick the odd one out: (a) Steve Biko (b) Jean Bodin (c) Friedrich Hegel (d) Thomas Jefferson

### 1.4 Summary

The discourse on the capacity of Africans to be rational invites a lot of reasoning to defend the African personality and intellect. This task was shouldered by the prominent scholars who were committed to this cause. They are motivated by the conviction that unless they rebuke these negative and derogatory comments about Africans, nothing good will be seen in the African. This unit has been able to provide a brief historical exposition of how Eurocentrism and the question of African identity both contributed to show that Africans cannot have anything commendable in them. This unit has been able to look at the ways the Europeans viewed Africans and passed negative comments on them. Furthermore, the effort of Africans and their descendants to show that these claims are wrong or misplaced has also been considered.

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### 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

1. Hegel; 2. (a)

## **Unit 3: Communitarianism and African Political Philosophy**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 What is Communitarianism?
- 1.3.2 The Relationship between Communitarianism and African Socialism
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

For this unit, we are going to look at the idea of communitarianism. Through this, the idea of African communitarianism as a key concept will be understood and appreciated as another unique framework that can assist the assimilation of the main ideas being proposed by some of the foremost Afro-political theorists that will be critically examined in the remaining modules of this course.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

Thorough engagement with the contents of this unit will allow the study to:

- Develop an understanding of the idea of communitarianism;
- Understand the connection between communitarianism and the clamour for African Socialism

### **1.3.1 What is Communitarianism?**

Communitarianism is a fairly recent doctrine in social and moral philosophy. It is the antithesis of individualism, but its manifestations in intellectual traditions around the world reveal important regional modifications. In Euro-American philosophical traditions communitarianism still lacks a uniform and normative expression which can be said to unite all its exponents in either socio-political or moral theory, but it has become a fairly strong and important source of critique of the perceived excesses of the liberal ideology of individualism. It does not articulate a substantive theory of what a communitarian society ought to be, or of which specific aspirations are to be expected of the inhabitants of a communitarian order, but its adherents subscribe to the general view of the political and moral community as having rights which are not only independent of those of the individual but also important enough in some crucial ways to warrant the adjustment of the freedoms of the individual to the conditions of the good of the collective whole (Masolo, 2004:482).

Claims that the values of community override the freedoms and rights of the individual pervaded much of the nationalist rhetoric which was associated with independence movements in the 1960s. While much of this rhetoric was brought to light through the language of nationalist politics in the traditional sense of the term,

it was committed to writing by those politicians who also often doubled as Africa's pioneer intelligentsia. Among these were celebrated leaders like Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. Their difference from Western communitarians lies in the fact they could appeal to African traditional social and political orders as backing for their claims (Masolo, 2004:485).

There is every reason to believe that communal life in Africa cannot be divorced from that of the group. Before we proceed very far, it would be helpful to commence with what Kwame Gyekye terms as shared beliefs and values of African thought system. Gyekye believes that "there is of course no pretense made that the moral values of various African societies are the same across the board, but there are some values that can be said to be shared in their essentials by all African societies" (Gyekye, 1996: 55–6). Elsewhere, he writes in the same connection that:

Such shared beliefs and values are said to fall under the following headings: (1) metaphysics: (a) ontology; (b) causation; (c) concept of person; (d) fate/destiny; (e) the problem of evil; (2) epistemology (inclusive of the paranormal as well as the rational/empirical); (3) morality (as established and maintained on a secular rather than religious foundation); (4) communalism (that self-interest must be reconciled with communal interests)" (Gyekeye, 1995: 195–210).

Amplifying on the above common denominator, Nkrumah (1964) is of the view that the traditional view of man imposes socialist obligations on society. He emphasises egalitarianism and the inherent dignity of man that was found in African traditional societies as the sources of his doctrine of consciencism. His socialism rides on that traditional model of communality and egalitarianism which influenced the communitarian view of persons.

### **1.3.2 The Relationship between Communitarianism and African Socialism**

In the process of understanding the relationship that can be noticed between African Socialism and Communitarianism, the ideas of the individual African political theorists are of better assistance. However, given that communitarianism has been briefly discussed, with some of its core features already discussed, it is now important to consider what is meant by African socialism and briefly understand its relationship with communitarianism. This is important because foremost African political theorists provided enough evidence to show that there is a relationship between each of these political terms within the African society.

To some Scholars, African socialism means a combination of African communitarianism with a hefty dose of Marxism. Senghor, for his part, while being

quite intrigued by Marxism, argued that that Marxist ethic fell short of stressing the centrality of people and their freedom. Rather, it placed emphasis on the priority of the economic factor and the class struggle “to the detriment of man and his freedom . . . it is a terribly inhuman metaphysics in which mind is sacrificed to matter, freedom to the determined, man to things” (Senghor, 1964: 76–7). By contrast, he asserts, West African realities include the fact that “they are community countries where the group holds priority over the individual; they are, especially, religious countries, unselfish countries, where money is not King” (Senghor, 1964: 77). Although he did not give it a clear definition, Senghor thought of African socialism as part of his humanism which, in turn, is a function of Africa’s Negritude. (It is useful to note that his idea of Negro-Africans included the Berbers of the north) (Masolo, 2004:490).

Dismar Masolo (2004) is fairly convinced regarding how this communitarian substance of African Political Philosophy cannot only be contrasted against Western communitarianism with some places of concord and discord but with other realities such as human rights as well.

Despite the promises and the role adduced to communitarianism as the backbone of African political philosophy, Godwin Azenarbo (2009) believes that there are some concepts that do not need the adjective ‘African’ qualifying them as though they are unique to the peoples of the continent. Employing socialism, a concept that is deeply ingrained and implied in the notion of communitarianism, Godwin Azenarbo (2009) believes that such concepts have their own original meaning for all time and place. Let us concern ourselves very briefly with his grouses.

Godwin Azenarbo (2009) interrogates the meanings and practices of African political thoughts, especially the theory put forward by Leopold Sedar Senghor. He questions the distinguishing factor of African Socialism; the direction of African socio-political philosophy; the African conception of man that determines the socio-political theory etc. He argues that Socialism is socialism; there cannot be anything like African Socialism, European Socialism, American Socialism and even Scientific Socialism.

This is because socialism is based on two premises: (i) Equity (ii) Non-exploitation. These are value-laden, moral and non-scientific. “Socialism can be applied as a means of economic, social and political advancement in any society. Although situation and condition may differ but the basic productive and distributive principles remain the same” (Azenarbo, 2009).

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. From the discussion of this unit, it is safe to deduce that African Socialism is based on African Communitarianism. (a) True (b) False (c) Undetermined (d) All of the above



## 1.4 Summary

Following the discussion explored in this unit, there is a clear indication there is no way one can have a proper understanding of African political theorists without a deep understanding of where they are coming from. This is what this unit has been able to do – situating the idea of African political theorists within the framework of African communitarianism which serves as the basis for the African socialism that binds all of them. This unit has been able to consider the fundamental issues related to the comprehension of the communitarian foundation of the African socialism that is discussed by the African political theorists that the modules of this course will focus on, going forward. The meaning of communitarianism was considered as well as how it is related to African socialism.

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## 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

1. (a); 2. (a)

### End of Module Exercises

1. Political Philosophy is the same as Political Science

(a) True (b) False (c) Determined (d) Both (a) and (b)

2. African Political Philosophy does not support which theory of economic system  
(a) Mixed Economy (b) Socialism (c) Capitalism (d) Fascism

3. \_\_\_\_\_ said negroes are naturally inferior to the whites

4. The main argument of Eurocentrism is that \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_ is of the view that socialism is socialism irrespective of time and place.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ is a combination of Marxism and African communitarianism.

## **Module 2: Julius Nyerere and the Concept of Ujamaa**

Unit 1: The Basic Tenets of Ujamaa

Unit 2: Nyerere's Problem with Capitalism

Unit 3: Critical Evaluation of the Doctrine of Ujamaa

## **Unit 1: The Basic Tenets of Ujamaa**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 Who is Julius Nyerere?
- 1.3.2 Ujamaa as Nyerere's version of African Socialism
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.0 Introduction**

Before now, the units in the previous module have been dedicated to providing a short exposition over some of the factors that engendered the African political theorists, most of whom we shall now be looking at. In this module, the political theory of Julius Nyerere, popularly called Ujamaa, shall be examined. However, it is impossible to go far without considering the profile of Nyerere. This will assist us to properly situate his doctrine of Ujamaa.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

In this unit, the student ought to be able to:

- Have a fair knowledge of who Nyerere is; and
- Be able to discuss the main ideas of Nyerere's Ujamaa.

### **1.3.1 Who is Julius Nyerere?**

Julius Nyerere, in full Julius Kambarage Nyerere, also called Mwalimu (Swahili: "Teacher") was born in March 1922, at Butiama, Tanganyika. First prime minister of independent Tanganyika (1961), who became the first president of the new state of Tanzania (1964). Nyerere was also the major force behind the Organization of African Unity (OAU; now the African Union).

Nyerere was a son of the chief of the small Zanaki ethnic group. He was educated at Tabora Secondary School and Makerere College in Kampala, Uganda. A convert to Roman Catholicism, he taught in several Roman Catholic schools before going to Edinburgh University. He was the first Tanganyikan to study at a British university. He graduated with an M.A. in history and economics in 1952 and returned to Tanganyika to engage in teaching (Encyclopædia Britannica 2022).

By the time Nyerere entered politics, the old League of Nations mandate that Britain had exercised in Tanganyika had been converted into a United Nations trusteeship, with independence the ultimate goal. Seeking to hasten the process of emancipation, Nyerere joined the Tanganyika African Association, quickly becoming its president in 1953. In 1954 he converted the organization into the politically oriented Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). Under Nyerere's leadership

the organization espoused peaceful change, social equality, and racial harmony and rejected tribalism and all forms of racial and ethnic discrimination.

In 1955 and 1956 he journeyed to the United Nations in New York City as a petitioner to the Trusteeship Council and the Fourth Committee on trusts and non-self-governing territories. After a debate that ended in his being granted a hearing, he asked for a target date for the independence of Tanganyika. The British administration rejected the demand, but a dialogue was begun that established Nyerere as the preeminent nationalist spokesman for his country (Encyclopædia Britannica 2022).

The British administration nominated him a member of the Tanganyikan Legislative Council, but he resigned in 1957 in protest against the slowness of progress toward independence. In elections held in 1958–59, Nyerere and TANU won a large number of seats on the Legislative Council. In a subsequent election in August 1960, his organization managed to win 70 of 71 seats in Tanganyika’s new Legislative Assembly. Progress toward independence owed much to the understanding and mutual trust that developed during the course of negotiations between Nyerere and the British governor, Sir Richard Turnbull. Tanganyika finally gained responsible self-government in September 1960, and Nyerere became chief minister at this time. Tanganyika became independent on December 9, 1961, with Nyerere as its first prime minister. The next month, however, he resigned from this position to devote his time to writing and synthesizing his views of government and of African unity. One of Nyerere’s more important works was a paper called “Ujamaa—The Basis for African Socialism,” which later served as the philosophical basis for the Arusha Declaration (1967). When Tanganyika became a republic in 1962, he was elected president, and in 1964 he became president of the United Republic of Tanzania (Tanganyika and Zanzibar).

Nyerere was reelected president of Tanzania in 1965 and was returned to serve three more successive five-year terms before he resigned as president in 1985 and handed over his office to his successor, Ali Hassan Mwinyi. From independence on Nyerere also headed Tanzania’s only political party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM).

As outlined in his political programme, the Arusha Declaration, Nyerere was committed to the creation of an egalitarian socialist society based on cooperative agriculture in Tanzania. He collectivized village farmlands, carried out mass literacy campaigns, and instituted free and universal education. He also emphasized Tanzania’s need to become economically self-sufficient rather than remain dependent on foreign aid and foreign investment. Nyerere termed his socialist experimentation *ujamaa* (Swahili: “familyhood”), a name that emphasized the blend of economic cooperation, racial and tribal harmony, and moralistic self-

sacrifice that he sought to achieve. Tanzania became a one-party state, though certain democratic opportunities were permitted within that framework.

As a major force behind the modern Pan-African movement and one of the founders in 1963 of the OAU, Nyerere was a key figure in African events in the 1970s. He was a strong advocate of economic and political measures in dealing with the apartheid policies of South Africa. Nyerere was chairman of a group of five frontline African presidents who advocated the overthrow of white supremacy in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), South Africa, and South West Africa/Namibia (now Namibia).

Nyerere's concerns on the domestic front were dominated by economic hardships and by difficulties between Nyerere and Idi Amin of Uganda. In 1972 Nyerere denounced Amin when the latter announced the expulsion of all Asians from Uganda. When Ugandan troops occupied a small border area of Tanzania in 1978, Nyerere pledged to bring about the downfall of Amin, and in 1979 the Tanzanian army invaded Uganda in support of a local movement to overthrow him. Nyerere's intervention helped to unseat Amin and brought about the return to power in Uganda of Milton Obote in 1980

Though enthusiastically adopted by his countrymen and steadfastly supported by sympathetic western European nations, Nyerere's socialist policies failed to spur economic development in Tanzania. At the time of his resignation in 1985, Tanzania was still one of the world's poorest countries, with a per capita income of about U.S. \$250. Agriculture remained at the subsistence level, and the country's industrial and transportation infrastructures were chronically underdeveloped. One-third of the national budget was supplied by foreign aid. Tanzania had one of the highest literacy rates in Africa, however, and the society was both politically stable and notably free of economic inequalities. Nyerere himself remained committed to socialist policies throughout his political career. Nyerere continued as chairman of the CCM until 1990. Thereafter he assumed the role of elder statesman and was regularly called upon to act as arbiter in international crises such as those in Rwanda and Burundi.

Soft-spoken, unpretentious, small of stature, and quick to laugh, Julius Nyerere was widely credited with impressive oratorical skills and unusual powers of political perception. Julius Nyerere died on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 1999.

### **1.3.2 Ujamaa as Nyerere's Version of African Socialism**

*Ujamaa*, is a Swahili word standing for family hood or cooperative economics Nyerere (1973). This indigenous term was employed by Julius Nyerere to capture the economic initiative that would be followed by the independent Tanzanian nation. What is *ujamaa*? What are its basic features and promises as expressed by Nyerere? These questions shall be answered after an interrogation of the economic implication of the concept has been laid bare.

The central tenet of *ujaama* is the creation of rural farm settlements and the emphasis on a kind of communalism where a Tanzanian works for self and others. Let Nyerere (1973) speak for himself:

When we tried to promote rural development in the past, we sometimes spent huge sums of money on establishing a settlement, and supplying it with modern equipment, and social services, as well as providing it with a management hierarchy...All too often, we persuaded people to go into new settlements by promising them that they could quickly grow rich there, or that government would give them services and equipment which they could not hope to receive either in the towns or in their traditional farming places... (Nyerere, 1973)

Julius Nyerere is particular about returning to the glorious past of Africa before colonialism. However, there is the need to incorporate some modern techniques into making this 'glorious' past less cumbersome. He reveals again that "what we were doing, in fact, was thinking of development in terms of things, and not of people...there have been many cases where heavy capital investment has resulted in no increase in output where the investment has been wasted. And in most of the officially sponsored or supported schemes, the majority of the people who went to settle lost their enthusiasm, and either left the scheme altogether, or failed to carry out the orders of outsiders who were put in charge and who were not themselves involved in the success or failure of the project" (Nyerere, 1973). With this, one may glean the reason why the concept of *ujaama* placed emphasis on self-reliance to provide for self and community.

First of all, upon attainment of independence and the assent of the masses mandate as president, Julius Nyerere was faced with a 'new' country on the one hand and on the other hand, a largely illiterate populace. Hence, a development ideology that must take cognizance of the foregoing is very pertinent. Robert (1985) observes the influence of pre-colonial communalism on African socialism, which had been mentioned earlier.

*Ujaama*, as a political concept was based on equality among Tanzanians irrespective of time and place. It also stressed the need for peace, both of which are constants for a cohabitable society. In his own words, Nyerere reveals:

There must be equality because only on this basis will men work cooperatively. There must be freedom because every individual is not served by the society unless it is his. And there must be unity, because only

when the society is united can its members live and work in peace, Security and well-being. Society must have institutions which safeguard and promote both unity and freedom and it must be permeated by an attitude – a society ethic – which ensures that these institutions remain true to their purposes, and are adapted as need arises (Nyerere, 1973).

The idea of *ujamaa*, centered on collective agriculture, under a process called villagization. It also called for the nationalization of banks and industry, and an increased level of self-reliance at both an individual and national level. *Ujamaa*'s socialist outlook required Tanzania's leaders to reject capitalism and all its trimmings, showing restraint over salary and perks.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1 Ujamaa is a \_\_\_\_\_ word for \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Ujamaa is captured by the words: “villagisation” and “rural settlements” (a) True (b) false (c) May be

### 1.4 Summary

This unit has succeeded in showing the main idea that can be found in Nyerere's political doctrine of Ujamaa. An important factor mentioned in module one, which is beginning to reflect in this module and unit is that the ancient past of Africa is seen as the source of the inspiration of African socialism which was an ideology for political independence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century among Africans. The discussion so far has offered two main ideas. The first considers the biography of Nyerere in order to understand some of the factors that assisted the development of his theory, whereas the second focuses over his doctrine of Ujamaa closely.

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### 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE



1. Swahili/Family hood; 2. (a)

## **Unit 2: Nyerere's Problem with Capitalism**

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Learning Outcomes

1.3.1 What is Capitalism?

1.3.2 How does Nyerere view Capitalism for Africa's Development?

1.4 Summary

1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

The previous unit has been able to consider the main idea of Ujamaa as that which captures Nyerere's political doctrine. So, in this unit, the focus shifts on a very important aspect of Nyerere wherein he shows why the capitalist mode of production will not be favourable to Africa. This unit, before considering Nyerere's view will first consider briefly the idea of capitalism.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

A critical exploration of this unit will allow the student to:

- Understand the fundamentals of capitalism;
- See how capitalism dictates the mode of production and distribution in a country; and
- Realise how Nyerere argued against capitalism in Africa

### **1.3.1 What is Capitalism?**

There are as many definitions of capitalism as there are scholars. It is important to begin with some etymology of the concept first. The term 'capitalist', meaning an owner of capital, appears earlier than the term capitalism. In the words of Harry Shutt:

It dates back to the mid-17th century. Capitalist is derived from capital, which evolved from capitale, a late Latin word based on caput, meaning "head" — also the origin of chattel and cattle in the sense of movable property (only much later to refer only to livestock). Capitale emerged in the 12th to 13th centuries in the sense of referring to funds, stock of merchandise, sum of money, or money carrying interest. By 1283 it was used in the sense of the capital assets of a trading firm. It was frequently interchanged with a number of other words — wealth, money, funds, goods, assets, property, and so on (Shutt, 2010).

In common terms, we realise that capitalism is an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production and their operation for profit. Characteristics

central to capitalism include private property, capital accumulation, wage labor, voluntary exchange, a price system, and competitive markets (Rosser & Barkley, 2003:7). In a capitalist market economy, decision-making and investment is determined by the owners of the factors of production in financial and capital markets, and prices and the distribution of goods are mainly determined by competition in the market.

Economists, political economists, and historians have adopted different perspectives in their analyses of capitalism and have recognized various forms of it in practice. These include *laissez-faire* or free market capitalism, welfare capitalism, and state capitalism. Different forms of capitalism feature varying degrees of free markets, public ownership, obstacles to free competition, and state-sanctioned social policies. The degree of competition in markets, the role of intervention and regulation, and the scope of state ownership vary across different models of capitalism; the extent to which different markets are free, as well as the rules defining private property, are matters of politics and of policy. Most existing capitalist economies are mixed economies, which combine elements of free markets with state intervention, and in some cases, with economic planning (Heilbroner, 2008).

Capitalism has existed under many forms of government, in many different times, places, and cultures. Following the decline of mercantilism, mixed capitalist systems became dominant in the Western world and continue to spread (Hyman & Baptist, 2014).

While writing about the economist Joseph Schumpeter, Robert Gilpin (2000) informs that “capitalism is the most successful economic system that has existed thus far; benefiting the entire population by raising their living standards”. Capitalism, he observed, creates wealth through advancing continuously to ever higher levels of productivity and technological sophistication; this process, known as creative destruction, requires that the "old" be destroyed before the "new" can take over (Gilpin, 2000:123).

All of these seem to show that capitalism as a system of production is a popular way of organising an economy. However, it needs to be said that the idea does not seem to go down well with Nyerere. This will be considered in the next section

### **1.3.2 How does Nyerere see Capitalism for Africa’s Development?**

Julius Nyerere also rejected capitalism on the grounds that it is not natural to the African mind. Nyerere maintains that traditional Africans do not share the mentality of private property ownership. While Nyerere supports a Socialist alternative to African progress, he reveals what problems capitalism has in itself and why it will not suit Africa.

Socialism, like democracy, is an attitude of mind. In a socialist society it is the socialist attitude of mind, and not the rigid adherence to a standard political pattern, which is needed to ensure that the people care for each other's welfare. The purpose of this unit is to consider critically, that attitude. It is not intended to define the institutions which may be required to embody it in a modern society.

In the individual, as in the society, it is an attitude of mind which distinguishes the socialist from the non-socialist. It has nothing to do with the possession or non-possession of wealth. Destitute people can be potential capitalists--exploiters of their fellow human beings. A millionaire can equally be a socialist; he may value his wealth only because it can be used in the service of his fellow men. But the man who uses wealth for the purpose of dominating any of his fellows is a capitalist. So is the man who would if he could! In his own words, He avers:

I have said that a millionaire can be a good socialist. But a socialist millionaire is a rare phenomenon. Indeed he is almost a contradiction in terms. The appearance of millionaires in any society is no proof of its affluence; they can be produced by very poor countries like Tanganyika just as well as by rich countries like the United States of America. For it is not efficiency of production, nor the amount of wealth in a country, which makes millionaires; it is the uneven distribution of what is produced. The basic difference between a socialist society and a capitalist society does not lie in their methods of producing wealth, but in the way that wealth is distributed. While, therefore, a millionaire could be a good socialist, he could hardly be the product of a socialist society (Nyerere, 1968).

Since the appearance of millionaires in a society does not depend on its affluence, sociologists may find it interesting to try and find out why our societies in Africa did not, in fact, produce any millionaires--for we certainly had enough wealth to create a few. I think they would discover that it was because the organization of traditional African society--its distribution of the wealth it produced--was such that there was hardly any room for parasitism. They might also say, of course, that as a result of this Africa could not produce a leisured class of landowners, and therefore there was nobody to produce the works of art or science which capitalist societies can boast. However, works of art and the achievements of science are products of the intellect--which, like land, is one of God's gifts to man. And I cannot believe that God is so careless as to have made the use of one of His gifts depend on the misuse of another!

Defenders of capitalism claim that the millionaire's wealth is the just reward for his ability or enterprise. But this claim is not borne out of the facts. The wealth of the millionaire depends as little on the enterprise or abilities of the millionaire himself as the power of a feudal monarch depended on his own efforts, enterprise, or brain. Both are users, exploiters, of the abilities and enterprise of other people. Even when you have an exceptionally intelligent and hard-working millionaire, the difference between his intelligence, his enterprise, his hard work, and those of other members of society, cannot possibly be proportionate to the difference between their "rewards." There must be something wrong in a society where one man, however hard-working or clever he may be, can acquire as great a "reward" as a thousand of his fellows can acquire them (Nyerere, 1968).

Acquisitiveness for the purpose of gaining power and prestige is unsocialist. In an acquisitive society wealth tends to corrupt those who possess it. It tends to breed in them a desire to live more comfortably than their fellows, to dress better, and in every way to outdo them. They begin to feel they must climb as far above their neighbors as they can. The visible contrast between their own comfort and the comparative discomfort of the rest of society becomes almost essential to the enjoyment of their wealth, and this sets off the spiral of personal competition--which is then anti-social (Nyerere, 1968).

Apart from the anti-social effects of the accumulation of personal wealth, the every desire to accumulate it must be interpreted as a vote of "no confidence" in the social system. For when a society is so organized that it cares about its individuals, then, provided he is willing to work, no individual within that society should worry about what will happen to him tomorrow if he does not hoard wealth today. Society itself should look after him, or his widow, or his orphans. This is exactly what traditional African society is doing. Both the "rich" and the "poor" individual were completely secure in African society (Nyerere, 1968).

Natural catastrophe brought famine, but it brought famine to everybody--"poor" or "rich." Nobody starved, either of food or of human dignity, because he lacked personal wealth; he could depend on the wealth possessed by the community of which he was a member. That was socialism. That is socialism (Nyerere, 1968).

There can be no such thing as acquisitive socialism, for that would be another contradiction in terms. Socialism is essentially distributive. Its concern is to see that those who sow reap a fair share of what they sow.

The production of wealth, whether by primitive or modern methods, requires three things. First, land. God has given us the land, and it is from the land that we get the raw materials which we reshape to meet our needs. Secondly, tools (Nyerere, 1968).

We have found by simple experience that tools do help! So we make the hoe, the axe, or the modern factory or tractor, to help us to produce wealth--the good we need. And thirdly, human exertion--or labor. We don't need to read Karl Marx or Adam Smith to find out that neither the land nor the hoe actually produces wealth (Nyerere, 1968).

And we don't need to take degrees in Economics to know that neither the worker nor the landlord produces land. land is God's gift to man--it is always there. but we know, still without degrees in economics, that the axe and the plough were produced by the laborer. Some of our more sophisticated friends apparently have to undergo the most rigorous intellectual training simply in order to discover that stone axes were produced by that ancient gentleman "Early Man" to make it easier for him to skin the impala he had just killed with a club, which he had also made for himself! (Nyerere, 1968).

In traditional African society everybody was a worker. there was no other way of earning a living for the community. Even the Elder, who appeared to be enjoying himself without doing any work and for whom everybody else appeared to be working, had, in fact, worked hard all his younger days. The wealth he now appeared to possess was not his, personally; it was only "his" as the elder of the group which had produced it. He was a guardian. The wealth itself gave him neither power nor prestige. The respect paid to him by the young was his because he was older than they, and had served his community longer; and the "poor" Elder enjoyed as much respect in our community as the "rich" Elder (Nyerere, 1968). On what he meant by traditional African society, Nyerere expatiates: "When I say that in traditional African society everybody was a worker, I do not use the word "worker" simply as opposed to "employer" but also as opposed to "loiterer" or "idler." One of the most socialistic achievements of our society was the sense of security it gave to its members, and the universal hospitality on which they could rely. But it is too often forgotten, nowadays, that the basis of this great socialistic achievement was this: that it was taken for granted that every member of society--barring only the children and the infirm--contributed his fair share of effort towards the production of its wealth (Nyerere, 1968).

What can be seen therefore is that the idea of Nyerere's Ujamma is more of a socialist pattern of organizing Africa than the capitalist system which involves the accumulation of wealth into private hands.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1 While Nyerere supports a \_\_\_\_\_ alternative to African progress, he reveals what problems capitalism has in itself and why it will not suit Africa
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ is an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production and their operation for profit.

## 1.4 Summary

From the argument given by Nyerere, we can notice that there is no place for capitalism in his system. Nyerere maintains that the system is alien to Africa and Africans and thus must not be encouraged. In this unit, two thematic considerations have been the center of contention. What capitalism means and implies has been discussed. The unit has also looked at the ways through which Nyerere finds capitalism undesirable for the new African states that are coming out of colonisation. His recommendation is the socialist underpinning that is inherent in the principle of Ujamaa which had been briefly considered in the previous unit.

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## 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

1. Socialist;
2. Capitalism

## **Unit 3: Critical Evaluation of the Doctrine of Ujamaa**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 Some Achievements and Limitations in Nyerere's Theory of Ujamaa
- 1.3.2 Ujamaa and Contemporary Africa
- 1.3.3 Globalisation and Nyerere's Ujamaa
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.7 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this module, the central ideas or arguments of Nyerere concerning his version of African socialism as enshrined in his principle of Ujamaa. It is now important to see how relevant this idea is both in contemporary Africa as well as how Tanzania fared when Nyerere applied it whilst a President.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

In this unit, the students must be able to:

- Argue for the advantages and problems in Nyerere's principle of Ujamaa;
- Understand some of the factors that led to the failure of Tanzania's economy; and
- To comprehend the extent to which African economy has moved beyond what Nyerere thinks thanks to globalisation.

### **1.3.1 Some Achievements and Limitations in Nyerere's Theory of Ujamaa**

In this section, we shall not be involved in merely addressing or bringing to light, some of the problems faced by Julius Nyerere's political philosophy, but also to make an appraisal of the strengths and pass make recorded by *The Teacher*. We commence with his applauses.

Firstly, the majority of Tanzanians that had hitherto been illiterate transformed into lettered and educated peoples. Thus the educational impact of Nyerere's *ujaama* assisted Tanzanians to see the world in an educated dimension but this is itself problematic. Whose education did they get? Indigenous or the white man's directly or indirectly?

Secondly, with the concept of *ujaama*, Nyerere's ideology halved the cases of infant mortality with the access to health care delivery.

*Thirdly*, just as is the case with many African amalgam states that experienced colonial administration, Tanzania is no exception with diverse ethnic nationalities. While other countries in Africa created by colonialism were having a hard time of fear of dominance, this was not the case with Tanzania. Hence the *ujaama*, ideology was able to unite Tanzanians across ethnic lines during Nyerere's administration.



Despite the above pass marks, the failure of Nyerere's political philosophy is not too difficult to see. The impasse recorded by Nyerere was evident right in his life time.

Firstly, as noted by the Nigerian economist Claude Ake (1982) the colonial powers handed over to those who could 'continue' the colonial ideology and in some cases employed the children of tribal chiefs to serve as president of the new countries (Ake, 1982). Some quarters have held the notion that the main reason why Tanzania failed under Nyerere was because he got his political ideology dosed by the colonial masters but had the impression of serving African communalism.

Secondly, it has been hinted that transportation network in Tanzania declined rapidly in Uganda due to emphasis on agriculture and farm settlements.

Thirdly, industry and bank crippled due to emphasis on agriculture. This aspect of the economy faced serious neglect. Even the industries and banks said to be in existence were already nationalized. The consequent of these, made the country one of the most indebted and poor countries in the world relying on international aid to up budget deficit.

The political philosophy of Julius Nyerere was filled with optimism when gleaned from the fact that the country was emerging from colonial chains, as many African countries were. However, there were many problems still faced by the country which Nyerere failed to secure. One of these problems in the opinion of this unit has to do with the issue of race and mental colonization. Frantz Fanon's idea of alienation is very much in tune with what we intend to portray. Tinted with illiteracy Africans have the supposition that the settler is more superior than they are and these promotes feelings of inferiority on the former (Fanon, 1986). More so, the idea that that they were inheriting a 'new state', a creation of the settler which made people of same stock to be alien to their traditional lands and people. Nyerere and many of his power-attaining presidents merely conducted ideologies under a structure that was not built for such policies. These, in the opinion of this unit are the foremost reasons why Nyerere's political philosophy, just like many of his contemporaries failed to yield appreciatively.

### **1.3.2 Ujamaa and Contemporary Africa**

As we tried to show in the preceding unit, the central tenet of Nyerere's *Ujaama* is an emphasis on communal living. The central tenet of *Ujaama* is the creation of rural farm settlements and the emphasis on a kind of communalism where a Tanzanian works for self and others. Let Nyerere (1973) speak for himself:

When we tried to promote rural development in the past,  
we sometimes spent huge sums of money on

establishing a settlement, and supplying it with modern equipment, and social services, as well as providing it with a management hierarchy...All too often, we persuaded people to go into new settlements by promising them that they could quickly grow rich there, or that government would give them services and equipment which they could not hope to receive either in the towns or in their traditional farming places... (Nyerere, 1973)

Julius Nyerere is particular about returning to the glorious past of Africa before colonialism. However, there is the need to incorporate some modern techniques into making this 'glorious' past less cumbersome. He reveals again that "what we were doing, in fact, was thinking of development in terms of things, and not of people...there have been many cases where heavy capital investment has resulted in no increase in output where the investment has been wasted. And in most of the officially sponsored or supported schemes, the majority of the people who went to settle lost their enthusiasm, and either left the scheme altogether, or failed to carry out the orders of outsiders who were put in charge and who were not themselves involved in the success or failure of the project" (Nyerere;1973). With this, one may glean the reason why the concept of *ujamaa* placed emphasis on self-reliance to provide for self and community.

From the brief recapitulation given to Nyerere here, we will definitely realise that the 21<sup>st</sup> century has gone far beyond the kind of economic relations that he seems to be vying for. There is no single self-reliant country in the world anymore. All states are now intertwined from trade and commerce, to culture and development. This is a fact attested to by the globalization of economies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **1.3.3 Globalisation and Nyerere's Ujamaa**

Globalization is the term used to describe the growing world-wide integration of the people and countries. According to Paulo (1998) the process of increasing global integration has accelerated dramatically in the technology. Peter (2002) views globalization as a process of integrating economic decision-making such as consumption, investment and saving all across the world. This means that globalization is a process of creating global market place in which increasingly, all nations are forced to participate.

Among the features that characterize globalization include interconnection of sovereign countries through trade and capital flow; harmonization of the economic rules that govern the interaction or relationship between these sovereign nations; creating structures to support and facilitate dependence and inter connection; and creation of a global market place (David 1997).

The process of globalization is not restricted to the economic sphere only. The advancement in information technology has resulted in the opening and exposure of the people of the world to more than ever before, different and alternative views and as a consequence influences almost all aspects of human life. This may influence the stand of Salimono (1999) when he maintains that globalization is a process of harmonization of different culture and beliefs of the world in to one. In the like manner, Garry (1998) views globalization as the harmonization of political system and enthronement of the culture of west.

In a nutshell, the entire idea of African political economy is built around the idea of globalization which is constantly and continuously fostering economies of the world at large into a single global village.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

- 1 Industrialisation was not possible during Nyerere's governance in Tanzania  
(a) True (b) false (c) possibly true (d) both true and false
- 2 The Banking sector of Tanzania contributed immensely to the economy under Nyerere (a) True (b) false (c) possibly true (d) both true and false

### **1.4 Summary**

This unit has been committed to the discussion of the problems of application of Nyerere's Ujamaa both as a President in Tanzania and even in contemporary Africa. A careful exploration of the contemporary patterns of economic relations across Africa and beyond shows that the world is very more industrialised, tech-driven and it is not a wise thing to return to the primitive communal living of Africans as advocated by Nyerere. It is on this basis of these arguments that this unit maintains that Nyerere's ideas have more problems in practical terms such that their contemporary relevance will continue to be in doubt. In this unit, the problems that beset the theory of Ujamaa as presented by Nyerere was the primary contention. This unit has been able to identify some problems that are perennial to Nyerere's ideas. It is also important to add that with the advent of globalisation, the contemporary relevance of Nyerere's ideas have been shown in this unit not to be plausible.

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## 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

1. (a); 2. (b)

### End of Module Exercises

According to Nyerere, in traditional African society everybody was a \_\_\_\_\_

According to Nyerere, God has given us the \_\_\_\_\_, and it is from the land that we get the \_\_\_\_\_ which we reshape to meet our needs.

\_\_\_\_\_ is the term used to describe the growing world-wide integration of the people and countries.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were the three overriding achievements of Nyerere's doctrine of Ujamaa in Tanzania.

Tanzanian economy failed because \_\_\_\_\_.

The first president of Tanzania was \_\_\_\_\_

Nyerere's political party failed to spur economic development in Tanzania (a) True (b) False (c) Undetermined

Nyerere was popularly called \_\_\_\_\_ among Tanzanians

### **Module 3: Kwame Nkrumah and Leopold Sedar Senghor on African Socialism**

Unit 1: The Main Idea of Philosophical Consciencism and Africa's Development

Unit 2: Nkrumah's Consciencism and African Developmental Framework

Unit 3: Afrocentrism and Negritude in Seghor's African Socaivism

Unit 4: Critical Examination of Senghor's Doctrine of African Socialism

## **Unit 1: The Main Idea of Philosophical Consciencism and Africa's Development**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 Kwame Nkrumah's Idea of Philosophical Consciencism
- 1.3.2 Fundamentals of Philosophical Consciencism
- 1.3.3 Philosophical Consciencism and the Development Ideology of Kwame Nkrumah
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this unit, we are going to be talking about the idea of philosophical consciencism and how it was instrumental to the formulation of his theory of development. One of the things that this unit will be able to divulge is the way that Kwame Nkrumah's version of African Socialism is slightly different from that variant of African socialism propagated by his other pan-Africanists. So, this unit looks at these themes as well as how they are able to be built on Nkrumah's philosophical consciencism.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the engagement with the content of this unit, it is hoped that the student would have been able to:

- Understand the core of Nkrumah's philosophical consciencism;
- Understand the relationship between his doctrine of consciencism and his development ideology; and
- Understand Nkrumah's variant of what he would later call "scientific socialism" for African development.

### **1.3.1 Kwame Nkrumah's Idea of Philosophical Consciencism**

In this section, the main idea that Nkrumah is communicating within *Consciencism* shall concern us. What is consciencism? How did Kwame Nkrumah conceive this idea and what are the probable solutions that he gave? These are the questions that we shall attempt to investigate.

The viewpoint of Consciencism is that philosophy arises from and operates within the context of a given society. This viewpoint asserts that "philosophy always arose from social milieu and that a social contention is always present in it" (Nkrumah, 1964: 10). Nkrumah was in search of an ideological catalyst for development. An ideology that shall be a synthesis of traditional and modern elements, that is, a synthesis of past and present.

*Consciencism* reinforced Blyden's views on African culture. It also upheld many of the ideological assumptions hitherto held by Nkrumah, particularly his denial of class conflict in precolonial Africa. The book emphasized that traditional African society was an egalitarian and communal society in which the means of production, including land, were held in common and individual ownership did not exist (Biney, 2011:125). Prior to Nkrumah, Blyden had articulated similar thoughts on Africa's cultural strains in his work *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*. Blyden advocated that African civilization had its own validity and was a universal part of civilization. It was characterized by communal African life, a community characterized by cooperation and mutual aid, and a communion with nature and God (Biney, 2011:125)

Consciencism has to fight in the field of moral and social theory. And it has to fight in the field of political theory and practice. Put in another way, Consciencism has its philosophy, its moral and social theory, and arising from these, a political theory. The practical application of consciencism in Ghana and Africa involves a sustained struggle in all three categories of thought. For Nkrumah, "consciencism is the map in intellectual term of the disposition of forces which will enable African societies to digest the Western, Islamic and Euro Christian elements in Africa and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality" (Nkrumah, 1964:81). Is it however possible and easy to synthesize African, Western and Islamic cultures as Nkrumah would have us believe?

When we turn to the practical application of this philosophy the first step is to clear our individual thinking of the cobwebs of irrationality, half-truths, unproved assertions and superstitions. We have to subject the ideas floating about in our individual minds to the test of rationality and above all to the test of practice. We have to reject all ideas and notions that can neither be verified nor confirmed by practice.

As regards the thinking of the community, Consciencism enjoins that we wage a relentless war against mysticism, magic and all those views which postulate the supernatural in an attempt to explain phenomena and events around us. If there is any phenomenon which we cannot explain, then this must be due to the fact that our knowledge is still limited. We cannot go by way of claiming that the phenomenon is supernatural and hence inexplicable in terms of human reason.

Overall, Consciencism and Nkrumah's ideological system, philosophical consciencism, serve as a basis for explanation of his increasingly unpopular decisions as a national leader. Consciencism seeks to explain Nkrumah's Africa - a colonial philosopher's experience of postcolonial Africa. It seems that his actions more often than not reflect the ideology that he has himself derived from socialism, the philosophical consciencism.



### **1.3.2 Fundamentals of Philosophical Consciencism**

In this section, our aim is to outline the fundamental claims of *Consciencism*, as holds by Kwame Nkrumah. There are seven (7) of these and they are based on the following:

1. that matter is the source of all knowledge;
2. that matter is a “plenum of forces in tension”;
3. that because it is a plenum of forces in tension, matter is capable of self-induced motion;
4. that the motion of matter is both unilinear and in leaps, that is to say, change in matter is both quantitative and qualitative;
5. that mind has a distinct existence even though it is a product of matter;
6. that there is interaction between matter and mind but that matter is primary;
7. that in this interaction of matter and mind, assumptions, theories and conclusions are permissible but that such assumptions, theories and conclusions are valid only when confirmed in practice. This philosophy is materialist in content. Its approach is rational. Its touch-stone is practice (Nkrumah, 1964).

How true is the idea that the African is materialistic as Nkrumah seems to maintain? A perusal of the African mind would reveal that Africans take seriously, the idea of the supernatural and suprasensible. More so, with history informing us about the formation of some principalities, where kings and monarchs reign, the question and supposition of egalitarianism as holds by Kwame Nkrumah is flawed. In the next section, we shall concern ourselves with the idea of development in the philosophy of Kwame Nkrumah.

### **1.3.4 Philosophical Consciencism and the Development Ideology of Kwame Nkrumah**

From our discussion so far, it is obvious that these theories were actually at their peaks when many African nationalities were beginning to attain independence and ideological scholars are tinkering on a suitable ideology that can deliver the promises of development. Most are willing to go with the dependency theory in place of the modernization theory. The doctrine of African Socialism and its attendant development strategies can be strongly associated with the Dependency School. Prominent among African leaders who advocated it are Leopold Senghor of Senegal, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Sekou Toure of Guinea, Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria, Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia (Gyekye, 1998). In this section, we shall briefly look at how Kwame Nkrumah conceived the path to development for Africa.

Kwame Nkrumah’s development doctrine is well spelt out in his “African Socialism Revisited” where he adopted Marxist socialist principles. He made some serious attempts to distance his socialism from those of his contemporaries like Nyerere.

For Nkrumah, the aim of African socialists is to remould African society in such a manner that the quintessence of the humanist purposes of traditional African societies is re-enacted in modern society. The doctrine urges humane development:

Consequently, socialism in Africa introduces a new social synthesis in which modern technology is reconciled with human values, in which the advanced technical society is realized without the staggering social malefactions and deep schisms of capitalist society (Nkrumah, 1964:2).

According to him, the view that traditional African society was classless cannot be attributed to African socialism. Neither can the doctrine be based on a metaphysics of knowledge that disdains the rational and critical capacities of traditional Africa. However, the basic organization of African societies in different periods of history manifested communalism. Humanism founded on egalitarianism, was the philosophy underlying this communalism. This philosophy aimed at the reconciliation of the individual's aspirations with group welfare. Consequently, African socialists share two postulates. The first is that each human being is an end in him/herself, not a means; and second, that it is necessary to guarantee each human being equal opportunities for his/her development. This permits an intuitive connection between socialism and communalism because "in socialism, the principles underlying communalism are given expression in a modern setting" (Nkrumah, 1967:7). It would seem therefore that for Nkrumah, the theoretical ancestor of "scientific socialism" (or Marxism) is communalism. Nkrumah's 'communalism' is the conceptual equivalent of 'communitarianism' which is a theory of social organization that has been formulated variously by its adherents. There is consensus amongst a number of African philosophers that the communitarian ethic underlies social organisational principles and practices in the indigenous African setting.

Nkrumah's communalism, thus, led him to socialism. In practicing this, his development programs were geared basically towards diversification of the Ghanaian economy through import substitution industrialization. This was to be achieved by the active participation of the state in economic planning in a socialist framework. These programs did not necessarily have as their sole aim macroeconomic prudence. In fact, they did raise the levels of medical and educational facilities; improve the road and rail network; construct Tema harbor and the township together with related industrial facilities; and built the Akosombo dam to generate power to primarily cater for industry (Frimpong-Ansah, 1991).

Further, Nkrumah was generally noted to be opposed to capitalist ideas and ventures. He informs us that "individuals who can command capital use their money not in productive endeavour but by the purchase and re-sale at high prices, of such commodities... which are in demand by the people. This type of business serves no

social purpose and steps will be taken to see [to it] that our banking resources are not used to provide credit for this type of business” (Nkrumah, 1973). Another important aspect of Nkrumah’s development strategy was the liberation struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism. This is exemplified, practically, by his prominent role in the formation of the Organization of African Unity.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1 Pick the odd one out concerning Socialism: (a) Kwame Nkrumah (b) Julius Nyerere (c) Leopold Sedar Senghor (d) Kenneth Kaunda
- 2 Philosophical consciencism is based on which monistic materialistic doctrine? (a) Idealism (b) Materialism (c) Dualism (d) Sophism

### 1.4 Summary

From the discussion of this unit, it is clear that the idea of consciencism as captured in the thought of Nkrumah is the backbone of his version of African Socialism which he later entitled “Scientific Socialism.” He made this distinction to show that even when he is sympathetic to the version of socialism which is synonymous with others such as Nyerere and Senghor, he is quick to add that the source of his inspiration for his theory is in Karl Marx’s doctrine of scientific socialism which is deeply steeped in materialism. In this unit, we have been able to consider the idea of consciencism as it is related to the overall philosophy of Kwame Nkrumah toward the liberation of Africans from the shackles of colonialism. We can see that there is also a metaphysical underpinning of materialism in the doctrine of philosophical consciencism as captured by Kwame Nkrumah. This unit has also been able to show how the idea of consciencism influences development which is socialist driven and girded by the philosophy of Karl Marx.

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## 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

1. (d); 2. (b)

## Unit 2: Nkrumah's Consciencism and African Developmental Framework

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 Nkrumah's Rejection of Capitalism
- 1.3.2 Philosophical Consciencism as Africa's Developmental Ideology for Africa
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

## **1.1 Introduction**

In the previous unit, attention had been given to the main doctrine of Kwame Nkrumah's philosophical consciencism. The unit was able to provide illustration concerning how Nkrumah developed his own unique version of African socialism, which he calls "Scientific Socialism" following its deep-rooted connections with Karl Marx's political economy. So, for the present unit, it is important to return again to the reason why capitalism was not embraced by Africa's national-ideological philosophers. So, in this unit, we shall focus over how Nkrumah rejected a capitalist framework for Africa's postcolonial political economy.

## **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

In this unit, it is expected that the students would be able to:

- Discuss that the idea of capitalism in relation to African post-independence political economy;
- Understand what ways Kwame Nkrumah repudiated the idea of capitalism for African states emerging from colonisation; and
- Understand the connection between capitalism and idealism in Nkrumah's scientific socialism.

### **1.3.1 Nkrumah's Rejection of Capitalism**

In Module 2, Unit 2 of this course, the main or fundamental notion of capitalism has been discussed. As a result, the present unit will not return to discuss the topic but will proceed to how and why the former Ghanaian statesman, Kwame Nkrumah rejected capitalism as a politico-economic basis for Africa's post-independent economy.

Following the discussion in the previous unit over how Kwame Nkrumah conceives consciencism as well as its connection the notion of scientific materialism, it is important to consider the relevance of this line of thought. Nkrumah believes in the African past which is egalitarian and materialistic as opposed to the idea of capitalism which is idealistic but foreign to the African mind. He therefore takes strongly the idea of African Socialism by conversing for communalism. In other words, Nkrumah (1964) continued to maintain the view that communalism is characteristic of African society. He referred to "the spirit of communalism" pervading African society. In his own words:

Socialism, therefore, can be and is the defence of the principles of communalism in a modern setting. Socialism is a form of social organisation, which, guided by the principles underlying communism, adopts procedures and measures made necessary by demographic and technological developments. These considerations throw light on the bearing of revolution and reform on socialism.

The passage from the ancestral line of slavery via feudalism and capitalism to socialism can only lie through revolution: it cannot lie through reform. For in reform, fundamental principles are held constant and the details of their expression modified. In the words of Marx, it leaves the pillars of the building intact. Indeed, sometimes, reform itself may be initiated by the necessities of preserving identical fundamental principles (Nkrumah, 1964:73-74).

The above are the prime claims of *Consciencism* set out in a very brief manner. This does not mean that Nkrumah's philosophy is not without its own problems. It is doubtful if Africans are strictly materialistic and also egalitarian as he wants us to believe. Is this really the case? Is it really defensible, Nkrumah's position that traditional Africans, being strictly materialistic, by his rendition did not try to have any kind of private property?

A critical look into the African past shows why this cannot be the case. Specifically due to the fact that the relationship between the king and the subjects in ancient time is such that the king is above the law. The king may seize the wife of any subject that is attractive for him, and nothing happens. The king is served by arrays of slaves and in some ancient African cultures, even the king is buried with some slaves. Under this kind of condition, can it be said that the African past is truly egalitarian as Nkrumah would have us believe? Definitely this is not a defensible position.

The idea that idealism is equal to capitalism and that materialism is equal to socialism does not have any form of ontological and theoretical backing that one would have wanted to appeal to for corroborating what Nkrumah says. On this note, even when we understand that for Nkrumah, capitalism is not suitable for Africa, it needs to be added that his premises or reasons for this rejection as hinged on his principle of philosophical consciencism is not compelling enough. We shall return to this in a later part of this unit. For the moment, it is helpful to interrogate the developmental ideology of Nkrumah as implied in his consciencism.

### **1.3.2 Philosophical Consciencism as Nkrumah's Developmental Ideology for Africa**

The socialist approach taken by Kwame Nkrumah is not without problems. Despite the fact that we have some very few success stories to say about Ghana, the failures experienced by Kwame Nkrumah's administration far outweighs the successes. We shall enumerate a few of the sad stories encountered by his development policies as enshrined in his consciencism shortly.

Firstly, there is a contradiction in Nkrumah's economic philosophy centred on small traders and businessmen and women who had been in the forefront of supporting the CPP in its early days and continued to do so. Nkrumah could not afford to alienate them. In order to reconcile the contradiction between his advocacy of

socialism and private enterprise, he envisaged there would be five sectors of the Ghanaian economy: state enterprises, foreign private investors, jointly owned state and foreign private companies, cooperatives, and small scale Ghanaian private enterprises. This “ingenious solution” enabled Nkrumah to ingest large and small Ghanaian private businessmen into his economic plans for a modernized and socialist Ghana (Biney, 2011:108).

Another contradiction inherent in Nkrumah’s development ideological position lies in his denial of class conflict in his vision of a socialist Ghana. In the early 1960s, he appeared to subscribe to the belief that the values of collectivism pervaded traditional African society and there were no Marxian type classes. Up until 1966, Nkrumah recognized the myriad social groups such as women, youth, semiskilled workers, chiefs, small businessmen, teachers, clerks, and professionals who constituted Ghanaian society. Nkrumah’s thinking on a classless African past was common belief even among less radical African leaders such as Jomo Kenyatta. Before the founding of the CPP, he had consistently appealed to these various social groups for national unity within Ghana for the purpose of attaining political independence. Intellectually, he conceived of an absence of antagonistic cleavages between these groups, for in his view they were committed to the goal of building a modernized nation- state of Ghana (Biney, 2011:108).

Thirdly, little focus was given to specific sector projects (Biney, 2011:107). There were also unrealistic aspects of the plan, such as the manpower and educational projections; ambitious target setting; insufficient attention paid to agricultural production, particularly the mainstay of the economy— cocoa.

Fourthly, many of the problems in implementation of his development agenda was the failure to adhere to annual budgets in accordance with the plan as well as the drastic fall in the country’s reserves during the 1964– 65 period. The task of the Planning Commission was to ensure the economic viability of all economic projects and contracts, but from the outset the Commission found it impossible to hold other ministries to these procedures. An example was the failure to adhere to the cost of building the 1965 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) conference hall. In short, Nkrumah himself refused to adhere to the discipline of planning and, as a result, there was an apparent divergence between the plan and reality (Biney, 2011:110).

Another instance of such discrepancies was the targets for industrial development as laid out in the plan. The aim was to phase in industrial development, beginning with the production of simple manufactured goods such as building materials, followed by metals and chemicals, and lastly the setting up of heavy industries such as electronic goods. Nkrumah was the nominal chairman of the Planning Commission and it was evident he did not agree with this sequence in principle or in practice. He favoured concentration on the building of heavy industries, for he

feared being economically dependent on outside sources. When Nkrumah was told that one of his decisions was contrary to the plan, he is said to have retorted, “Who decides, Mensah or me?” (Biney, 2011:110). In short, Nkrumah lacked the discipline to adhere consistently to his own plans. His planners acquiesced to his view “so that whereas the industrialisation described in the Seven Year Plan was phased over twenty years, the Annual Plan for 1965 shifted dramatically into higher gear” (Biney, 2011:111).

From our discussion so far, it is very obvious that the ideas present in Nkrumah’s quest for development led to and compounded more problems for Ghana. To even cement the failure of his development policies, his dream of a united Africa was shattered by Julius Nyerere.

It was at the 1964 OAU summit meeting that Nkrumah put forward his idea of an African High Command to a caustic rebuff from Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania, “the most eloquent exponent of the gradualist approach (Biney, 2008:139). Mwalimu (“teacher”), as Nyerere was popularly referred to, believed that a United States of Africa could not be achieved in one step and could not happen overnight.

Nyerere made a stinging attack on Nkrumah when he accused him of employing the notion of Union Government for propaganda purposes. He declared: “I am becoming increasingly convinced that we are divided between those who genuinely want a continental Government and will patiently work for its realization, removing obstacles, one by one; and those who simply use the phrase ‘Union Government’ for the purpose of propaganda” (Nyerere, 1967: 301). Moreover, he went on to question the repudiation of the East African Federation as contrary to African unity. He rebuked Nkrumah when he questioned why the notion of Union Government, which implied a single state of Africa, did not mean the surrendering of each state’s individual sovereignty. Nyerere said: “It is some curious animal to which our individual states do not surrender sovereignty, and yet somehow becomes the strong instrument which we require to fulfil the purposes of modern states” (Nyerere, 1967:303). For Nyerere, “To rule out a step by step progress towards African Unity is to hope that the Almighty will one day say, ‘Let there be unity in Africa,’ and there shall be unity. Furthermore, “to say that the step by step method was invented by the imperialists is to reach the limits of absurdity” (Nyerere, 1967:303). Nkrumah had met his intellectual equal at the OAU summit of 1964. “It was, in all a spirited performance that left the objective of a Union Government bleeding to death on the floor of the Cairo conference hall, speared, as it were, by Nyerere’s flashing verbalism” (Biney, 2008:138).

Aside the foregoing, we can also add that Nkrumah’s consciencism has been found to possess some theoretical defects. Firstly, given that the entirety of Kwame



Nkrumah's development ideology and African socialism is a derivation from his *Consciencism*, it may be asked: does the communitarian view, which is metaphysically egalitarian and materialistic expressed by Nkrumah, a real reflection of the African reality? We think not. Whereas the Marxist approach to matters of fact is materialism, Kwame Nkrumah seems to be convinced that this line of idea is expandable to the traditional African way of doing things which he termed African socialism. We do not think his arguments in this regard are convincing.

It is the case that Nkrumah was seeking to make Africans believe that their world-view materialistic when in fact, there is no serious evidence for this in his entire works. Furthermore, the idea that materialism is equal to egalitarianism is also full of errors. We do not understand why in the ancient times kings can marry other person's wives arbitrarily or when lands are taken from persons without due process. The implication in this view also leads to what is termed African Socialism. How can we be talking about socialism in Africa when people had private properties even when they were communal in social life? For us, Kwame Nkrumah is merely feeding his Marxist conclusions and premises into the African setting. This Marxist tradition is also problematic

Secondly, the *Consciencism*, is strictly Marxist in nature and is mainly an attempt to use Western models as a basis for interpreting the African reality. Is this faithful to the African reality? We think not.

Whereas Marx advocated for violence in the need for social change, this essay frowns at such an approach. More so, we cannot even place Africa squarely in the trend of Marxist historical materialism.

All of the above points are well entrenched in the *Consciencism* framework and yet all of these, in the opinion of this unit do not mirror the African reality. The reason why his development ideology suffers more flaws than applauses in therefore not far-fetched.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

- 1 Pick the odd one out of given your understanding of the discussions in this unit (a) Oligarchy (b) Socialism (c) Materialism (d) Capitalism
- 2 Scientific Socialism and African Socialism are one and the same (a) No (b) Yes (c) Yes and No (d) None of the above

## **1.4 Summary**

From the discussion engaged in this unit thus far, we can see that for Nkrumah, the end of his argument is to look for a way through which capitalism can be rejected

for us in the political economy of Africa. However, it needs to be said that whenever one wishes to critically engage the ideas of Nkrumah as they extend to the discourse on rejection of capitalist ideals in Africa, we are bound to run into problems. This is mainly because the idea from his principle of philosophical consciencism that matters is socialism and that the idea of capitalism suffers from a serious ontological defect which makes his grounds for the rejection of capitalism in African contentious and not compelling or convincing enough. For the present unit, we have been able to focus mainly on Nkrumah's reasons for the rejection of capitalism in Africa. It has also been able to discuss the extent to which his developmental ideology as laid out in his philosophical consciencism is limited. In all, the unit has been able to show that the reasons for the rejection are tied to his principle of consciencism which serves as the theoretical framework for his thoughts. Even when this study understands that he is vocal concerning the need to reject capitalism, it is the position of this unit that the arguments provided by Nkrumah do not pass critical and logical analysis.

### **1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

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### **1.6 Possible Answers to SAE**

1. (a); 2. (a)

## **Unit 3: Afrocentrism and Negritude in Leopold Sedar Senghor's Thoughts**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 A Brief Profile of Leopold Sedar Senghor
- 1.3.2 The Place of Afrocentrism and Negritude in Senghor's Thoughts
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this unit, another important African political theorist in the person of the former statesman and President of Senegal, Leopold Sedar Senghor will be given attention. This is essential in order to understand how the quest for socialist ideology among African states took another dimension especially when considered from the purview of Senghor's perspective. So, this unit is going to introduce the person of Senghor and also his struggle against Eurocentrism which led him into an Afrocentric position.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, it would have been possible for the students to:

- Know the important bits of the personality of Senghor;
- To show the reason why Afrocentrism is a reaction to the idea of Eurocentrism; and
- To understand the Afrocentric position of Senghor.

### **1.3.1 A Brief Profile of Leopold Sedar Senghor**

Who is Senghor? What contributions did he make to Africa? Senegalese poet, writer, and statesman Léopold Sédar Senghor was born near Dakar in the town of Joal to a Fulbe mother and a Serer trader father. He was educated at the *École Nationale de la France d'Outre-Mer* in Paris, where he became friends with Aimé Césaire and future French president George Pompidou. After earning his French citizenship, Senghor taught in Tours and Paris. He joined the French army during World War II and spent 18 months in a German prison camp. After serving successive terms representing Senegal in the French National Assembly, Senghor returned to his native land, where he led his nation's independence movement in 1960. He eventually became Senegal's first democratically elected president, a post which he held for the next twenty years.

Senghor's political and literary careers were inextricably linked. Residing part-time in France, he wrote poems of resistance in French which engaged his Catholic spirituality even as they celebrated his Senegalese heritage. Senghor is the author of several collections of poetry, including *Chants d'ombre* (1945), *Nocturnes* (1961),

and *The Collected Poetry* (1991, translated by Melvin Dixon). He also edited an anthology of work by African poets in French colonies, *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poésie Nègre et Malagache* (1945, with an introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre). His nonfiction work includes numerous volumes on politics, philosophy, sociology, and linguistics.

Senghor co-founded, with Aimé Césaire, the Négritude movement, which promotes distinctly African cultural values and aesthetics, in opposition to the influence of French colonialism and European exploitation. He also co-founded the journal *Presence Africaine* with Alioune Diop. Senghor, the first African invited to join the Académie Française, was awarded honorary doctorates from 37 universities, in addition to many other literary honors. Senghor died at his home in France at the age of 95.

With the profile of Senghor briefly outlined, it is now important to turn to his idea of negritude and how it is able to serve as a direct response to the discourse on Eurocentrism, which has been briefly considered in the Module 1.

### **1.3.2 The Place of Afrocentrism and Negritude in Senghor's Thoughts**

Negritude is one of the core terms that was presented in showing the originality and intellectual capacity of Africans. The foremost representative of this philosophic world-view that is Afrocentric in nature derives from the ideas of the first post independent president of Senegal, Leopold Sedar Senghor. The call for the philosophy of negritude by Senghor occurs as a result of the denigration of the cerebral abilities of Africans on the altar of Eurocentrism. The strength of Eurocentrism lies primarily in the assertions of Western intellectual giants who passed destructive criticisms on the ability of Africans to think deeply. One of the most respected Western giants with strong emphasis on Eurocentrism is Friedrich Hegel.

As we know, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), who was not a historian, but a great philosopher, stated in his lectures delivered in the winter of 1830–1 on the philosophical history of the world: “Africa is no historical part of the world; it has no movement or development to exhibit...Egypt...does not belong to the African Spirit” (Hegel, 1956: 99). This view of the Hegelian philosophy of history has become almost a common opinion and an academic paradigm in Western historiography. A great culture or civilization cannot be produced by African (Black) people. Moreover, African people have never made any kind of contribution to world history. Even some brilliant African minds still accept as true Hegel's incongruous statement (Obenga, 2004: 32-3).

As a result of the Eurocentric claims of some of the popular Western scholars, the African identity seems to have been tarnished. What kind of ideas did aboriginal

Africans contribute to the world intellectualism? What kind of political norm would fit Africa emerging from the doldrums of colonialism? Can Africans direct their own affairs? Submerged within these questions is the question of the African self-discovery. What defines the Africans? In a bid to respond to these questions, Leopold Sedar Senghor puts forward the philosophy of negritude which has close interface with his African socialism. What is embedded in his idea?

Although he did not give it a clear definition, Senghor thought of African socialism as part of his humanism which, in turn, is a function of Africa's Negritude. He commenced with what he perceived as a clear distinction between the Negro-African society and what he called "the collectivist European society", in the following words:

I would say that the latter is an assembly of individuals. The collectivist society inevitably places the emphasis on the individual, on his original activity and his needs. In this respect, the debate between "to each according to his labor" and "to each according to his needs" is significant. Negro-African society puts more stress on the group than on the individual, more on solidarity than on the activity and needs of the individual, more on the communion of persons than on their autonomy. Ours is a community society. This does not mean that it ignores the individual, or that collectivist society ignores solidarity, but the latter bases this solidarity on the activities of individuals, whereas the community society bases it on the general activity of the group (Senghor, 1964: 93-4).

In the discussion that follows the above passage Senghor traces the African's tendency toward communitarianism to a way of life rooted in his experience of the world. It is the way he feels and thinks, in union not only with all other people around him but "indeed with all other beings in the universe: God, animal, tree, or pebble." So, where reason rules for the Euro-American, emotion is central for the way the African sees reality. Senghor's earlier work including his definition of Negritude, had addressed the naturalness with which Africans embrace and participate in nature rather than relating to it cognitively from a distance. In other words, for him, the communitarian habits of Africans are not acquired; rather, they are part of the African way of expressing being.

On this idea he built what later would become a fashionable refrain for most of the essentialists among black intellectuals: "Black people are communitarian by nature." It is perhaps due to this assumption that Senghor, like most others who later espoused his idea, saw no need to give an analytical account of their claim that African societies were communitarian in their social-political ethic. Instead, it is

merely asserted as an abiding truth that such was the case with African societies (Masolo, 2004: 389).

### Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1 According to Senghor, for the African \_\_\_\_\_ rules whereas among the Euro-Americans reason overrules.
- 2 Pick the odd one out: (a) George Hegel (b) Theophile Obenga (c) Dismar Masolo (d) Leopold Sedar Senghor

## 1.4 Summary

From the short exposition given to the idea of negritude and how it influences or serves as Senghor's basis to respond to or even reply to the prongs of Eurocentrism, we can begin to see how this is able to shape his own version of African socialism which is rooted in African communitarianism prior Western contact. An important factor that needs to be considered in Senghor just like in other African socialist, is the fact that it is their exposure to Western thoughts and ideals that has led to the need to realise that there was an African past worth reviving – that past that can be amended in the light of current realities to serve as a basis for their political situation. In this unit, a brief profile of Senghor has been undertaken in this unit. In addition, the factors that led to the emergence of Senghor's Afrocentrism as captured in his negritude have also been considered in this unit. One of the ideas that are consequent is that the idea of Afrocentrism which is said to be practiced by a host of African scholars, Senghor inclusive, is a reaction to Eurocentrism.

## 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

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## **1.6 Possible Answers to SAE**

1. emotion; 2. (a)

## **Unit 4: Critical Examination of Senghor's Doctrine of African Socialism**

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Learning Outcomes

1.3.1 Leopold Sedar Senghor and African Socialism

1.3.2 A Critical Evaluation of Senghor's Negritude and African Socialism

1.4 Summary

1.5 References/Further Reading

1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this unit, the main doctrine of African socialism as captured in the works of Senghor will be discussed. Aside this, this unit will also consider the various ways through which one can provide a critical assessment of the version of African socialism that he provides.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

After a thorough engagement with the core contentions of the unit, the student must be able to:

- Have a wide or deep comprehension of Senghor's version of African socialism; and
- Understand some of the limitations of the idea of Senghor's African socialism.

### **1.3.1 Leopold Sedar Senghor and African Socialism**

Leopold Sedar Senghor believes that every African shares certain distinctive and innate characteristics, values and aesthetics. In the poem 'New York', Senghor argues that the black community of Harlem should "Listen to the far beating of your nocturnal heart, rhythm/ and blood of the drum' and 'let the black blood flow into/ your blood" (Senghor, 1965: 157). The word nocturnal is interesting because it refers to the image of night. By using the imagery of night, Senghor is asserting that one's African heritage (one's Blackness) is both inescapable and natural (like night-time). Negritude is the active rooting of a Black identity in this inescapable and natural African essence (Senghor, 1993:27). The major premise of Negritude is therefore that one's biological make-up (race) defines one's outer (skin colour) as well as inner (spirit/essence) traits. Negritude is a concept which holds that there is a "shared culture and subjectivity and spiritual essence" among members of the same racial group (Loomba, 2005:176). As Irele explains, there is a "parallel between this conception and the racial doctrines propounded in Europe, presenting the Negro as an inherently inferior being to the white man, and which provided the ultimate ideological *rationale* for Western imperialism" (Irele, 1980:71). Instead of rejecting the (colonialist) theory that race defines one's being; Negritude rejects the assumption that the African is inherently inferior to the "white man". To Senghor,



this makes Negritude a weapon against colonialism and an ‘instrument of liberation (Senghor, 1993:27).

To Senghor, the African essence is externalized in a distinctive culture and philosophy (Senghor, 1993:27). This claim is supported by Senghor’s assertion that Negritude – the rooting of identity in one’s natural essence – is ‘diametrically opposed to the traditional philosophy of Europe’ (the colonizer) (Senghor, 1993:30). To Senghor, European philosophy is “essentially static, objective... It is founded on separation and opposition: on analysis and conflict” (Senghor, 1993:30). In contrast, African philosophy is based on ‘unity’, ‘balance’ negotiation and an appreciation of ‘movement and rhythm’ (Senghor, 1993:32-4). Senghor describes African culture “in terms of precisely those supposed markers of African life that had been for so long reviled in colonialist thought – sensuality, rhythm, earthiness and a primeval past” (Irele, 1980: 177) The traditional stereotypes of African culture are not directly challenged by Negritude – Africans *are* essentially spiritual according to Senghor – they are modified. Negritude is a process of negotiation which proposes a counter-myth or counter-reading of those traditional stereotypes with the aim of valorizing and celebrating the African personality.

For Senghor, the proletariats in Europe are held as a class as opposed to being a racial group, which was the case for the Africans. Since the Africans were held as a different racial group they were supposed to be civilised as civilisation only belonged to the Europeans (Senghor: 1964; 68). The solidarity between the proletariat and the colonized people misrepresents the true nature and effects of colonialism. In his view, all Europeans benefited from colonialism.

Further, Senghor disputes the claim that it is only European civilisation that can lay claim to universal civilisation. He believes that all forms of civilisations are capable of developing into universal civilisations. He is of the view that no civilisation can claim to have any superiority over the other on the basis that it is universal. The only credit he grants to European civilisation is that it was able to diffuse its own civilisation throughout the world. Senghor is clearly convinced that colonialism stifles the cultural progress and expression of the colonised people. This is particularly achieved by the way in which the colonisers seek to impose their own culture on the colonised people in the name of civilising their newly found subjects. The justification for the struggle for freedom lay in the quest of the oppressed to be totally free of alienating and stifling oppression. In their struggle to gain freedom they must not employ foreign tools or associate with other foreign people who might claim that they are in solidarity with them because the fight against colonialism is much more than class struggles that are characteristic of European societies. He says these people had a single rain season and they worked only four months of the year. The remaining eight months they engaged in “cultural activities-living in communion, by and within the community with other men, their brothers, more

precisely with the solidarity forces of the entire universe: the living and the dead, men and animals, plants and pebbles” (Senghor: 1964; 80).

This view echoes Tempels (1959), Mbiti (1970) and Menkiti’s (1984) position that conceives the living as not only being in communion with each other but also with the dead. Senghor says in returning to cultural roots, the new methods that have been brought by the West should not be ignored. He calls on the people to stop blaming all their ills on colonialism in cases where they could take responsibility. He urges that a new look at colonialism will yield a proper understanding of the dynamics involved in the birth of colonialism. He says colonialism is a fact of history, the conquerors may bring destruction but they ultimately bring seeds that will yield some new ideas and progress. He says the colonisation of the world by Europe was a product of the renaissance whereby the landed gentry’s influence was usurped by the monarchy and the emergence of the bourgeoisie in the cities. He says the driving ideas behind the renaissance were atheistic, mercantile and destructive of the old order. He sees the renaissance as having done more than exported people and their trades. “But it exported not only merchants and soldiers; with professors, physicians, engineers, administrators, and missionaries, it also exported ideas and techniques. It not only destroyed, it built; it not only killed, it cured and educated; it gave birth to a new world, an entire world of our brothers, men of other races and continents” (Senghor, 1964:80).

### **1.3.2 A Critical Evaluation of Senghor’s Negritude and African Socialism**

Negritude has received some very serious rebuttals and rejoinders. The more troubling consequence of this assessment, of the dominance or predominance of emotional needs and feelings over abstract thinking in Africa, was how to relate or to reconcile it with an academic philosophy that was overwhelmingly rationalistic in orientation. Senghor’s Negritude (Senghor 1970) proved to be, in the end, a less than successful attempt to do this because it more or less confirmed and reinforced the reason/emotion dichotomy between the West and Africa (Hallen, 2004:296). Many African intellectuals protested that critical reasoning also had to play an essential role in African systems of thought and that, in any case, dividing the person up (purportedly on a “scientific” basis) between a rational self and an emotional self was an hypothesis of Western cultural orientation (Fanon 1967, 1978; Hallen 2000). Other African scholars suggested that lumping all of African “abstract” thought into a single category and then comparing it with the theories of so deliberately and painstakingly refined a subject as academic philosophy was not fair. Africa has its own folklore, folk thought, or folk philosophy (relatively popular beliefs, superstitions, etc.), as also is the case with the West. This distinction in the two cultures’ respective modes of thought or beliefs had first to be made clear before a neutral basis for intercultural comparisons would be established. Otherwise elements of African folklore might end up being contrasted and compared (unfavourably, of course) with technical philosophical theories (Wiredu 1980).

Secondly, Mphahlele (1982) strongly rejects Senghor's Negritude from a literary point of view. However, he agrees with his philosophical interpretation of African humanism, a theme that constitutes the basis of his literary and educational works (Mphahlele 1982). The thrust of the argument put forward here is that there is no serious justification for what makes the African more emotive than rational. Moreover, in an attempt to put the African person in the proper perspective, Senghor has ended up denigrating the African as an emotive entity void of reason. This is the implication of his thoughts. Is the really viable or reliable? This is deep question for further reflections.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

- 1 Senghor's version of socialism is similar to Nkrumah's version of socialism  
(a) Probable (b) Certainly (c) Doubtful (d) Not similar
  
- 2 Pick the odd item: (a) Negritude (b) Consciencism (c) Ujaama (d) Liberalism

## **1.4 Summary**

From the foregoing, the need for self-discovery is latent in the reflections and postulations of nearly all the African political theorists there are. Eurocentrism and those who sponsored the ideals clearly possess a very poor notion and understanding of history and Africa. This is why they made statements that seem to make the African of the 20<sup>th</sup> century lacking in reason and critical thinking. This essay concludes that the African reality is every sense different from that of the Western. To allow non-Africans, mostly arm-chair scholars, pass negative comments about the African is not enough to rule out the cerebral abilities of the African. This has precisely been the principal contention of Senghor and he makes a commendable effort in repudiating these ideas and to show how an African socialist framework is pertinent. In this unit, we have been able to consider the ways through which Senghor evolves from a defense of black intellect into an Afrocentric thinker that also provides a version of African socialism for Africa, going forward. Even when it can be said that his ideas are not without some flaws or limitations, it needs to be said that they are able to break the strength of Eurocentrism by providing an improved image of the African.

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## 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

1. (d); 2. (d)

### End of Module Exercises

1. “That there is interaction between matter and mind, but that matter is primary.” This is a statement credited to \_\_\_\_\_ (a) Karl Marx (b) Friedrich Engels (c) Kwame Nkrumah (d) Julius Nyerere
2. It was in the essay entitled: \_\_\_\_\_ that Kwame Nkrumah discusses his variant of African socialism.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ enjoins that we wage a relentless war against mysticism, magic and all those views which postulate the supernatural in an attempt to explain phenomena and events around us.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ reinforced Blyden’s views on African culture (a) Socialism (b) Republicanism (c) Consciencism (d) Communitarianism
5. The strength of \_\_\_\_\_ lies primarily in the assertions of Western intellectual giants who passed destructive criticisms on the ability of \_\_\_\_\_ to reason logically.
6. Senghor was friends with \_\_\_\_\_ whom he met in France, who later became a prominent political figure in Guinea’s liberation struggle.
7. Senghor says in returning to \_\_\_\_\_, the new methods that have been brought by the \_\_\_\_\_ should not be ignored.
8. For Senghor, \_\_\_\_\_ is based on ‘unity’, ‘balance’ negotiation and an appreciation of ‘movement and rhythm.’
9. The major premise of \_\_\_\_\_ is therefore that one’s biological make-up (race) defines one’s outer (skin colour) as well as inner (spirit/essence) traits.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ is equal to idealism whereas socialism is equal to \_\_\_\_\_
11. If capitalism is \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_ is egalitarian

12. Traditional Africans according to Nkrumah did not embrace \_\_\_\_\_ because their egalitarian lifestyle appeals to \_\_\_\_\_ economic framework
13. \_\_\_\_\_ is the theoretical framework upon which Nkrumah's rejection of capitalism and the acceptance of socialism rests.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ is merely feeding his Marxist conclusions and premises into the \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Module 4: Obafemi Awolowo's Theory of Democratic Socialism**

Unit 1: Obafemi Awolowo's Democratic Socialism

Unit 2: Awolowo Democratic Socialism and Marxian Socialism

Unit 3: Evaluating Awolowo's Democratic Socialism

## **Unit 1: Obafemi Awolowo's Democratic Socialism**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 A Brief Profile of Obafemi Awolowo
- 1.3.2 What is Democracy?
- 1.3.3 What is Socialism?
- 1.3.4 Awolowo's Democratic Socialism
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.5 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

This unit looks at the basic idea of Awolowo's Democratic Socialism. It begins with a brief biography of Obafemi Awolowo before expounding over the fundamental principles upon which Awolowo's ideas rest. In this unit, another politico-ideological approach which will be used for the management of post-independent Africa by another African political theorist will be given closer attention or scrutiny.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

After a thorough engagement with the core of Awolowo's version of democratic socialism, this unit would have been able to:

- Possess a fair knowledge of the person of Awolowo; and
- Understand the fundamental ideas of Awolowo's Democratic Socialism

### **1.3.1 A Brief Biography of Obafemi Awolowo**

Who is Awolowo? What can we learn about his personality? Chief Obafemi Jeremiah Oyeniyi Awolowo, GCFR (Yoruba: *Obáfẹ́mi Awólówọ̀*; 6 March 1909 – 9 May 1987), was a Nigerian nationalist and statesman who played a key role in Nigeria's independence movement, the First and Second Republics and the Civil War. He is most notable as the outstanding first premier of the Western Region but was also a successful federal commissioner for finance and vice president of the Federal Executive Council during the Civil War and was thrice a major contender for his country's highest office (Booth 1981: 52). A native of Ikenne in Ogun State of south-western Nigeria, he started his career, like some of his well-known contemporaries, as a nationalist in the Nigerian Youth Movement in which he rose to become Western Provincial Secretary. Awolowo was responsible for much of the progressive social legislation that has made Nigeria a modern nation (Booth, 1981: 53). He was the first Leader of Government Business and Minister of Local Government and Finance, and first Premier of the Western Region under Nigeria's parliamentary system, from 1952 to 1959. He was the official leader of the Opposition in the federal parliament to the Balewa government from 1959 to 1963.



In recognition of all these, Awolowo was the first individual in the modern era to be named Leader of the Yorubas.

While in London, Awolowo formed in 1947 the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa*, an association dedicated to the preservation and advancement of Yoruba culture in the new world conditions. Thereafter, he founded the Action Group in 1951. This party, alone among the major political parties, demanded immediate independence based on federalism. He led the Action Group (which was also the first Nigerian party to write and present an election manifesto) to victory in the Western Regional elections of 1951 and was named Leader of Government Business and Minister for Local Government and Finance, ultimately becoming the first premier of the Region when it was elevated to a federating unit in 1954. As the leader of the Action Group, Awolowo represented the Western Region in all the constitutional conferences intended to advance Nigeria on the path to independence. He was the official leader of the Opposition to the Balewa Government from 1959 to 1963 after he had left the Western Region to contest elections to the prime ministership of Nigeria at the centre. He was chosen by the Yoruba elite as their political leader or, formally, Leader of the Yorubas, during the peak goodwill period following his release from imprisonment for about three years on the charge of plotting to overthrow the national government, and was later appointed Federal Commissioner for Finance and Vice-President of the Federal Executive Council in Yakubu Gowon's Federal Military Government during the Civil War. In those capacities, he played a major role in preserving the Nigerian federation. As chairman and presidential candidate of the Unity Party of Nigeria, which contested the elections of 1979 and 1983 on a welfarist platform, Awolowo polled the second highest number of votes. He retired from politics on the termination of the Second Republic in 1983.

Awolowo is best remembered for his remarkable integrity, ardent nationalism, principled and virile opposition, and dogged federalistic convictions (Booth, 1981). His party was the first to move the motion for Nigeria's independence in the federal parliament and he obtained internal self-government for the Western Region in 1957. He is credited with coining the name "naira" for the Nigerian standard monetary unit and helped to finance the Civil War and preserve the federation without borrowing. He built the Liberty Stadium in Ibadan, the first of its kind in Africa; established the WNTV, the first television station in Africa; erected the first skyscraper in tropical Africa: the Cocoa House (still the tallest in Ibadan) and ran a widely respected civil service in the Western Region (Booth, 1981: 52). Awolowo died in 1987 at the age of 78 but his legacy lives on.

In order to have a commanding grasp of the idea of Awolowo's democratic socialism, it is important to first have a brief conceptual clarification of the key

terms: ‘Democracy’ and ‘Socialism.’ When the meanings of each of these terms have first been explored, the next task is to see how they fit into Awolowo’s political ideology.

### **1.3.2 What is Democracy?**

Democracy is etymologically derived from two Greek words ‘demos’ and ‘kratia’ means people and government respectively. It was a very popular system of government among the Greek city states (Cayne;1992:115). This means that democracy means the rule of the people. However, and over the years the idea of democracy evolved and advanced from the direct form practiced by the ancient Greeks. In contemporary times democracy means representative governance.

Democracy contrasts with forms of government where power is either held by one person, as in a monarchy, or where power is held by a small number of individuals, as in an oligarchy. Nevertheless, these oppositions, inherited from Greek philosophy, are now ambiguous because contemporary governments have mixed democratic, oligarchic, and monarchic elements (Barker;1906). Elsewhere we read that democracy in contrast to dictatorship or tyranny, thus focusing on opportunities for the people to control their leaders and to oust them without the need for a revolution (Jarvie and Milford;2006:218).

In this regard, democracy may be said to be a kind of government that is capable of giving the populace what they desire. It is a system that intends to make the people achieve their aims and goals. It promises to be a full representation of the conscience and aspirations of the peoples involved. It is in this regard that the famous quote of Abraham Lincoln comes to the mind. Abraham Lincoln, a former president of the United States of America, defines democracy as “the government of the people, by the people for the people”. These very words capture the main essence of democracy. Although, it may still be maintained that there is no universal definition of democracy just as it is the case with philosophy. Hence several scholars have attempted to give the concept their own definitions according to their understandings of the concepts.

There have been many critical responses to this idea. Peter B. Harris is one of the critical receptors of this idea. ‘Government of the people...by the people...for the people’ has been attacked by Peter Harris that such conception of democracy is too lofty to attain.

He starts that the idea that there can be a government of the people can be flawed. He says “the whole idea of election is that they enable people to choose their representatives from those recommended to them usually by political parties. Yet when elections are badly or dishonestly conducted, as they are in some states in

Africa and Asia, the government which emerges still stands to describe itself as having the support of the people” (Harris;1983:203). Harris continues that:

If we consider the next idea of government by the people, we have to admit that this is impossible proposition because the ‘people’ cannot actually ‘rule’...The people have to rule by means of their representatives, who are in turn guided by their cabinet or by their party (Harris;1983:204).

### 1.3.3 What is Socialism?

In this part of the unit, our aim is to look at the meaning and nature of socialism. The word ‘socialism’ finds its root in the Latin *sociare*, which means to combine or to share. The related, more technical term in Roman and then medieval law was *societas*. This latter word could mean companionship and fellowship as well as the more legalistic idea of a consensual contract between freemen (Andrew;2010:83).

The modern definition and usage of the term "socialism" settled by the 1860s, becoming the predominant term among the earlier associated words “co-operative,” “mutualist” and “associationist.” The term “communism” also fell out of use during this period, despite earlier distinctions between socialism and communism from the 1840s (William;1983:288). An early distinction between “socialism” and “communism” was that the former aimed to only socialize production while the latter aimed to socialize both production and consumption (Steele;1992:43).

Socialism has been coined to mean of the socio-economic system where the production and distribution of wealth is in the hands of the few private individuals. According to Cayne (1992:941) socialism is “a political and economic theory advocating collective ownership of the means of production and distribution”. He continues that “it is based on the belief that all, while contributing to the good of the community, are equally entitled to the care and protection which the community can provide.” (Cayne;1992:941).

Central to the meaning of socialism is common ownership. This means the resources of the world being owned in common by the entire global population. But does it really make sense for everybody to own everything in common? Of course, some goods tend to be for personal consumption, rather than to share—clothes, for example. People 'owning' certain personal possessions does not contradict the principle of a society based upon common ownership. In practice, common ownership will mean everybody having the right to participate in decisions on how global resources will be used. It means nobody is able to take personal control of resources, beyond their own personal possessions. Production under socialism would be directly and solely for use.

With the individual terms of ‘socialism’ and ‘democracy’ briefly explored, it is now important to see how they are used by Obafemi Awolowo in order to provide a basis for his political theory. The urgent question that is at the forefront of contention now is: What does Awolowo mean by Democratic Socialism?

### **1.3.4 An Exposition of Awolowo’s Democratic Socialism**

In this unit, we shall now try to understand the democratic socialism of Awolowo. Awolowo’s Democratic Socialism is a political philosophy targeted at liberating emerging African states from the shackles of underdevelopment. Its sole purpose is to see that wealth is distributed in society such that there is a balance between the rich and poor (Awolowo, 1968). He believes that once socialism is adopted in a democratic set up selfish persons who try to oppose it will find themselves in conflict with forces of the transcendental universal law of justice. Evil can never prevail for a long time over good. In the end good will always triumph over evil (Omeregbe, 1999:147). It is very obvious that the kind of political set up that Awolowo wants us to have is that which is inherently social such that wealth would be for everyone and would not be subject to being hoarded in the hands of a few.

Awolowo distinguishes between the primary aim of the state and its ultimate purpose. The primary aim is the maintenance of peace and order and the prevention of external attack. Its ultimate purpose is to enable the citizens enjoy the fruit of their labour and live a decent and happy life including the enjoyment of their fundamental human rights. Awolowo (1968) finds that this is not possible in a capitalist society.

For Awolowo (1968) Capitalism’s four postulates are full of problems. These are: private property, choice, equality and egoistic altruism. All of these for Awolowo are based on false understanding. Awolowo argues that capitalism has done more harm than good to human kind. In the ruthless struggle for survival only a few survive while the majority of the populace perish. Nature has provided mankind with natural gifts by placing many natural gifts on Earth to be used by all. However, for Awolowo the capitalist structure allows a greedy and selfish few to grab to themselves alone what nature has given to all men. Capitalism for Awolowo is an evil system (Omeregbe, 1999:145). Given the problems that Awolowo finds against capitalism, he therefore proposes his socialism.

For Awolowo, the aim of socialism is social justice, equality, and respectable standard of living, employment for all citizens, social amenities such as free education, health services and a host of others. Given that it is not all men that want what they really need, many others want things they do not need. There should be a legislation to distinguish between what the people want and what they need. All the means of production should be controlled by the state. Those already in the hand of

the individual should be confiscated by the state while the owners would be compensated. Even if there are similarities with the ideas of Marx, Awolowo distances himself from the socialism of Karl Marx. In his own words, he counters Marx on the grounds that “the only way society can change from capitalism to socialism is through peaceful change” (Awolowo, 1968: 191). Awolowo believes that peaceful change is possible through democratic and legal process if the people make peaceful change possible.

For Awolowo, once socialism has been adopted those selfish people who try “to oppose it will find themselves in conflict with the forces of the transcendental universal law of justice” (Awolowo, 1968: 200). For him, evil can never prevail for a long time over good. He continues that when people hold an idea in their minds and cherish it, desire it as something that will be good for them, and take steps to realize it, it will eventually become a reality for them provide they maintain steadfast and consistent about it (Omeregbe, 1999: 148).

### Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1 Awolowo’s doctrine of Democratic Socialism embraces Marxist Socialism  
(a) Probably (b) Certainly (c) False (d) In some ways
- 2 According to Awolowo, Capitalism has \_\_\_\_\_ number of postulates that are full of \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.4 Summary

A careful look at the idea of democratic socialism as enshrined in the thoughts of Awolowo indicates how an African can use two mainly Western concepts to provide a basis for indigenous African development template. First, one would think that Awolowo would have been in full support of Marxian socialism, but this is not the case since he provides a clear rejection of Marxist Socialism as illustrated in the next unit. We have been able to get in close connection with the personality of the former Nigerian statesman, Obafemi Awolowo. The unit has reconsidered the fundamental meanings of each of ‘democracy’ and ‘socialism.’ It has also been able to reflect over the ways through which they play out in the ideas of Awolowo.

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## **1.6 Possible Answers to SAE**

1. (d); 2. Four/Problems

## **Unit 2: Awolowo's Democratic Socialism and Marxian Socialism**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 Fundamentals of Marxist Socialism
- 1.3.2 Distinction between Awolowo's Democratic Socialism and Marxist Socialism
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

The unit looks at the ways through which Awolowo's democratic socialism differs from Marxian socialism. This distinction is very important as we can recall in module 3, where Kwame Nkrumah puts Marxist scientific socialism as the basis of his version of African socialism. In the present scenario with Awolowo, even though he uses the same concept, socialism, Awolowo makes the effort to show that he does not concede to Marxian socialism, which Nkrumah embraces. What then is the basic argument he uses? This is the core agenda or concern of this unit.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

From the unit, the student must be able to:

- Have a fair grasp of the underlying principles in Marxist Socialism;
- Understand how Awolowo disassociates his political theory from Marxist Socialism; and
- Understand how key political concepts can be contextual and used by theorists as they please.

### **1.3.1 Fundamentals of Marxist Socialism**

Here, our main aim is to go deeper into the ideas that informed and provoked Karl Marx's thinking. The chief intellectual influences may be listed as follows: (1) the Utopian socialists, including the Frenchmen, Saint Simon and Fourier, and the English-man, Robert Owen; (2) the economists of the Manchester school, Adam Smith and David Ricardo, together with their precursors and their immediate followers; (3) that modification of the philosophy of Hegel himself, represented by the Left Movement of the Young Hegelians, Feuerbach's name featured prominently.

Of these three, the German Hegelian philosophy contributed most as it birthed his materialism which he employed to gain a better view of reality. Let us take a closer look at it. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was a dialectician. The dialectical method is one of the astounding developments and achievements of Hegel's thoughts. Dialectics originally refers to the process of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis (Stumpf;1979). Ideas are formed and classified in the course of intellectual debate.

Such debates normally with a proposition or thesis and then challenged by a counter proposition (anti-thesis). Since both are partly true and partly untrue, the normal outcome of the debate is a revised proposition or synthesis which combines the valid elements of each of the thesis and anti-thesis. In spite of this, the synthesis is not always the whole truth. It therefore, takes the place of a new thesis and undergoes the same process against an anti-thesis to beget another synthesis.

Hegel recognizes the impact of this logic and imports it into his thoughts on Absolute Spirit. This is where Hegel's dialectical idealism is fully expressed. Hegel maintains that social institutions reflect the ideas behind them and it is the movement of ideas through the dialectical process which is responsible for social change. One of these is the state. For Hegel, the Absolute Spirit, externalizes itself in and through the material universe. This implies that all changes that occur in the universe are traced to the Absolute Spirit (Stumpf;1979). This is where Marx disagreed.

For Marx, being a materialist, there is no reason to suppose that the idealism of Hegel is correct. The material universe is all there is and Marx was fascinated by the sciences which was also a purely empirically discipline explaining the universe without recourse to spirits as Hegel would have him believe. This is the main reason why those who followed Hegel's teaching dogmatically were called the Right Hegelians while those who followed another path such as Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx are called the Young Hegelians (Stumpf;1979).

Even when Friedrich Engels was writing about the transition from Hegelianism to Marxism, Feuerbach was mentioned and also criticized. For Engels, the Hegelian system merely represents "materialism idealistically turned upside down in method and content" (Engels;1972).

The concept of dialectical materialism emerges from statements by Marx in the preface to his magnum opus, *Capital*. There Marx says he intends to use Hegelian dialectics but in revised form. He defends Hegel against those who view him as a "dead dog" and then says, "I openly avowed myself as the pupil of that mighty thinker Hegel" (Marx:1906;25). Marx credits Hegel with "being the first to present its dialectic's form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner." But he then criticizes Hegel for turning dialectics upside down: "With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell" (Marx;1906:25).

The whole gamut of Marxist philosophy centres on the call for social change. The need to understand the forces of production and distribution of social wealth and the urgency to see a higher society brought to bearing is the message of Marx and Engels. With dialectical materialism applied to history, they showed that the history



of societies is that of class struggle. Marxist Philosophy also calls for social change. The need to understand the inner contradictions in capitalism and the movement to another realm of socialism is well underscored.

### **1.3.2 Distinction between Awolowo's Democratic Socialism and Marxist Socialism**

Having been able to understand the main doctrine of Marxist Socialism, the next step in this unit is to show how Awolowo makes the effort to differentiate his version of democratic socialism away from Marxist socialism.

Perhaps it is better to commence with the general understand that many of Africa's independence fathers employed the term 'Socialism' to depict the political state of affairs of the pre-colonial Africa. Each of them in their unique ways formulate what they understand this to mean and how this ideal is to be attained. Awolowo is not left out of this approach. However, upon a critical examination of his ideas, Awolowo tries to distance himself from the Socialism of Karl Marx. What are the places of disagreement? Are there places of concord? This is what we shall examine in the rest of this unit.

Firstly, Awolowo's socialism is different from Marxist socialism which is characterized by dictatorship of the proletariat. But Awolowo rejects Karl Marx's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He also rejects Karl Marx's idea of a stateless society at the communist state as unrealistic (Omeregbe, 1999: 146). On the contrary Awolowo differs from Marx on the grounds that there will never be a time when man will not need the state. It is only within the state that man can enjoy personal freedom and happiness.

The aims of socialism, for Awolowo are social justice and equality. Awolowo's Democratic Socialism is a political philosophy targeted to liberate emerging African states from the shackles of underdevelopment. Its sole purpose is to see that wealth is distributed in society such that there is a balance between the haves and have-nots (Awolowo, 1968). He believes that once socialism is adopted in a democratic set up selfish persons who try to oppose it will find themselves in conflict with forces of the transcendental universal law of justice. Evil can never prevail for a long time over good. In the end good will always triumph over evil (Omeregbe, 1999:147). It is very obvious that the kind of political set up that Awolowo wants us to have is that which is inherently social such that wealth would be for everyone and would not be subject to being hoarded in the hands of a few.

As we observed in the previous unit Awolowo's Democratic Socialism is a political philosophy targeted at liberating emerging African states from the shackles of underdevelopment. Its sole purpose is to see that wealth is distributed in society such that there is a balance between the haves and have-nots (Awolowo, 1968). He believes that once socialism is adopted in a democratic set up selfish persons who

try to oppose it will find themselves in conflict with forces of the transcendental universal law of justice. Evil can never prevail for a long time over good. In the end good will always triumph over evil (Omeregbe, 1999:147). It is very obvious that the kind of political set up that Awolowo wants us to have is that which is inherently social such that wealth would be for everyone and would not be subject to being hoarded in the hands of a few.

On the charge that his democratic socialism does not deprive people of their freedom, Awolowo (1968) maintains that the individuals do not have the freedom to oppress others or the freedom to deprive others of their rights. The state is like a family. Unlike the Marxist sense where there is perpetual conflict and strife between the oppressed and oppressor, Awolowo states that it is the duty of a state to do to citizens what a father does to the members of the family.

From the brief exposition given, we can notice some places of agreement as well. Both Awolowo and Marx are concerned about the status of the society. Each of them wants to improve society from their intellectual contribution. Although their methods are different, their ultimate aim is to attain a situation where the condition of the commoner in the society would be uplifted.

Furthermore, we agree with Awolowo that social change ought not to be bloody and violent. We are also in agreement with the fact that man cannot live without the state as opposed to the thought in Marxism of the withering away of the state.

The most laudable distinction between Awolowo's Democratic Socialism and the Socialism of Karl Marx is in the belief and principle of democracy. Whereas there is no explicit position of democracy in Marx's thoughts, Awolowo's version of socialism has to do with democracy. We find the main ideas of Democracy and Marxism at odds. On the one hand, Karl Marx informs that by the era of Communism, the state will wither away and there shall be no government. Democracy on the other hand, is not looking forward to the extinction of the state. In fact, democracy exists to preserve the peaceful coexistence of individuals and institutions in the state. Marxist democracy, with its violent and consistent talk about revolution seems to undermine the essence of democracy itself.

From the above antecedent, it is not an error to infer that socialist democracies anchored on the principles of Karl Marx, would have problems with a proper practice of democracy, in the real sense of the word.

In the next unit, the main task is to examine the place of Awolowo's democratic socialism and see if there is any basis for holding onto it as an ideal.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. Pick the statement that is consistent with Awolowo's Democratic Socialism: (a) Capitalism can liberate Africa (b) Democratic socialism offers social justice that will end poverty (c) Marx's scientific socialism is similar in every sense with Awolowo's Democratic Socialism (d) Awolowo and Nkrumah are on the same page concerning African Socialism
2. Socialism is the same concept for all independent African fathers (a) May be (b) False (c) True (d) None of the above

#### 1.4 Summary

In this unit, we have been able to consider the ways through which Awolowo shows how different his democratic socialism differs from Marxist socialism. In spite of showing that there are some fundamental reasons for his aversion to Marxists socialism, it needs to be added that for Awolowo, just like Marx, the refusal to admit capitalism as a viable economic framework is because it is hostile and exploitative. From the discussion made so far, it is safe to say that Awolowo's doctrine of democratic socialism, which has been able to consider the way forward for African politics, it is not the same as Marxist socialism. This goes on to show that socialism may be employed in several ways but the meanings applied to them may not have to be the same. This has been demonstrated in Karl Marx, Kwame Nkrumah and Obafemi Awolowo.

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## **1.6 Possible Answers to SAE**

1. (b); 2. (c)

## **Unit 3: Evaluating Awolowo's Democratic Socialism**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 Achievements of Awolowo's Democratic Socialism
- 1.3.2 Limitations of Awolowo's Democratic Socialism
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this unit, the overall aim is to consider the ways through which Awolowo's Democratic Socialism is able to attain some fundamental success stories when he was the Premier of the defunct South-Western region of Nigeria. In as much as this unit intends to reflect on this, it needs to be added that the political theory suffers some limitations too. Both of the positive and limiting aspects of his political theory shall be considered in this unit.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:

- Reflect over the practical achievements of Awolowo's theory of Democratic Socialism in post-independent Nigeria; and
- Understand the limitations that beset Awolowo's doctrine of Democratic Socialism.

### **1.3.1 Achievements of Awolowo's Democratic Socialism**

In the preceding units, we have been able to show that Awolowo's Democratic Socialism has the potential to augment Nigeria and as a premier of the defunct south-west Nigeria, he was able to bring this theory to fruitful and rewarding practice. There is no doubt that Awolowo, attains a lot of achievement with this kind of thinking as he applied his ideas sincerely and critically to the issues that affects South-West Nigeria which makes his legacy still resonating today.

Awolowo pioneered free primary education in Nigeria in the Western Region and also free health care. Although Awolowo failed to win the 1979 and 1983 presidential elections of the Second Republic, he polled the second highest number of votes and his policies of free education and limited free health were carried out throughout all the states controlled by his party, the Unity Party of Nigeria.

Awolowo is best remembered for his remarkable integrity, ardent nationalism, principled and virile opposition, and dogged federalistic convictions. His party was the first to move the motion for Nigeria's independence in the federal parliament and he obtained internal self-government for the Western Region in 1957. He is

credited with coining the name “naira” for the Nigerian standard monetary unit and helped to finance the Civil War and preserve the federation without borrowing. He built the Liberty Stadium in Ibadan, the first of its kind in Africa; established the WNTV, the first television station in Africa; erected the first skyscraper in tropical Africa: the Cocoa House (still the tallest in Ibadan) and ran a widely respected civil service in the Western Region.

Awolowo was reputedly admired by Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah, and some of his disciples in the South-West have continued to invoke his name and the policies of his party, the Action Group, during campaigns, while the principles of his democratic socialism have influenced politicians in most of the other geopolitical zones of the nation.

In 1992, the Obafemi Awolowo Foundation was founded as an independent, non-profit, non-partisan organisation committed to furthering the symbiotic interaction of public policy and relevant scholarship with a view to promoting the overall development of the Nigerian nation. The Foundation was launched by the President of Nigeria at that time, General Ibrahim Babangida, at the Liberty Stadium, Ibadan. However, his most important bequests (styled Awoism) are his exemplary integrity, his democratic socialism, his contributions to hastening the process of decolonisation and his consistent and reasoned advocacy of federalism-based on ethno-linguistic self-determination and uniting politically strong states-as the best basis for Nigerian unity. In spite of these colossal success stories that are tied to Awolowo’s democratic socialism, it is also important to state that there are some limitations that beset the system.

### **1.3.2 Limitations of Awolowo’s Democratic Socialism**

Awolowo’s Democratic Socialism, is filled with the drive to make society better for all and sundry and chides any form of dissipation in governance. When we critically look at the ideas so proposed we find some problems present in them.

Firstly, we find the articulation by Awolowo (1968) that Socialism is a universal phenomenon irreconcilable with his aversion to Marxist Socialism. Awolowo maintains that socialism is a universal concept. The principles that guide it are universal as well. He informs us that “there is no such thing as ‘African Socialism’, just as there is no ‘African logic’ or ‘African Mathematics’. By its very nature it is universal, the same for all human societies” (Awolowo, 1968:188). This unit does not support this inference of Awolowo. Socialism is a social, economic and political theory. “Unlike logic and mathematics it is concerned with society; therefore it must be influenced by and adapted to the society in which it is implemented” (Omeregbe, 1999:149). It seems Awolowo finds himself in a contradiction here. First, he distances himself from socialism as articulated by Karl Marx, he also holds that

Socialism is the same for all societies. He seems to be mindless of the fact that every society has its own peculiar problems.

Now that we have been able to establish that Awolowo's attempt to rescue himself from the Socialism of Marx, it follows that some of the problems that present themselves in the thoughts of Marx would also reveal themselves in his Democratic Socialism whose converse does no better by rendering us with the knowledge that Awolowo would endorse Socialist Democracy which has many flaws. At this juncture, a brief exposition of the basic ideas of Socialist Democracy is pertinent. Socialist thought has several different views on democracy. Social democracy, democratic socialism, and the dictatorship of the proletariat (usually exercised through Soviet democracy) are some examples. Many democratic socialists and social democrats believe in a form of participatory democracy and/or workplace democracy combined with a representative democracy (Dunn, 1994: 134).

Within Marxist orthodoxy there is a form of critic and disagreement to what is commonly called "liberal democracy," which they simply refer to as parliamentary democracy because of its often centralised nature. This system ultimately manifests itself as council democracy and begins with workplace democracy (Diamond, 2004:231).

Socialist democracy is employed to emphasize the compatibility between democracy and Marxism. It is also conceived as Marxian social democracy. The role of democracy in Marxist thinking may refer to the role of democratic processes in the transition from capitalism to socialism, or to the importance ascribed to participatory democracy in a post-capitalist society. If we recall the elucidation in the foregoing paragraphs, the merger between Marxism and Democracy would not be too difficult to grasp.

Most Marxists maintain that democracy is the road to socialism. Marxists believe that the working class could achieve power through democratic elections, but that working people had the right to revolt if they were denied political expression (Gabriel, 2009). This is clearly articulated in the words of Hal Draper (1970: 42): "After the workers, i.e., the proletariat, achieve political power and use the state to transform bourgeoisie society into a classless, communist society, the state would lose its reason for existence, which is the suppression of the one class by another, and would no longer be needed." In a related note, Kenneth Megill (1970: 25) articulates that:

Democratic Marxism is authentic Marxism—the Marxism which emphasizes the necessity for revolutionary action. Loyalty to the movement, not loyalty to any particular doctrine, is characteristic of the orthodox democratic Marxist (Megill, 1970:25).

Now, while Marxism does not dismiss democracy, it views it along class lines. The democracy that Marxists aim to achieve is a workers' democracy also known as the dictatorship of the proletariat, and this is what Awolowo frowns at. This would consist of political power being held by the working class (the majority demographic of society) and state power wielded in their interests. Marxists also hold that a workers' democracy (the dictatorship of the proletariat) is only a temporary and transitional form necessary prior to the establishment of a communist society.

We have seen that despite the attempt to retrieve himself from the inner kernels of the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Awolowo fails in this guise. There is no doubt that Awolowo seems to favour liberal democracy which is a type that guarantees all the demands and norms of Awolowo, only that it has a Capitalist tendency. It is in this connection that we shall be looking at the basic claims of Liberal Democracy and try to amend with the basic ideals of Awolowo still intact.

Democracy as such cannot confer any benefits upon the citizen and it should not be expected to do so. In fact democracy can do nothing – only the citizens of the democracy can act (including, of course, those citizens who comprise the government). Democracy provides no more than a framework within which the citizens may act in a more or less organized and coherent way (Popper, 1963: 32).

The discussion that has occupied our attention so far is aimed at revealing that Awolowo's Democratic Socialism is a Liberal Democracy in disguise. This unit finds that the real problem in Awolowo's thought is the negative influence of Capitalism in Africa.

We have come to understand the entire thought of Awolowo as a rejection of Capitalism and if we can remove the Capitalist tendency present in Liberal Democracy then even Awolowo's thoughts would not have the Socialist connotation that is implied in it.

Furthermore, when we take a critical scrutiny at his Democratic Socialism, we find that he seems to shy away from the ideas of Karl Marx on the grounds that a state must always be there for the individual as a result of the fact that the individual needs it. Marx had already prophesied the gradual withering away of the state which Awolowo frowns against. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is another idea that Awolowo frowns against. All of these clearly mean that in whatever way we may construe, Awolowo's Democratic Socialism it has the elements of Socialist



Democracy and Liberal Democracy present in it and this is why we believe that his ideas, thus amended could still be relevant to us in the present era.

When we look at the way things are contemporary times, we find that neither Capitalism nor Socialism can independently solve the problems of governance, corruption and underdevelopment that have engulfed African states. Awolowo's writings of several decades has seen this and this is why he had to distance himself from the ills of Capitalism and the extremism of Socialism.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

- 1 Awolowo's Democratic Socialism acted as a background catalyst for his success as premier of South-Western Nigeria (a) Not possible (b) Certainly (c) None of the above (d) both (a) and (b)

### **1.4 Summary**

In this unit, two issues were the prime focus. The first concerns with the success stories connected to Awolowo's practical application of his theory of Democratic Socialism. The second has to do with his ideas being given critical assessment. These two tasks have been the contention of this unit. From the discussion thus far, we can clearly see that position that no philosophical position is flawless as an absolute position.

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### **1.7 Possible Answers to SAE**

1. (c)

### End of Module Exercises

1. Awolowo died at the age of \_\_\_\_\_
2. The fundamental purpose of Awolowo's Democratic Socialism is to see that \_\_\_\_\_ is distributed in society such that there is a balance between the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
3. Awolowo distinguishes between the \_\_\_\_\_ aim of the state and its \_\_\_\_\_ purpose.
4. For Awolowo, social change ought not to be bloody and violent (a) Probable true (b) Necessarily true (c) Sufficiently true (d) Improbably false
5. The aims of socialism, for Awolowo are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
6. The most laudable distinction between Awolowo's Democratic Socialism and the Socialism of Karl Marx is in the belief and principle of \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ is employed to emphasize the compatibility between democracy and Marxism.
8. Awolowo's Democratic Socialism is a \_\_\_\_\_ in disguise.
9. Awolowo failed to win the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ presidential elections of the Second Republic.

## **Module 5: Frantz Fanon on Political Violence**

Unit 1: Fanon on Violence and Terrorism

Unit 2: Interrogating Fanon's Doctrine of Political Violence

## **Unit 1: Fanon on Violence and Terrorism**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 A Brief Biography of Frantz Fanon
- 1.3.2 Alienation and Disalienation in Fanon's Political Theory
- 1.3.3 Violence in the Thoughts of Frantz Fanon
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this unit, we are going to be looking at the political theory of Frantz Fanon. Fanon is notorious for his emphasis on violence as a way through which the African can purge himself of the limitations and hurdles set by Euro-American civilisation and domination. In this module, two main themes will be touched. The first concerns with the need to look at Fanon's biography briefly. Afterward, the position of Fanon on violence will be looked at.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

After a careful exploration of the contents of this unit, it is hoped that the student will be able to:

- Understand the profile of Frantz Fanon;
- Have a comprehensive psychological impact of being black-skinned and alienated;
- Understand the concept of alienation and what the process of disalienation entails;
- Relate with how the idea of violence reflects in the political theory of Fanon; and
- Develop a commanding comprehension of the influences and experiences that helped in shaping his political theory.

### **1.3.1 A Brief Biography of Frantz Fanon**

Who is Frantz Fanon? Fanon was born in French West Indian island colony of Martinique. The specific year was 1925 and two other remarkable black men were born that same year: Amilcar Cabral and Malcolm X (Strickland, 1979:67).

Fanon grew up in an "upper middle-class family," the youngest of four boys in a family of nine or ten (Gendezier, 1973). In 1936, at the age of eleven, Fanon was sent by his parents to the private school for black children in Martinique, the Lycee Schoelcher. The lycee charged a small tuition which, we are told, precluded 96 percent of the population from receiving the classical French education available there (Gendezier, 1973).

Although the school was racially segregated, this did not cause any particular protest from the Martiniqueans. In 1939-1940 two momentous events occurred which were to have a decisive impact on Martinique in general and on young Fanon in particular. The first was the outbreak of the Second World War, the subsequent fall of France and the installation of the Vichy collaborationist government of Marshal. For the next four years some 10,000 Vichy troops occupied Martinique, behaving, according to Fanon, like “authentic racists” (Gendezier, 1973:22).

The second momentous event was “the return to his native land” of Martinique's then most famous son, Aime Cesaire. Cesaire came home to teach at the Lycee and to extol the virtues of *negritude*, Fanon claimed that this created a minor sensation since it was the first time that “a Lycee teacher – a man, therefore, who was apparently worthy of respect-was seen to announce quite simply to West Indian society 'that it is fine and good to be a Negro” Gendezier, 1973:22). Thus did French colonialism, in the person of the Vichy government, and black consciousness, in the person of Cesaire, introduce themselves to the teen-aged Fanon.

Fanon's reaction to Vichy colonialism was characteristic: he took action. Slipping out of Martinique to the British-controlled island of Dominica, he joined the Caribbean Free French Movement in 1943. Later that year after Vichy had surrendered, Fanon returned home but he did not stay long. In 1944 he volunteered for active duty in the regular French army in order to fight in Europe.

On the way to Europe he spent several months in North Africa; first in Morocco and then in Algeria, He was nineteen years old and it is his first contact with the country for which he would later sacrifice his life. This stay in North Africa and the trip across the sea were important in two respects. As a result of the occupation some Martiniqueans had come to believe that the racism of Vichy was the racism of “the bad French” only “for everybody knows that the true Frenchman is not a racist” (Gendezier, 1973:25). However, the voyage to Casablanca and the months stationed in North Africa cured Fanon and his friends of that notion. Observing their officers and the racial structure of the Free French Army, they saw that the “Free French” were also infected with the virus of racism. They also observed how colonialism had restructured the world into a racial pecking order that fragmented the unity of the oppressed: “The Negro is told: You are the best soldiers in the French Empire; the Arabs think they are better than you, but they are wrong.”

At the time Fanon did not fathom the reasons behind these contradictions nor did he realize that he was to grapple with this problem of false consciousness among the colonized for most of the rest of his life. In the summer of 1944 Fanon volunteered to leave North Africa to join the allied invasion of Europe. He was reassigned to the ninth Division of Colonial Infantry, First French Army. The Division landed near Marseille and began marching northward to engage the Germans. In mid-November

Fanon was slightly wounded. Then, apparently in December, he volunteered to lead a small party to bring ammunition to the forward positions in a battle outside of Besancon, a town to the southeast of Paris. He was wounded by mortar shrapnel and sent to a military hospital outside Lyon for a two-month convalescence. After being released from the hospital he was awarded the *Croix de Guerre avec etoile de bronze* by Colonel Raoul Salan, commander of Fanon's Sixth Regiment, and promoted to corporal. Prophetically, Lyon and Salan were to figure prominently in Fanon's future (Strickland, 1979:68).

After the war Fanon returned to Martinique and re-entered the Lycee to prepare himself for the university. He and his brother Joby also participated in the political campaign of Aime Cesaire, who was elected to the French Assembly as the Communist Party's deputy from Martinique in the first election of the new Fourth Republic (Gendezier, 1973).

In 1947 Fanon's father died and he decided to return to France to take advantage of a scholarship he had won to attend the university of his choice' in metropolitan France. His initial intention was to study dentistry in Paris. However, after three weeks of introductory courses in dental school, Fanon abandoned dentistry and journeyed to Lyon to study medicine. He was a wounded war veteran, a peripheral participant in the politics of the French left and an international traveller in search of his vocation and his destiny. He was at the time twenty-two years old.

For the next six years Fanon was to live, study, and languish in France. He enrolled in the medical school at Lyon, became involved in student politics, edited one issue of a black student newspaper called *Tam-Tam*, and began writing the series of essays which were to be published in 1952 as *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* (Black Skin, White Masks).

Confronted by the racial hostility, indifference, and the paternalism of the metropole, Fanon tried in this first book to resolve the question of being black in a white world. That the book was written in the torment of his personal search for answers is clear from the introduction: "This book should have been written three years ago.... But these truths were a fire in me then. Now I can tell them without being burned" (Fanon, 2008).

The book is significant for what it tells us of Fanon's state of mind at the time. It is a stage in the evolution of his thought which contains the seeds of ideas which will flower in his later work. But its fundamental approach and analysis is psychological-existential. The problem of the Negro, neurotic in colonial society, is defined, primarily, as a question of consciousness. Although the social order is itself oppressive, it is the victim who must overcome his sense of non-recognition and non-existence by utilizing his free will: "I believe that the fact of the juxtaposition

of the white and black races has created a massive psychoexistential complex. I hope by analyzing it to destroy it.” (Fanon, 2008).

What he subsequently came to believe is that the analysis of colonialism is necessary, but not sufficient. In 1951 Fanon received his medical degree, returned to Martinique and then went during the following year to France to marry Josie Duble and take up his residency in psychiatry at the Hopital de Saint Alban under the expatriate Spanish professor, Francois Tosquelles.

After Cesaire and Sartre, Tosquelles is the third major intellectual influence on Fanon, and Tosquelle’s “materialistic psychiatry” (Gendezier, 1973) which emphasized work therapy and patient involvement in the treatment of mental illness, was to be the basic approach Fanon would attempt to practice in Algeria when he went there in November 1953 to become one of the six Chefs de service in the Blida hospital, some 35 miles south of Algiers.

For the next three years, Fanon attempted to revolutionize the practice of psychiatric medicine at the hospital, while becoming ever more deeply drawn into the course of the Algerian revolution, which had erupted in 1954. At the same time he was, ironically, also treating members of the police, whose adoption of torture as a general policy of combatting the revolution had produced many neurotic symptoms among "les gendarmes" (Strickland, 1979:69).

Having made the commitment to put his medical skills at the service of the revolution, it was only a matter of time until Fanon made the final irreparable break with France. He did so in 1956 by submitting his resignation to the President Minister, Robert Lacoste, in a letter which is one of the most remarkable mini-manifestos of modern times. In it Fanon stated:

For nearly three years I have placed myself wholly at the service of this country and of the men who inhabit it. I have spared neither my efforts nor my enthusiasm. There is not a parcel of my activity that has not had as its objective the unanimously, hoped for emergence of a better world. But what can a man's enthusiasm and devotion achieve if everyday reality is a tissue of lies, of cowardice, of contempt for man? ... The function of a social structure is to set up institutions to serve man's needs. A society that drives its members to desperate solutions is a non-viable society, a society to be replaced (Fanon, 1956:52-3).

He had come a long way from *Black Skin, White Masks*, a long way from the search for individual answers to problems which are, at bottom, rooted in the social system itself.

### 1.3.2 Alienation and Disalienation in Fanon's Political Theory

How does the idea of alienation feature in the political thoughts of Fanon? In the opening pages of *Black Skin White Mask*, Frantz Fanon confesses: "The black man, wants to be white. The white man is desperately trying to achieve the rank of man" (Fanon, 1986: xiii). This attempt to "achieve the rank of man" is complicated by the fact that under capitalism we share a common lot—alienation. Moreover, in the case of the black man, this alienation results in a double bind, the "first economic, then the internalization or rather epidermalization of this inferiority" (Fanon, 1986: xv). Genuine disalienation, the narrator contends, "implies a brutal awareness of such socioeconomic realities," but a solution to racism needs to be "found on the objective as well as the subjective level," since "reality demands total comprehension" (Fanon, 1986:xv). An individual black man, in other words, can no more overcome racism by desperately plunging himself into the "black hole" of a mythic or cosmic black civilization as if it is simply a matter of the "salvation of the soul" than a neurotic can will himself to health with knowledge alone (Fanon, 1986:xv). After all "what is so often called the black soul is a construction of white folk" (Fanon, 1986:xviii). There is then another uncomfortable realization tied to this conclusion that the totality—capitalism—must itself be transcended: "There is but one destiny for the black man. And it is white" (Fanon, 1986:202). But, paradoxically, the obverse, that whiteness is the flipside of blackness, is false. This is the central claim of Fanon that stands at both ends of the book. For the black man, offers "no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man" (Fanon, 1986: 90).

Fanon starts with the observation that the unequal relationship between the races results in "a massive psycho-existential complex" (Fanon, 1986:xvi). A "cure" can only be had if one analyzes racism as a symptom. Fanon argues that "*only* a psychoanalytic interpretation" can transfigure the significance of the symptom so as to make life more livable. That is, if we bracket the socio-structural causes of racism, then we can attack the psychopathology of race. Anti-black racism often serves to alibi poverty or class differences, but to confuse anti-black racism as the cause of structural disparities is to misunderstand the particularity of modern racism, which is also why a psychoanalytic explanation of racism differs from a sociological one, despite the fact that its object of analysis is the same. A psychoanalytic treatment of racism takes as its concrete concern the affective satisfaction that blacks as well as whites obtain from anti-black racism. One manifestation of this "double narcissism" is that the "white man is locked in his whiteness, the black man in his blackness" (Fanon, 1986:xiv).



These issues aside, the realization that one is black induces “nausea,” shame, and it locks the black man in an infernal circle that makes it impossible for “either side to obliterate the past once and for all” (Fanon, 1986: 101). But much like the Jew who once stood in as the symbol of humanity, the black man is now forced to do the same; the struggle for disalienation carries within it the emergent universal category of man. The black man thus finds himself faced with the task of transcendence. He is only a rational subject whom others can recognize in spite of this blackness. However the extent to which the black man is an object of racism he cannot be a subject. “The black man is a toy in the white man’s hands” (Fanon, 1986: 119).

The only way out of this dual narcissism, for Fanon is to liquidate history so that one can recognize that what is attributed to the other is what one should attribute to oneself. The book ends with the words: “Was my freedom not given to me to build the world of *you*? At the end of this book we would like the reader to feel with us the open dimension of every consciousness” (Fanon, 1986: 206). Fanon urges that the same affect that is enlisted in racism (which, when it is negative and destructive is what we refer to as authoritarianism) is, when it is turned inside out, the dynamic invested with the hope of destroying racism—the denied, twisted investment in the other that racism plays on is the same affective source for the obliteration of racism! The interracial utopian vision in Fanon’s work is that this transformation needs to occur within the context of capitalism. This is what it means that “whiteness” is the black’s “destiny.” Fanon attempts to hook the temporal core of psychoanalysis explicitly to the Marxist conception of emancipation.

Disalienation will be for those Whites and Blacks who have refused to let themselves be locked in the substantialized “tower of the past.” For many other black men, disalienation will come from refusing to consider their reality as definitive....In no way do I have to dedicate myself to reviving a black civilization unjustly ignored. I will not make myself the man of any past. I do not want to sing the past to the detriment of my present and my future (Fanon, 1986: 201)

As Fanon informs, “long time ago the black man acknowledged the undeniable superiority of the white man” (Fanon, 1986: 202). This superiority was synonymous with capitalism, but insofar as the aim of the black man shifts from trying to achieve a “white existence” to “culture,” so much the worse. He asks in frustration: “What am I supposed to do with a black empire?...I am French. I am interested in French culture, French civilization, and the French,” “[all] I wanted...[was] to be a man among men” (Fanon, 1986: 179, 92). After all, “I should like nothing better” than to drown in “the white flood composed of men like Sartre and Aragon,” since as a man “the Peloponnesian War is as much mine as the invention of the compass” (Fanon, 1986:179, 200).

We have been able to observe that Fanon blames the man of colour, the native for the condition they have found themselves. He links this problem to a form of psychoanalytical disorder. In the next section, we shall pay serious attention to the solution that Fanon proffers to the man of colour so as to retrieve his alienated self.

### 3.3 **Violence in the Thoughts of Frantz Fanon**

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, the idea of violence and its terrorist consequences cannot be easily relegated to the background. For Fanon "The colonized man finds his freedom in and through violence" (Fanon, 1963:2). Fanon utters these words in his most direct articulation of a concept of anti-colonial violence, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon writes about the colonial world on behalf of all colonized subjects, even though Algeria is the site of reflection in the book. The colonial world is a world cut into two compartmental zones: the zone of the native or colonized, and the zone of the settler or colonizer. Barracks and police stations divide these spheres. The Manichean nature of the colonial world divides it into binaries of colonizer/colonized, light/dark, white/black, and dominator/dominated. Narcissism pervades the consciousness of the colonizer. When narcissists look into a mirror, they see images of beauty, abundance, domination, self-assurance, and self-serving qualities staring back at them. The narcissistic colonial settler situates his or her zone of being as the sole sphere of humanity in the colonies. If one does not belong to that sphere, then one cannot claim to represent a civilized human species. Fanon tells European people in favor of colonial domination "to wake up and shake themselves, use their brains, and stop playing the stupid game of the Sleeping Beauty" (Fanon, 1963: 106). To further the charge of creating a new humanity, Fanon implements what he calls a slightly stretched Marxist analysis. Slightly stretched Marxism involves a global class struggle that takes into account racial injustices inherited in the Manichean colonial world from the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas in 1492 to the transatlantic slave trade to the forms of racism prevalent during Fanon's time. Colonial subjects living in the racial state Fanon narrates occupy positions as the underside of modernity (Fanon, 1963). Fanon says each generation must discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it (Fanon, 1963:206). How does a colonized subject manage to fulfil its mission of achieving independence and decolonization in the wake of colonial terror and violence? Fanon's answer is tragic revolutionary violence:

National liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new formulas introduced, decolonization is always a violent phenomenon (Fanon, 1963: 35).

What does Fanon believe counter- violence and counter-terrorism enacted by a colonial subject achieve? (1) It promotes individual self-respect. (2) It helps in realizing political independence and decolonization, and (3) Assists in creating a

new humanity. Violence promotes individual self-respect because it destroys myths, releases tension and aggression, and helps, the oppressed take charge of their own lives. Relating the theme of catharsis to the notion of self-respect, Fanon says: “At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect” (Fanon, 1963: 94).

Violence actualizes the realization of political independence and decolonization since it reveals the reality of capitalist/colonial violence, communicates effectively to the colonial oppressor, and clears the foundation oil which a new order may be built. Lastly, violence creates a new humanity through building a national identity, promotes national culture beyond what Fanon terms "the pitfalls of national consciousness," and allows for a process of perpetual renewal (Fanon, 1963). Let us now use the Arendt's Instrumental Conception of violence to examine the thoughts of Fanon. This will be the attention of the next unit.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

- 1 In which African country is Fanon most active (a) Libya (b) Algeria (c) Liberia (d) Tunisia
- 2 The approach undertaken by Fanon for the assessment of the mind of the African is (a) Psychology (b) Sociology (c) Psychoanalysis (d) Meta-analysis

## **1.4 Summary**

The present unit has considered the political theory of Fanon which is hinged on violence. The idea of violence, as Fanon shows is tied to the need for the African to purge the psychological forms of oppression impressed upon him by the Euro-American. Is violence reliable as a method for the disalienation of the African man? This will be the central focus of the next unit wherein the fundamental basis of Fanon’s political theory, which is built on psychoanalysis and violence will be closely and critically examined. Violence is central to the political postulation of Fanon. This is because of his understanding that the method through which the coloniser used for the establishment of her authority and alienating the African was via violence, it is therefore imperative for the African to extinguish the mental and psychological problems caused by this through violence as well. It is within this purview that his idea of alienation and disalienation becomes entrenched.

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## **1.6 Possible Answers to SAE**

1. (b); 2. (c)

## **Unit 2: Interrogating Fanon's Doctrine of Political Violence**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3.1 A Critique of Fanon's Methodology of Psychoanalysis
- 1.3.2 Assessing Fanon's Violence as a means for Overcoming Colonial Violence
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

### **1.1 Introduction**

This unit examines, the extent to which Fanon's theory of political violence, as advocated for, by Fanon can be said to be a viable platform for the disalienation of the African. His outlook that colonial violence has done some damages over the minds of the African is correct. However, his insistence that it is only through violence that this anomaly can be rectified demands closer examination. So, the first thing to consider is his methodology and then examines how Hannah Arendt views violence as a political theory in the work of Fanon.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

After an engagement with this unit, it is hoped that students will be able to:

- Recognise the context through which Fanon's doctrine of political violence is severely limited;
- Understand the main idea of psychoanalysis as well as how it functions in the theorisation of Fanon; and
- Possess a clear understanding of some aspects of Fanon's analysis of the mental and psychological conditions of the African mind.

### **1.3.1 A Critique of Fanon's Methodology of Psychoanalysis**

The method of Fanon is worthy of assessment. He borrowed the ideas of Sigmund Freud to corroborate his ideas that were employed in the mental problems faced by the natives. Firstly, it needs to be asked whether or not the approach employed by Frantz Fanon is not flawless. What is psychoanalysis? How adequate are the reports or findings given by Fanon (2008; 1963)? Could all these not be mere conjectures and liable to being refuted?

Perhaps the best way to go around this is to begin what psychoanalysis actually means or stands for. We should also inquire into the way Freud whom Fanon's took as premises is all about.

In his theory of Psychoanalysis, Freud sums up psychoanalytic theory in two fundamental premises: the first is that the greater part of our mental life, whether of feeling, thought or volition, is unconscious; the second is that sexual impulses,

broadly defined, are supremely important not only as potential causes of mental illness but as the motor of artistic and cultural creation. If the sexual element in the work of art and culture remains largely unconscious, this is because socialization demands the sacrifice of basic instincts, which become sublimated, that is to say, diverted from their original goals and channeled towards socially desirable activities. But sublimation is an unstable state, and untamed and unsatisfied sexual instincts may take their revenge through mental illness and disorder. The existence of the unconscious is revealed, Freud believes, in three ways: through everyday trivial mistakes, through reports of dreams, and through the symptoms of neurosis (Anthony, 2006: 344).

From the brief analysis given to the nature and scope of psychoanalysis as Freud saw and used it, we can already begin to see some problems looming. Psychoanalysis which Fanon took without critical investigation from Freud seems to know precisely how the mind works. It seems to examine and predict correctly what is the problem with the mind, why such is the particular problem before trying to establish probable solutions. If this theory is always true and correct, then we ought to have less mentally depressed persons in society. However, reality points otherwise.

This methodology that Fanon took and employs throughout his work and study of the relations between the native and settler is doomed to fail from the outset. Perhaps it would be better to begin with some ideas about whether or not the causal principle holds in this method.

Fanon (1963) inspires to think that in some of the mental problems that he was faced with, the real reason for their status is because of the brutal violence that they have experienced in the hands of their oppressors. In the opinion of this research, there cannot be any established causal link between the mental problems and the violence suffered by the natives. In other words, there is the problem of causality. Fanon (1963) cites instances of mental disabilities and delusion caused as a result of race and brutal treatment in the hands of the 'settler' by the 'native'. It would be noticed that in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon was particularly concerned with the instances of mental problems. Yet his analysis is lacking and therefore warrantable on the Plato of the causal connection, Hume (2007) would demand. As a result, it is necessary to take a gloss over the thoughts of Hume on causation before we return to Fanon.

David Hume will be hard to overlook when discussing skepticism in the modern period. Hume had been influenced by the empiricism of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke before him (Hospers;1999). Hume was however, displeased with the notion of causation and how humans are quick too often to infer that every event must have a cause.

From the above analysis of Hume on causation, we find that it is not correct for Fanon to lay the mental problems faced by natives singularly at the feet of colonization. This is because these natives leave lives that portray poverty and hardship before and even after the advent of colonial subjugation.

Secondly, with the development of genetic sciences, it is important to begin by informing that some cases of mental origin are actually passed from parents to offspring. To therefore maintain as Fanon (1963) would want us to is not totally correct.

None of the above comment is calculated to show that the thoughts of Fanon are incorrect. Or that not even one person may have become a victim of mental problems as a result of colonial violence. The point is that we should not reduce all the problems to this singular cause alone.

### **1.3.2 Assessing Fanon's Violence as a means for Overcoming Colonial Violence**

Fanon wants us to believe that it is only through violence that the native can overcome their status/state of mental impairment, perception of the world and in turn economic and political liberation.

It is worthy to laud the assessment of Fanon on the ground that some of the problems that he cites and talks about are actually the case but not all. However, his endorsement of violence, alongside Jean-Paul Sartre is worthy of serious contemplation. Before we show the problem with this outlook, it would be insightful to begin with the submission of Fanon on why he thinks violence can assist the struggle of the natives, the oppressed class. Fanon announces:

Will we recover? Yes. For violence, like Achilles' lance, can heal the wounds that it has inflicted. Today, we are bound hand and foot, humiliated and sick with fear; we cannot fall lower. Happily this is not yet enough for the colonialist aristocracy; it cannot complete its delaying mission in Algeria until it has first finished colonizing the French. Every day we retreat in front of the battle, but you may be sure that we will not avoid it; the killers need it; they'll go for us and hit out blindly to left and right. Thus the day of magicians and fetishes will end; you will have to fight, or rot in concentration camps. This is the end of the dialectic; you condemn this war but do not yet dare to declare yourselves to be on the side of the Algerian fighters; never fear you can count on the settlers and the hired soldiers; they'll make you take the plunge. Then, perhaps, when your back is to the wall, you will let loose at last that new violence which is raised up in you by old, oft-repeated crimes (Fanon, 1963: 30-31).

Violence is fundamentally an activity emerging from the category of agency. Agency here refers to one's ability to act. Beyond simple questions of acquiring control or potency, it involves a person's ability to make decisions. The capacity for agency, therefore, represents an important dimension of freedom and freedom's connection to anti-colonial violence. Those lacking subjectivity perform violence in order to gain agency. Regarding the normative assessment of violence, victimization occurs when linking violence with the innocent. Retribution occurs when linking violence with the guilty. Any attempt by the colonized to change the status quo of the colonizer hints at a form of future violence seeking retribution (Neil, 2004).

It is true that some aspects of violence are the reason behind some problems of mental nature experienced by the colonized, but shall we use evil for evil? Can violence assist in the mental and economic liberation of the natives from the settlers? We do not agree.

This is the case because violence leads to bloodshed. This work holds that although violence may not be totally taken off the table, it should not be the first solution. There is the need to begin with dialogue. Violence should be the last but not the first resort contrary to what Fanon would have us believe.

Fanon's elucidation of the metaphysical necessity of violence evokes passionate opposition. Unlike her implicit critique of Fanonian revolutionary theory in *On Revolution*, Hannah Arendt publicly voices opposition to Fanon in *On Violence* less than a decade after the publication of *The Wretched of the Earth* (Arendt, 1969). Arendt's *On Violence* rejects the use of violence as a solution to conflict. Arendt distinguishes between the concepts of power, strength, force, authority, and violence although she does not present a detailed normative definition of each (Arendt, 1969:43-46). Arendt positions power and violence as conceptual opposites, a move that Fanon does not make. Whereas power involves collective action, violence is the use of force and strength by an individual or group. Violence arises when power finds itself in jeopardy (Arendt, 1969: 56). Power does not require justification since it is inherent in the existence of political communities. Power does, though, need legitimacy. While the exercise of power has the potential for becoming legitimate, violence "can be justified, but it never will be legitimate" (Arendt, 1969: 52). Arendt makes another move that I argue Fanon does not do: Arendt conceives of violence instrumentally from a phenomenological point of view. She writes:

Violence, finally, as I have said, is distinguished by its instrumental character. Phenomenologically, it is close to strength, since the implements of violence, like all other tools, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength until, in the last stage of their development, they can substitute for it (Arendt, 1969:46).



Arendt conceives of violence as rational and instrumental. Violence relies on the instruments of destruction. Violence is rational in the degree to which it is planned, calculated, deliberate, and has a particular objective. Arendt rejects the idea of violence instituting a level of action. Power, not violence, has the ability to actualize activity and agency within the human condition. Arendt publicly speaks out against the Vietnam War. In addition, she speaks out against the student and Black Power movements of the 1960s in the United States, blaming theorists such as Fanon for providing misguided inspiration leading these movements to protest societal injustices. Arendt has a particular antipathy to the rise of Black Power and its purported perversion of the political realm with issues meant for what Arendt calls the social realm (Neil, 2004:7-9).

Fanon believes that many African states are lacking in national consciousness and this in essence is what makes progress and development far from being realizable. Nationalism, as Fanon argues in *The Wretched of the Earth*, often fails at achieving liberation across class boundaries because its aspirations are primarily those of the colonized bourgeoisie--a privileged middle class who perhaps seeks to defeat the prevailing colonial rule only to usurp its place of dominance and surveillance over the working-class "lumpenproletariat." As Fanon would suggest, colonialism may only be understood as a complicated network of complicities and internal power imbalances between factions within the broader categories of colonizer and colonized--not least, of course, the way in which nationalist leaders often replicate the systems of coercion and domination that shape colonial rule. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon blames the failings of nationalism on the "intellectual laziness of the middle class" (Fanon, 1963:149). The native bourgeoisie rises to power only insofar as it seeks to replicate the bourgeoisie of the "mother country" that sustains colonial rule. In the following passage, Fanon suggests that the opportunist native bourgeoisie mistakenly attempts to survey and control the colonized masses to the same extent as the colonial bourgeoisie it attempts to displace:

The national middle class which takes over power at the end of the colonial regime is an underdeveloped middle class. It has practically no economic power, and in any case it is in no way commensurate with the bourgeoisie of the mother country which it hopes to replace. In its narcissism, the national middle class is easily convinced that it can advantageously replace the middle class of the mother country. But that same independence which literally drives it into a corner will give rise within its ranks to catastrophic reactions, and will oblige it to send out frenzied appeals for help to the former mother country ( Fanon, 1963: 149)

One consequence of the native bourgeoisie's economic dependence upon the colonial bourgeoisie is the problem of representation--specifically the relationship between leader and led that so often serves ironically as a synecdoche for the relationship between colonizer and colonized. Fanon suggests in *The Wretched of the Earth* the ways in which intellectual leaders often betray the national working-class:

Before independence, the leader generally embodies the aspirations of the people for independence, political liberty, and national dignity. But as soon as independence is declared, far from embodying in concrete form the needs of the people in what touches bread, land, and the restoration of the country to the sacred hands of the people, the leader will reveal his inner purpose: to become the general president of that company of profiteers impatient for their returns which constitutes the national bourgeoisie. (Fanon, 1963:166)

Does this hold water? Is it the case that Fanon's thoughts on the pitfalls of National Consciousness still hold water? In "On National Culture," in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon foregrounds the following paradox: "national identity," while vital to the emergence of a Third World revolution, paradoxically limits such efforts at liberation because it re-inscribes an essentialist, totalizing, fetishized, often middle-class specific understanding of "nation" (Fanon, 1963:220). Fanon encourages a materialist conceptualization of the nation that is based not so much on collective cultural traditions or ancestor-worship as political agency and the collective attempt to dismantle the economic foundations of colonial rule. Colonialism, as Fanon argues, not only physically disarms the colonized subject but robs her of a "pre-colonial" cultural heritage. And yet, if colonialism in this sense galvanizes the native intellectual to "renew contact once more with the oldest and most pre-colonial spring of life of their people," Fanon is careful to point out that these attempts at recovering national continuity throughout history are often contrived and ultimately self-defeating. "I am ready to concede," he admits, "that on the plane of factual being the past existence of an Aztec civilization does not change anything very much in the diet of the Mexican peasant of today." In the passage below, Fanon explains that "national identity" only carries meaning insofar as it reflects the combined revolutionary efforts of an oppressed people aiming at collective liberation. Fanon highlights that:

A national culture is not a folklore, not an abstract populism that believes it can discover the people's true nature. It is not made up of the inert dregs of gratuitous actions, that is to say actions which are less and less attached to the ever-present reality of the people. A national

culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify, and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence (Fanon, 1963:233).

We must not forget the obvious that Fanon's ideas as briefly articulated holds a lot of promise for us in the contemporary society. However, this does not dismiss the problems that are present in Fanon's ideas, as this unit has disclosed.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1 The methodology of psychoanalysis which was adopted by Fanon was developed by (a) Sigmund Freud (b) Samuel Freud (c) Sigmund Fraud (d) Simon Fraud
  
- 2 One of the first persons to offer some problems against Fanon's theory of political violence is \_\_\_\_\_ (a) Martin Heidegger (b) Hannah Arendt (c) Anita Baker (d) Seko Toure

### 1.4 Summary

This unit has considered some of the fundamental flaws and challenges faced by Fanon's theory of political violence. It has shown that colonial violence cannot be purged by the visitation or via the use of violence on the colonisers by the colonised. This is following from the challenges related to the theoretical inconsistencies that this unit has raised concerning the political theory of Fanon. The idea of violence as a means to reversing the colonial violence that Africans are experiencing has been shown to be lacking certainty. This is the case, following the application of David Hume's discourse on causality for the mediation of the causal connection which Fanon draws between colonial violence and mental or psychiatric disorders. The perspective of Arendt has also served to show that too much emphasis on violence as a means for political and mental liberation does more harm than good.

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## 1.6 Possible Answers to SAE

1. (a); 2. (b)

### End of Module Exercises

- The title of the work wherein Fanon considers the mental and political situation of the African is \_\_\_\_\_
- Fanon, Malcolm X and Amílcar Cabral were all born in the year \_\_\_\_\_
- The phrase "The black man, wants to be white," was quoted by \_\_\_\_\_ in his book entitled: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ will be for those Whites and Blacks who have refused to let themselves be locked in the substantialized "tower of the past." (a) Alienation (b) Association (c) Disalienation (d) Immigration
- \_\_\_\_\_ as Fanon argues, not only physically disarms the colonized subject but robs her of a "pre-colonial" cultural heritage.

6. Fanon thinks that political leaders in Africa usually betray the working class (a) Not true (b) Partially true (c) Certainly (d) None of the above
7. The title of the work upon which Arendt's work on violence is built is entitled \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_ was used by this unit to show that there is no causal connection between colonial violence and mental disorder.