

## IS 'INDEPENDENCE' FOR AFRICA: A LEAP FROG MIRAGE?

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### ABSTRACT

The election of Nelson Mandela into political office in 1994, for many, signified the completion of the process of African liberation begun in the 1950s. The hope of African independence, for these people, was finally realized. At last Africans were accorded the opportunity to carve their destiny free from imperialism. At last they were poised to develop themselves and their progeny in directions they chose for themselves in a sustainable manner. Was this optimism justified? This paper seeks to critically interrogate the African Nationalist ideology, with view of establishing the extent to which it fostered the agenda of sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Emancipation, Ideology, '*Chimurenga* Monologue', Independence, Liberalism, Nativism, Sustainable Development

## INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to examine the prospects of Africa's development in light of the ideology pursued by the nationalist leaders. Admittedly, the struggles for emancipation were essential for any meaningful self determination to take root. Yet one wonders whether this drive for emancipation was illuminated by an authentically liberating ideology and whether in turn this envisioned sustainable development for the respective communities. The essay grapples with the following questions; what were the Africans trying to free themselves from when they waged the various wars of liberation? What were they trying to establish? How far have they gone in achieving these emancipation hopes? Can these by any means be qualified also as struggles for sustainable development? Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Joshua Nkomo and other nationalist leaders invested their energies and efforts to overthrow colonialist, neo-colonialist or settler regimes and make the 'means of producing wealth [be] owned by the masses' (Nkrumah, 1970). Unfortunately, most of these nationalist leaders unwittingly anchored their struggles for freedom on the Western ideological platforms (e.g. the Liberalism, Marxism, Socialism or Maoism), as if they were heirs to that platform (Serequeberhan, 1994). The result was an African liberation program without an authentic<sup>1</sup> liberating ideology and a clear and elaborate developmental thrust. Ultimately, this suggests that independence for Africa was a myth<sup>2</sup> or an illusion (Poe, 2012). The argument developed in this paper is that inasmuch as the African nationalist leaders had no clear ideology of their own, it was logically impossible for them to have a clear and unmediated vision of a free Africa they wanted to establish. The result was a warped conception of sustainable development either on capitalist or communist terms both of which were western paradigms! Secondly, for as long as African affairs were and still are dictated by external variables; such as the demands of the flow of international capital, there would be very little room for African leaders to explore genuine emancipation possibilities. Hence, it is feasible to suggest that the idea of "African freedom" remains a foggy frog-jumping mirage. Apparently, the nationalist ideology surreptitiously hopped between the African traditional ideology and the ideology of their Western benefactors (Heywood, 1998). The upshot of this predicament is the promotion of what Mahmood Mamdani would coin the "paralysis of perspective" (Mamdani, 1996) amongst African leaders in relation to the freedom and well-being of the continent. In Zimbabwe, for instance, prominent nationalist leaders initially adopted Marxism or Maoism. Currently, the ZANU PF led government has now adopted either a nativistic or an Afro-radical ideology, while the MDC formations appear to have embraced the Western style liberal ideology. The signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) between the feuding parties, led to the agreement, among other things of the need for "charting a new political direction for the country" (Tatira, 2011). Does this signal an ideological renaissance for Zimbabwe?

The paper is divided into 3 sections. The first, examines the nature, role and influence of ideology on society. The second focuses on the African nationalist ideology and how it envisioned the new life of prosperity after the demise of colonialism. The last is the conclusion of the paper and seeks to argue that based on the political ideology of the nationalist leaders,

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<sup>1</sup> The idea of authenticity is an intriguing one. However, I use it in the sense suggested by Sefa Dei, that of "pure and uncontaminated identity", in the article, "Reclaiming Our Africanness in the Diasporized Context: The Challenge of Asserting a Critical African Personality", *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol.4, no.10, January 2012, pp. 42-57

<sup>2</sup> The idea of the myth of independence is adopted from Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's analysis of the relations existing between Pakistan and the United States of America, suggesting that much as Parkistani wants to liberate herself from the grip of the other, she cannot. This may also imply a similarity that Africa may be in the same predicament in relation to former colonial masters.

contemporary Africa does not have a very clear and elaborate ideology on sustainable development. An improved quality of life after colonization is dependent on astute political leaders, who take it as their burden, the progress and well-being of the African people (Farah, 2011). One wonders also whether sustained progress can be possible if when the continent is riddled with political conflicts. Can there be a sustained economic growth based on foreign aid? (Ayodele, 2005). Is there hope for a better future for generations to come when there is corruption (Hobbs, 2005), diseases (Rweyemamu, 2006), poverty and malnutrition (Atinmo, 2009) and when the physical and social environments (Amechi, 2009) are neglected? This is highly unlikely that Africa never will emerge out of her sludge, unless she revamps her developmental ideology.

## **THE POWER OF IDEOLOGY**

Ideologies are aspects of any political culture (McCain, 1975). An Ideology is a set of closely related beliefs, or ideas, or even attitudes, characteristic of a group or community (Hallung, 1996). This view is propped by Emmanuel Ibuot, who connects ideology to a community's worldviews (Ibuot, 2011). As Ibuot puts it

“The worldview of a people is the matrix that shapes and determines the direction of the people; it is the system that reveals the movement of the people, whether positive or negative, progressive or not. Such a posture may otherwise be called the belief system or ideology of the people; it is an ideology since it is a worldview in action or practice” (Ibuot, 2011)

Racism, for instance, is an ideology of racial domination or exploitation which according to Julia Bristor et al, incorporates beliefs in a particular race's cultural and/or inherent biological inferiority, and uses such beliefs to justify and prescribe inferior or unequal treatment for that group (Bristor, 1995). Ideologies are a widely shared "system of beliefs that emanate from and promulgate" a certain picture of the world (Hirschman, quoted in Bristor 1995, 47). Ibuot reiterates this point:

“An ideology is, generally speaking, a set of beliefs held together as an explanation of the universe of a people and that serves as the source of meaning for the people. Thus, it is so woven that it contains the reasons for the existence of human beings, the reasons for the way the life of the people should be organized (community or society organization), and the reason to hope against the fear of total annihilation (at death)” (Bristor, 1995).

These ideas are then set into motion by the adherents and become social programs for action (Baradat, 1988). It is interesting to note also that ideologies are cognitive. In the words of van Dijk:

Although ideologies obviously are social and political, and related to groups and societal structures ...they also have a crucial cognitive dimension. In intuitive terms, they involve mental objects such as ideas, thought, beliefs, judgements and values. That is, one element of their definition implies that they are 'belief systems' (Van Dijk, 1995).

Ideologies share some general characteristics namely: (i) they seek to establish a picture of reality natural or social, (ii) they seek to prescribe how society ought to act and (iii) they constitute a form of identity for a given social group (Ibuot, 2011).

Consequently, any ideology “is a system that consists of a set of assumptions, and beliefs about existence and how man should execute his life within the purview of the beliefs” (Ibuot, 2011).

Due to the fact that people use them as programs for action such as spurring development, ideologies are usually subtle and difficult to understand (Jost, 2009). As Williamson puts it:

Ideology is always precisely that of which we are not aware. It is only ideology in as far as we do not perceive it as such. And how does it become invisible, what keeps it hidden from us? The fact that we are active in it, that we do not receive it from above: we constantly re-create it. It works through us, not at us. We are not deceived by someone else 'putting over' false ideas: ideology works far more subtly than that. It is based on false assumptions. We must never lose sight of the fact that we are dealing with ideas which became political movements and led people to political action. The efficacy of these ideas can be assessed in terms of the strength of the resultant movements and the parties through which ideas become readied and armed for a struggle for supremacy. Ideologies are not disembodied entities, they are not abstractions. They exist because men and women share them and adopt them as part of their own lives. Ideologies are weapons when men and women make them so, but they are also havens that produce companionships, cooperation and fulfillment (Halliung, 1996).

The concept of ideology dovetails very well with that of development in the sense that, if ideology simply means ideas by which we organize our social lives (Van Dijk, 1995), then we can have some thoughts about our progress or development in the different spheres such as: politics (Omotola, 2009), the environment (Heath, 2006), religion (Rizwan, 2011), the economy (Morishima, 2004), education (Kiraz, 2006), morality (Tagar, 2013) and so on. The link between ideology and sustainable development is thus apparent.

Sustainable development has been generally understood from its classic definition as; “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Drexhage, 2010). Significant other scholars consider social, environment and economic factors as key to sustainable development (Harris, 2003) .

The importance of ideology in political theory and in sustainable development cannot be overemphasized. Neo-Marxists now agree that a drastic revolutionary overhaul of the society, if there is one, must be above all a moral and intellectual revolution; a revolution in the ideology of society. It must create its own counter-consciousness, its own counterculture – a new set of beliefs and values and a new style of life that will eat, like a worm, into the core of prevailing liberal-capitalist orthodoxy (Halliung, 1996). The ideology of African nationalists during the war of liberation, particularly those from ZANU PF adopted the *Chimurenga* monologue as the nuclei around which to: wage the anti-colonial struggle, mold patriots, discover war veterans, isolate puppets, weed sellouts, label born-frees and so forth (Ndlovu G. S., 2011).

Since political ideology is a set of ideas and beliefs that people hold about their political regime and its institutions and about their own position and role in it. Political ideology accordingly appears synonymous with political culture or political

tradition (Halliung, 1996). There are general criteria for assessing ideologies – coherence, pervasiveness, extensiveness and intensiveness.

First, there is need to focus on coherence. Coherence according to Halliung, deals with the scope of an ideology, along with its internal logic and structure (Halliung, 1996). Does it spell out clearly a set of goals and the means to bring them about? Do its various propositions about social, economic and political life hang together? (Halliung, 1996). One wonders what could be said about the nationalist ideology at the dawn of independence. Did the nationalist have a clue as how the newly independent societies were to be steered to prosperity? It would appear that all efforts were channeled into two avenues – namely fighting colonial domination and politically uniting all Zimbabweans into one nation (Ndlovu G. S., 2011) . Very little, if any, was ever said about development and sustaining it for posterity.

The other thing to consider about ideologies is their pervasiveness. Ideologies are said to be pervasive in that they have a stranglehold on the people’s psyche so strong is the grip that it is impossible to wriggle free (Kvale, 1976). Ideologies have been strong in some of the following areas: the oppression of women (Minoletti, 2011), in the regulation and maintenance of power in society (Dijk), in promulgating racism (Bond, 2012) and so forth.

Ideologies are also reportedly extensive and intensive. They are extensive in so far as they cover broad spectrum (Guillaumin, 1995). They are intensive in so far as their degree of effect or appeal is very high (Guillaumin, 1995). Does it evoke the spirit of total loyalty and action? Ideas are like weapons that in the hands of a small minority may have a far greater impact on society than widely shared interest. Thus interest is sluggish, but ideas are not. Intensiveness implies emotional commitment, total loyalty and unequivocal determination to act even at the risk of one’s life (Halliung, 1996).

## **AFRICAN NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM**

It is a curious exercise to establish what ideology the nationalists embraced and which propelled them into independence. According to one school of thought, for as long as African nationalist thought was a response to colonial state nationalism, it has to be understood as peripheral (Jaffrelot, 2003). However, what needs to be established is the sense in which this supposedly new mode of thought supplanted colonial ideology. One needs to establish whether the ensuing ideology was viable and capable of ushering Africa into the promised future of sustainable development, well-being and prosperity. It is of profound interest to establish whether the African nationalists had a common ideological source – a common point of inspiration. According to Cecil Blacke, from the 1960s, beginning with Ghana, African states fought for and got their independence from the various European powers that had colonized them. Regrettably however, there was a conspicuous absence of African ideology rooted in the indigenous African traditions:

“A notable characteristic feature of all of the independent states was what one could characterize as the absence of a clear and discernible African ideology to serve as the basis for the development of the respective states” (Blacke, 2005).

In contrast to Blake, Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) makes a contention about African nationalists operated from a hodgepodge of ideologies:

African nationalists were a bizarre mixture of people of various ideological persuasions. They drew ideological resources from pre-colonial traditional claims and entitlements, as well as modern global and Diasporic resources. What brought about a semblance of ideological unity was a common conception of national liberation in terms of ending white colonial racial oppression; seizure of political power by the African elite; and nationalist re-imagination of nationhood (Ndlovu-Gatsheni S. J., 2009) .

African leaders including Kwame Nkrumah, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Nelson Mandela led various movements all involved in the struggle for independence. It is curious to establish their understanding of freedom and their vision of the promise of a post-colonial independent and developed Africa. Apparently, one can never completely understand the ideology of the nationalist leaders outside the specific historical situation which produced them – namely colonialism and the dehumanization of the African subjects. Inspired by Ghana’s independence in 1960, many African leaders gazed at Nkrumah for direction. A case in point was Sam Nujoma of Namibia who once said:

“Ghana’s fight for freedom inspired and influenced us all, and the greatest contribution to our political awareness at that time came from the achievements of Ghana after its independence. It was from Ghana that we got the idea that we must do more than just petition the UN to bring about our own independence” (Biney, 2008)

A similar view was echoed by Kenneth Kaunda, the first president of Zambia, who said: “Nkrumah inspired many people of Africa towards independence and was a great supporter of the liberation of southern Africa from apartheid and racism” (Biney, 2008)

Just how did Nkrumah formulate his ideology for independence? According to Tsenay Serequeberhan, Nkrumah took the problem of African emancipation as simply an economic question and he adopted scientific socialism as the solution to that problem (Serqueberhan, 1994) . In “*African socialism Revisited*” (1996), Kwame Nkrumah says:

Socialism is a complex of social purposes and the consequential social and economic policies, organizational patterns, state structure, and ideologies which can lead to the attainment of those purposes (Nkrumah, 1966).

Nkrumah crafted his ideology for liberation on the Marxian heritage of historical materialism. He contended that socialism has ‘abiding principles according to which the major means of production and distribution ought to be socialized if exploitation of the many by the few is to be prevented; if that is to say, egalitarianism in the economy is to be protected’ (Nkrumah, 1966). Accordingly, Nkrumah argued that, unless and until the ordinary Africans were given control over the means of production, there will never be freedom in Ghana and anywhere else in Africa for that matter (Serequeberhan, 1994).In his own words Nkrumah says:

There is only one way of achieving socialism: by the devising of policies aimed at the general socialist goals, each of which takes its particular form from the specific circumstances of a particular state at a definite historical period. Socialism depends on dialectical and historical materialism, upon the view that

there is only one nature subject in all its manifestations to natural laws and that human society is, in this sense, part of nature and subject to its own laws of development” (Nkrumah, 1966) .

Serequeberhan is very critical of Nkrumah’s approach to freedom since, it allegedly, “under-interprets the problematic of African freedom ...and banishes it to being nothing more than a European economic question in the tropics (Serequeberhan, 1994). Serequeberhan further argues that Nkrumah made European modernity the basic model for the development of all societies of the world. He did not question the efficacy of the model on non-European communities, but simply adopted it wholesale. In Serequeberhan’s words:

Nkrumah fails to ask what socialism or any other universal, neutral and culture – and value free conception of freedom conceived and constructed outside the concrete context of African historical existence could mean in and for the African situation (Serequeberhan, 1994) .

Thus in adopting scientific socialism, Nkrumah failed to realize that this ideology was grounded on the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment for Serequeberhan was the ground of European modernity on which the illuminating ideas such as freedom, equality and brotherhood all were anchored. Thus, scientific socialism, to use Serequeberhan’s words, “automatically and of necessity privileges its own originative historic ground as metaphysically paradigmatic for human existence in all its derivative applications...to talk of scientific socialism in a singular and undifferentiated way...is to superimpose European ideas and conceptions ... on the African situation (Serequeberhan, 1994).

As a matter of fact, the problem of emancipation for Africa was not supposed to begin in the same manner as did the revolutions in Europe, since the two are products of different historical processes – the one was a war against bourgeoisie domination; while the other was a war against colonial domination and dehumanization of the African people. Africa needed to transcend the European-dominated discourse on freedom in her quest for emancipation. Even Karl Marx whom Nkrumah emulated as the champion for proletariat emancipation maintained several unpalatable positions. In the first instance he believed in the hegemonic power of the West in cultural and economic terms and was therefore amenable to the eradication and displacement of non-Western traditional societies (Serequeberhan, 1994). The general point made here is that African nationalist leaders erred in transposing European ideals onto the African situation as this prevented Africans from actively working towards their emancipation and self-advancement. Serequeberhan contends further, that just like Nkrumah, the other nationalist leaders did not fare any better.

The *Africanite* or African socialism of Leopold Sedar Senghor got entrapped in the insipid efforts to characterize Africans as charting a unique course of history – a path remarkably different from that of the Europeans. Senghor preferred to present a systematic elaboration of African beliefs, based on a certain metaphysic of knowledge (Serequeberhan, 1994). Senghor celebrated the differences between Africans and Europeans as a way of self-assertion (Oguejiofor, 2009) .He believed strongly that the French policy of assimilation had been implemented wrongly, in that only the French cultural values were superimposed on Africans and no symbiosis was allowed to occur (Oguejiofor, 2009). The fact that the French completely ignored Africa’s cultural resources was scandalous to say the least. Hence, Senghor saw the need to glean for and present African thought patterns which, though pointing at differences between African and Western civilizations were highlighting

that there was something in Africa by way of intellectual resources which may go unnoticed. Thus for Senghor, if the French wanted the policy of assimilation to succeed, they were supposed to fuse French and African values (Oguejiofor, 2009).

Senghor's concept of negritude is centered on the misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the African and his heritage, a situation that has since imposed enormous burden on all aspects of his life. It is against this background that negritude becomes a philosophy with clear aims, in particular, the aims of furnishing a corrective measure and of contributing to the amelioration of a state of affairs that has obviously uncomfortable consequences. By this character, negritude aligns itself neatly with the rest of contemporary African philosophy, which seeks to use philosophical reflections as an avenue toward improving the lot of battered Africans (Oguejiofor, 2009) .

However in the process, Senghor's project backfired. Instead of serving to liberate the African, it ended up disparaging and denigrating him further (Kunnie, 2012). All this is a result of a certain collusion between Westerners sympathetic to the African cause for emancipations and the African nationalists (Hountondji, 2000). The same can also be said of other nationalist leaders who pursued African socialism such as Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia to mention just a handful. Julius Nyerere for instance reverted back to what he called the African traditional values such as freedom, equality and unity and their corollary such as cooperation, mutual respect and community of property (Ibhawoh B, 2003). However, Ibhawoh and Dibua's view is undercut by critics such as Charles Lane (1999) and Fredrick Cooper (1997) and Stoger-Eising (2000). Stoger-Eising for one, argues that the values which Nyerere expoused were not authentically African as there are parallels between them and those of Rousseau. Consequently, Stoger-Eising claims that Nyerere attempted to fuse European concepts derived from liberals such as Kant with those apparently emanating from traditional communitarian Africa (Stoger-Eising, 2000).

Cecil Blacke contends further that independence for most African states saw what one might term 'ideological conversion'. African leaders departed from the ideology initiated by Diasporic Africans and negotiated new bonds and allegiances. As Blacke puts it,

After decolonization, rather than adopting an African-centered ideology, all African states got involved as client states with ideological allegiances split between the dominant Western and eastern hemispheres, the former proselytizing a capitalist/democracy and the latter a socialist/communist ideology with Eurocentric visions and missions of development. Even with the emergence of the nonaligned movement led by Tito of Yugoslavia and Nehru of India, there was no distinct ideological marker that one could associate closely with the movement. Each nation in that movement maintained its client relationship with the leading actors in the two major blocks - the east and the west. As for Pan-Africanism, it increasingly became more of a cultural manifestation rather than an ideological blueprint for the continent (Blacke, 2005) .

If it be granted that African nationalist leaders plugged their ideologies for independence on existing European ideas which had given rise to earlier revolutions which were meant to emancipate Europeans during their own troubled times, then it may safely be inferred that this happened at the expense of indigenous ideologies, both continental and diasporic. This in turn

would give credence to Cecil Blacke's contention that African struggles for independence were crafted on foreign ideological platforms namely those from Europe and the United States of America. The resultant independent African states "broke up into two groups- the Casablanca and Monrovia groups-having client relationships with the communist/socialist bloc and the democratic/capitalist bloc, respectively" (Blacke, 2005) .

One wonders whether the flirtation with Western ideologies could have occurred at the complete exclusion of indigenous African ideas of self-determination, emancipation and human well-being. If Blacke and Serequeberhan are correct in their assessments, then African nationalists were characterized either by ideological bankruptcy, miscalculation or sheer delusion. Besides, their eyes were bending on political freedom as if it was the panacea to all problems including those of development. In addition, it would be proper to characterize African nationalists as ideologically bankrupt if they did not churn out own ideas for emancipation. They would have miscalculated if they believed that Euro-American ideals of freedom would naturally fit their situation and usher them in turn into the land of promise in which sustainable development will automatically take off. Delusion would have crept into them, if they took appearance for reality. The African historical situation was not a replica of what had happened in Europe and America, hence the Nationalists needed to work out solutions that were in tandem with their own historical situatedness. Adopting either Liberalism or Communism, would naturally have sustained the 'myth of the Negro's past'<sup>3</sup> in which the African is presented as mimicking the West in every way. However, the view that African nationalists are guilty of ideological mimicry is not fully subscribed to by some African or Africanist scholars. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) for instance postulates that African nationalist ideology was a concoction of ideas whose only point of convergence was the need to dismantle white minority rule.

Of note however, is the manner in which Blacke and Ndlovu-Gatsheni paint this ideological picture. Whereas Blacke asserts the absence of the African rootedness of nationalist ideology in the independence agenda, Ndlovu-Gatsheni makes the point that the nationalists' ideological situation was a blend of ubiquitously forged ideas as long as they sustained efforts against colonial rule (Ndlovu-Gatsheni S. J., 2009) . Blacke suggests that the liberations struggles in Africa were waged on a borrowed ideological platform, but Ndlovu –Gatsheni is open to the possibility of indigenous African ideas playing a part in the struggle for independence. Blacke also contends that, African nationalist leaders in the 20<sup>th</sup> century did not harness and perpetuate the emancipation agenda begun by their 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Diaspora counterparts:

During enslavement and after emancipation in the United States of America, leading African spokespeople agitated for emancipation and repatriation to their ancestral land. Their rhetorical stances and lines of argument crafted an ideology for African national development after their eventual repatriation. In fact, the arguments in support of their appeal to freed slaves in America to return to Africa were predicated on the prospects for self-rule, independence, and prosperity in West Africa, as well as access and control of the various natural and physical resources Africa possessed. Yet, the closest one could come to establishing any connection with Diaspora social thought was with a movement that started at the turn of the 20th century -

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<sup>3</sup> Melville J. Herskovits wrote a book in 1941 entitled, *The Myth of the Negro's Past*, New York: Harper & Brothers. He argued that it is a myth to suppose that the Negro in America, brought through slavery, has a solid past rooted in African traditions.

the Pan African movement - which focused primarily on decolonization and, for Garveyites, the consolidation of the race in Africa (Blacke, 2005).

Marcus Garvey for one is regarded as the founder of both Pan-Africanism and the 'back to Africa' movement. According to Dagnini (2008):

Pan-Africanism is a political doctrine, as well as a movement, with the aim of unifying and uplifting African nations and the African Diaspora as a universal African community. In that sense, Marcus Garvey, founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), founder of the Black Star Line and pioneer of the back-to-Africa movement can certainly be considered a Pan-Africanist (Dagnini, 2008).

Blacke contends further that African nationalist leaders did not uphold the pan-African liberation ideology began in the Diaspora of freeing Africans from slavery and establishing communities founded on self-rule, independence and prosperity - an ideology which was grounded squarely on African interests and promising to usher Africa into a haven of genuine emancipation and development. Instead, they concentrated on decolonization and the promise of political independence (Blacke, 2005).

As Blacke sees it, the Diaspora ideologues who were fighting for the emancipation and repatriation of slaves back to Africa had a certain vision and mission – one of establishing an African nationality with Africans in control of their resources and destiny. One of the pioneering architects of this thought was Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1916).

While some scholars converge in giving credence to the view that most African nationalist leaders thrived on borrowed ideologies, the issue runs deeper than it looks. On the one hand, there seems not to have been any vision beyond freedom, no model of sustainable development beyond the ideals of community, brotherhood and mutual cooperation (Cornelli, 2012). According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, underneath these Western ideologies lurked some form of inert nativism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni S. J., 2009). Nativism is generally construed as the ideology which holds that continents or even states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group. The ideology stretches to include control over social and economic life of the community in question. Whereas nativism has worked well in other parts of the world, has been severely curtailed in Africa where national boundaries had been made arbitrary by the processes of colonization (Jefrey, 1989) ; (Amandife, 1993). However, placing emphasis on ethnic or national consciousness has sometimes been perceived as potentially detrimental to nation-building (Kersting, 2009). In developing this ideology, labels such as "sons of soil" would be applied to those perceived as members (Walther, 2012); (Nmoma, 2008). Naturally, such kind of ideology would spell disaster to those considered as non-members, strangers or aliens or *vatorwa* (Chimuka, 2006). In its worst expression, nativism leads to xenophobia (Kersting, 2009) and racism (Galindo Rene, 2006)

Another off shoot of the nativist ideology, according to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, is the *Chimurenga* monologue, which basically was a set of ideas used to mobilize people for the war of liberation (Ndlovu G. S., 2011). The *Chimurenga* ideology according to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, was an admixture of persuasion and intimidation all neatly woven to make people united in waging the armed struggle against colonial rule (Ndlovu G. S., 2011). It adopted Marxist-Leninism and Maoism and

attempted to fuse this with the traditional ideology of nativism and communalism (Ndlovu G. S., 2011). Initially, the *Chimurenga* ideology was crafted to build African resistance, but was later broadened to include other things. Among them was the creation of ZANU PF as the only legitimate and stable party to usher the people into independence (Ndlovu G. S., 2011). The ideology was also churned to make the party play a Messianic role (Chitando, 2005). Ultimately, the *Chimurenga* ideology was used in a bid to create a one-party state (Ndlovu G. S., 2011). This helps explain why alternative ideologies from other parties were discredited and assaulted. As a result, when the MDC party emerged, it was labeled a “counter-revolutionary and neo-liberal force that threatens to reverse the gains of independence” (Mutisi, 2011). The new party was regarded as a “surrogate of the British and a puppet of the West, tasked with orchestrating the regime change agenda” (Mutisi, 2011).

“Zimbabwean nationalism was predicated on this assumption that diversity of ethnic and racial identities had to be homogenized into a singular national identity and that successful nation-building and state-making was to culminate in eradication of diverse identities and projection of the identity of the group that dominated state power. The ideology of *Chimurenga* became the nodal point around which imaginations of a monolithic nation-state had to crystallize” (Ndlovu G. S., 2011).

Thus, nativism was bound to lead to radicalism and racism, with no life beyond decolonization (Ndlovu-Gatsheni S. J., 2009). Even this ideology was not creative enough to push Zimbabwe to the promise of genuine independence as it led to crisis. Force was used against the citizens (Moyo, 2008) the economy failed to perform (Carmody Draig P, 2003), alternative political leadership (van Wyk, 2007) could not be discovered, hence a blockade.

## CONCLUSION

Most of Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular, went into independence without a sufficiently constructed for sustainable development – an ideology properly suited to deliver the promises of independence and usher the continent onto the path of sustained progress and prosperity for its people. We look around we see the continent infested with pestilences and poverty, countries are failing to preserve their physical environment with resources being depleted at an accelerated scale, population is growing beyond what neither the land nor resources are able to sustain, the economic performances of most countries in Africa are pathetic and political ideologies appear jumbled. These are tell-tales of a deep seated problem, whose magnitude is now frightening and its impact devastating, yet the continent is in limbo and carries out business as usual, seemingly unperturbed by the ensuring ecological disaster.

Focusing only at the environmental plane, if Africa continues to release raw materials to other economies without restraint, if her population continues to grow at a rate not matched either by her food production or economic performance and, if the policies of governments do not embrace sustainable development imperatives, then the future is bleak for generations to come.

We have seen how the nationalists fell for one Western political ideology or other. We have seen also how some liberation movements attempted to grope for nativistic ideologies of “son of the soil” (Hwami, 2012) or the

*Chimurenga* monologue in a bid to garner the support of the populace. However, no emphasis was placed on the issue of sustainable development, hence the looming crises.

Africa has in one way or other flirted with Western political ideologies to no credible end, forgetting that there is always the developmental side of things. If one examines liberalism, for instance, one would observe that there have always been two sides to this ideology – the political and the economic aspects. Liberal democracy is the political aspect, while economic liberalism, characterized by a free market system is the other (Leon, 2010). The nationalist flirted only with the political, leaving out the economic on which development efforts rest, hence the paralysis of perspectives that Mamdani (1997) has alluded to.

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