

A CRITIQUE OF KWAME NKRUMAH'S CONSCIENCISM

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Abstract

One of the effects of colonialism in Africa is the erosion of some of Africa's unique identities through acculturation. The problem has never been the issue of Africans' open-mindedness towards new and better ideas, but rather the inability of most Africans to truly and consciously pick up these new ideas for use without the brainwashing and forceful imposition of some of these ideas on Africans by the colonialists. Colonialism ended decades ago, but the confusion created by this conflicting way of life is what Africans have continued to grapple with. In the poem of Gabriel Okara, "Piano and Drum," one is made to see the average African man in the middle of two cultural systems. Needless to say, this has resulted in so many issues in Africa today, most notably mind colonialism and imperialism. In fact, Nkrumah alluded to the fact that Neocolonialism is the last stage of imperialism. In trying to address this issue, Nkrumah came up with a new ideology called Philosophical Consciencism. He believes that this ideology will help resolve the confusion of the average African man. However, this ideology did not really work in Africa due to some of its shortfalls. This paper attempts to look at the historical trajectory of Kwame Nkrumah as an African nationalist and the birth of Philosophical Consciencism. The paper examines some of the positive implications of philosophical consciousness if adopted in Africa. The paper concludes by carrying out an x-ray on why Nkrumah's philosophy failed in Ghana and why it could not be adopted by other African countries that were being colonized and equally facing similar challenges.

Keywords: Colonialism, Philosophical Consciousness, Culture, Religion

Introduction

It is common knowledge that most countries in Africa were at one time or the other under the control of foreign countries after the Berlin conference that partitioned the continent into various parts and acted as guides for the colonial masters. However, the true sons of the soil who happened to be nationalists like Kwame Nkrumah, Kenneth Kaunda and others fought bravely for the independence of these countries, and hence came self-governance. After the granting of independence and the leave of the colonial masters, these educated nationalists went ahead to forge for Africa an ideology that would carry them to the Promised Land. One of these ideologies is the "Consciencism" of Kwame Nkrumah, which is to pave the way for the economic and political emancipation of the African Continent.

Without a doubt, Kwame Nkrumah is one of Africa's most prominent nationalists who fought against white colonialist oppression of the black people. He was the leading figure who fought for the independence of the Gold Coast, now the Republic of Ghana. If there was one vision that Nkrumah held onto so much, it was the freedom of the African race from the white colonialists and the unity of the entire African continent. For Nkrumah, "the independence of our nation (Ghana) is meaningless unless it links up with the total liberation of the African continent¹." Nkrumah was an African nationalist as

well as a Ghanaian nationalist. He believes so much in socialism because of the radical influence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels on him. Nevertheless, his acceptance of cultural integration and finding a synergy with the indigenous African political ideology, which is communalistic in nature, forms the basis of Nkrumah's philosophy, called philosophical consciencism. Nkrumah's philosophy can be divided into three stages. The first stage is that he wanted to advance a socialist society in Africa. For him, he believes that socialism is not indigenous to African society, unlike the position of Nyerere in Tanzania; rather, he believes that Africans can adopt socialism as a way of combating the capitalist structure of western colonialism. One might want to think that perhaps the advancement of socialism as opposed to capitalism for Africa could be a way of breaking the structural hold of western dominance on Africa. Especially given the progress of the Soviet Union's socialist society at the time.

If socialism becomes possible in Ghana, then Nkrumah has an idea of extending the philosophy to other African countries. Hence, the second stage in his philosophy is the unity of African society. Nkrumah was very interested in the unity of the African countries. He believes a united Africa could birth a strong world force. But needless to say that Nkrumah's education and social realities at that time inspired the idea of the unity of African countries.

Uniting the African continent will then make the African continent a very strong force that can combat the influence and dominance of the western colonialists both ideologically and in terms of economic strength. This will be the birth of the fight against colonial dominance in Africa. This is the last stage of Nkrumah's philosophy called "neocolonialism". However, one important thing to note about the philosophy of Nkrumah's is that at the center of his philosophy is the decoloniality of the African continent. He was being honest that the effect of colonialism on the African continent could not be eradicated completely even at the point of decolonization, but then, he believed that there could be a synergy of all these ideologies. This is what he calls "consciencism." But how well these conflicting ideas can be reconciled to produce positive results has been and continues to be a source of contention. Nkrumah's philosophy met a stumbling block even in Ghana when he was deposed in a coup, but that does not negate the fact that there are many positive aspects to Nkrumah's philosophical ideas, nor does it mean that some of Nkrumah's ideologies cannot be implemented in Africa, which is why Nkrumah's philosophy could not thrive well in Ghana and even outside of Ghana.

Many scholars have brought out the good and the demerits of Nkrumah's philosophy. Both from the political to the social structure, as well as the metaphysical aspect that was neglected in his philosophy, But far from this is the very fact that Nkrumah and so many African scholars have advanced the fact that colonialism diluted the cultural and political life of the African people, but this research is set to affirm that what was diluted or eroded away by colonialism was the cultural identity of the African continent and the political structure of the African continent blended with what was introduced by the western colonialists. The western colonialists studied Africa's political settings and introduced a system that fit into the political structure of each region. a structure that is not too alien to them, but rather an advancement of their own system. This is the very reason why the system of colonialism varies from one African country to another. The fact that Africans lived in small clans and hoods does not imply socialism. The Yoruba people of Nigeria never practiced socialism. In fact, a thorough examination of some African societies would reveal elements of feudalism and totalitarianism, among other systems at various times. So Nkrumah, like a lot of African writers, has assumed that Africans are communalistic in nature. Hence, the decoloniality approach was to set Africans free from the captivity of capitalism. That was why most decoloniality attempts failed. But the truth is, if most African structures had built their decoloniality attempts around capitalism, there is every likelihood that most of them would have been successful. Capitalism is not synonymous with exploitation, but that was the perception of most African nationalists at that time. Today, most African countries are thriving on the bedrock of capitalism, and if there is ever to be any decolonial attempt in Africa, then it ought to be built around a capitalist structure. Nkrumah attempted to replace socialism with capitalism. Capitalism has been integral to most African societies even before the advent of the colonial masters, just that what they practiced was not perceived to be capitalism because of the close communal affinity. Nkrumah saw cultural identity erosion as political structure ambivalence.

As a result, this paper will attempt to provide Kwame Nkrumah's perspective on colonialism, what he considers to be philosophical consciousness, and a critique of his idea of colonialism.

A Brief History of Kwame Nkrumah

Kwame Nkrumah was one of the notable African Nationalists of the 20th century. He was born on the 21st of September, 1909 at Nkroful in Ghana. He was a trained teacher and taught in several schools in the Gold Coast. He had his post-secondary education in the United States of America and in Britain from 1935 to 1947. He enrolled at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, where he graduated in 1939 with a B.A and received a Bachelor of Sacred Theology in 1942. Nkrumah earned a Master of Science in education in 1942 from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Arts in philosophy in 1943. He taught political science at Lincoln and also preached at black Presbyterian churches in Philadelphia and New York City. He has a couple of achievements attached to his name. He helped organize the fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England. Then he founded the West African National Secretariat to work for the decolonization of Africa².

In early 1947, Nkrumah was invited to serve as the General Secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), which marked the beginning of his quest for Africa's liberation and unity. According to Ebenezer, he quickened the pace of liberation in Africa (and) inflamed revolution in many parts that had never known it³. Nwoko avers that he was the first African leader to attract international fame and represents for the black world a symbol of unity⁴. The Organisation of African Unity is his brainchild. On March 10th, 1952, Nkrumah was elected as the Prime Minister and on March 6th, 1960, he announced plans for a new constitution which would make Ghana a Republic. On April 19, 23, and 27, 1960, a presidential election plebiscite on the constitution was rectified. Nkrumah was elected president. He was overthrown by a section of the Ghana Army led by the late General Emmanuel Kotako and the late General Amansa Akwasi Afrika (then a Major) in a coup d'état. He died in exile on the 17th of April, 1972 in Bucharest, Romania, at the age of 63, six years after he was overthrown. He has the following works attributed to him: *Towards Colonial Freedom* (1962); *Africa Must Unite* (1963); *Consciencism* (1964); and *Autobiography* (1965).

According to Dr. Aggrey, Nkrumah appeared to have been greatly influenced by these two personalities. One of them was Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who edited the African Morning Post newspaper in Accra after returning from the United States in 1934. He was a harsh opponent of the Colonial Administration and used his editorial column to paint a picture of a new Africa led by progressive youth as opposed to the conservative chiefs who readily cooperated with the colonial authority⁵.

In the end, Nkrumah's resolute decision to study in America was caused by the combined influence of Aggrey and Azikiwe. Nkrumah read about the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in a London newspaper while en route to the US. He claimed that when his nationalism "surged to the fore," he was prepared to assist in the abolition of colonialism and was prepared to go through hell if necessary⁶. This clearly demonstrated that Nkrumah had already begun to feel nationalistic before beginning his studies in the United States, and that his time there was intended to strengthen his preparation for helping to end colonialism in Africa. Nkrumah focused on his studies during the first four years of his time in America, but after that, he started getting involved with a variety of political groups, including the Republicans, Democrats, Communists, and Trotskyites. His motivation for joining so many groups was to learn about organizational strategies so as to end the era of colonialism and imperialism in Africa. Through these connections, he was able to meet C.L.R. James and gain insight into the operations of an underground movement. Karl Marx and Nikolai Lenin were two figures Kwame Nkrumah studied, but Marcus Garvey also seems to have had an influence on him. For those who are worried about the emancipation of Africa, Marcus Garvey has a message.

He argued vehemently that blackness was never a sign of inferiority and that Africa had a rich history of accomplishments in which black people all around the world could take pride. He wanted "Africa for Africans." When Nkrumah became the president of Ghana, he dubbed the government shipping company the Black Star Line, the same name Garvey had given to his shipping line, demonstrating the

enormous impact Garvey had on Nkrumah. As the lode star of African unity, he gave the independence square the name “Black Star Square” and positioned the Black Star in the middle of the national flag⁷.

Colonialism and the Liberation of Africa

Nkrumah criticized the imperialists' government for their intention to perpetually dominate Africa, a domination that finds expression in the monopoly and control of capital by the imperialists against their dependent colonies, the financial enslavement of the world's majority, and the emergence of unequal development and struggles between the rich and poor countries; these struggles are usually resolved in war⁸. He thus looked forward to a time when the forces of European exploitation of Africa would destroy its own working principles. According to Nkrumah,

Its destruction of its own working principles will begin with the emergence of a colonial intelligentsia, the awakening of a national consciousness, the emergence of a working class movement, and the growth of a national liberation movement, which will tend towards the establishment of a free press to stir up political consciousness and educate the people on their rights and freedom; it must also have a good social, economic, and political plan⁹.

According to Nwoko, Nkrumah's liberation movement aims at three spheres: political freedom, in terms of independent government; democratic freedom, in terms of a democracy whose sovereignty is vested in the masses; and social reconstruction, which includes freedom from poverty and economic exploitation¹⁰. Closely related to imperialism is neo-colonialism. Nkrumah christened neo-colonialism as the highest stage of imperialism. He sees it as imperialism abandoning its old form of naked exploitation to enter the neo-colonial stage.

In the neocolonial state, the old exploitation continues, but this time the supervisors are the national bourgeoisies. Three methods of exploitation are noted. First, multinational corporations oversee one aspect of exploitation; second, Balkanization allows neocolonialism to continue; and, finally, those who provide aid to African countries ensure its continuation subtly. According to Afari-Gyan, the concept of neo-colonialism parallels that of socialism in importance in the thought of Nkrumah. He sees neo-colonialism as the number one enemy of Africa's development¹¹. Therefore, Asante avers that socialism is an antidote to neo-colonialism and anything that promotes the growth of socialism serves to frustrate neo-colonialism¹². However, one thing that needs to be interrogated is the fact that to what extent can one justify the fact that even socialism will not constitute imperialism or the fact that colonialism will not thrive in a socialist state? In fact, there could be a higher success rate of colonialism in a socialist state than in a capitalist state, because in a socialist state, the government controls the means of production of the entire nation. The colonialists could easily have infiltrated the government, and the entire society would have followed suit. One could justify this in the attempt to colonize Nigeria. The Yoruba and Hausa tribes were easily overpowered because they had a sort of central administrative system, but it was not that easy in the Igbo land because there was no sort of a unified central system. Each Igbo clan and village operated different administrative structures, although similar, but there were no super figure heads, as we have the Aalafin and Ooni in Yoruba and the Sultan of Sokoto and Kano in the Hausa land. Nkrumah's desire for socialism was based on Karl Marx's influence on him. But since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Socialism has never thrived successfully in any part of the world again. While capitalism has continued to breakthrough times and seasons, Nkrumah might have been successful if he had perhaps inculcated his decolonial agenda around a capitalist structure rather than having it hinged on socialism. It was like Nkrumah was set out to revolt against the people unconsciously, and that was the very reason he could not succeed in Ghana.

Consciencism

Nkrumah's search for the right formula for the decolonization of Africa reached its zenith with his development of the idea of consciousness. The need for philosophical consciousness is based on the irreversibility of the dynamic changes that have occurred in African society as a result of the influence of alien cultures, as well as the belief that for any institution or ideology to be effective, it must relate to the conditions of the people it seeks to serve. Through a process comparable to gestation or grafting,

philosophical consciencism would synthesize a harmonious whole out of the otherwise conflicting cultures in Africa. According to Nkrumah, African history has accumulated many muddled teachings and orientations from external influences such as colonial imperialists, Islamic and Euro-Christian elements, resulting in an equally muddled and conflicting vision¹³. The situation has been worsened by the deceptive presentation of African history as a story of Western adventure. A reforming, revolutionizing, and inspiring philosophical system is indispensable to fully undertake the venture of the unification and liberation of Africa. He calls this system "*Philosophical Consciencism*."

Philosophical consciencism would serve as a "body of connected thought which will determine the general nature of our action in unifying the society which we have inherited; this unification to take account, at all times, of the elevated ideals underlying traditional African society¹⁴. This would further equip the African with the ability to shift and blend appropriate values for the major elements of African history in order to form or fit the African personality. To help resolve the crisis of conscience already created by the contact between Africa and the West, Nkrumah (1964) further writes that our philosophy must find its weapons in the environment and living conditions of the African people. It is from those conditions that the intellectual content of our philosophy must be created. The emancipation of the African continent is the emancipation of man. This requires two aims: first, the restitution of the egalitarianism of human society; and second, the logistic mobilization of all our resources towards the attainment of that restitution¹⁵. He believes that this would help bring about the total liberation of the African people. However, one question needed to be asked is, is an egalitarian society possible? If Nkrumah set out to find a philosophy in the living conditions of the African people, then it means the promotion of his idea of an egalitarian society is, in fact, faulty from inception because egalitarian society was not even practiced in indigenous African societies. Most African societies' histories are not devoid of power, rank, and hierarchy; in fact, Nkrumah's and other African nationalists' education was never free. And it was never available to all. The history of class struggle as postulated by Marx is the historical trajectory of all societies in the world, including African society. Hence, what Nkrumah set out to do was to deconstruct the African man's thought process.

Nkrumah's Triple Heritage or Philosophical Consciencism

The Triple heritage thesis has been identified by Ali Mazrui. However, there is evidence that Mazrui himself derived the term from Nkrumah's doctrine of philosophical consciencism. According to Mazrui (1986), the Triple Heritage Thesis refers to the three main cultural influences on Africa: traditional African culture, Islamic culture, and Western culture. Nkrumah linked the Triple Heritage Thesis with his doctrine of philosophical consciencism. According to him, the main concern of philosophical consciousness was to develop a new kind of socialism that is in tune with the original humanist principles underlying African society. Thus, philosophical consciencism is the "map in intellectual terms of the disposition of forces which will enable African society to digest the Western, Islamic, and Euro-Christian elements in Africa and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality¹⁶." According to Nkrumah, the African personality is defined by the cluster of humanist principles that underlie traditional African society. Philosophical consciencism is that philosophical standpoint which, taking its start from the present content of African conscience, indicates the way in which progress is forged out of the conflict in that conscience. The above view brings about the dialectical nature of the doctrine of philosophical consciousness. As a matter of fact, Nkrumah believes that his doctrine has its basis in materialism, the view that asserts the absolute and independent existence of matter¹⁷.

The dialectical aspect of materialism is that matter is a plenum of forces that are in antithesis to one another. It does seem to follow that Nkrumah rejects any explanation of natural and social phenomena that is based on divine or mythical beings. The application of this dialectical materialist thesis is that matter is one, even when it manifests itself in different ways. By the same token, human beings are one even when they are manifested in different cultures and different historical situations. This is the egalitarian ingredient in philosophical consciousness. The identification of the unity of the human species with a non-spiritual element, thus by passing forms of relativism that can vitiate attempts at finding certain commonalities in human societies, has been noted by Wiredu. According to Wiredu,

even when human beings are cultural beings, there are certain biological things that human beings share in common. He identified one such commonality as human communication. According to him, communication is an existential necessity. Without communication, there can be no human community...¹⁸. In the total absence of communication, we cannot even speak of human beings.

The implication of this view for the triple heritage thesis is clear: it is that human beings, no matter our cultural orientations, are bound together by certain (physical and biological) elements that make us distinctively human. That some segments of the human population have denied this is an exemplification of disciplinary decadence, which has become a slogan in some philosophical circles. As a result, despite their differences, the traditional, modern, Christian, and Islamic cultures can coexist. The ethical arm of consciencism proclaims that ethical rules are not permanent but depend on the stage reached in the historical evolution of society.

However, Nkrumah observed that no matter the change experienced in the ethical rules of a society, the cardinal principles of egalitarianism are preserved. Following Kant, egalitarianism holds that people should be treated as ends in themselves and not merely as means¹⁹. The next question to be asked is how does this doctrine constitute an ideology for the development of the African continent? Given the fact that socialism was the favored ideology among the first generation of African leaders, of which Nkrumah was a frontrunner, what kind of African socialism was embraced by him? The response to these questions is that Nkrumah rejected what has been regarded as the romanticism of the African past. Rather, he believed that, given the current realities of the African continent, ideology for African development could only emerge from a synthesis of traditional African society's humanistic features combined with Christian and Islamic religious doctrines. If we are to follow Nkrumah's triple heritage thesis, then we can suggest that the egalitarian principle seems to be the connecting principle among three traditions²⁰. Thus, the egalitarian nature of African traditional society derived from equality among all the segments of the population. Christ the Christ preached that the rich should sell their belongings and give the proceeds to the poor (economic redistribution), and the Islamic religion believes in equality as depicted in the act of *sakar*, that the rich should help the needy around them. Egalitarianism, therefore, is a universal principle that defines a person as a person without recourse to age, status, race, or creed. There are certain conceptual and practical issues that could be raised in respect of Nkrumah's notion of egalitarianism as a cardinal principle of philosophical consciousness. One of the conceptual and practical issues relates to the attempt to derive an ethical principle from a materialist and scientific ontology. In other words, the perennial problem of the dichotomy between fact and value is once more rearing its ugly head. One possible response to this critique is that one does not expect an ideology to be free from certain philosophical infidelities; after all, ideology is supposed to motivate political action, and in doing this, certain philosophical ideals or standards may be violated. What is important for practitioners of politics, like Nkrumah, is to appreciate that they are not political theorists in the scientific understanding of the term; rather, they are praxian who have to use different genres in articulating their message. What is important for them is that their message gets across to their audience, whom they expect to act appropriately in relation to the purpose of the message.

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

According to Nkrumah, philosophical consciencism was a response to colonialism, imperialism, disunity, and lack of development. For Nkrumah, the first major task of the ideology was to liquidate colonialism in all its ramifications²¹. Such liquidation is premised upon political action. Political action, according to Nkrumah, "is the constant struggle for emancipation as an indispensable first step towards securing economic independence and integrity²²". It should be noted that Nkrumah vacillated on what

form this struggle would take. It, like Marx, could use either violent or nonviolent means, depending on the historical situation at the time.

An Appraisal of Nkrumah's Consciencism

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

One of the lessons that could be learnt from Nkrumah's triple thesis ideology relates to its dialectical nature. Here, one can use dialectics in such a way that it carries another meaning different from its materialistic interpretation. In this connection, dialectical might mean the synthesis of seemingly antithetical realities. Traditional African society is, in some ways, different from Christian culture, and Christian culture is, in some senses, different from Islamic culture, but given the unique realities of their being the product of both the traditional and the modern, there seems to be no other way than to accommodate the realities presented by these traditions. In other words, the African person cannot be identified with her historical past as depicted by traditional African realities because such historical realities cannot be reversed. A viable alternative to defining the African person is to see him or her as a product of the historical realities around him or her. Such realities suggest that she cannot dispense with the colonial history that brought in its wake the existing contact with Western and Arabic cultures. This stark reality is evidenced by Nkrumah's view that "the traditional, the Western, and Islamic coexist uneasily; the principles animating them are in conflict with one another²³." But in order to define the African personality, a product of these conflicting cultures, there is a need to discern the commonality among them. Such commonality, according to Nkrumah, is the cardinal principle of egalitarianism; the idea of treating people as ends and not as mere means.

Consequently, in order to have a meaningful development in African a society, there is the need to fashion out an ideology that can motivate the establishment of institutions which are the product of the fusion or synthesis of these three segments; or at least to see them as complimentary to each other. We suggest here that different institutions politics, economy, education, medicine, communication, agriculture, could be established along the line of development as dialectical transformation, in such a way that the policies emanating from these institutions are directed at furthering the worthwhile goals of African peoples.

Also, Nkrumah mooted the idea of an African economic and political union some 50 years ago. Since then, there have emerged similar economic power blocks worldwide, the most significant of which is the European common market and emerging political union. The very states that accused Nkrumah of suffering from the symptoms of megalomania, the ambition to become the president of the United States of Africa,

Furthermore, since the neo-colonialist economic system bequeathed to us by Britain, France, and other European states has not delivered on the material and social well-being of African people, African leaders should be urged to abandon this system and instead vigorously pursue the integration of African markets. There lies the salvation of the continent. However, in the light of these contributions of Nkrumah's philosophy to knowledge, one cannot shy away from the fact that this philosophy is not totally practicable, which also leads to why most of Nkrumah's projects were not successful.

A Critical Evaluation of Nkrumah's Consciencism

Raymond N. Osei²⁴ identifies some reasons why Nkrumah's socialist experiment in Ghana failed.

First, Ghana's market was too small to enable the government to generate the amount of capital required to finance a socialist program. Even though Nkrumah tried to implement a planned economy, the world economic system in which Ghana's economy was embedded put a significant constraint on his program.

Second, the imperialist state, if they wished, could manipulate the price of cocoa and gold (Ghana's main export products) in order to undermine the socialist experiment. It is believed that the UK and Americans did precisely that in order to prepare the ground for Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966.

Nkrumah's call for the economic and political integration of Africa fell on deaf ears. Many of the independent leaders were educated and steeped in the cultural values of the western capitalist culture. The socialist alternative Nkrumah was selling was unfamiliar territory to the African political elite, many of whom thought western neo-liberal political culture was the ideal for Africa.

Some independent leaders also feared that the continental union government that Nkrumah was canvassing would deprive them of the trappings of political power, including the material comforts that go with the office of the chief executive. However, some other criticisms that can be found in Nkrumah's philosophy are numerous.²⁵

Furthermore, Kwame Nkrumah's ideology, which he propounded for the development of Africa, is based on a foundation of materialism. The minimum assertion of materialism is the absolute and independent existence of matter. Looking at it from this angle, it is clear that philosophical consciousness, as Nkrumah calls it, cannot be reconciled with the religious realities of African society, as the roles of spirits and souls cannot be overstated in the African's mind.

However, looking at Nkrumah's philosophy, one can argue that the triple heritage thesis could be antithetical to African society. How can Africa merge conflicting cultures together when it is not a case that these cultures are acceptable by everyone? Will embracing of Christianity and Islam not undermine our own indigenous traditional religion? Will it not further lead to erosion of our golden heritage in trying to do this? This serves as a major criticism to consciencism. His philosophy was set out to find a synergy within a social conflicting situations already. Till date, Africans are yet to find the balance or synergy.

As pointed out by Paulin Houtondji²⁶, consciencism is wrong in treating any political system as interdependent with some specific metaphysical theory. For him, if political theories are to need justification, it must be political justification, which belongs to the same level of discourse. In other words, there is a problem with bringing metaphysics into the realm of political discourse.

Another problem is that of the realization of Nkrumah's ideology. "Colonialism and its attitudes are dying hard, like the attitudes of slavery, whose hangover still dominates behavior in certain parts of the western hemisphere." For the above reasons, the problem arises as to whether or not philosophical consciencism is not just merely a theoretical concept which will fail in practice. This can be likened to the failure of socialism in practice. Nkrumah fell for the same error that was evident in socialism. The fact that a theory is good on paper does not imply its practicability. Nkrumah took the mind to be the keys on the piano board. The keys on the piano board does not have the mind of its own, hence can't revolt against the pianist, but the human person is dynamic. Children revolt against their parent's ideology. The human person is complex that an individuals can even revolt against his own personal ideology by time.

However, looking at the nature of Nkrumah's consciencism, one cannot but concede the fact that such a philosophy will fail because, just like he explains societal change as a form of dialectics, indigenous

African societies are said to be socialistic in nature. Hence, the movement of African dialectics was not the same as the western society that moved from feudalism to capitalism. Africans moved from socialism to capitalism. Even though this cannot be absolutely true. African's trajectory did not begin with slavery. The colonialists came to enslave Africans. By implication, it becomes impossible to reverse the African historical trajectory.

Also, the African metaphysics, which Nkrumah fails to put into consideration in his philosophical consciousness, served as a major setback to Nkrumah's philosophy. The wide range of contrast between the two religions introduced and the African traditional religions will not create room for synergy as the acceptance of one religious value means the neglecting and relegation of another religious value. Aside from this fact, this religion has been considered a leading agent of colonialism, and if Nkrumah would want to follow Marxism to the letter, then the aspect of religious synergy should not appear in his philosophy. It suffices to say, how can we inculcate what Marx tagged a tool of oppression in the hands of the bourgeoisie with African socialism?

Why Nkrumah's philosophy will not work is because Nkrumah fails to put into consideration one of the many aspects of human nature, which is the very tendency to dominate and rule over fellow men. This is also what Marx failed to consider, which has relegated the Marxist classless society to being utopia. Hence, men have the tendency to always dominate one another, and it only depends on who moved first. Some argue that if Africans had responded to modernity and industrialization earlier, they would not have resisted the quest to colonize the west. Even Nkrumah was not left out of this as he served as president for years despite people's complaints, and if not for the coup intervention, he would have spent decades in power like most other African leaders. However, another issue with Nkrumah's philosophy is that African society does not have a unified social political structure. Therefore, it is going to be difficult for him to forge a philosophy that unites the African continent. Even western society adopted different methods to colonize the African continent. The indirect rule for some and the policy of assimilation for some so realities are different and so what works for society A might not work for society B, so the ideology of a united African society might not work. However, one could say that the establishment of the African Union and ECOWAS could be part of the plus of Nkrumah's ideology, but to make Africa have a unified economic force is still a utopia till date.

Conclusion

Nkrumah's philosophical consciencism can be regarded as a true path to African development when we consider the challenges and problems facing African society, but the major issue with Nkrumah's philosophy, as it has been discussed earlier, is that the philosophy does not take into consideration the metaphysical constituents of African society, the initial living conditions of the African people, or the historicity of the African people. In Africa, virtually everything is linked up or could be given a metaphysical undertone, including politics and governance. Hence, Nkrumah's philosophy prescribes a path that Africans were and are still alien to, because despite the civilization in Africa today, Africans still find a way of mingling their religion and metaphysical conviction with whatever they do. Apart from this, Nkrumah's philosophy looks like an attempt to impose a modality or system on the African people, rather than allowing the structure to come out of the living conditions of the people. His egalitarian society and socialism theory were already shaky foundations for his decoloniality philosophy. I conclude that decoloniality and consciencism would have been more successful under a capitalist state than a socialist structure.

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