KWAMEH NKRUMAH'S PHILOSOPHICAL CONSCIENCISM: REFLECTIONS ON NIGERIAN DEMOCRACY

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Abstract
Kwame Nkrumah's Philosophical Consciencism is a clarion call for African nations to unite so as to achieve sustainable development. It is also a call for Africans to be conscious of their peculiarities and so pull away from westernized model of governance. Nigeria as country has been moving back and forth in its practice of democracy since independence. This is as a result of plethora of issues that have posed as challenges. Some of such challenges include, cultural diversity, adoption of westernized democracy, and a whole lot of challenges due to colonial experience. This study adopts Nkrumah's Philosophical Consciencism and seeks to apply it to the practice of democracy in Nigeria. The study employs the method of analysis to dissect Nkrumah's Philosophical Consciencism and put it side by side with democratic governance in Nigeria. As it were, the study finds out that, given the cultural diversity in Nigeria, that taking cognizance of Nkrumah's Consciencism will be a panacea for Nigeria's developmental challenges. This is so because having in mind Nigeria's cultural diversity as a peculiarity and working towards sincere unification, will bring out the true meaning of democracy in Nigeria. The study concludes that when that is done, the practice of democracy in Nigeria will occasion sustainable development in Nigeria.
Keywords – Philosophical Consciencism, Nigerian Democracy

Introduction
Like Leopold Senghor, Julius Nyerere, Nnamdi Azikiwe and other nationalists/ideologists of his time and milieu in charge of constructing philosophical basis for the emancipation of Africa, Kwame Nkrumah as one of Africa's most renowned philosophers and political leaders, was not only at the centre of what he called "the African revolution," which he articulated in his philosophical ideologies by proposing "Consciencism", which he describes as the map in intellectual terms of the disposition of forces which will enable African society to digest the Western and the Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements in Africa, and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality. It is a "philosophical standpoint which, taking its start from the present content of the African conscience, indicates the way in which progress is forged out of the conflict in the conscience"[1]. In other words, Consciencism is briefly Nkrumah's political and philosophical treaties to provide a conceptual synthesis of the three cultural influences upon the African namely; Traditional, Islamic, and Euro-Christian, and to provide a methodology or solution to this triad influence upon the African in his or her path toward freedom and decolonization.

With Consciencism, constructs a dialectical materialism in line with the Marxist tradition (and the work of authors such as Friedrich Engels and Georgi Plekhanov). His idea, for which he coins the neologism "consciencism", however differs from the Marxist tradition in that he

claims his understanding of dialectical materialism to be in line with traditional or pre-colonial African (i.e. non-Western) metaphysics. He thus, squarely falls into the category of what Harding would call "African difference" thinkers. The term "consciencism", suggesting simultaneously "conscience", "consciousness" and "science", does not, however, derive its name from its alleged link with the pre-colonial past, but rather from a certain anticipated future. Nkrumah sees this ontology or description of reality as the necessary philosophical frame or "consciousness", the necessary contemporary "African conscience", or African worldview, to accompany the praxis of colonial liberation and of both material and symbolic decolonization. "Consciencism is his way of beginning to resolve what he sees as the crisis of African conscience of his time caused by colonization"[2].

His idea of Consciencism emphasized the freedom that Africans deserved in order to exercise independent thinking. Africa's tragic experience with colonial exploitation and oppression made the first generation of African leaders very skeptical of the Western model of development. In Nkrumah's view, independence referred to freedom from external interference, particularly the Western or Eurocentric narrative of the African person. Consciencism was therefore an epistemic project with a drive to dig out one's own identity, values and institutions within the original humanist principles underlying African society. But it does not end with a discovery of common cultural experiences and histories of African people. Rather "it sought to reconstruct this shared past and use it as building block for the present."[3] Nkrumah underscored the leading role of African intellectuals to undertake this project. He therefore implied that Consciencism was an elitist project which involved the masses. He once argued that any "social revolution must have standing firmly behind it, an intellectual revolution, a revolution in which our thinking and philosophy are directed towards the redemption of our society."[4] But once again, he understood political practice wedded to this intellectual experiment, very much in line with what he was doing. Here Nkrumah came close to the Marxist rendition that "philosophers have interpreted the world in many ways, the point however is to change it"[5]. Nkrumah argued that this intellectual revolution would feed political practice in the world. Hence, he considered the intellectual to be playing the role of a political actor too.

The challenge however was that the political ecosystem of the African countries was different from industrialized societies where class featured as the dominant form of cleavage. The shift to the neo-liberal model of democracy in Africa came about during the early 1990s when the continent was undergoing a number of transformations. The 1990s, in Africa, represented a new era of optimism and democracy just as the early 1960s did, when many of these countries gained their independence. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold war brought peace dividends in Africa where protracted civil wars (usually supported by either of the global superpowers) came to an end in Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and Liberia. Military dictatorships in countries like Ethiopia (1991), Nigeria (1993), Ghana (1992), and Uganda (1986) were replaced by civilian governments. And most importantly, the end of Apartheid in South Africa (1994) and its reputable success of democratization increased the hope that African countries would gradually, but surely, transition into democracies.

Though, after securing political freedom, transiting to democratic rule many African countries are still highly and severely undeveloped, faced with slow economic growth, adverse global terms of trade, the oil crisis, capital flight, extreme poverty, unfulfilled elementary needs, widespread hunger, a high rate of death, preventable diseases, illiteracy, lack of access to portable water, poor sanitation, violation of political freedom and basic liberties, bad governance, and various forms of violent conflicts in countries like the Democratic Republic

of Congo (DRC) and corrupt local elite in countries like Nigeria. Referring to the democracy of African giant and elite Nigeria, Ajayi and Ojo averred that "Democracy and Nigeria just like the rest of Africa are like Siamese twins; though conjoined, they are uncomfortable and under intense pressure that have resulted in all forms of hurt, even death. Nigeria, as far as the practice and delivery of dividends of liberal democracy is concerned, is yet a cripple that can barely stand let alone walk or run"[6] Nigerian democracy is a brand of democracy that spends so much to accomplish so little (where and when it achieves anything at all). It invests in the comfort of officials rather than in human and material resources. In fact, the welfare of the common man occupies the bottom rung on the ladder of the priorities of the anchors of Nigerian democracy. Plagued by hydra-headed and pathological corruption that ensures that the impact of any seeming good policy is either extremely negligible or almost exactly nil.

The discourse about Nigeria's democracy should appropriately start with colonialism. This is because there would have been no Nigeria as a state if colonialists had not merged together erstwhile independent communities and named it Nigeria. It is the colonialists that gave birth to Nigeria, formed its institutions, set its bureaucracies in place, decided the rules with which Nigeria is to be administered and determined the mode of governance with which the country is to be governed. Eventually, when the British granted Nigeria independence, Britain bequeathed to Nigeria, not just structures, but a mental orientation about the state. Ekeh puts it succinctly when he states that "it is to colonialism that we must look for any valid conceptualization of the unique nature of African politics"[7]. Osaghae reiterates this position when he stated that "the character and pathologies of contemporary African politics takes root from, and has been shaped by, colonialism"[8]. One major influence of colonialism is that the nature of the state introduced to Africa essentially differs from the type of state the West had. Although the state in Africa was patterned after that of the West in that they parade similar institutions or bureaucracies, yet, "many postcolonial African countries function quite differently from conventional understanding of what a formal Western state is and should do"[9]. The West got it wrong because the prime motive for the establishment of colonies was economic and in order to realize their economic goals, the colonialists employed means that are immoral in achieving the ends they sought. The consequence, in Nigeria's case is that the newly introduced colonial state had an overbearing control on not just the political realm, but also on the social, religious, and economic spheres. Hence, "whilst in the West, the realm of politics is relatively well-defined and self-contained, both concretely and analytically separate from those, for instance, of the economy or society, such is emphatically not the case in Africa"[10]. The kind of politics the colonialists introduced to Africa was quite different from the kind obtained in their home countries. Largely, the type of politics the colonialists practiced back home was responsive to the needs of their people and geared towards improving the lot of their citizens, while the type they introduced to Africa was exploitative and directed towards expropriating the human and natural wealth of the African continent. Politics in the colonial era was aimed, strictly, at the maximization of returns from the colonized states for the advantage of the colonizers.

The result of this kind of administrative policy in Nigeria, is that the state was not administered by those ruling with the view of benefiting the people being ruled. The people merely got the crumbs from the master's table. The institutions that were set up existed for the sole purpose of obtaining compliance from the people. The rulers were omnipotent, unquestionable beings, whose wills were laws. The people were not the nucleus from which power derived. They were mere objects over which power was lorded. Eventually, when the colonialists handed over the reins of governance to indigenous rulers, apart from the change of guards nothing fundamentally changed about the principles with which Nigeria was administered. The way the

colonialists administered Nigeria rubbed off on indigenous politicians. These politicians adopted the philosophy underpinning the ruthless style of administration of colonialists without questioning. As Ekeh puts it, this class accepted "the principles implicit in colonialism but it rejects the foreign personnel that ruled Africa."[11]

The politicians that took over the reins of governance in Nigeria were more concerned with being in charge of the state of affairs of the country. They gave little attention to evaluating the ideologies, policies, values and institutions with which Nigeria was hitherto governed in order to determine how adequate they are for postcolonial statehood. Business was carried on with the nature of the inherited colonial state without adequate thought about the consequences of the characteristics of the colonial state in a post-colonial era. This made the protégé of the colonialists, as noted by Chabal and Daloz, to resort to the political instrumentalization of disorder, that is, the process by which political actors in Africa seek to maximize their returns on the state of confusion, uncertainty, and sometimes even chaos, just as the colonialists did. Explaining how colonialism has shaped the crop of leaders Nigerians got after independence, Ibrahim argues that "the present Nigerian ruling class is the product of a sham transition from colonial rule to 'independence.'"[12]

Although, politics should be guided by ethical considerations and the application of set of appropriate rules, this was not the case in Nigeria. This essentially can be traced also to the pattern with which the colonialists, and the post-independence leaders of the Nigerian state, administered Nigeria, a pattern which was devoid of morality. In the end, Nigeria inherited a crisis- the separation of politics from morality. However, Appadorai has rightly underscored the importance of morality in politics, when he held that:

> …the question for politics is to discover not what government prescribes, but what they ought to prescribe, the connection between ethics and politics is clear, for on every political issue the question may be raised whether it is right or wrong…what is morally wrong can never be politically right. Politics is conditioned by ethics. The separation of morality from politics has taken its toll on democratic governance in Nigeria with flagrant disregard for the principles and values on which democracy is founded.[13]

This is what Nigeria has witnessed in its democracy; and the reason why democratic governance has been unable to bring about development in the country. Unah is right then, when he held that a wrong value system will result in a wrong pattern of behaviour. The adoption of a wrong pattern of behaviour by persons or groups will in turn result in the negative unfolding of events around them. In other words, the adoption of a wrong social conduct by persons and groups will result in negative development. Colonialism shaped Nigeria's political terrain in yet another way. Although, Nigerian politicians took over the reins of government at independence, the power to govern was never firmly in their hands.

Nkrumah's consciencism plays right into the dance of democracy in Nigeria and by extension Africa. Capturing the very essence of various present realities for African societies like Nigeria especially in terms of its political situation. Nkrumah's criticism of colonialism and its residual effects on the African society can be seen to take shape in democracy in the continent, which he noted by the criticism, that the introduction of democracy to the African society to which the politics and parliaments of the West are virtually impractical in Africa since "Democracy" is regarded as a system that protects capitalism. He further noted that the multi-party system which exists in Western countries now in the African societies promotes social cleavage, and

the kind of class system which is not supposed to exist in the African society, is a ruse for perpetuating, and covering up, the inherent struggle between the haves and the have-nots.

From this, one could argue that Nkrumah noted there was no way Africans could determine their right future when they saw it another man's eyes. Though, he did not advocate for an entire demolition of Western and Islamic intrusion into the African culture such as democracy from the west. He maintained through the strength of his philosophical ideology of consciencism and insistence that the African citizens must own their thinking as well as politics. It can again be argued that if Nkrumah's model had been followed through to the latter, it would have sought a connection with the egalitarian and humanist past of the people before their social evolution was ravaged by colonialism. Yet again, Consciencism predicates its beliefs on materialist basis and does not mystify socialism but gives it a practical basis for examining its social and political value. Nkrumah's consciencism therefore, was a philosophy of self-determination by Africans; it was a perspective with a premise that Africans take charge of their own destiny.

Hence, Nkrumah's ideas of Philosophical Consciencism offers us an indigenous platform for a revaluation of the Contemporary Nigerian democratic system. Hence, this study therefore investigates via appraisal of Nkrumah's idea of Philosophical Consciencism from a philosophical perspective and to find out its worth, value, essence and significance and also to establish its relevance in being applied to contemporary Nigerian democracy, a democracy that has left on its trail, regrets and sorrows among the country's citizens whose fortunes as citizens of Nigeria have not improved despite many years the country has practiced this acclaimed best form of government. Thus, a need to analytically analyze the debris of neocolonialism in contemporary Nigerian democracy with the core ideas of Nkrumah's Consciencism.

Exploring Kwame Nkrumah's Philosophical Consciencism
Kwarne Nkrumah's bold step to speak up against the unfriendly trends in Africa stemming from colonialism. The need to develop the true African spirit and give up Western influences. Emerged the ideology of consciencism. It is about the heritage of Africa and influences from abroad. While the colonial experience had succeeded in eroding African values, the central idea of Nkrumah was for Africa to learn from the pre-colonial African societies and not to sacrifice those values for materialism. Hence, Nkrumah's famous statement,

> With true independence regained, however, a new harmony needs to be forged, a harmony that will allow the combined presence of traditional Africa, Islamic Africa and Euro-Christian Africa, so that this presence is in tune with the original humanist principles underlying African society. Our society is not the old society, but a new society enlarged by Islamic and Euro-Christian influences. A new emergent ideology is therefore required, an ideology which can solidify in a philosophical statement, but at the same time an ideology which will not abandon the original humanist principles of Africa[14]

Alongside the above famous statement, Nkrumah also made another which also echoes the sentiments of his vision for the African continent. Nkrumah states:
> Self- government is not an end in itself We have to work hard to evolve new patterns, new social customs, new attitudes to life, so that while we seek the material, cultural, and economic advancement of our people, while we raise their standard of life, we shall not sacrifice their fundamental happiness.[15]

Nkrumah describes "consciencism", as "the map in intellectual terms of the disposition of forces which will enable African society to digest the Western and the Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements in Africa, and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality." It is a "philosophical standpoint which, taking its start from the present content of the African conscience, indicates the way in which progress is forged out of the conflict in the conscience"[16] The problem Nkrumah identified was that there was a lack of understanding in the sense that people failed to recognize the need for the three aspects; traditional Africa, Islamic Africa and Euro-Christian Africa to be in harmony and understood properly. Nkrumah states that "Our society is not the old society, but a new society enlarged by Islamic and Euro-Christian influences"[17]. A recognition of the need for a new ideology that will accommodate these extensions is what Kwame Nkrumah intends to proffer in his philosophical consciencism. Such a philosophical statement will be born out of the crisis of the African conscience confronted with the three strands of present African society.

Nkrumah insisted vehemently on the importance of ideologies and societies he gave attention to 'ideologies and societies' in the third chapter of his book "Consciencism: Ideology for Decolonialization". He supports the whole idea with a quotation from Mazzini: Every true revolution is a program; and derived from a new, general, positive and organic principle. The first thing necessary is to accept that principle. Its development must then be confined to men who are believers in it, and emancipated from every tie or connection with any principle of an opposite nature[18]

There is always an ideology behind every revolution which occurs and the revolution is only a consequence of the ideology. It appears Nkrumah wants to suggest that new ideologies always stem up to challenge old ones. This is the cause of revolutions in the world. As such, every revolution must begin primarily as an ideology before there is an actualization in the form of a revolution. However, Nkrumah states that "In societies where there are competing ideologies, it is still usual for one ideology to be dominant. This dominant ideology is that of the ruling group"[19] Although Nkrumah does not say why the ideology of the ruling group dominates, he points to the true work of the ideology which may be masked by other factors. He says that "… an ideology does not seek merely to unite a section of the people; it seeks to unite the whole of the society in which it finds itself"[20]. This means that the rulers must always have an upper hand in creating the dominant ideology because they are at the hem of affairs, putting rules and setting standards for the whole people to follow. There is also the possibility of influencing the whole community through a designated use of the authorities which are available to them.

Two aspects of ideological oppositions are discussed by Nkrumah. The first is when there is conflicting opposition within a society and the second is when there is conflicting opposition between two societies. There is such a thing as peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems; but as long as oppressive classes exist, there can be no such thing as peaceful coexistence between opposing ideologies. Therefore, ideologies can be seen as basic because it is the driving force in the society and peaceful coexistence and progress depend solely on that. The ideologies that are prevalent in a society make themselves known through three aspects of the society as suggested by Kwame Nkrumah. These three aspects are the political, social and moral aspects. These are instruments through which the ideology of a society displays itself. The ideology of a society is total. It embraces the whole life of a people, and manifests itself in their class-structure, history, literature, art, religion. Since every aspect of society contributes to the ideology of the society, paying attention to these aspects will help in shaping the ideology of the society. Changing the ideology of the society or setting an ideology for the society will be effective when attention is paid to the different aspects of the

society. Nkrumah's idea of a pre-colonial determinant of the African personality was in direct contrast to Senghor's Negritude theory which attributed the idea of matter and mind to the Negro African origin[21]. Senghor was emphasizing the use of positive European values to entirely transform and develop Africa. Senghor further called for the adoption of a more embracing approach to development rather than a radical opposition. This idea of Senghor falls into what is classified as "black psychology'.

Senghor and Nkrumah at this point appreciated how African societies had been influenced by Western culture. Both leaders seemed to share the same theme in terms of changes to the African reality. This was because, Nkrumah had an admiration for the Western model, but wanted it to be Africanized. Consciencism to Nkrumah became an antidote to the neglect of Africans in world history and a revolutionary challenge to White history similar to the writings of W.E.B. DuBois. DuBois was challenged to write the black history, claiming that blacks played an important role in the world and one could not write the history of the world without considering the contributions of Africans who occupy the center of the globe[22]

Each of these arguments was employed by Du Bois when explaining the predicament of African Americans in the United States. If colonial subjugation was the anathema in Nkrumah's analysis of colonial Africa, then slavery and racism were the fountain heads of black subjugation in Du Bois's analysis of racist America. While Nkrumah insisted upon the urgent and total emancipation of all Africans from colonialism, Du Bois advocated for the rapid advancement and political empowerment of blacks in America. Du Bois was a militant Democrat who wanted black people to become socially conscious of the racial injustices, inequality, and Jim Crow treatment they were subjected to. He agitated for Black people to rise up and fight for what was inherently theirs: civil rights and liberties, equality, and respect. Du Bois questioned what self-respecting man would live under the laws of inequality. Similar forces of inequality were enshrined in colonial Africa. Nkrumah, therefore, was clear-headed while stating that the independence of Ghana was meaningless without the total independence and unity of the African continent. He saw uniting forces and factors in the African struggle for independence and unity. He also understood the case for supporting the struggle against racism and segregation in America. Likewise, Du Bois argued that integrating the various components of African American Liberation and world peace, gender and later economic analyses were very indispensable[23]. The challenges of Black people, Du Bois maintained, transcended the "realm of race and racism" into "sexism, colonialism, capitalism, and American imperialism, which all remain on the radical political agenda"[24]

Even more, Du Bois's classic work entitled *The Soul of Black Folks* and his discussions of "double consciousness" seemed to dovetail with what Nkrumah called Black Consciencism. The return to the notion of conscience, in both works, was an attempt to look at the values, norms, sanctions, psychological and affective self-images of black people looking both at themselves and their oppressors. Both Du Bois and Nkrumah noted that the challenges of the African were not only economic resources and political subjugation, but also cultural autonomy and personal self-esteem as black people. Hence both underlined the need to advance the cultures, rituals and solidarity of black people both within the continent and across the Atlantic. All of these ideas and encounters became possible mainly because Nkrumah was the first and the only African president who lived in the United States, came back to claim Ghana's independence, and nurtured the connection between the black scholars of America and those of Africa. This put Ghana on the map as the center for Black and Pan-African scholarship.

Fundamentals of Consciencism

As stated by Obenga, Consciencism was highly rooted in Afrocentricity[25]. An idea that places African people as "subjects of historical and social experiences rather than objects in the margins of European experiences"[26] Nkrumah's Consciencism attacked the racist view that black people were inferior and emphasized the need to get rid of the colonial mentality that had engulfed the minds of Ghanaians even after independence[27]. By refuting that fiction through Consciencism, Nkrumah gave an alternative view to the self- determination of the African using the Afro- American struggle as a model. He exemplified this belief in his dress code as he occasionally dressed in rich kente cloth and sometimes batakari to signify not only the unity among the Ghanaian tribes but also to build "psychological associations" within the people who had begun to develop Western fantasies[28]. In a speech, he argued for the use of Western education to improve the lives of Africans in the African way in order to retain what he referred to as "the African genius." Nkrumah argued: "By the African genius, I mean something positive, our socialist conception of society, the efficiency, and validity of our traditional statecraft, our highly developed code of morals, our hospitality, and our purposeful energy"[29]. Before Karl Marx gave the scientific basis for socialism, it was what was called utopian socialism. Marx's dialectical materialism was what made the whole difference in grounding socialism to material realities. While Marx and Engel classified materialism as one reality, noted that the Cartesian duality which he referred to as "irreducibility" was the underpinning factor in African socialism.[30] This therefore made Nkrumah's call for a type of socialism tailored to reflect the African consciousness more opportune. He called this "Philosophical Consciencism." In this theory, contended that consciencism "enabled African societies to digest both the Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements in Africa, and develop them in such a way as to fit into the African personality"[31]. He maintained the scientific principles as discovered by Marx, but again took a deep look at the African conception of religion, of God, and Women. He found a direct expression in governance and in the nature of things to create a new harmony in the new Africa's "triple heritage"[32]

While explaining the motivation for his philosophical approach in dealing with the African challenges, Nkrumah stressed that,

> We know, of course, that the defeat of colonialism and even neo-colonialism will not result in the automatic disappearance of the imported patterns of thought and social organization. For those patterns have taken root, and are in varying degree sociological features of our contemporary society. Nor will a simple return to the communalistic society of ancient Africa offer a solution either. To advocate a return, as it were, to the rock from which we were hewn is a charming thought, but we are faced with contemporary problems, which have arisen from political subjugation, economic exploitation, educational and social backwardness, increases in population, familiarity with the methods, and products of industrialization, modern agricultural techniques[33]

Nkrumah like Frantz Fanon spoke very profoundly about the African personality, the hierarchy and the social order and urged Africans to fashion out their own unique style which deals with the African evolution. In this, Nkrumah divided the African society into three segments; the traditional, the Western, and the Islamic. He acknowledged that the principles animating these were often in conflict with one another and also in conflict with the socialist egalitarianism of the traditional African society. In prescribing what must be done to resolve this crisis, Nkrumah noted that the two other segments, in order to be seen, must be accommodated only as experiences of the traditional African society. Here, he insisted that the "social revolution should begin in Consciencism, that social revolution must have stood firmly behind it, an

intellectual revolution, a revolution in which our thinking and philosophy are directed towards the redemption of our society"[34] Thus, more than anything, Consciencism, was his proposed framework for Africa to discover its spirit and create the African identity. From this, one could argue that Nkrumah noted there was no way Africans could determine their right future when they saw it in another man's eyes. Thus, even as he did not advocate a demolition of Western and Islamic intrusion into the African culture, he maintained it would be seen only as a historical experience. The strength of this philosophy was based on Nkrumah's insistence that the citizenry must drive and own their thinking as well as politics. It can again be argued that if Nkrumah's model had been followed through to the latter, it would have sought a connection with the egalitarian and humanist past of the people before their social evolution was ravaged by colonialism. Yet again, Consciencism predicates its beliefs on materialist basis and does not mystify socialism but gives it a practical basis for examining its social and political value. Nkrumahism therefore, was a philosophy of self-determination by Africans; it was a perspective with a premise that Africans take charge of their own destiny.

Consciencism starts from having the freedom to exercise independent thinking devoid of external interference, particularly the Western or Eurocentric narrative of the African person. It is a project to figure out one's own identity, values and institutions from within, what is often referred to as a "return to things native"[35]. Secondly, Consciencism means a discovery of the common cultural experiences and histories of African people that they shared together. This project to reconstruct a shared past Nkrumah believed, was very important to building a united present. Thirdly, Consciencism is a project to be realized under the vanguard of the intellectual. Hence it is an elitist project which involves the masses. Last but not the least, Nkrumah viewed this intellectual project of Consciencism as something inseparable from the political leadership and political action. Intellectual revolution would feed political practice in the material world. Hence, he did not make a clean break intellectuals and political actors when he argued for the need to revive the past in the project of Consciencism.

The Pillars of Consciencism
The basic ideas of Nkrumah's consciencism are established on four co-related pillars of State Ownership of the Factors of Production, One Party Democracy, a Classless Economic System and Pan African Unity. The core idea behind these is the rejection of western capitalism and the influences of colonial liberal democracy. As such, the pillars are threshold for the attainment of Consensual Democracy (Socialism) and elimination of the distortive influences of neo-colonialism.

State Ownership of the Factors of Production
The crux of Nkrumah's consciencism is the call for and the institution of socialism in African societies. In his thoughts, socialism cannot exist both in colonial territory and/or in a liberal territory that is not united. National unity is the prerequisite for socialism. A socialist state is geared towards social equality and the overall development of the society. As such, socialism becomes a universal ideal for all societies to aspire.

In *Consciencism*, Nkrumah argues that the indigenous African society is anti-capitalist and egalitarian in nature. Offering socialism in his opinion, had a lot in common with traditional African communal past and hence socialism was a suitable ideology for the new African countries. In justifying his preference for socialism, he argues that such a theory is an advancement and refinement of communalism. Thus, humanism and egalitarianism are common features of socialism and communalism. Employing ethical analysis, especially the principle of utilitarianism, Kwame Nkrumah further argues that, "under socialism the study

and mastery of nature has a humanist impulse and is directed not towards a profiteering accomplishment, but the affording of ever-increasing satisfaction for the material and greatest needs of the greatest number."[36]

One Party Democracy

One of the major necessities of Consciencism reflects in its fight against the caprices and influences of colonial powers. Nkrumah affirms that even after the grant independence to African countries, colonial masters still found means to neutralize the same independence by "fomenting discontents and disunity". Nkrumah favors a one-party system as more able to express and satisfy the common aspirations of a nation as a whole, than a multiple-party parliamentary system which exists in Western countries, promoting social cleavage, and the kind of class system which is not supposed to exist in the African society which is a ruse for perpetuating and covering up the inherent struggle between the haves and have-nots. Nkrumah believes that a people's parliamentary democracy with one party system is "better able to express and satisfy the common aspiration of a nation as a whole, than a multi-party parliamentary system."[37] A one-party system is better suited for the fight against neo-colonialism than a multiparty system where as it often happens, the opposition party, under the influence of colonial powers, militate against the progress of the ruling party. The core idea of the formulation of one-party system is to ensure that neocolonialism is defeated in order for the nation to enjoy independence.

Pan-African Unity

With independence won and the dangers of neocolonialism averted, there is thus a need for a positive action with a new orientation away from the sheer destruction of colonialism and towards national reconstruction. The Pan-African vision of unity was supported by the Concept of African Personality and a non-racial African Identity. Africa was to learn from pre-colonial societies and not sacrifice those values for material progress. At the philosophical level, Nkrumah intimated that Africa was capable of evolving its own ideology and philosophy in order to solve the crisis that affected African conscience and which was affecting the society. Still in connection with philosophical Pan-Africanism, Nkrumah suggested that it was necessary for Africa to harmonize the three cultural currents that now existed within African societies namely: the traditional, Euro-Christian, and the Islamic strands. He believed that the cultural poles in Africa were capable of bringing about freedom among the people. Nkrumah did not mince words when he said more than fifty years ago that "If we do not formulate plans for unity and take active steps to form political union, we will soon be fighting and warring among ourselves with the imperialists and colonialists standing behind the screen and pulling vicious wires, to make us cut each other's throats for the sake of their diabolical purposes in Africa"[38]

From Nkrumah's excerpt, one is not left in doubt that he wanted the political union of Africa because of the diabolical actions of European countries in Africa. He was aware of the consequences that befell a divided nation. In another prophetic excerpt of his Pan-African vision Nkrumah opined that:

> We need the strength of our combined numbers and resources to protect ourselves from the very positive dangers of returning colonialism in disguised forms. We need it to combat the entrenched forces dividing our continent and still holding back millions of our brothers. We need it to secure total African liberation... At present most of the independent states are moving in directions which expose us to dangers of imperialism and neo-colonialism[39]

Kwame Nkrumah also argued in favor of an African Personality that should disentangle Africa from attachment to European and American cultural entanglements. He advocated pan-Africanism through an approach of governance based on the black world, that is, on the unity of all black people around the world. Through this, he advocated support for the war against racism and segregation like it is and is still obtained in the USA and other parts of the world. Nkrumah also emphasized the need for cultural autonomy and the personal self-esteem of black people wherever they found themselves.[40] He maintains that Pan-Africanism is anti-colonialism. It awakens this consciousness and helped the spread of African nationalism. The practical aspect of Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism is seen in the 'All African People's Conference', which metamorphosed into the 'African Union'

Philosophical Consciencism: Reflection on Nigerian Democracy
Kwame Nkrumah's manifesto for renaissance in Africa is fully developed and articulated in his work *Consciencism: A Philosophy and Ideology for De-Colonization*. Nkrumah's consciencism was born as a result of the search for an idea which will help harmonize the Islamic and Euro-Christian heritage with the traditional African society as part of African reconstruction and development after European colonialism. As Nkrumah expresses it:

> With true independence gained…a new harmony needs to be forged, a harmony that will allow the combined presence of traditional Africa, Islamic and Euro-Christian Africa, so that this presence is in tune with the original humanistic principles underlying African society…. Such a philosophical statement will be born out of the crisis of the African conscience confronted with the three strands of present African society. Such a philosophical statement I propose to name "philosophical consciencism"[41]

In another place, Nkrumah asserts: "consciencism is a map in intellectual terms of the disposition of forces which will enable African society to digest the western and the Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements in Africa and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality"[42]. Notably for Nkrumah, there are five fundamental problems plaguing the contemporary African Society. These problems are: the after effects of colonialism, imperialism, neocolonialism, paucity of unity and underdevelopment. There is therefore, a need to liberate the African society from all these ills. As a guide, Nkrumah believes that "the path to liberation must be guided by thought, for practice without thought is blind"[43]. Thus, there is a need for a novel way of thinking which will serve as an intellectual map for the emancipation and the transformation of the African Society. This is what he captured summarily in the philosophy of consciencism. The aims of Consciencism as elaborated by Kwesi are as follows:

> First, to chart a course of action to defeat colonialism and imperialism; second, to reveal the whims and caprices of neo-colonialism so that the defeat of colonialism does not become pointless; third, to marshal all the various forces and groups in a territory towards a national (or continental) unity; and finally, to articulate a philosophical ideology suitable for national reconstruction and development[44]

As a philosophical ideology, consciencism is not merely an antagonist opposition to other non-African ideologies; rather, it is an accommodation of all the opposing ideologies which surround the African society. Nkrumah holds that the African society has one segment which comprises our traditional way of life; it has a second segment which is filled by the presence of the Islamic tradition in Africa; it has a final segment which represents the infiltration of the Christian tradition and culture of Western Europe into Africa, using colonialism and

neocolonialism as its primary vehicles.[45] These different segments are animated by competing ideologies.

Consciencism also comprises a coherent philosophical system with metaphysical, ethical and socio-political theoretical components. It prescribes a certain range of human conduct, which is only acceptable to it. That even though the mode of social conduct as prescribed by consciencism is not static, the basic principles guiding it, is constant .[46] Therefore, in a traditional African society, consciencism would advocate for basic principles of egalitarianism. This is expressed in the humanistic and egalitarian orientations that saturate the African society of the pre-colonial era. The wholesome adoption of Western Liberal democracy has not served a good purpose within the Nigerian polity. A study of the Pre-colonial Nigerian Society, especially of the Igbos of Southeastern Nigeria, reveals that man was considered as a socio-cultural being that always share a relational affinity with other members of his community; Human beings and societies exist only in relation. The Igbo People of southern Nigeria exhibit their social characteristics in their interactions with their fellow human beings both within their ethnic nationality and outside of it. This Egalitarian way of life "is anchored on Igbo-African world-view which is characterized by a common origin, common worldview, common language, shared culture, shared race, color, habit, common historical experience and a common destiny"[47]. As such, the Nigerian political culture and atmosphere before colonialism celebrates in deep cultural and philosophical modality our common humanity, interconnectedness and our common responsibility towards ones another. This is in line with the famous proverbial assertion of Mbiti "I am because we are and since we are, therefore, I am"[48]

In the Igbo-African view, even till the present day, it is the community which defines the person as person. Individualism is an alien to Igbo experience of reality; hence, "Reality as a communal world takes precedence over the reality of individual life histories"[49] As a summary of this idea, Nwoko opines:

> An African Traditional Society is a society where the individual is always considered a free, integrated member of his community, a communion person. It is a society where individualism is considered a taboo, where each member takes the interest of the community as his own. His pride is community is power. The more united he is to the community, the more he sees the community as a mere extension of the family"[50].

The need to live together in community is seen as part of Igbo-African existential status. The individual has meaning only in the context of the community[51]. The Igbo-African society has been based on an extended family system, which in turn expanded to kinship groups which further extended to Clan system and this is the theoretical basis of African communalism.[52] Therefore, the Igbo community denotes first and foremost ontological quality of human relation. It is ontological in so far as all the members of the community are believed to descend from a common ancestor[53] It provides an ontological horizon that presents being as that which possess a rational character of mutual relation. To live outside the parameters of solidarity and complementarity is to suffer alienation. "To be" is "to be" with the other in a community of beings. This is also captured in the philosophical assertion of Iroegbu that "To be is to belong and to belong is to be."[54]

Nevertheless, this communitarian way of life was greatly distorted by the advent of colonial masters which brought about neo-colonialism. Nkrumah perceives Neocolonialism as "any oblique attempt of a foreign power to thwart, balk, corrupt or otherwise pervert the true

independence of a sovereign people."[55] The major interest of neocolonialists is the subjugation of the interest of the people to theirs despite the recognition of their sovereign powers. Neo-colonialism is a greater danger to independent countries than colonialism, while colonialism can be averted through a purposeful concert of national efforts i.e., neo-colonialism prompts some sort of division among the people especially their leaders.

A quick glance at democracy and neo-colonization gives the impression of chain reactions. The latter seems to be possible only through the presence of the former. Democracy in Nigeria has been distorted as there is so much confusion as to what exactly democracy is and what it should be. A democracy that has left millions of Nigerian citizens in a very poor and despicable state thus dashing their hopes of ever experiencing the good life which democracy through the medium and instrumentality of good governance is supposed to bring to them. Perhaps it is this good life which Aristotle talked about that the state is supposed to provide for the citizens that have been christened dividends of democracy by some Nigerian politicians. Munyarandzi and Tupuwa statement on democracy and human rights gives us a clearer understanding of democracy as a challenge for Africa:

> …. the fact that democracy and human rights are undoubtedly and undeniably Africa's two formidable challenges in the 21st century. This is mainly because most if not all the problems affecting Africa today can in one way or the other be traced back to these two Western derived ghosts haunting the African continent. A critical reflection of Africa's past and a purposeful self-examination of the current predicament of Africa will reveal that the discourse of democracy and human rights is empty rhetoric that is meant to destroy the African epistemological cosmos and render them identity less. Only when Africa is identity less, divided, confused and unfocused can the West willy-nilly manipulate Africa to dance to its own whims[56]

The above statement of Munyarandzi and Tupuwa boarders the rhetoric of Nkrumah consciencism. However, Kwame Nkrumah's philosophical ideology of consciencism does not support the western idea of democracy as it is seen as the avenue to which the African roots and heritage is lost. Also, the African unity dream of Nkrumah cannot be achieved. In his book, Nkrumah recognizes that "the traditional face of Africa includes an attitude towards man which can only be described in its social manifestation as being socialist. In Africa, man is (fundamentally) regarded as a spiritual being who is originally endowed with a certain inward dignity, integrity and value"[57] We can see that the idea of the original value of man imposes duties of a socialist kind upon Africans. Thus, this constitutes the theoretical basis of African communalism. His philosophical ideology of consciencism waters down and even remove the idea of strong men in any democratic system, employing the principles of liberty, equality and original of African thoughts as his strongest tools of engagement. His consciencism emphasizes the superiority of the basic structure of society over any individual. This majorly ensures the existence of strong major institutions in the state as opposed to the emergence of strong individuals as exemplified by political godfathers as seen in the Nigerian democratic polity. Nkrumah writes:

> The liberal democracy with its individualistic tendencies turned the contemporary Nigerian man into a wolf capable of devouring his fellow citizen. The societal link of consensual democracy was lost in imitation of foreign democratic inclinations. As such, the interest of particular group of individuals started to override the communal interest[58]

This was intelligently captured by Nkrumah. Nkrumah also, claims that in traditional African society, no interest of a particular section of society could override others; nor was there any

legislation or executive authority that aided the interests of any particular group at the expense of another. In fact, in Nkrumah's view, the welfare of the people was supreme. But he was quick to add that colonialism should take the blame for altering this traditional system. We can safely say that Nkrumah was actually appraising pre-colonial Africa which had been tremendously transformed by colonial contact. Nkrumah speaking to the idea of individualism see as western, an offshoot of the culture of democracy and which in every way contrast with the African egalitarian way of life that have existed pre-colonialization. Representing the core ideas of capitalism in which Nkrumah fought against through his philosophical ideology of consciencism. Smith in his Classical work, Theory of Moral Wealth and the Wealth of Nations, argues that human beings are naturally capitalist who consider self-interest before the interest of the society[54]. This represents a predominate Western culture. It is established on the idea of a struggle for limited resources whereby the winner takes the gain. As predicted by Fukuyama, capitalist society "uproots people from their culture and undermines local community power"[59] as such, it does not bring development to third or developing countries. From this, it is arguable that capitalism contributes to entrench underdevelopment in Africa, an instrument through which "the richer get richer and the poor get poorer." This is one of the ideologies which consciencism rejects. Evidently the Nigerian society via its democracy exhibits this.

Nkrumah considers the evil of capitalism as consisting in its alienation of the fruit of labor from those who work and sweat to produce this fruit. This aspect of capitalism in his view makes it irreconcilable with those basic principles which animate traditional African society. Thus, capitalism is not merely unjust and too complicated to be workable in the Africa which was regaining its independence, "it is also alien," he concludes. Nigeria through its democratic practice suffers this fate of Nkrumah's conclusion via his ideological philosophy of consciencism.[60] Nkrumah's concept of consciencism in offering other understanding ensures that citizens (Africans) as individuals in their larger society are symmetrically and strategically placed in the society in such a systematic way that prevents the involuntary or voluntary emergence of lords and peasants or the haves and have-nots. This will help to reduce to the barest minimum the continuous emergence and sustenance of the very rich and very poor in the society. A situation whereby we have very few affluent members of the society cornering the wealth of the nation while millions of citizens go to bed on empty stomach as a result of debilitating poverty as we have it today in Nigeria can be very disturbing as it could lead to social uprising with far reaching unpleasant consequences for the society and the nation at large. However, this is the reality which plagues Nigeria via its democracy.

Nkrumah's consciencism would promote the principles of justice as fairness if some of its ideologies can be properly harnessed to fit democracy. It can be used to effectively monitor the major societal institutions through which the ideals and fundamental principles of democracy and their basic applications are channeled towards the full realization of the benefits or dividends of democracy as it is commonly called in Nigeria. For sure, certain benefits or advantages accrue from the basic practice of democracy in the state but if the basic structure of the society does not have a firm foundation on the basic democratic principles, the benefits of democracy will hardly get to the grassroots and the masses will hardly have a positive feel of democracy and its acclaimed dividends. This sadly is the exact situation with today's democracy in Nigeria where democracy is actually in place but its positive effects in terms of individual and societal developments are yet to be fully felt.

Nkrumah's consciencism emphasizes the primacy and undiluted importance of the concept of societal cohesion, human development and African original heritage of unity and Pan-Africanism. All this has been neglected over the years in Nigerian democracy. It appears more

often than not that Nigerian politicians do not understand the far-reaching importance and implications of African original thoughts and heritage, social cohesion and development. As a result of this anomaly, previous and even present government have failed albeit, woefully in delivering social cohesion, development and a conscious state as Africans, and as Nigerians, which is a common good to Nigerian citizens. The commonwealth of the nation is distributed more often than not to the utter disadvantage of the masses. This is exemplified in the unfortunate scenario that play out in the Nigerian state whereby citizens become governments to themselves by providing basic amenities for themselves either as individuals, communities and other organized groups and yet they still pay taxes to the government which is highly ironical but real.

The heterogeneous and pluralistic nature of the Nigerian state with its diversities and complexities which have enthroned all manner of negative ethos in the state makes Kwame Nkrumah's Consciencism and its applicability highly relevant in the Nigerian state aimed at fashioning a new mode of operation in the nation's democracy. This will obviously bring about good governance in the Nigerian state since it will help to mitigate the negative effects of such drawbacks in the nation's democracy as neo-colonialism, imperialism, godfatherism, ethnicism, election rigging, voter inducement as well as political corruption thus paving the way for development in the Nigerian state and by extension to the larger African community as Nigeria represents an elite among nations and territories of the continent.

Challenges of Nigerian Democracy
Nigeria's democracy has been beclouded by various challenges since her independence till now. Sadly, some of these challenges are highly avoidable. Adekola captures this fact succinctly:

> Nigeria has not been so lucky with it. She has had a long-tortured history of dancing around democracy but has never gotten it right. This is largely due to some challenges amongst which are: lack of large scale free, and credible elections, lack of freedom of speech and publication, refusal to accept defeat in elections by political gladiators, godfatherism, non-observance of rule of law, corruption and attitude of political office holders to corner the wealth of the nation[61]

Since the attainment of political independence in 1960 up till the present moment, democracy in Nigeria has been laden with many challenges which have made it extremely difficult to entrench an enduring democratic culture in the Nigerian state. All efforts aimed at full democratization have yielded little or no better results till now hence the country seem to be in a vicious circle. A lot of scholars both in the country and outside have written so much about the main issues confronting democracy in the country. Indeed, literatures about the challenges of democracy in the Nigerian state are not in short supply at all. They are indeed unlimited. Many factors are responsible for the very unprogressive nature of the country's democracy. The very first problem is the structural nature of the country. To be very fair to Nigerians, this problem was not created by Nigerians but by our British colonial masters who were not actually interested in formulating a workable nation for the Nigerian state but were merely interested in aggregating ethnic nationalities together purely for selfish economic interests.

The amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates by Lord Lugard in 1914 was never done with the actual consent of the people that made up the two protectorates. Though the history of the famed amalgamation is sketchy, we have never been told that there was a consent that was willingly given by the regions that were forcefully amalgamated. The regions

that were forcefully joined together were regions that had different language, religious, educational and cultural backgrounds. The obvious result is the confused entity we have today as a country. Nearly 60 years after the country's independence, we are still searching for direction and nation building seem to have become a huge and near unrealizable dream. There is indeed a deep uncertainty surrounding the future of the Nigerian state.

The structural imbalance seems to be at the very center of the nation's democratic challenges. Okechukwu and Odinchezo Ikejiani eloquently argued that the entity which is known as Nigeria today came about by accident. They opined that fundamentally, the country is an arbitrary and artificial creation comprising people of diverse cultures, languages and historical experiences. By implication, this shows that since independence, the country has remained simply an alliance of culture. These cultures have never been a unifying factor in the country. Ofiaja share this view albeit strongly. According to his own view, "Nigeria is not a nation and that the word Nigeria is only a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within Nigeria from those who do not and that Nigeria constitutes separate political units which correspond to major regional groups"[62]. The structural imbalance foisted on the nation by her colonial masters unconsciously divided the country along ethnic lines making Nigerians to owe more allegiance to their ethnic nationalities rather than the country itself and this hugely accounts for the apathy and lack of patriotism in the country as many Nigerians will first of all identify themselves with their ethnic nationality before identifying themselves as Nigerians which is a far cry from what is obtainable in other climes.

The problem of ethnicity is a national one and has to be resolved if the nation is to make any headway in its efforts towards genuine democratization. Perhaps ethnicism and its negative role in the country's democracy is amply demonstrated during national elections where people from all the ethnic groups vote for candidates from their own ethnic nationality during Presidential election irrespective of whether the candidate from their area is qualified and suitable or not. This has led us to have mediocre presidents in the past. Again, when it comes to the issue of appointments to national positions, ethnicism assumes a cult status. The nation has never had it so bad than in the present government of the All-Progressives Congress headed by Muhammadu Buhari. Buhari's government has thrown federal character, modesty and merit to the wind by giving every major political appointment to the northerners thus negating greatly the huge aspiration for national unity. The fear is that this negative trend may outlive this present administration and endanger the clamor for oneness and peaceful coexistence in the country. It is indeed a very unfortunate development.

Another major problem of democracy in Nigeria is that of poverty on the part of the citizenry especially those of voting age. This has resulted in politicians bribing voters during elections with all manner of gifts including rice, salt, clothes and even cash. In most cases in the country, elections are won and lost not based on political manifestos of the parties involved in election contestation or the suitability of their candidates but rather on who offered the highest inducements to the electorate. It is perhaps as a result of the biting poverty in the country that so many people now jump into politics seeking to make ends meet erroneously believing that politics is all about sharing the commonwealth of the country. Many uninformed Nigerians now see politics as a sure means of making quick and cheap money and this has given vent to the politics of materialism otherwise called bread and butter politics now popularly referred to in Nigerian political circle as politics of stomach infrastructure.

Political parties are the driving force of any country's democracy. Such parties are easily identified by their ideologies and the masses identify with them through their ideologies. The

ideologies of parties are made manifest through their manifestos. However, political parties in Nigeria are easily known by a lack of clear-cut political ideologies among the various political parties in the country. This scenario clearly plays out during electioneering campaigns when these parties recycle campaign speeches that have no bearing with contemporary existential reality. It is the lack of clear-cut ideological orientation among the political parties that has even led to the incessant and unbridled carpet crossing among politicians in the country. A politician in Nigeria can join three different political parties in less than one week all in the name of seeking political relevance and favor. For such politicians, politics is business and a lucrative one for that matter.

Election rigging is another major obstacle confronting democracy in Nigeria. Nwabueze stated clearly

> the effect of this malaise on the nation's democracy. According to him: Among the greatest challenges of democracy in Africa and some other developing counties of the world today is a whole-sale electoral malpractice, in particular; rigging by which government in these countries keep themselves in power against the wishes of a majority of the people as expressed in their votes. The challenge is indeed a grave one because of the forms electoral malpractices take their extent and ever recurrent incidence of blatant manifestation[63]

Kurfi, equates election rigging with unfree and unfair elections. He further identifies three ways or methods of making elections unfair namely: bribery, corruption and illegal practices, intimidation or fraud.[64] Election rigging in Nigeria is as old as the country itself. However, it must be acknowledged that some of the elections conducted in recent years in the country have gotten some level of credibility when compared with past electoral experiences.

Another major challenge of democracy in Nigeria is that of godfatherism. A godfather in Nigerian political parlance is a wealthy and well-connected person who sponsors candidates for elections under specified and agreed conditions. More often than not, these godfathers indirectly dictate the pace of governance in places where their candidates hold positions of power. They dictate how funds are to be shared and appropriated, who and who should be appointed into various political offices as well as those to be awarded contracts and so on. Political godfatherism seriously impedes the nation's democracy. Initially, the country had ideological godfathers who were not interested in interfering in the day-to-day activities of government at all levels. They were contented with offering leadership ideas and expertise which they shared with their political sons and daughters who were at the helm of affairs. Their vision was narrow and was strictly based on enthroning and enforcing a philosophy of governance geared towards critical development. The present godfathers in our political clime are politically clueless and have sheer greed as their major driving force.

Another major challenge of Nigeria's democracy is the problem of corruption. As a result of corruption that has surrounded democracy in the country especially since the return of democracy in 1999; Nigeria's democracy has in most cases been described as "cash and carry" democracy. Our democracy is really infested with monumental corruption. Right from the activities of the political parties, corruption is actively at work. Candidates seeking nomination from the parties to vie for elective positions are made to part with large sums of money which are given to party officials to grease their palms and get their support. Even government houses both at the states and federal levels are more or less scam houses where corruption related actions like contract inflation and racketeering and other related corruption issues thrive. The resultant effect of these political corruption issues is that the citizens of the country are wholly

shortchanged as few politicians corner the nation's wealth to themselves feeding themselves fat on the wealth of the nation and leaving the majority of the citizenry pauperized and hopelessly impoverished. Corruption in the polity has indeed done a colossal damage to the country's economy as well as the image of the country abroad especially in the international community.

Another major challenge of Nigeria's democracy is poor leadership. The leadership challenge in the Nigerian polity is a major contributory factor to the nation's underdevelopment. Achebe had argued many years ago that leadership is Nigeria's major political challenge. One of the major problems of Nigeria's democracy is the lack of focus of the political gladiators in the Nigerian state. Most politicians in the country whether they belong to the ruling party or the opposition are majorly concerned with their narrow and selfish interests. The average Nigerian politician sees politics as an avenue for personal enrichment and he is less concerned with what constitutes the interest of the state or the interest of the masses otherwise called the common good. When he gets power, he uses it as a medium to feather his own nest. Political leadership in the country is self-serving, manifestly corrupt, greedy and evil minded. They are obviously accountable to no one and earn so much while the public workers earn mere peanuts despite the quantum of work they do.

Evaluation and Conclusion

Before the advent of colonialism, Nigeria as a territory was egalitarian and communal because there was no recognized government or official demarcation that determined nations. The condition was same with what was obtainable in the early socialist African society. In this condition, the people were operating with the core African spirit and saw one another as equals. The issue of global identity and interconnectedness were properly recognized because each had concern for the other and the community at large.

Growth in the Nigerian community during this period was collective because each person contributed to society. Despite the presence of tribes and traditional rulers, there were no official leaders who imposed laws on the people. The laws in operation at that time were for the protection of each person in the community. Although it was not all advantage filled, the advantages seemed to outweigh the disadvantages. The idea of slave trade only came in after the infiltration of colonial ideologies. All the facts point toward a peaceful and workable Nigeria before colonialism. It is observed that despite the purported advancements brought by the colonial masters, there was a destruction of fundamental unity in Nigeria. The colonial masters expanded the dividing factors among the citizens and tried to implant the seeds of individualism where each person thought and cared only for themselves. However, these were not obtainable in the precolonial egalitarian and communal Nigeria.

Kwame Nkrumah's consciencism has come as a guide to uphold the values of every individual in the society. The cardinal ethical principle of philosophical consciencism is to treat each man as an end in himself and not merely as a means. This explains how consciencism is a veritable tool for the amendment of democratic rule to fit in to the actual needs of society. What Nigerian citizens need is to develop a philosophical conscience that will set in motion the ideological standards for change in the socio-political sector. Nkrumah's ideas represent not only a critique of colonial Africa but a project of modernization that was fashioned to make Africa capable of fending for itself and defending her interests. Though they seem disparate, his ideas coalesced on three major pillars of thought. First comes his penchant to effect rapid economic development throughout Africa by using the modem nation state and central socialist planning.

Second, he anticipated the full liberation of all African countries and their rapid integration into a united political community.

Nkrumah's Pan Africanism was therefore a double-edged sword. It was projected outward to combat the footholds of European colonialism. It also looked inwards since it urged the post-colonial elite and leadership of Africa not to delay the unity of Africa but make it a reality as soon as possible! Even more, Nkrumah understood the need to tap into the traditions and culture that make up of African societies. His notion of Consciencism and African personality were meant to tease out these egalitarian ideals of many African societies.

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