

A History of Nationalist Struggle in Africa within the Context of the Bolshevik Revolution

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ABSTRACT

The colonization of Africa formally established after the 1884-1885 Berlin conference was an action which received counter reaction from Africans. At the beginning, colonialism received a hostile welcome from Africans as different independent African territories staged defensives against European subjugation. Although Africans were later overpowered as a result of the superiority of the European weapons, they never forgot their identity that make them Africans and by extension, "Blacks". They exhibited strong and admirable nationalist movement to air their voice and gradually agitated for self-determination. African intellectuals, the pioneers of this agitation operated as a movement guided by their commonality in promoting the concepts of "Ethiopianism", Pan-Africanism and cultural nationalism. As events unfolded, radical nationalists formed nationalist movements and took the responsibility of nationalism from the intellectuals. Inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the efforts of cultural nationalists, and being intellectuals in their different capacities, they agitated for outright independence of Africa. In view of the forgoing, the paper examines the history of nationalist struggles in Africa with regards to the activities of cultural and radical nationalists by establishing that the eventual independence of African states from the 1950s to the 1980s achieved through radical nationalism with socialist and communist ideological inputs took its root from the efforts of cultural nationalists.

INTRODUCTION

At the forefront of nationalism after the eventual subjugation of African territories by European colonial officials were African intellectuals who embarked on rigorous and tenacious research on Africa's historical past. They formed an intellectual movement with their literature and writings directed at enlightening the African populace on the beauty of the Africa's past as a precursor towards reclaiming Africa for Africans and also priding the African culture. The intellectuals championed their agitations through cultural nationalism and soon, it became a phenomenon which spread across the African continent. Cultural nationalism informed agitations against the westernization of the Church in Africa, agitations for the inclusion of Africans in governance and agitations against racial discrimination. However, as events unfolded within and outside Africa, a new generation of nationalists took to nationalism with a more radical orientation. They believed that the pen

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alone would not deter Europeans from the continued domination of Africans; hence nationalism took the radical shape as the works of cultural nationalists and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 provided the needed foundation for radical nationalism. They agitated for an outright independence of Africa through the establishment of independent movements. They also used the mass media, wrote literature on decolonization, adopted socialist ideology as a precursor to the end of exploitation, and employed the use of confrontations in form of rallies, protests and guerrilla tactics against the colonial government.

The Emergence of Intellectual Nationalists

Africans exhibited a warm embrace towards western education introduced by the Christian Missionaries during colonialism. The facts that it enlightens and adds value to life – a typical reflection of African belief on intellectualism, made Africans enrol their children in the missionary schools. Some parents also sent their children overseas to study medicine and law. Hence, western educated Africans were exposed to European culture, ideals, philosophy and European taught on the Black race. They were also exposed to plethora of Eurocentric works on the barbaric and primitive nature of Africans and the absence of civilizations worthy of recognition in Africa. Educated Africans also became part of European institutions of the Church and Missionary schools, dispensaries, hospitals, and administrative departments created for colonial administrative convenience¹.

In effect, the exposure to western education empowered Africans and created a class of intellectuals with different views on how to chart the course of Africans along the reality of European domination. The classes of assimilationists and moderates emerged with each respectively calling for the total embrace of Western ideals and culture, as well as the partial adoption of western ideals along the line of African beliefs. Later, the class of traditionalists emerged calling for a renounce of European culture and the adoption of old African culture as a result of the discriminations they were exposed to in European institutions. The intellectuals were unanimous in promoting the African personality and advancing discuss on the need for Africa's development². Moderates believed in the need to borrow from the nostalgia the African historical past offers in the quest towards the development of Africa, hence they developed nationalist spirit for Africa but sought for African progress within the reality of European domination. As Toyin Falola rightly puts it; they prided themselves as "*Black Englishmen, adopting European names and taking up European culture*"³. As most of the intellectuals were accommodated within the Church, they saw the need to appreciate the instructions which had made them enlightened, hence, they accommodated western culture which was promoted in the Church but did not lose their African root. However, the works of Eurocentric writers on ethnography, history and anthropology portraying Africans as

¹ Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*(New York: University of Rochester Press, 2001) pp. 8-14

² F. Abiola Irele, "In Praise of Alienation", inaugural lecture, University of Ibadan, 22 November, 1982

³ Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*, pp.30-31

primitive and barbaric led to the emergence of a traditionalist class among the intellectuals seeking the outright renounce of European culture and the total adoption of the African culture. This class developed the ideology of "Ethiopianism" as the guiding idea towards the emancipation of Africa. "Ethiopianism" was developed in allusion to the biblical phrase that "Ethiopian shall soon stretch out her hands unto God". The ideology was promoted to garner respect for Africans ahead of Europeans, and for the emergence of assertive and patriotic elites influenced with the burning desire of engineering the emancipation of Africa and the empowerment of Africans through its values. In effect, this ideology led to the emergence of independent African Churches and the compilation of taught provoking intellectual literature on Africa's emancipation and historiography⁴. Independent African Churches were established in South Africa, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and parts of East and Central Africa. Not only were these Churches administered by Africans, African culture featured prominently in its administration. Outside the Church, intellectuals contributed to "Ethiopianism" through thought provoking discussions on African emancipation made available in pamphlets, and newspaper articles. Eventually, the idea of cultural nationalism was born within the intellectual class; hence, they sought for the emancipation of the African culture from European domination⁵.

The Era of Cultural Nationalism

Cultural nationalism of African intellectuals led to the emergence of prolific writers providing intellectual writings on Africa's rich cultural past in the area of philosophy, racial purity, myths, and history to forge a way-forward for the eventual emancipation of the African culture. Cultural nationalists emphasized the liberation of Africa and its ultimate development along the line of its ideals, norms and values. They promoted the concepts of "Pan Africanism", "African Personality" and "Africa for Africans" as tools for empowering the African mind. Pan-Africanism was aimed at promoting the ideas of "African purity" and "Blackness". Leading cultural nationalists were Major James Africanus Beale Horton, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Bishop James Johnson, Mojola Agbebi, Kobina Sekyi, John Mensah Sarbah, Sir Apollo Kogwa, Jacob Egharevbu, Akiga Sai, Hampate Ba, and Boubou Homa. The contributions of some of these people to cultural nationalism are considered below.

Firstly, Edward Wilmot Blyden who is famously regarded as the father of cultural nationalism considering contributions to African cultural emancipation and his plethora of works on African consciousness, African Spiritualism, African unity, and African development. Blyden was an advocate of African racial purity, African cultural and political emancipation, and African spirituality. He made indelible contributions to the intellectual liberation of Africans through his study of African local history relying on oral sources. This, he promoted by noting that educated Africans should be disposed to African nationalism instead of cosmopolitanism affiliating them to Europeans. He agitated for a study of the history of Africa to ensure the adequate reconstruction of African history for Africa's

⁴ Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*, pp.32-33

⁵ Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*, pp.33-34

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civilization to occupy its exalted place among world civilizations as against barbarism and primitiveness associated with it by Europeans⁶. On African racial purity, he was against attributing superiority to the White race as he asserted that the race is driven by material pursuit characterized by aggressive science orientation as evident in their invention of scientific medicine and pursuit of economic glory. He alluded to divinity to explain the concept of racial differentiation. Hence, he was against the assimilation or emulation of the white race, claiming that its values are too materialistic and domineering, and it directs religious worship at man instead of God, making its people pursue materialism ahead of salvation and spiritualism⁷. Consequently, the only respite for Africa in its quest for emancipation is to shun inferiority and emulate itself by priding its culture and historical heritage among other cultures of the world. The result of this he notes would be such that; When the civilized nations, in consequence of their wonderful material development, shall have had their spiritual perceptions darkened and their spirituality susceptibilities blunted through the agency of a captivating and absorbing materialism, it may be that they may have to resort to Africa to recover some of the simple elements of faith.⁸

Blyden's stance on African racial purity influenced the development of the concepts of "Africa for Africans", "Negritude", and "Pan-Africanism" for which radical nationalists would later channel their nationalist agitations. Blyden challenged anthropologists and sociologists to embark on research to the African heritage and society towards priding the African personality noting that such concept as "African Cooperative socialism" as espoused in the communal nature of the African community is only one of many societal developmental concepts obtainable in Africa⁹. Mojola Agbebi is another renowned African cultural nationalist. He advocated for the practice of Christianity in line with the African culture. This influenced his involvement in the establishment of the Native Baptist Church – the first indigenous Baptist Church in Nigeria in 1888. As a prominent leader of the Church, he promoted the concept of African emancipation and self-determination and self-propagation within the Church leadership and followership. He advocated for the adoption of an African way of life and encouraged his congregation to be African in their way by taking African names, wearing African clothes and embracing African culture. This was demonstrated through his wearing Yoruba dresses and dropping his European name Vincent for Mojola Agbebi as a reflection of his belief in the African culture¹⁰. As a Pan-Africanist,

⁶ Edward Byden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* (1887; re-print, ed., Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967)p91

⁷ Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*, pp.36-37

⁸ Robert W. July, *The Origins of Modern African Thought: Its Development in West Africa*

During the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century's, pp. 412-413

⁹ Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *Pan-African History Political Figures from Africa and*

the Diaspora since 1787, (London; Rutledge Publisher, 2003)

¹⁰ "Black History Month Series: African Nationalism Dr Mojola Agbebi's Contribution", Accessed 24/08/2017, <https://israelolofinjana.wordpress.com/2012/10/08/black-history-month-series-african-nationalism-dr-mojola-agbebis-contribution/>

he took interest in African literatures and called for the translation of European literature used in schools into African language. He also advocated for the use of African languages in missionary activities. His desire for a United Black race influenced his call for the return of Black Americans to Africa for adequate unification with their ancestors¹¹. Cultural nationalists contributed a lot to the emancipation of Africa and African consciousness. They, however, were not able to achieve the independence of Africa partly as a result of their reliance on intellectual agitations devoid of any radical approach. They principally relied on the power of intellectual agitations in form of writing and reform initiatives. Also, as laudable as their call for African consciousness and pride was, it was confined to the circle of the elite which they belonged. They professed their views as intellectuals and not as leaders ready to reach out to the people of the hinterland and initiate an independent movement.

However, what was lacking amongst the cultural nationalists was present amongst the radical nationalists of the 20th century that took up nationalism from the cultural nationalists of the 19th century. The radical nationalists were new sets of active men armed with Pan-Africanist ideology, radical organizations and associations, mass media and the socialist orientation. Unfolding events during and after the world wars also gave the nationalists the leverage to agitate on several grounds, a leverage not enjoyed by cultural nationalists. The first and second world wars saw to the use of African men as soldiers, and as they were informed that they were fighting for liberation and freedom, nationalists took the Europeans up on these concepts after the war. Ex-servicemen also got to realize the absence of inferiority between the black race and the white race, hence, they became disposed to nationalism and established or joined nationalist movements. The fourteen-point agenda and the Atlantic Charter-both documents advocating self-determination as promoted by Europeans, also influenced the emergence of radical nationalism in Africa for nationalists became radical when European colonizers failed to implement the principles of the two documents¹²

Bolshevik Revolution and Radical Nationalism in Africa

Like the cultural nationalists, the radical nationalists were in their numbers across Africa and maintained certain level of connection and relationship. Unlike the cultural nationalists whose struggles were espoused in form of commonality in ideas and beliefs on African liberation, the radical nationalist existed as a movement through the establishment of different organizations and associations, some of which were transformed into political parties that won the independence of their respective states. Prior to the 1917 workers revolution, popularly known as the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, the Russian state had experienced workers exploitation and subjugation by the Tsarist monarchy. This influenced the evolution of revolutionaries in Russia agitating for a proletarian revolution towards the actualization of an egalitarian society based on socialist principles and ideals, hence, the call for revolution in Russia. In retrospect, the revolutionaries called for revolution as a result of

¹¹ (1902) Rev. Mojola Agbebi, "Inaugural Sermon", Accessed 24/08/2017, www.blackpast.org

¹² Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*, p.107

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exploitation of the working class, poor peasantry condition, brutality of the bourgeoisie, dependent Russian economy and denial of economic and political rights. This led to the emergence of revolutionaries who were bent on dislodging the Tsarist regime and installing a socialist state to elicit equality and the dictatorship of the proletariat. By October 25 1917, groups of working class movements led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and comprising forward thinking revolutionaries successfully overthrew the Russian monarchy and the Russian Provisional Government, consequent upon which a socialist state was pronounced in Russia¹³. The success of the 1917 revolution was historic. For the first time in world history a proletarian revolution had dislodged capitalism and installed socialism as espoused by Karl Marx. The news of the revolution got spread to other parts of the world and influenced political events across the world in several forms; it led to the emergence of similar political and economic change in Eastern European countries of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Finland, while in Western Europe it influenced a more acute class struggle which led to the growth of socialist and communist radicle in Western European political circles. Above all, the revolution exerted a massive revolutionary influence on the working class of the whole world.

The revolution has significant effects on political and economic events in Africa. Colonial rule which all African countries witnessed at this time established capitalism in Africa and also promoted imperialism. The colonial capitalist policies were exploitative of workers and the peasantry, inimical to the economic development of Africa, unconcerned about the development of the African man and also eroded the African pride. Hence, by default economic conditions influencing the Bolshevik revolution became obtainable in Africa. In view of this, the 1917 instilled radical nationalism in the mind of African Nationalists as they wanted to overthrow colonialism in Africa as the Bolsheviks had overthrown Monarchy and serfdom in Russia. This radicalized African nationalist had influenced series of uprising against colonial governments. At this stage, African Nationalists of the 20th century was armed with the philosophy of "African pride", "Africaness" and "Pan-Africanism" espoused by cultural nationalism. So were they empowered by the revolutionary examples and strategies which the 1917 revolution offered the exploited and the oppressed? The nationalists were also encouraged and supported by Communist and Socialist organizations in Western Europe which had developed rapidly as a result of the 1917 revolution. The influence of the Bolshevik revolution was aided by the prior exposure of African nationalists to revolutionary works of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels before the 1917 revolution. Hence, from 1917 and beyond, the work of Lenin coupled with the revolutionary spirits and strategies the 1917 revolution offered gingered the Marxist oriented revolutionary views inherent in African nationalists. They absorbed Marxist writings in its Leninist form. Hence, they became advocates of Lenin ideas of "Party Supremacy", "Democratic Socialism", "the Vanguard role of the Party", "Criticism and self- criticism" and "inner-party democracy". They also borrowed from the strategies employed by Lenin to actualize the Bolshevik revolution in their quest to actualize the goal

¹³ M.S. Pletushkov et' al, The Soviet Union, pp. 22-24

of an independent Africa. Like the Bolshevik radicals, 20th century African nationalists organized protests, riots and other forms of confrontations including armed struggle against the colonial governments in Africa. As Lenin waxed stronger despite being alienated by the government, so were African nationalists resolute in their agitations despite being imprisoned or exiled by the colonial governments. Some modelled after the Military Revolutionary Committee which coordinated the armed struggle of the Bolshevik revolution to establish secret military groups and militant organizations who took to guerrilla warfare as forms of confrontation for the actualization of agitations against colonial governments. This led to the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya, MajiMaji rebellion in Tanzania, the Algerian war of independence, Angolan and Mozambican wars of independence and the apartheid struggle in South Africa, which radicals like Jomo Kenyatta, Sekou Toure, Julius Nyerere, Sam Nujoma, Kwame Nkrumah, and Nelson Mandela were actively involved.

A major influence of the Bolshevik revolution on nationalist struggle in Africa was the nationalists support for socialism. While some of the nationalist routed for "scientific socialism"¹⁴, some were advocates of "African Socialism". These advocates opined that socialism was not alien to Africa as pre-colonial African societies were characterized by equality, egalitarianism and communal land ownership – the major underlying features of socialism. Hence Africa had a socialist ideology known as "African Socialism" whose path Africans must thread in its quest towards development. Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Sekou Toure of Guinea and MamodouDia of Senegal were stunt advocates of this ideology¹⁵. However, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana routed for "Scientific Socialism" in its pure form as the most suitable ideology for Africa's political economy. As socialism was agitated in Russia by the Bolsheviks to elicit economic development, so was the ideology promoted by African nationalists towards the actualization of Africa's economic development. Many of the nationalist equated socialism to economic development and rebuffed capitalism for its exploitative nature. They believed that capitalism is alien and inimical to Africa; hence, it would be a betrayal of the personality and conscience of Africa. They also provided different justifications for the practise of socialism in Africa. Kwame Nkrumah asserts that capitalism was "too complicated a system for a newly independent nation, hence, the need for a socialist society in Africa"¹⁶. The nationalist envisioned a socialist system that would lead to the actualization of rapid economic development in Africa in forms of state ownership and control of industries, improved living standard, redistribution of land, improved working condition of workers, rapid state directed infrastructural development.

¹⁴ Kwame Nkrumah, "African Socialism Revisited", in *Africa: National and Social Revolution*, (Prague: Peace and Socialism Publishers, 1967)

¹⁵ Kenneth G. Grundy, "Mali: The Prospects of Planned Socialism" in William H. Friedland and Carl G. Roseberg Jr. Eds. *African Socialism*, (Stanford/London 1964) p.176

¹⁶ Kwame Nkrumah, "Why I Founded 'The Spark' ", *The Spark* (Accra), No 100, 13 November 1964, p.1

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Mechanized agricultural system and improved literacy. The radical nationalists promoted a tri-faceted African Socialism. The first phase affirms Africa's "originality, distinctiveness and personality", the second phase upholds Africa's "independence" ideologically and politically, while the third phase upholds Africa's "open-mindedness" and its rejection of "tyranny of ideologies"¹⁷. African socialism was also prompted by the radical nationalists in an attempt to stand aloof of exigencies and negatives associated with capitalism and communism. Socialism served as cross-road that keeps Africa away from the exploitation of capitalism and atheism espoused by communism. African socialism was espoused to accommodate religious practise in Africa. Here the radicals tolled the line of cultural nationalists that spiritualism is part of bring an African, hence, the important of religion to the African man cannot be over-flogged. The radicals rebuffed atheism preached by Marx's communism and instead justified the importance of religion to the development of Africa. Nationalist that belong to the Kwame Nkrumah School of taught believed that ideology is not meant to replace religions but to implement all true religious teachings¹⁸ while African nationalist with the Islamic faith such as Abd'al Naseer and Amar Ouzegane affiliated socialism with Islam claiming that Islam in its early days was the first socialist state as a result of equality, brotherhood and egalitarianism that existed among the companions of the Prophet. Radical nationalism in Africa was espoused through trade unionism, a reflection of Leninist style of mobilizing workers and the masses. African nationalists used the platform to mobilize the masses towards forming a formidable opposition against negative colonial policies. The development of radical communist and socialist organizations in Western Europe as a result of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution influenced the affiliation of trade unions in Africa and socialist and communist organizations in Europe. For example, this affiliation led to the establishment of Generale des Travaillesd'Afrique Noire and Confederation Generale du Travail (C.G.T) which linked trade unions in French Africa to communist and socialist organizations in France. As events unfolded in Africa, some trade unions were transformed into revolutionary movements while others transformed into political parties. The former arrangement was to avert futility associated with trade unionism devoid of revolutionary input while the latter was to achieve the goal of Africa's independence and the emergence of socialist states in Africa. Some of the political parties established adopted socialism as party ideology and maintained alliance with socialist party in Western and Eastern Europe. The *Groups d'Etudes Communisties (G.E)* and the *Rassablement Democratic African* was a political party arrangement that informed relationship between socialists in French Africa and socialists in France. Zimbabwe's ZANU-PF, Angola's Peoples Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and the Mozambican liberation front(FRELIMO) also aligned with the Soviet Union while Tanzanian TANU, Nigerian Action Group and Ghanaian Convention Peoples party all subscribed to socialist ideology although with levels of variations. The Northern Element Progressive Union was also established in

¹⁷ Leopold Sedar Senghor, *On African Socialism* (New York, 1964), p.46

¹⁸ Kofi Baako, "Nkrumanism – Its Theory and Practise", in Paul E. Sigmund Jr. Eds, *The Ideologies of the Developing Nations* (New York, 1963) p. 180

Nigeria by Mallam Aminu Kano as a political party for the peasants, in a quest to agitate for the interest of the masses and the poor.

Independent movements such as the West African student Union and the Zikist movement of Nigeria also adopted some level of socialist ideology. This movement were led by young nationalist who demanded for an outright independence of Africa. The Zikist movement for example confronted the colonial government in Nigeria, by organizing strikes, riots and engaging in public orientation of the masses against colonial policies. The movement led by M.C.K Ajuluchukwu, Raji Abdallah and Nduka Eze demanded the independence of Nigeria and single headedly declared the country independent when the colonial government was unyielding to their demand. The South African African National Congress (ANC) also had socialist radicals agitating for an end to apartheid rule in South Africa. The African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC) also had Amilcar Cabral as a stunt radical nationalist and strategist against Portuguese colonialism in Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands¹⁹. In the long run, these political parties and independent movements achieved the independence of Africa from the 1950s till the 1980s. While socialism became state ideologies in some of the newly independent African states, some were not able to achieve a socialist state as a result of exigencies that associated with their independence. Worthy of note also is that socialist states in Africa were short lived due to problems associated with the implementation of socialist principles, authoritarianism of socialist leaders, military intervention in African politics and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Learning from the Example of African Radical Nationalists

The list of the radical nationalists is endless; however, the leading ones such as Ladipo Solanke, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Patrice Lumumba and Jamal, Abd al -Nasir would be discussed.

Ladipo Solanke

Ladipo Solanke was an astute nationalist who held sway in the United Kingdom. The nationalist spirit inherent in him and the discrimination he faced as a student in London influenced his membership of the Union of African Descent – a Pan-African organization. He later established the Nigerian Progressive Union in 1924 as the first Nigerian organization in Britain. Although, the organization was formed to safeguard the interest of Nigerian student in Britain, it was later expanded to accommodate students from other parts of Africa; hence it was transformed to the West African Student Union (WASU) in 1925. WASU became a breeding ground for nationalists, and as an organization, it championed the agitation for the independence of Africa²⁰. Solanke built an African students' hostel in London and named it the African House to show the world the capability of Africans to stay together and exhibit an

¹⁹ Africa Information Service Eds., *RETURN TO THE SOURCE Selected Speeches by Amilcar Cabral*, (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1973) p.10

²⁰ Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *Pan-African History*

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admirable relationship. Solanke's WASU was also pivotal to the establishment of political parties in Africa. Its branches across West Africa were transformed into political parties by its members. The Gold Coast branch metamorphosed into the Gold Coast Youth Conference while the Nigerian branch became the Nigerian Youth Movement. Also, his positive disposition to the communist and socialist ideology influenced his affiliation of WASU with the communist led League against Imperialism. He also wrote several open letters calling for the independence of Africa, all published in *Wasu* - the journal of WASU, and was the first individual to broadcast for the British Broadcasting Corporation with the use of Yoruba language²¹.

Francis Nwia Kwame Kofi Nkrumah

Kwame Nkrumah is regarded as the father of Ghana's nationalism. He was a distinguished African radical nationalist whose spirit of Pan-Africanism is unrivalled. He led the Gold Coast to independence in 1957 and was the ardent advocate of a United States of Africa. His interest in politics as a student in America influenced his contact with the United Negro Improvement Association of Marcus Garvey and the Council on African Affairs, all of which influenced his radical approach to political agitations. He joined the Association of African Students'(AAS) formed by West African Students in 1941 and became secretary and later President of the organization. He was also one of the founding members of West African National Secretariat, formed to champion the unanimous independence of African States²². He became the secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) after he was invited by Dr Danquah, a constitutional nationalist in Ghana. He later left the UGCC as a result of conflict of ideology and thereafter established the Committee of Youth Organization and later the Convention Peoples Party in 1949(CPP). CPP made "self-government now" its slogan and agitated for the independence of the Gold Coast, The party won elections in 1952 and Nkrumah became the leader of Government Business. It also won the 1954 and 1956 elections that preceded the independence of Gold Coast in 1957, and by 1957²³. His stance against imperialism influenced his communist and socialist affiliation; while in London, he was the leader of "Circle" of soviet revolutionary organization dedicated towards the establishment of a Union of African Socialist Republics. Nkrumah became the President of the Gold Coast under the platform of the Convention Peoples Party in 1957, becoming the first African President in Sub-Saharan Africa²⁴. He was also affiliated with the British Communist Party and initiated socialist policies as President of Ghana²⁵. As the President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah used his powers to agitate for the independence of African states still under colonial rule as he claimed that the independence of Ghana is meaningless if the whole of Africa is not

²¹ Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *Pan-African History*

²² AmaBiney, *The Political and Social Thought ok Kwame Nkrumah*, (New York: Palgrave

Macmillian, 2011) p.24

²³ AmaBiney, *The Political and Social Thought ok Kwame Nkrumah*, p.18

²⁴ Rina L. Okonkwo, *Heroes of West African Nationalism* (Enugu: Delta, 1985)

²⁵ Genoud, R. *Nationalism and Economic Development in Ghana*, (London,1969)p.69

liberated from European domination²⁶. His dream of a United States of Africa influenced the Accra Conference of Independent African States and the All African People's Congress held in 1958 to initiate a roadmap for the liberation of African states.

Julius Nyerere

Julius Nyerere was a distinguished Tanzanian nationalist who saw to the independence of Tanzania. Influenced by his exposure to socialist and communist ideas, he established the Tanganyika National Union (TANU) as a nationalist movement saddled with the responsibility of agitating for the independence of Tanganyika. He gathered lots of people through TANU and was also able to unite all nationalists in Tanganyika under TANU. The party embarked on agitations of different nature to pressure the British Colonial government at granting the independence of Tanganyika and by 1958, the colonial government organized an election into the legislative council²⁷.

TANU won the majority seats in the legislative council election; hence, it became involved in governance. Consequently, Nyerere used the opportunity to agitate for improved political representation and self-government in Tanganyika. Eventually, a reform of the legislative council was carried out and another election was conducted. TANU remained the victor in the election and Nyerere became the Chief Minister and used his position to pressure the British for the independence of Tanganyika, and with his efforts, Tanganyika became independent in 1962 consequent upon which he emerged as President. Thereafter, in 1964, Nyerere defied Western influence to align with the Zanzibar's communist Afro-Shiraz party; an alliance that saw to the merger of Zanzibar with Tangayinka leading to the emergence Tanzania²⁸. Consequently, in 1967, he initiated socialist economic reliance policies in Tanzania under the Arusha declaration. He also initiated the *Ujama* agricultural policy to promote economic sufficiency, noting that; *Ujama* describes our socialism. It is opposed to capitalism, which seeks to build a happy society on the basis of the exploitation of man by man; and it is equally opposed to doctrinaire socialism, which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between man and man.²⁹ Julius Nyerere was a Pan-African who believed in the liberation of Africa and the promotion of African heritage. He was renowned for organizing an International Congress of African Historians for a brainstorm on the roadmap towards the reconstruction of African history. He was part of the All African Peoples Conference in Accra

²⁶ "Prime Minister's Midnight Speech on the Eve of Independence 6 March, 1957," box 154- 14,

folder 21, Kwame Nkrumah Papers

²⁷ Colin Legum," The Pan-Africanist", in *The Nyerere Years*, (Britain-Tanzania Society, 1985) p.11

²⁸ Yusuf Kassam, "Julius Kambarage Nyerere" in *Prospects: the quarterly review of comparative*

education (Paris, UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, 1994), vol. XXIV,p.248

²⁹ JannilBoesen et' al, *Ujama – Socialism from Above* (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Affairs, 1977)

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Ghana in 1958, and established the Pan-African Movement for East and Central Africa alongside Tom Mboya and Jomo Kenyatta. His vision for the emergence of a United States of Africa informed the pivotal role he played in the establishment of the Organization of African Unity in 1963³⁰.

Patrice Emery Lumumba

Patrice Lumumba was one of the radical nationalists that stood for Africa's independence struggle. He began activism as a post office worker when he established the Amicale de Postiers (Post Office Workers Friendly Society). He was also a member of several other organizations of the Belgian-Congo such as the Association of Congolese Government Employers, African Staff Association, and the Committee of the Belgian Congo Union. He was elected the President of Association of Congolese Government Employers, and used his office to agitate for improved welfare for workers as a result of the unfavourable working conditions obtainable in the Belgian-Congo, a reflection of Belgium colonial policy of paternalism. In 1959, Patrice Lumumba was able to unite all nationalist organizations in Congo. This led to the independent resolution which called for the independence of the Belgian Congo. Riots and public protests broke out as a result of this; Patrice Lumumba was arrested and sentenced to six months imprisonment for inciting the riots. He later established the Movement National Congolais (MNC) as a nationalist movement for the independence of the Belgian-Congo. The movement garnered support across the Belgian-Congo and Lumumba used its popularity and membership strength to agitate for independence. As the pressure persisted, elections were organized as prelude to independence. The MNC won the majority of seats in the election and Patrice Lumumba emerged the first Prime minister of the Belgian-Congo after surmounting hostilities against his emergence³¹. He remained resolute in prison, and was released after public demand for his release. He later emerged Prime Minister of Congo. However, Patrice Lumumba faced hostilities from Belgium after his emergence for he was seen as an obstacle to the Belgian interests in the Congo, hence, uprising were incited against his government, leading to mutiny within the police and army, and the Belgian invasion of Congo. With the connivance of foreign powers, rebel groups arrested and murdered him at the age of 36³². His death was mourned across the world as he was eulogized by many as one who sacrificed himself for the liberation of Africa.

Jamal Abd'al Nasir

Jamal Abd'al Nasir was a prominent nationalist of the Arab world, a believer of African unity and an activist against colonialism. He was politically influenced by the works of Arab nationalists and his relationship with nationalist organizations in Egypt such as the Young Egypt Party. While Nasir was still a student, he organized mass protest against the

³⁰ Colin Legum, "The Pan-Africanist", in *The Nyerere Years*

³¹ Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *Pan-African History*

³² Ashutosh Singh, "Foreign Role in the Assassination of Patrice Lumumba", *International*

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partial independence given to Egypt in 1922. This protest was a violent one that led to the death of two students while many including Nasir sustained gunshot wounds. Also, as a soldier, he believed in the use of force to achieve political emancipation, hence, in 1949, in pursuance of their goal of an independent and progressive Egyptian state, Nasir alongside some of his cadre in the military who shared the same ideals on Egyptian emancipation and development established the "Free Officers Organization" through which they initiated a roadmap towards the actualization their goal of Egyptian emancipation and end to colonialism. Eventually, on July 23 1952, they staged a successful coup against the monarchical government of King Farouq³³. Subsequently, a Revolutionary Command Council was established and Nasir became the deputy Prime Minister and later Prime Minister. Nasir subscribed to the socialist ideology. He initiated the concept of "Arab Socialism" in the Charter for National Actions drafted in 1962. More so, in 1964, the constitution of the United Arab Republic declared Egypt "a socialist state based on alliance of the working forces". He governed Egypt in defiance to European domination and as a supporter of African unity. Hence, he remains one of the foremost African leaders and nationalist³⁴.

CONCLUSION

The liberation and independence of Africa achieved through the efforts of nationalists is one that was characterized by intellectualism and radicalism. African intellectuals served as pioneers of African liberation, acting as agents against the "denationalization" of Africa as a result of colonialism. Consequently, by the 20th century, new generation of nationalists, built on the foundation lay by the intelligentsias and became radical advocates of African liberation which led to the eventual political independence of African States. However, socialism which set the tune for radical nationalist agitations in Africa was short-lived after the independence of African States. Hence the dream of a socialist Africa was shattered; making the socialist ideology a means to an end and not the end itself, for it was a means to actualize the independence of Africa and not the real end of Africa's economic development. Socialism did not succeed in Africa because the bourgeoisie class were not comfortable with the system of government. Also, the failure of socialism in Africa was facilitated by the war against socialism from the capitalist world.

³³ Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *Pan-African History*

³⁴ Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *Pan-African History*