

A CRITIQUE OF NNAMDI AZIKIWE'S NEO-WELFARIST IDEOLOGY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIA

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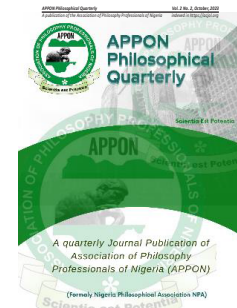
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Abstract

Some of the fundamental problems closely associated with the Nigerian State include the problem of corruption, ethnicity, leadership failure, economic crises, and lack of political integration. Nnamdi Azikiwe suggests neo-welfarism as one way of solving these fundamental problems in Nigeria as a nation-state. The study is aimed at analysing Azikiwe's perception of contemporary problems and to critically appraise the extent to which his neo-welfarist ideology tends to provide fundamental answers to Nigerian political integration and economic system. His neo-welfarist ideology calls for national paradigm in Nigeria. This study argues that Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology is not a totally and unquestionably reliable guide to Nigeria's economic development and political integration, even though; his eclectic and pragmatic methods are imperative and attractive. The study reveals that the neo-welfarist ideology is not precisely enough in its purported theoretical assumptions and assimilation of the good elements in the different socio-economic and political ideologies. This study adopts the analytical framework in addressing Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology and its implications for Nigeria.

Keywords: Ideology, Neo-colonialism, National Paradigm, Neo-welfarism, Nigerian State

Introduction

Kwasi Wiredu, in his work “African Philosophy” published in the “*Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*”, pointed out that contemporary African continent is in a state of instability, but the instability is not without some defining moments. He opines that the main reason for the instability reflects on the fact that Africa, in most part, is in a state of evolution from a traditional condition to a more complex and modernized level. He reiterates the fact that the achievement of African independence was the most significant milestones in this socio-economic matrix, cultural mileage, psychological and political transition of the African continent. He further asserts that Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* showcases a profound philosophical basis for the colonialist struggle in the African continent. For him, it reveals a form of national paradigm for African liberation. Ramose in consonance with Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* demonstrates a specific notion of the human beings; it remains the basis to organize specific social relations or inter-human-relations. It stipulates African political culture and human emancipation. Ruch and Anyanwu, in their work, “*African Philosophy: An Introduction to the Main Philosophical Trends in Contemporary Africa*”, maintain that Azikiwe's political thought is more explicit than Nyerere's notion of *Ujamaa* and Senghor's concept of *Negritude*. They argued that Azikiwe upholds the critical importance of parliamentary democracy and the ideological commitment to Nigeria.

Obi Oguejiofor, in his book, “*Philosophy and African Predicament*” posited that Azikiwe's neo-welfarism has little or nothing to offer to Nigeria's myriad of socio-political and economic challenges. For him, Azikiwe's neo-welfarism has the same theoretical affinity with Nkrumah's philosophical *consciencism*. Azikiwe sees neo-welfarism as the most appropriate ideology for Nigeria. For Mutiso and Rohio in their book, “*Readings in African Political Thought*” argued that Azikiwe's neo-welfarism presupposes the spirit of national paradigm and African humanism.

Having taken a cursory look at some relevant philosophical literatures, it is germane to note that none of these scholars have been able to address or identify the socio-political quagmire and the economic challenges facing contemporary Nigerian society. They have not been able to address the salient fundamental issues facing the Nigerian State which the paper aims at addressing. This paper aims to address these epistemological quandaries, ideological confusions and ethical quicksand facing the Nigerian State. Azikiwe's neo-welfarism is more theoretical than practical but it could serve as a kaleidoscopic nature of looking at the myriad of fundamental challenges facing the Nigerian State. This paper, therefore, argued that Azikiwe's neo-welfarism has not been able to grapple with a myriad of fundamental problems facing the Nigerian State. The fundamental solutions to the Nigerian State are effective and visionary leadership, eradication of poverty and corruption through capital

punishment to corrupt political leaders, cultural integration and the need for moral rebirth among Nigerians. Corruption, on the one hand, is destructive or anathema to national development and national paradigm. On the other hand, it is a social evil. In a nutshell, corruption is against our humanity. Azikiwe's neo-welfarism is a new form of an ideological construct for African liberation. On the other hand, ideology means different things to different people. For Marx and Engels, in their work, *Communist Manifesto*, ideology is the prevailing ideas of the ruling class. For Ferrante, in her book, *Sociology: A Global Perspective*, ideology is a set of beliefs system that is not challenged or subjected to scrutiny or questioning. For Baradat, in his book, *Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact*, ideology presupposes the need for fundamental change, it is frequently debated and it is action-oriented or people-oriented. For Thomas, in his book, *Value and Context: The Nature of Moral and Political Knowledge*, ideology presupposes a correct explanation of a set of beliefs system that serves the interests of a particular group of people in society. For Ritzer and Stepnisky, in their book, *Sociological Theory*, ideology presupposes human value; it is an underlying social relations and it is necessary for the ultimate development of the human beings. For Fukuyama, ideology represents the need for human dignity, freedom and equality.

In addition, a critical look at Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology showcases the need for national paradigm or national

struggle. His clarion call was the need for the decolonization of Africa. It reminds us that the two fundamental problems facing contemporary Nigerian society are the problems of lack of economic development and political integration caused by ethnic politics, corruption and the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism. Some groups from parts of the country are already agitating for separation due to lack of political integration in Nigeria. This lack of national integration has led to the emergence of secessionist groups such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), the Niger Delta militants and the Oduduwa group of the Yoruba extraction. Although, neo-welfarism might not be the fundamental solution to Nigeria's myriad of socio-political quagmire and economic challenges but it could serve as leverage for the critical understanding of the Nigerian State. Neo-welfarism has triadic conceptions of capitalism, socialism and welfarism. It stipulates not just the ideological framework for the decolonization of Africa but it has strands of African communalism and it could serve as the basis of African ideology. Ideologies, on the other hand, are always backed by human actions. Ideologies are human centred or people-oriented. It has always been said that ideas rule the world. Ideologies are heralded by deliberate human actions and democratic commitment or political engagement; it requires democratic accountability, "harmonious relatedness" and leadership responsibility. Effective leadership is ideologically driven and it becomes a critical step to national development and

national paradigm. Leadership drives everything in a country in terms of the socio-political, economic, cultural, psychological, scientific, technological and pedagogic aspects of the social conditions of a people in a country.

Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology showcases political legitimation, the normative assumptions of law and order. It guarantees national paradigm and sustainable development strategy for Nigeria. Economic development in Nigeria cannot take place in an atmosphere of structural violence, rancour, and social disorderliness. His African political philosophy reveals the liberal paradigm of the comprehensive conception of the good life in Nigerian society. The state in its very nature is welfarist in outlook. The state as a means of corporate governance is organic in nature. The welfare of the people in any country becomes very paramount of such a country. The whole essence of the establishment of the state will be defeated if the welfares of the people are not being taken care of or guaranteed. Azikiwe's perception of contemporary economic and political challenges as it affects the Nigerian State is examined in this study. The problems militating against the dogged pursuit and realization of the greatest happiness of the Nigerian peoples are mainly the problems of leadership and political corruption. Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology brings to the fore the need for human value, human dignity, a widespread economic development and political integration in Nigeria. Azikiwe presents neo-welfarism as a normative

outcome of his harmonization of the good elements of various foreign ideologies. In his theoretical viewpoint, the neo-welfarist ideology is not only the panacea for the much needed development of post-colonial African societies. Thus, Azikiwe maintains that neo-welfarism should be adopted by all nation-states of the world as the most suitable ideological framework for tackling contemporary challenges of economic development and political integration.

Worthy of note is that various scholars have identified ideology as one of the cornerstones of a welfare state. Neo-welfarism is all about the national struggle for African liberation as postulated by Nnamdi Azikiwe. Neo-welfarism is another form of ideology like socialism, nationalism, capitalism, democracy, fascism, conservatism, liberalism, and totalitarianism. On the other hand, the concept of ideology as political extremes has been given different interpretations.

This paper is divided into eight sections. Section one talked about the introductory remarks. Section two discusses Azikiwe's theory of neo-welfarism. Section three is anchored on the concept of African emancipation in Nnamdi Azikiwe and Kwame Nkrumah. Section four envisages Azikiwe's neo-welfarism as an ideology for African liberation. Section five focuses on economic development and political integration in Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology. Section six reflects on Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology and its implications for Nigeria. On the other hand, section seven anchors on a critique

of Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology. Section eight reflects on the concluding considerations on Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology and its implications for Nigeria.

A Context of Nnamdi Azikiwe's Theory of Neo-Welfarism

Azikiwe's theory of neo-welfarism has the same theoretical affinity with Nkrumah's philosophical *consciencism*. This trend is also very evident in the thought of Nnamdi Azikiwe. In the 1970s, when Nigerians through various media were arguing seriously about the most appropriate ideology for the country, Azikiwe made a study of three foreign ideologies – capitalism, socialism and welfarism – and decided that the best option for Nigeria is what he calls *neo-welfarism*.¹ Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* entails eclecticism and a synthesis of these three ideologies – capitalism, socialism and welfarism. His political philosophy of *neo-welfarism* is eclectic and synthetic philosophy.² Neo-welfarism, is therefore, an eclectic and radical liberal philosophy, Azikiwe's neo-welfarism demonstrates the fostering of individual freedom from socio-political and economic exploitation.³ Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* advocates the principles of global justice or the principles of

comparative advantages of the economic market forces of nation-states. According to Azikiwe, a neo-welfarist state should also cooperate with advanced countries in developing and exploiting humans as well as natural resources for the mutual advantage of all involved. Such an ideology should aim at restoring democracy by building a new power structure which will realize political freedom, economic security and social equality.⁴ Azikiwe further asserts that we should prepare a socio-economic matrix which will combine the basic elements of capitalism, socialism and the welfare state. Though, our ancestors were communal in nature, this communalism was based on landed peasantry.⁵ Accordingly, Azikiwe further asserts that we should adapt modern ideologies of alien extraction whether in the extreme right or centre or extreme left, to the indigenous ideologies, which had enabled our forebears to conquer the elements.⁶ *Neo-welfarism* reflects a theoretical background for the social reconstruction and ideological re-orientation of parliamentary democracy.⁷ Azikiwe, therefore, asserts that domestic policy of Nigeria will be framed on the assumption that Nigeria shall continue to be a

¹ Oguejiofor., Obi., *Philosophy and African Predicament*, (Ibadan: Hope Publication Limited, 2001), p.115

² *Ibid.*, p.116

³ *Ibid.* p.47

⁴ Azikiwe., Nnamdi., *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?* (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp.127-128

⁵ *Ibid.*, 173-174

⁶ *Ibid.* p.127

⁷ Azikiwe., Nnamdi., *A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp.97-98

parliamentary democracy. Following from this proposition, Oguejiofor asserts that:

Most important for us, however, is the fact that, perhaps more than the other currents we have surveyed, their engagements are mostly marked by what we have called the African predicament. Every aspect of their efforts can be traced back to a prior condition created by some aspects of the African predicament. The overall quest for the emancipation of the African people, their efforts to outline this quest into a political theory and the specific results of these theories, have all arisen because of the peculiar situation of the ambience of their struggles. Even, their being co-opted to fill, as it were, the hall of African philosophy and the fact that virtually only they are counted among African political thinkers is a pointer both to the direction and history of contemporary African political thinking or political philosophy.⁸

The Concept of African Emancipation in Nnamdi Azikiwe and Kwame Nkrumah

Nkrumah's call in the wake of the replacement of colonialism by neo-colonialism was a clarion call for the unification of African states for the avoidance of further neo-colonialism and balkanization. Nkrumah's *consciencism* is a platform of national paradigm for African States. It was a call for national paradigm, holistic economic programs and political gains for the entire African peoples. Plucking a leaf from Kwame Nkrumah, the then President of Guinea, Sekou Toure (who was Nkrumah's bosom friend) joined the search for a united Africa and a rejection of all forces depersonalizing the African culture. Sekou Toure argues for the reinstating of the African culture in a united Africa. *Neo-welfarism* as a political ideology that found sanctuary in the writings of Nigeria's Nnamdi Azikiwe is exemplified as the panacea for holistic economic determinism (system) and cultural humanism for Nigeria and Africa in general. In Azikiwe's view, *neo-welfarism* involves a power-game which will realize democratic values. Nkrumah's philosophical *consciencism* is characterized by materialist presupposition or the assumption of national paradigm. The materialist basis of *consciencism* results in democratic

⁸ Oguejiofor., Obi., *Philosophy and African Predicament*, pp.117-118

egalitarianism and party control. Azikiwe was an advocate of party politics and he believes in the importance of parliamentary democracy. For Azikiwe, there can be no doubt that party control is essential to an effective practicalization of democracy.⁹ On the other hand, the egalitarianism of *consciencism* gives rise to the cardinal ethical principle which is the same as Kant's categorical imperative that men are to be treated always not as means but as ends in themselves.¹⁰ Nkrumah's principle of *consciencism* showcases the “dictates of materialism or materialist assumptions.”¹¹ His *consciencism* is anchored on the Africa's context of underdevelopment and pervading human misery, neocolonialist struggle and the varied attempts to overcome these fundamental problems facing the African continent.¹² Egalitarianism is deeply rooted in African socialism. All these – materialism, categorical imperative and egalitarianism – have philosophical foundations in traditional Africa, which also supports socialism. Such socialism is rooted in communalism, which socialism seeks to modernize. African socialism is African

humanism. Egalitarianism serves as a tool for African emancipation.¹³

Accordingly, Rodney, on his part, asserts that African scientific socialism serves as a tool and idea for dismantling the capitalist imperialist structure; it reflects on the emancipation of the African peoples.¹⁴ In the view of Jary and Jary, communism reflects a form of society, which approximates to the socialist ideals; a political ideology, deriving from socialism, and particularly from Marx. Subsequently, Marxists believe in the creation of societies in which private production, property, social classes and the state are absent.¹⁵ Nkrumah's philosophical *consciencism* reflects on African communism and African emancipation. Socialism is a utopian ideology. All socialists are vulnerable to the charge of utopianism, of trying to realize a society that is contrary to human experience and historical development. While some socialists have seen utopia as a good thing, liberals and conservatives regard the notion of utopia as negative as an irresponsible idealism that rides roughshod over the hard facts of reality

⁹ Azikiwe., Nnamdi., A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe in Paul Sigmund Eugene (Ed.), *The Ideologies of Developing Nations*, (USA: Praeger Publishers, 1952), p.214

¹⁰ Ibid., pp.114-115

¹¹ Oguejiofor., Obi., *Philosophy and African Predicament*, pp.115-116

¹² Oladipo., Olusegun., *The Idea of African Philosophy*, (Ibadan: Hope Publication Limited, 2000), p.114

¹³ Dukor., Maduabuchi., *African Freedom: Freedom of Philosophy*, (Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2009), pp.354-355

¹⁴ Rodney., Walter., *Marxism and African Liberation, A Speech Delivered at Queens College*, (New York, 1975), pp.1-14

¹⁵ Jary., David., and Jary., Julia., *Collins Dictionary of Sociology*, (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000), p.93

that can at worst lead to nightmarish regimes of a highly oppressive and totalitarian kind.¹⁶

Nkrumah's philosophical *consciencism* showcases democratic socialism and African liberation. Social democracy sees itself as everything that Marxism is not: democratic, reformist, realistic, open-minded and concerned with the moral case for socialism. In other words, social democracy suffers from a serious identity problem.¹⁷ Nkrumah's *consciencism* is a political, cultural, social, economic ideology for the African peoples. It is actually a reflection on the need for African liberation or African emancipation. Evaluating this phenomenon, Oguejiofor asserted that:

In *consciencism*, Nkrumah was presenting a philosophical ideology for the political, economic, social and human improvement of the African continent. In class struggle in Africa, he is more strident and more doctrinaire. He avers that independence has not brought the expected economic and political freedom. Nkrumah, therefore, advocates more and more the inevitability of African revolution. While in *consciencism*, he was presenting a theory for

consideration as an alternative means of African progress, he now asserts that “the choice has already been made by the working class, the choice for unification of Africa, for liberation and for socialism”. Nkrumah advocates a full blown Marxist ideology in place of the attenuated version he had earlier preached. But it is notable that in doing so, he had no qualms about universalizing an ideology that has its notion in a particular context as he would be later criticized. Nkrumah uses the neo-colonialist methods to advance the liberation of the African continent.¹⁸

Furthermore, the basic method of neo-colonialism is understood from the Marxist perspective of socialism and materialist assumption. Socialism has become a fundamental element of political ethics. Going further, *consciencism* is an ideological construct that is aimed at resolving African problems; and it could serve as an ideology for African liberation. Nkrumah argues that neo-colonialism has replaced erstwhile colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism. He further

¹⁶ Hoffman., John., and Graham., Paul., *Introduction to Political Theory*, Second Edition, (England: Pearson Higher Education Limited, 2009), p.220

¹⁷ Ibid., p.229

¹⁸ Oguejiofor., Obi., *Philosophy and African Predicament*, pp.116-117

argues that neo-colonialism is also the worst form of imperialism and ideology is the theoretical and practical mirror through which the society is viewed, gives social, political, and economic direction to governments and their policy makers.¹⁹ The African states are in the grip of neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism has become a form of socio-economic boot-trap and political balkanization, bastardization and manipulation of Africa's political programs and economic policies. Neo-colonialism is aimed at retarding the economic, scientific, technological advancement and cultural development of the peoples of Africa. Foreign aids or grants to African states have become an indirect form of neo-colonialism. African unity against every forms or subtle forms of international imperialism and neo-colonialism can only be achieved or guaranteed by the African peoples through the concerted effort of African rebirth or African Renaissance. African Renaissance arises from:

The struggle of the different component nationalities for independence from the dominating nationalities, wars, refuge phenomenon, development question, abuse of human rights, rule of law, family hood, brain drain and European and U.S citizenship have all severally and collectively eroded the ideal and material conceptions of

identity and citizenship. In this case, Africaness is non-physical; it is a thing of the thought and mind. Africa, for instance, had a retarded development, and Europe over took her in the upward march towards civilization and humanism since that period, Africa and the rest of the third world had little or no opportunity of facing the challenges and competition dictated by a world characterized by the survival of the fittest and consequent upon which they have been grappling and struggling to meet up or, rather regrettably, to emancipate from colonialism and neo-colonialism. The colonial and neo-colonial situation is a situation of prolonged and sustained inequalities of democratic citizenship in the world. The status quo of unequal opportunities and development is strengthened by the philosophers of colonialism and neo-colonialism.²⁰

Neo-welfarism as an Ideology for African Liberation

Neo-welfarism serves as motivational grounds for African liberation. African

¹⁹ Dukor., Maduabuchi., *African Freedom: Freedom of Philosophy*, pp.230-231

²⁰ Dukor., Maduabuchi., Identity, Citizenship and African Freedom, in Maduabuchi Dukor (Ed.), *Philosophy and Public Sphere, An Interdisciplinary*, International Journal of Concerned African Philosophers, Volume.7, No.1(2010): pp.89-103

liberation solely lies on a number of factors such as fostering the need for national paradigm and economic freedom for the African people. African liberation rests on the emancipation of the African people through the need for an attitudinal change. What Africans are currently facing is what Oladipo calls in his work, “*The Idea of African Philosophy*” the “crisis of relevance”.²¹ Today, the various African governments are faced with one form of crises ranging from socio-political crises such as political corruption and leadership irresponsibility, to economic crises such as underdevelopment. African identity has been bedeviled by neo-colonialism and cultural chauvinism, ethno-religious crises and economic crises. Some African scholars have argued that the crisis of African identity has been caused by the hegemonic tendencies of globalization. Many African leaders have failed the African people due to their poor governance or leadership style. It is germane to note that the African continent has been bedeviled by environmental non-sustainability or degradation, natural epidemics such as diseases, abject poverty, and corruption. The problems of poverty and corruption have been some of the banes to African liberation and African development. Democracy in Africa lacks accountability and development sustainability. The lack of democratic commitment by African leaders and their followers have led to the slow pace of sustainable development in Africa. African liberation must be holistic

in nature. Political freedom requires economic freedom. Many Africans lack both economic freedom and political rights. For Burr and Goldinger, right is the property of man.²² Freedom, equality and self-determination are the principles of man's true existence.

Worthy of note is that many Africans lack both economic and political rights due to lack of democratic accountability among some African leaders. Many of the African leaders have subjected the African people to a perpetual political un-freedom and economic subjugation.

In a nutshell, many Africans are wallowing in abject poverty due to political corruption or leadership irresponsibility. They have denied the African people their rights to the public good. The public good remains the solid bedrock of the general happiness of the African peoples. The idea of the common good remains the legitimizing foundation of social order in Africa. The common good brings about the need for “harmonious relatedness” in African society.

Economic Development and Political Integration in Nnamdi Azikiwe's Concept of *Neo-welfarism*.

Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology calls for the doctrine of integral human development in Nigerian society. This doctrine of integral human development can be considered meaningful and

²¹. Oladipo., Olusegun., *The Idea of African Philosophy*, pp.9-10

²². Burr., John., and Goldinger., Milton., *Philosophy and Contemporary Issues*, (New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Private Limited, 2008), pp.294-295

realistic only when the human environment is judiciously and properly managed for the overall economic growth and sustainable economic development of Nigerians.²³ Capitalism, socialism and welfarism are concepts that are actually aimed at the sustainable development of the human capacity. For Offe, there are six defining features of capitalism: markets, property rights; the role of private firms, politico-economic institutions, capitalist patterns of the cognitive and normative culture (Weber's "spirit" of capitalism), and reflexive dynamics of critique that are specific to capitalist societies.²⁴ As Offe further observes, the study of capitalism is a highly interdisciplinary field of investigation to which historians, economists, sociologists, lawyers, political scientists, and philosophers have significantly contributed. Capitalism is equated with individual freedom.²⁵ Capitalism is a political economy in the sense that it can hardly be conceptualized in terms of a durable institutional equilibrium.

Nevertheless, capitalism is all about individuals' pursuit of acquisitive rationality for its own sake.²⁶ On the other hand, socialism was a radical response to the purported evils and exploitative tendencies of capitalism. For Callaghan, socialism nevertheless lost none of its capacity for disputation and dissent. In part, this was because it continued to display a dual temporal existence, being both an account of the world as it was as well as an account of the world as it might be. On both counts, there was enormous scope for disagreement.²⁷ For Callaghan, socialism represented an alternative socioeconomic system to capitalism based on the principles of egalitarianism and collectivism. Socialist and liberals drew upon a common stock of Enlightenment assumptions.²⁸ Accordingly, Keats and Neill assert that, the socialist thought is conceived of human emancipation as requiring the subordination of nature to human ends.²⁹ For them, the socialist thought is built on the egalitarian principle of social justice: distribution according to needs is the most

²³. Isanbor., Philip and Bature., Anthony., *Morality, Integral Ecology and Development in Francis' Laudato Si: A Review* in Peter Omonzejele and Anthony Asekhauno (Eds.), *Philectics Benin Journal of Philosophy*, A Publication of the Department of Philosophy, University of Benin, Volume 1, No.2 (2018): 62-63

²⁴. Offe., Claus., *Capitalism* in Bertrand Badie, Hirk Berg-Schlösser and Leonardo Morlino (Eds.) *International Encyclopedia of Political Science*, Volume 3, (London: Sage Publications Limited, 2011), p.186

²⁵. *Ibid.*, pp.186-187

²⁶. *Ibid.*, p.191

²⁷. Callaghan., T. John., *Socialism* in Bertrand Badie, Hirk Berg-Schlösser and Leonardo Morlino (Eds.) *International Encyclopedia of Political Science*, Volume 3, (London: Sage Publications Limited, 2011), p.2452

²⁸. *Ibid.*, p.2448

²⁹. Keats., Russell., and Neill., John., *Socialism* in Edward Craig (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p.885

common, as in the well-known principle, 'from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs'.³⁰ These scholars argued that the claim that socialism produces the existential conditions for the realization of liberal political values has been central to arguments for socialism that appeal to the values of democracy and freedom.³¹ For Keats and Neill, socialism is a precondition of long term economic development and for many socialists the solution to economic development has been seen to lie in a centrally planned economy in which resources can be effectively and rationally directed to satisfy human needs and aspirations; while also meeting other social and ethical objectives such as human wellbeing and the human good.³²

Furthermore, socialism has been given some qualifying terms such as state socialism, market socialism, guild socialism, revolutionary socialism, scientific socialism, ethical socialism, even national socialism or fascist socialism but there is no agreed classification of types since the relevant basis for this is itself subject to dispute.³³ Socialism both as a relatively coherent theoretical doctrine and as an organized political movement had its origins in early

nineteenth century Europe, especially in Britain, France and Germany. It has both normative assumption and institutional elements.³⁴ It is germane to note that despite the negative connotation of capitalism, it gives room for technological advancement, creativity, innovation and competition. Capitalism drives away the tendency for domination of monopolies. Capitalism as a political economy is more profound and realistic than socialist thought.

Consequently, the connection between capitalism and socialism is that both concepts are aimed at the social development of the human person. Development is holistic and it remains one of the critical elements of the survival of any nation-state. Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* implies the correlation between democracy, development and the state. In consonance with Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology, Efemini, on the other hand, asserts that the state is in the best position to promote social development.³⁵ Efemini, further argues that, it is taken for granted that the nature of the politics played in each state affects the possibility of development in such a state. However, the nature of politics in any society could either positively or negatively affects the development of such a society.³⁶ Efemini's

^{30.} Ibid., p.884

^{31.} Ibid., p.883

^{32.} Ibid., pp.881-882

^{33.} Ibid., p.880

^{34.} Ibid., pp.879-880

^{35.} Efemini., Andrew., *Claude Ake's Concept of Development: Implications for Nigeria*, (Port Harcourt: Port Harcourt University of Port Harcourt, 2010), p. 61

^{36.} Ibid., p.58

theoretical position on the conceptual clarification of development elicits the need for national paradigm in Nigeria. Sustainable development could bring about national integration in Nigeria. Worthy of note is that politics is a process and it is all about the common good of the people in society.

Nnamdi Azikiwe's Neo-welfarist Ideology and its Implications for Nigeria

It is, however, not out of place that Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology has great moral lessons for Nigerian society. One of the moral lessons is that capitalism in Nigeria should be encouraged or advanced to pave the way for higher productivity. It gives room for the availability of the production of goods and services. It encourages self-reliance of any nation-state. It guarantees creativity, innovation, scientific and technological advancement and competition in the production of goods and services. Unfortunately, economic policies in Nigerian society are very harsh for the Nigerian peoples. Nigeria as a country should avoid the temptation of overdependence on foreign technology, goods and services. Nigeria as a country should move away from a consuming nation-state to a producing nation-state.

In addition, another fundamental problem militating against economic development and political integration in Nigeria is the problem of leadership failure. Ethnic

politics has affected Nigeria's leadership structure. The problem of ethnicity along ethnic divides has negatively affected socioeconomic and political development in Nigeria. However, ethnicity has overwhelmed Nigerian politics. Nigeria has always been characterized by what Okaneme calls the unpreparedness for leadership. It is one thing to aspire for political leadership, but it is entirely a different issue to be prepared for and to actually rule or lead well. Political leadership at any level is not a tea party. It is a very serious business and therefore, requires some unique positive dispositions for one to succeed while in office.³⁷ Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* demands that the problem of political leadership could only be tackled by visionary leadership: visionary leaders who could set the pace for Nigeria's quest for economic development and political integration.

Nnamdi Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology has contemporary relevance to Nigeria. In contemporary Nigerian society, there is nothing like political integration and intercultural integration due to the problem of ethnic politics. Tribal sentiment has destroyed the socio-political and economic structures of Nigeria. Tribal sentiment in Nigeria has given room for ethno-religious crises. The social structure of Nigeria is ravaged by lack of religious tolerance and ethnic politics. In today's contemporary Nigeria society, Islamic fundamentalism has been

³⁷. Okaneme., Godwin., The Poverty of Political Leadership in Nigeria: Philosophical Reflections, Peter Omonzejele and Anthony Asekhauno (Eds.), *Philectics Benin Journal of Philosophy*, A Publication of the Department of Philosophy, University of Benin, Volume 1, No.2 (2018):7-8

propelled by ethnic politics and lack of religious tolerance. This pitiable Nigerian condition has drastically distorted the socio-economic structures and political integration of Nigeria. Ethno-religious crises can serve as a bane to Nigeria's economic growth, economic development and socio-political advancement of Nigeria. Neo-welfarism could serve as leverage for curbing political corruption in Nigeria. Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* may not be purely realistic or practicable unlike capitalist ideology but it has a lot of contemporary relevance and moral implications for democratic socialism in Nigeria. Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* has both socialist thought and liberal dimension. Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology is deeply rooted in democratic liberalism. For Hardin, liberalism offers a prescription of how the state is to deal with citizens.³⁸ According to Waldron, liberal political philosophy explores the foundations of the principles most commonly associated with liberal politics: freedom, toleration, individual rights, constitutional democracy and the rule of law.³⁹ Azikiwe's liberal philosophy has some practical importance or pragmatic implications for democracy in Nigeria if his political theory is well natured and nurtured. His theoretical reconstruction showcases democratic commitment and engagement because democracy, itself, is an egalitarian concept which vests

ultimately power on the Nigerian people.⁴⁰ A truly democratic state would have the following features present in its polity: accountability, rule of law, predictability, competition, autonomy of the state and popular power.⁴¹ Azikiwe's liberal philosophy of capitalism, socialism, and welfarism reveals the ideological commitment of the Nigerian State which ought to be people-oriented. Unfortunately, the present day Nigerian political system is not ideologically driven and it is not people-oriented. Ideological agenda and programs are driven by the need for economic holism, socio-political integration, human wellbeing and human good.

Worthy of note is that the idea of the common good in Nigeria is a farce because many Nigerians have been denied their economic rights and civil rights due to the evils of corruption and bad leadership structure. Poverty in Nigeria has become so endemic that many Nigerians are currently living in poor living condition or abject poverty. Poverty has become a norm in contemporary Nigerian society and it has been moralized. Many Nigerians see poverty as a normal phenomenon and the will of God. Poverty has been Christianized in Nigeria. When you are poor in Nigeria you could be seen as holy or pious. Poverty is a form of dehumanization. It dehumanizes our

³⁸. Hardin., Russell., Liberalism in Edward Craig (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p.1428

³⁹. Waldron., Jeremy., Edward Craig (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p.598

⁴⁰. Efemini., Andrew., *Claude Ake's Concept of Development: Implications for Nigeria*, p.62

⁴¹. *Ibid.*, p.64

personality or dignity and it destabilizes our psychological wellbeing. Poverty is evil and anti-human.

Moreover, the ideological politics and democratic commitment of Nigerian leaders should be aimed at ensuring human wellbeing and the public good. Ideological programs are deeply rooted in the comprehensive conception of the good of the people. Ideology, itself, is aimed at restructuring complex modern societies.⁴² For Baradat, ideology is a positive, negative or *neu*-central feature of modern society. Baradat opines that ideologies are not only people-oriented but they are driven by economic ideas and the impact of progressive social change and political development. Ideologies have idealistic, materialist, pragmatic, normative and rationalist assumptions. It reflects the institutional outcomes of any democratic society. Ideology provides the moral compass for the public good and the collective interests of the people in any nation-state.

A Critique of Azikiwe's Neo-welfarist Ideology

Nnamdi Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology has both strengths and weaknesses. One of the strengths of Azikiwe's theoretical construct is that it showcases the practice of parliamentary democracy and democratic capitalism. His work is eclectic, pragmatic and a synthesis of foreign ideologies that could be best suited for African humanism and his

theoretical disposition reflects on the need for national paradigm in Nigeria. His work recognizes the interdependence between politics and economics. In other words, it is political sociology of some sort. On the other hand, one of the weaknesses of his philosophy is that his theoretical construct has not been able to grapple with the current economic and socio-political challenges of Nigeria. His political thought is more theoretical than practical. It showcases utopian ideals. His political thought lacks philosophical rigorosity despite his intellectual sagacity or theoretical ingenuity. The study is aimed at analysing Azikiwe's perception of contemporary problems and to appraise the extent to which his neo-welfarist ideology provides fundamental solutions to Nigerian socio-religious malaise and politico-economic conundrum. The thesis of this study is that Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology is not a totally and unquestionably reliable guide to Nigeria's economic development and political integration, even though, his eclectic and pragmatic method which he suggests is imperative and attractive. The study, therefore, reveals that the neo-welfarist ideology is not precisely enough in its purported liberal assumptions and the theoretical assimilation of the good elements in the different ideologies and economic systems serve as a kaleidoscopic nature of human freedom and social equality. Rousseau, for instance, was an advocate of approximate human equality because there is nothing

^{42.} Baradat., Leon., *Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact*, (New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Private Limited, 2008), p.6

like absolute or total equality in its entirety. The study also reveals that Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* showcases African humanism, democratic socialism and African Renaissance or moral rebirth. It is deeply rooted in economic holism or holistic and politico-economic and cultural determinism for Nigeria. This study also reveals that Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* presupposes African democratic egalitarianism and ideological commitment or political engagement. This study reveals that his African political thought assumes a form of both socialist thought and libertarian tradition. The study posits that Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology is all about the rationalization of Nigerian society and that ideology as political extremes has both materialist and rationalist assumptions. Azikiwe's perception of contemporary economic and political problems as it affects the Nigerian State is examined in this study. He suggests that imperialism whether or in its anachronistic form of direct colonialism or in the modern or indirect form of neo-colonialism is the root cause of the socio-political problems besetting the Nigerian State.

Moreover, the problems militating against the dogged pursuit and realization of the greatest happiness of the Nigerian peoples are simply the problems of political corruption and leadership irresponsibility. Azikiwe contrasts the poverty of the erstwhile colonial societies with the affluence of the technologically advanced (imperialist) nations of the world and maintains that both the poor and rich

nations of the world suffer from a kind of alienation or ideological confusions. This alienation is in the form of alienation by surrender (slave by consent) along economic and ideological lines or divides which is concerned with the need to overcome the economic struggle and political problems of the Nigerian State. This demands the call for a desirable, abundant and humane Nigerian society. Azikiwe maintains that to usher in a widespread economic development, the various nations of the world need a new attitude to tolerance and critical understanding of one another. He suggests that given the strict adherence to different ideologies and economic doctrines, there is the need for rational dialogue on ideologies with a view to harmonizing them by sifting and integrating the good aspects and making them work for the benefits of mankind. Azikiwe presents *neo-welfarism* as a pragmatic and normative outcome. The harmonization of the good elements of the different ideologies and economic doctrines remain imperative for human capacity building based on the principle of eclecticism and pragmatism.

Consequently, in his theoretical viewpoint, the neo-welfarist ideology is not only the panacea for the much needed development of post-colonial societies. It is more or less inadequate then for African communism. Thus, Azikiwe maintains that *neo-welfarism* should be adopted by all nation-states of the world as the most suitable or viable ideological template or theoretical framework for tackling contemporary economic development and

socio-political challenges in Africa. His theoretical reconstruction advocates African socialism and socialism is an ideal economic system; and philosophy does not rely solely on idealism.

Nonetheless, socialism is an economic system in which ideally the important decisions of what should be produced and how it would be distributed are determined by individuals making their own separate decisions of how to spend their time and money.⁴³ The problem of human nature would definitely frustrate the socialist ideals because of the problem of human egoistic calculation and pseudo-interest of the human person. Capitalism and socialism are concepts that are tilted towards the libertarian creed.⁴⁴ Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* should be seen as a liberal ideology where there is the emergence of open society in which critical thinking, freedom and progress can flourish; it presupposes that true freedom is to be found through the ethical state.⁴⁵ Azikiwe's *neo-welfarism* is nothing but a "libertarian creed" and it elicits a form of utopianism. It reflects on a critical understanding of the three principles of freedom, equality and self-determination. Worthy of note is that Azikiwe's neo-welfarism is deeply rooted in the need for national paradigm in Nigeria. Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology becomes an integral socio-political system and economic spectrum for African development. Worthy of note is that

Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology was a radical response to the decolonization of Africa. Africa as a continent has been lagging behind in terms of social, economic and political development. The status quo of uneven opportunities and development in Africa is reinforced by the thinkers of colonialism and neo-colonialism. The African continent is under a serious siege and it is yet to set itself free from the evils of colonialism and neo-colonialism.

Concluding Considerations

Having critically examined Azikiwe's neo-welfarism and its implications for Nigeria, this paper, therefore, concludes that Nnamdi Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology has both strengths and weaknesses. One of the strengths of Azikiwe's theoretical construct is that it showcases the practice of parliamentary democracy and democratic capitalism. His work is eclectic, pragmatic and a synthesis of foreign ideologies that could be best suited for African humanism. His theoretical disposition reflects on the need for national paradigm in Nigeria. His work recognizes the interdependence between politics and economics. In other words, it is political sociology of some sort. On the other hand, one of the weaknesses of his African political philosophy is that his theoretical construct has not been able to grapple with the current economic backdrop and socio-political challenges of Nigeria. His political thought is more

⁴³. Burr., John., and Goldinger., Milton., *Philosophy and Contemporary Issues*, p.523

⁴⁴. *Ibid.*, p.307

⁴⁵. Canovan., Margaret., *Totalitarianism in Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p.443

theoretical than practical. It showcases a form of utopianism. His political thought lacks philosophical rigorosity despite his intellectual sagacity or theoretical ingenuity.

This theoretical treatise is *coverage* of Nnamdi Azikiwe's African political thought. It is assumed that politics is not only a process but its major objective is to guarantee the idea of the common good as the intrinsic value of every human society. The theoretical analysis of society is geared towards rational and teleological ends. It is, however, not out of place that Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology has great moral lessons for Nigerian society. One of the moral lessons is that capitalism in Nigeria should be encouraged or advanced to pave the way for economic adequacy such as higher productivity, human dignity and human value. It gives room for the availability of the production of goods and services. It encourages the principle of self-reliance of any nation-state. It guarantees creativity, innovation, scientific and technological advancement and competition in the production of goods and services. Unfortunately, economic policies in Nigerian society are very harsh for the Nigerian peoples. Nigeria as a country should avoid the temptation of overdependence on technology, goods and services. Foreign aids are not enough but self-reliance remains the solid bedrock of Nigeria's quest for sustainable development. Democracy and development are intertwined or interwoven. Nigeria ought to move away from a consuming nation-state to a producing nation-state.

In addition, another fundamental problem militating against economic development and political integration or democratic advancement in Nigeria is the fundamental problem of “bewildering leadership structure” to use the words of Ruch and Anyanwu. It also reveals the problem of political corruption; hence there is the need for an effective or visionary leadership, ideological commitment, rule of law, democratic stabilization and economic liberalization in Nigerian society. The problem of ethnic politics has negatively affected socio-economic development and political integration in Nigeria and the fundamental answer to these problems of economic backwardness and ethnic politics in the Nigerian State is national paradigm. Azikiwe's neo-welfarist ideology calls for the doctrine of integral human development in Nigerian society. This doctrine of integral human development can be considered meaningful and realistic only when the human environment is judiciously and properly achieved for the overall economic growth and sustainable economic development of Nigeria and Africa in general.

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