

Human Nature in Marxism-Leninism and African Socialism

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Abstract

Understanding the true nature of the human being is no doubt a *sine qua non* for developing an ideology for a desirable praxis. This paper examines the pitfalls of Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism and African socialism. It argues that a critical analysis of both ideologies reveals a lack of clear understanding of the nature of man by their proponents. An exhaustive account of the nature of man must explain self-consciousness, the urge to avoid pain, the desire for a purposeful life and for freedom from external interference, the passion for distinction, and, most importantly, the desire to acquire personal property. The paper further contends that socialism (whether scientific or African), does not allow room for the pursuit of personal ambition. This accounts for the failure in the implementation of both Marxist-Leninist socialism and African socialism. The paper avers that there is need to understand that the human being cannot simply be seen as a socio-economic or historical being; rather, consideration of the intrinsic elements which constitute the true nature of personhood is quintessential to achieving a well-ordered society.

Introduction

The idea behind all socio-economic and political policies of government is usually predicated upon certain ideologies. The word “ideology” has been given many meanings. It owes its first linguistic meaning to Destutt de Tracy, as a “science of ideas meant to inform institution reforms...” (Braybrooke 1972, 124). To Momoh (1991, 127), “It is as old as mankind in the sense that it is always latent and implicit in any socio-human activity. Ideology is philosophy to the extent that an ideology is often predicated on a philosophy.”

Many scholars have advocated Marxist-Leninist (scientific) socialism as an ideological basis upon which to found a peaceful, ordered and incorruptible society. In Africa, socialism based on the ontological presuppositions of communalism has frequently also been prescribed. The belief in this regard is that capitalism encourages a bi-polarization of people into the classes of the oppressed and the oppressor. The belief of many advocates of the socialist ideology is that the mere adoption of socialism is the panacea to the problems of the society. Nevertheless, Nehru views this differently when he states:

Socialism is not only a way of life but a certain scientific approach to social and economic problems. If socialism is introduced in a backward underdeveloped country, it does not suddenly make it any less backward. In fact, we then have a backward and poverty-stricken socialism (Nehru 1982, 614).

Nehru’s explanation suggests that socialism is not the only alternative to the problem of capitalist bi-polarization of people into classes of the “haves” and the “have-nots”.

This paper examines the ideological impacts of the Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism in praxis, and African socialism as an ideology for decolonization in post-colonial Africa. The aim of this undertaking is to juxtapose the practicability of these two ideologies against a theory of human nature that embodies the individual’s self-consciousness, the urge to avoid pain, the desire for a purposeful life and for freedom from external interference, the passion for distinction, and, most importantly, the desire to acquire personal property.

Human Nature Conceptualized

Theories about human nature revolve—around answering the question: what is the fundamental nature of the human being? What constitutes his/her essence? This has been controversial in the history of ideas. Discussion on the nature of the human being has drawn the attention of philosophers, psychologists, economists, sociologists and natural scientists. While some scholars conceive the individual human being as a finished product of society, others hold the view that human nature is a product of biological drives which could be explained through genetic codes. Others premise their argument on the assumption that the human being is the only rational animal whose actions have positive or negative impacts on his/her overall environment. Which ever way these arguments go, the presupposition is that when the real nature of the human being is known, his/her present and future actions could be explained, controlled and possibly predicted. Apparently, social re-engineering for social stability could be realized upon an understanding of what the human being's true nature is.

Over the centuries, philosophers have made perspicuous attempts at accounting for the nature of man. This is why it would be quite difficult to narrow down in absolute terms what constitutes human nature. It is therefore on the basis of these conflicting perspectives on the nature of man that Battish Mondin notes:

The modern and contemporary philosophers have obtained a whole new series of images of man, which have sparked great interest. For example, anguished man (Kierkegaard), economic man (Marx), erotic man (Freud), existent man (Heidegger), symbolic man (Cassier), utopic man (Ricoeur), problematic man (Mercl), cultural man (Gehlen), fallible man (Bloch) etc. (Mondin 1985, 9).

The idea behind the theories of these scholars suggest that two dimensions to human nature can be deduced, namely, the individual and the social. What constitutes these two dimensions of human nature is broadly described by Leslie Stevenson:

Human persons need food, shelter, and the society of other persons. They wish to avoid pain. They want to find a purpose in life, and to enjoy exercising their manifold abilities or capacities without interference. These desires or needs are general and undisputable facts about human nature (Stevenson 1974, 124).

Explaining these dimensions further, Sulaimon Opafola notes:

The individual dimension comprises, among others, the wish to avoid pain, the need for food and shelter, the desire for purposeful life, and being free (that is, from interference) or being allowed to exercise manifold abilities.

Components of the social include the need for society of other human persons (Opafola 2008, 3).

The individual and social dimensions as described and explained by Stevenson and Opafola respectively seem to us to capture the essence of the nature of man. Stevenson (1974) goes on to examine seven theories of human nature, namely, the Lockean, Hobbesian, religious, Aristotelian, scientific, existentialist and Marxian. However, a discussion of all the seven theories of human nature as enunciated by Stevenson would be too broad for the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, the last theory, that is, the Marxian conception of human nature, falls within the purview of this paper, and so we shall limit ourselves to it.

Marxism and Human Nature

In his *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx (1967, 263) opines that “human nature is primarily determined by economics, and offers a radical philosophy, which also sees conflict as a consequence of the constraints of human existence.” Elsewhere Marx (1972, 43) asserts that man “is a social being, he is no abstraction squatting outside the world, but is himself, the human world, the state, society...The real nature of man is that he is a social and historical being.” Thus Marx conceives man as a purely socio-economic and historical being. Marx believes that a single assertion that all men are selfish, egoistic or altruistic does not offer us any understanding of ourselves, and must therefore not be accepted as an accurate description of the nature of the human being. The true nature of the human being in the Marxian account, according to Fayemi (2008, 2), is that “man by nature is social, economic, productive and dynamic being without alienation”.

Freedom, in Marxian terms, is the capacity of people to make decisions founded on recognised necessity, and to act with knowledge of the subject. It also means the human being’s control over nature, over social relationships and over himself/herself (Zakharov 1985, 115). However, a thorough examination of Marxism-Leninism in praxis reveals certain contradictions regarding the attribute of freedom in its theory of human nature. In our view, Marxism-Leninism does not give man the freedom to exercise his personal ambition. The intrinsic nature of man entails the desire for a purposeful life, being free from interference, the possibility to exercise manifold abilities and ultimately man’s

desire to acquire personal property. These, to us, form the basic constituents of human nature. The argument here is that Marxism-Leninism as construed and practiced in some quarters of the world (such as the former Soviet Union, Cuba and China) expresses autocratic tendencies, and does not allow the individual to exercise his/her personal will. The problem here is not really scientific socialism as envisaged by Marx; rather, the difficulty is wrapped around the manner of adoption and implementation of this theory by many self acclaimed communist societies.

Of course, Marx's scientific socialism berates the utopian socialism of Saint Simon, Charles Fourier and Robert Owen before it as based on hopes and dreams. These utopian socialists were concerned with establishing not just a better but perfect society based on socialist principles. Marx claims that his theory is based upon a scientific and correct analysis of history in materialistic terms with its revolutionary potency which is very practical and more realistic. Friedrich Engels buttresses Marx's assertion as follows:

The socialism of earlier days was as incompatible with this materialistic conception as the conception of nature of the French materialists was with dialectics and modern natural science. The socialism of earlier days certainly criticized the existing capitalist's mode of production and its consequence. But it could not explain them and therefore, could not get the mastery of them (Engels 1978, 52).

One basic fact needs to be emphasized, namely, that the utopian socialists provided the ground upon which Marx's theory of socialism is based. In fact, utopian socialism provided profound and convincing criticism of the bourgeois society, pointed to its numerous internal contradictions and vices, and raised the question of replacing capitalism by a new, just society (Zakharov 1985, 13). The difference between the utopian and Marxian socialism is that the former does not contain revolutionary elements as does the latter.

No doubt, Marx gave a scientific materialistic interpretation of human history, free from the characteristic gap in those previous theories between the explanation of the world and its transformation. Thus the theory of scientific socialism is inseparably linked with revolutionary practice, and is constantly enriched by the latter (Zakharov 1985, 16-17). It is therefore on this basis that Marx, Engels and Lenin turned socialist utopias and separate socialist ideas from a dream about a just society cherished by both the oppressed and the exploited into a scientific theory and programme of overthrowing the exploiting system,

and of conscious building of socialism (Zakharov 1985,18). The implication of Marx's assertion is that man can be liberated from the burden of economic and social evils by means of a socialist revolution which aims at abolishing the existing exploitative system of capitalism.

In Marxism-Leninism, it is believed that the society is economically divided into two classes. The theory states that history is characterized into several periods, for example, ancient civilization, feudalism and capitalism. Each of these periods is characterized by a predominant mode of production, and based upon it a class structure consisting of a ruling and an oppressed class. Marx (1967,93) thus emphasizes that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle." Marx argues that throughout history there have been two basic classes in society - the "haves" who control the production of goods and gain the lion's share of wealth, and the "have-nots" whose labour is exploited to enrich the upper class (Perry 1974,529). Marx therefore holds capitalism responsible for the poverty of the proletariat (workers). For Marx and his followers, capitalism fails to distribute its benefits to the great mass of people.

Marx, therefore, predicts the destruction of capitalism by means of a socialist revolution, which will lead to the abolition of private capitalist ownership and the establishment of public collective ownership (Hook 1975, 97). In this regard, Marx stated:

The great historic mission of the working class is to emancipate the working man by means of a socialist revolution, eradicate capitalism and build a genuinely human society, socialism (Marx 1972, 171).

Marx emphasizes that the cardinal task of the socialist revolution is to overthrow the supremacy of the bourgeoisie, sweep away the old state machine and create a new state - "the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat" (Marx 1972,231). Marx, however, prefers a violent revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist society. This violent revolution, according to Marx (1972,231) is "necessary – not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the much of ages and become fitted to found society a new". This violent overthrow of the capitalist system would bring about the dictatorship of the proletariat, in turn setting the stage for socialism, which would subsequently lead to communism.

However, Marxism-Leninism was criticized by Karl Popper among others. Popper's concern is about the consequences of Marxism's claim to be scientific. Popper contends that Marx's claim that history develops according to scientific laws is falsifiable. This is because Marx's assertion concerning a future communist state is, for Popper, purely a historical prediction and therefore unscientific:

Historical predictions made by Marx, on the basis of his economic historicism, have been falsified by subsequent historical events. The Russian revolution is, for example, entirely at odds with Marx's theory, as is the way in which the unrestricted capitalism of Marx's time has subsequently become both more economically successful and more just and humane as a result of diverse political interventions. Marxist economic historicism is just false; it is pseudo-scientific (Popper 1945, 111).

It is evident that working class revolutions have not broken out in the industrialized Western nations contrary to Marx's scientific law of history. As Perry (1974, 533) points out, it was rather in the underdeveloped regions of the world, in nations that were predominantly agricultural, that communist revolutions took place against a privileged minority that exploited the masses. A major example of this peasant communist revolution took place in 1917, when the Bolsheviks took over power through a revolution in Russia. The Marxism-Leninism which characterized the Bolshevik political regime in the Soviet Union went against a true theory of human nature, which embodies his/her individual and social dimensions. **In the former Soviet Union**, Marxism-Leninism became more autocratic than the Tsars' regime which it violently overthrew. In fact, worse than ever before, the subjects could not claim wills of their own.

Records show that Lenin's communist party wiped out the propertied, educated and europeanized minority. It transformed all subjects into toilers, who had to earn a living in enterprises controlled by the state. The communist party abolished income-producing private property, and created a population heavily dependent on the state, thereby taking away their freedom to acquire property and exercise personal ambition. The subjects were in fact indoctrinated with the Marxist-Leninist ideology, with the intention of leaving them no room to develop a personal mode of rational thinking. Even Stalin's communist regime which came after Lenin's, in its pursuit of economic growth for the state, used terror to subdue the people's will. In the words of Perry (1974, 657), "Men and women were exhausted by long hours of bleak work, their minds bewildered by the constant repetition of the slogans of Marxism-Leninism". Several other publications have also

affirmed these historical facts, chief among which is TK Chung's *Totalitarianism in Europe*, which buttresses our claim on the dictatorship of Stalin with his secret policy of the "Great Purge", in which he carried out a series of killings against his real or alleged enemies (Chung n.d.). Bergman (1998) is also an affirmation of the effects of totalitarianism on the individual personality of the soviet dissidents and the reformers of the Gorbachev era.

The Marxian conception of human nature is problematic because it stresses the economic life of the human being at the expense of other aspects of his/her identity. Due to this misconception, scientific socialism as practiced by the former Soviet Union succeeded for a while, only to fail eventually. What can account for this failure is that it was not founded on the will of the majority. Nevertheless, scientific socialism still has considerable influence on the outlook of many societies, particularly in their adoption of socialism both as an economic and political policy. Notable among these are China, Cuba and North Korea. This wave also hit Africa, particularly during the early 1960s, as many of her countries were emerging from colonialism. African proponents of socialism drew from the communalistic outlook of their societies, thereby giving their version of socialism a distinctly African flavour. It is therefore expedient to examine African socialism and its view of human nature.

African Socialism and Human Nature

The rise of communism in the former Soviet Union, and particularly the teachings of Karl Marx, Frederick Engel and Vladimir Lenin against the exploitation of the masses, informed the early African political thinkers on the need to end colonialism and to cut off all its tentacles. Thus African socialism was borne out of the need to find a suitable ideology for effective decolonization in Africa. Furthermore, as a result of the debilitating effects of colonial rule, post-independent African thinkers were faced with the serious challenges of socio-political and cultural reconstruction. The colonialists had imposed European beliefs and values on Africa. Thus European languages, belief systems, social, economic and political systems replaced pre-colonial African ones. In the words of Falaiye (1996, 82), "the colonialists distorted the values they met in Africa and termed them inferior."

One of the instruments of exploitation which was believed to have come with colonialism was capitalism. Capitalism as an economic system was believed to be alien to Africa. Consequently, the principle of individualism was claimed to replace the African cultural context of brotherhood, which suggests a welfare system of communalism, collectivism and egalitarianism. Thus the link between capitalism and colonialism created an anti-capitalist ideology in post colonial Africa. This led to the search for an ideology of decolonization. For Fanon (1968), decolonization involves a struggle for the mental elevation of the colonized African people. Similarly for Wiredu, the most important function of post-colonial philosophy is what he refers to as “conceptual decolonization”. This simply implies “divesting African philosophical thinking of all undue influences emanating from our colonial past” (Wiredu 1998). So, immediately after the independence of Ghana in 1957 and the subsequent independence of other African countries in the early 1960s, Kwame Nkrumah and several other African thinkers, among whom were Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal, Sekou Toure of Guinea, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Obafemi Awolowo of Nigeria, were concerned about how to dismantle the legacy of colonialism in the name of capitalism. To them, the adequate ideology for the total emancipation of the continent was socialism.

Nevertheless, despite the manifest influence of the teachings of Karl Marx and his European adherents on them, these African leaders claimed that socialism was not alien to Africa; rather, the African was naturally a socialist. This ontological foundation of African socialism was predicated upon the fact that the pre-colonial African societies were communalistic in nature. The three basic principles of communalism, collectivism and egalitarianism were said to be the guiding forces behind communities in pre-colonial Africa. Hence the African conception of the human being in pre-colonial Africa was said to have been based on the principle of communalism. The human individual is seen not only as a social being, but also as a communal one.

Similarly, some scholars have asserted that in the pre-colonial African thought system, every reality was embedded in force. Thus everything that exists is a force, and in the universe of forces no isolated force exists. Rather, every force is related to every other force, and forces interpenetrate each other. Thus Tempels explains that force is life and vice versa. He holds that “the world of forces is held like a spider’s web of which no

single thread can be caused to vibrate without shaking the whole network” (Tempels 1959, 60). On this point Anyanwu has stated:

All forces are interrelated and constantly interacting.... Because everything is filled with force or dominated by it the African arrives at the awareness that all things are similar and share the same nature in spite of apparent difference. This explains the inter-relationship between man and man which leads to the expression ‘to the whole idea of communal responsibility and interdependence’ (Anyanwu 1983, 50).

Mbiti also buttresses the claim of the African firm belief in a communal existence of individuals, stating that it is captured by the saying that “I am because we are and since we are therefore I am” (Mbiti 1989, 141). This is intended to show that in the African society, the individual’s identity is based on social interaction. The life of the individual cannot be separated from the community in which he/she lives. This is why Mbiti says that “only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being” (Mbiti 1989, 141).

However, in the midst of this interrelationship of forces, there is a hierarchy in how forces relate to one another:

Above all force is God, spirit and creator. It is He who has force, power, in Himself. He gives existence, power of survival and of increase to other force. In relation to other forces, he is ‘He who increases force’following from God, the Archpatriachs, the founders of clans, the ancestor, etc, going down to living human beings, animals, plants and inanimate objects. These are all linked by the possession of vital force... (Tempels 1959, 61).

The principle of communalism, believed to have existed in pre-colonial Africa, has been claimed to form the ontological foundation of African socialism. It is further claimed that the ideas of brotherhood, social relations and collectivism are features of communalism, and these are said to go hand-in-hand with the basic characteristic of socialism, which entails the material resources of the society being controlled by the state rather than by private individuals as is the case in a capitalistic setting.

During the Arusha declaration of 1967 in which Julius Nyerere declared the adoption of African socialism in Tanzania, many African political leaders and revolutionary theorists saw this as a step in the right direction. In his book, *Neocolonialism: The Highest Stage of Imperialism*, Kwame Nkrumah (1965, 41) asserted that “capitalism is alien to Africa and it is indeed a form of neocolonialism”. He went on to aver that an African is a socialist by

inclination, so that African socialism should be adopted as an ideology for decolonization. Nyerere buttresses this basic assumption that Africans in pre-colonial days lived communally:

In traditional African society, an African never aspired to acquire wealth to the detriment of his fellow men in order to dominate his fellow men. Everybody was the same within the community. He was rich or poor according to whether the whole society was rich or poor. However, if the society prospered, all members of the society or tribe shared in it (Nyerere 1975, 164).

However, although African socialism became the dominant ideology for the total emancipation of post-colonial Africa, there were several variants of it. Many of the African political thinkers were actually pursuing widely contrasting policies in their efforts to reconstruct their various countries, yet a number of them used “socialism” to describe the ideologies behind their respective efforts. In short, they did not agree among themselves on what form African socialism should take. This was partly due to their different experiences under different colonial masters; but even if they had gone through similar experiences, they probably would not have interpreted them the same way.

In the essay “*Ujamaa: the Basis of African Socialism*”, Nyerere argues that pre-colonial African societies were socialist because they were based on the principle of *Ujamaa*. *Ujamaa* literally means familyhood or brotherhood. One common feature of Nyerere’s argument is the call to a return to the African traditional past, which past he claimed was communal. Nyerere claimed that African communalism was the precursor to socialism. To Nyerere, the traditional African past was a glorious one. For him, colonialism was episodic. Consequently, contends Nyerere, it is possible to imagine it never occurred, so that the people can continue from where they were halted.

Nyerere rejects capitalism, claiming that it is alien to the traditional African mindset. He argues that the African is a socialist by nature because of the spirit of communalism in him:

We in Africa have no more need of being converted to socialism than we have of being taught democracy. Both are rooted in our past..... Modern African socialism can draw from its traditional heritage..... (Nyerere 1975, 515).

Furthermore, Nyerere contends that in traditional African societies everyone was a worker, and that the obligation to work was a sacred virtue that everybody had to adhere to in order to survive. In those societies, he claims, no parasites were allowed:

Those of us who talk about the African ways of life quite rightly take a pride in maintaining the tradition of it and might do well to remember the Swahili proverb saying “Mgeni siku mbili, siku ya tatu mpe jembe ...”. Meaning, treat your guest as guest for two days on the third day, give him a hoe (Nyerere 1975, 146).

The Negritude of Leopold Senghor with Leon Damas and Aime Cesaire is another variant of African socialism. Negritude is explained simply as “assimilate but do not be assimilated”. It stands as a complement to the European values and the African cultures. Senghor reiterates that negritude does not express itself as opposition to European values, but as a complement to them:

It is a matter of selecting, among European methods, the most effective ones for an exact analysis of our situation. It is a question of borrowing those of its institutions, values and techniques. We shall retain whatever should be retained of our institutions, our techniques, our values, even our methods. So, from both the African acquisitions and European contributions, we shall make a dynamic symbiosis to fit Africa and the twentieth century, but first of all, to fit man (Senghor 1964, 83).

Apart from Nyerere and Senghor, there is also Kwame Nkrumah, who called his ideology “philosophical consciencism”, a system of thought which its author claims rests primarily on socialist ideals. In traditional African societies, according to Nkrumah, people lived communally - everything was owned by the community, including the means of production, and everybody worked for the common good. To Nkrumah, the developed form of communalism is socialism. Capitalism, according to Nkrumah, is not compatible with the egalitarian and communalistic nature of traditional African societies. Consequently, Nkrumah contended that there is need to adopt an ideology in Africa based on socialist principles.

Nkrumah advocated a revolution in Africa based on a socialist strategy of economic and political reforms. This was to be sustained by a new discourse expressing the need to confront underdevelopment and capitalist neocolonialism by way of an alternative “African” socialism. This, for Nkrumah, is a “revolution for reconstruction”. It was to build on the African heritage of communal and “socialist” way of life. It would end the “exploitation of man by man” by promoting social property, a mixed (private-public)

economy under the control of the state, by constructing a Pan-African and Third World force in world politics, and by belief in God (Acquah 1992, 138).

This new discourse on the socialist orientation is enunciated in Nkrumah's book, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology of Decolonization and Development*. Nkrumah states that the socialist principles to be adopted in Africa must rest primarily upon “philosophical consciencism” as an ideology for decolonization:

A new harmony needs to be forged, a harmony that will allow the combined presence of traditional Africa, Islamic Africa and Euro-Christian Africa, so that this presence is in tune with the original humanist principles underlying African society. Our society is not the old society, but a new, enlarged by Islamic and Euro-Christian influences. A new emergent ideology is therefore required, an ideology which can solidify in a philosophical statement, but at the same time an ideology which will not abandon the original humanist principles of Africa. Such a philosophical statement will be born out of the crisis of the African conscience confronted with the three strands of present African society. Such a philosophical statement I propose to name “philosophical consciencism” (Nkrumah 1968, 268).

Unlike Nyerere who painted a glorious African past and advocated a return to it, Nkrumah reiterates that it is impossible to return to the traditional past because the conscience of the African has been influenced by what he calls “the triple heritage”. To him, the African has been exposed to Islamic and Euro-Christian cultures through trade, slavery and colonialism. Thus Socialism in post-colonial Africa must rest on philosophical consciencism because it (philosophical consciencism) is firmly based on communalism and egalitarianism.

Other variants of African socialism include Obafemi Awolowo’s “Democratic Socialism”, which advocates the attainment of socialism by democratic means (Awolowo 1968, 195). On its part, Sekou Toure’s “Communaucratique” concurs with Senghor’s viewpoint, attempting to blend European values with the purported socialist outlook of traditional Africa (Toure 1960, 292). It is however important to note that most of these variants were developed to suit the specific African societies in which their progenitors resided.

In our view, African socialism, like Marxist-Leninism, is characterised by non-recognition of individual will to self-actualization. The imposition of socialism on

contemporary African societies is contrary to the natural right to freedom from interference, the right to exercise manifold abilities, the individual's aspiration for a purposeful life, his/her desire to avoid pain, and his/her passion for the acquisition of personal property and for the attainment of distinction. It is no wonder therefore that the one-party system of government in Africa was often closely associated with the practice of African socialism. Furthermore, the attempt to banish individual ownership of wealth on the assumption that the human person is naturally communalistic because some individuals have shown an inclination towards this kind of arrangement is to commit the fallacy of converse accident (hasty generalisation). Thus just as scientific socialism failed in the former Soviet Union, so Nkrumah and Nyerere both failed in their bids to set up African socialist states, because their ideas were embedded in autocratic rule, which, of necessity, quashes personal, economic and political freedom.

Conclusion

It has not been the aim of this paper to advocate capitalism as the most appropriate political and economic system - an objective that can be enticing given the level of success that capitalism has recorded in industrialized societies today. Although capitalism is successfully promoting globalization, the attempts of the duo (capitalism and globalisation) at eroding national cultures and economies of developing countries is a course for concern. The demerits of capitalism itself are boundless, particularly as it promotes unhealthy rivalry which may lead to social disorder. Globalization is also guilty of widening the gulf between the "haves" and the "have-nots". "In fact, while global wealth has undoubtedly increased, it has become concentrated, in fewer hands and fewer countries" (Perry 1974, 530).

Our view is that any social, economic or political ideology ought to take a holistic view of human nature. Our submission is that one of the major reasons the Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism failed in the Soviet Union and in its satellite Eastern European states, and that African socialism was equally unsuccessful on the continent, is that while the former sees the human person purely as a socio-economic and historical being, the latter is based on the hasty generalisation that Africans are naturally communalistic. Both ideologies failed to recognize the fact that the human person is not just a composition of one element, but a conglomeration of many attributes, inherent in both the individual and

social dimensions of human nature. This fact is embodied in John Locke's famous *Two Treatises on Civil Government*. Locke states that human beings by nature are not wholly selfish, as they sometimes work for the good of others and co-operate with one another. Human beings are governed by the law of nature, with the proviso that no one ought to harm another in his/her life, health, liberty or possessions (Locke 1821, 259).

Furthermore, according to Locke, there are certain areas of human conduct which are immune from governmental interference. Locke calls these "rights", and they include freedom to speak and to worship as one pleases. However, the main right which Locke emphasizes is the right to own private property (Locke 1821, 269). The reason is that private property is, to a great extent, the fruit of a person's own labour. The individual dimension which Locke emphasizes here relates essentially to the right to own private property, while the social dimension is the person's co-operation with others for the good of all. The submission here, therefore, is that a synthesis of the individual and social dimensions of human nature would be a sound basis for the formulation of a dynamic and durable ideology for building a well-ordered society.

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