**Communism, Marxism-Leninism and Socialism in Africa**

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**Introduction**

Communist ideas have been prevalent in Africa since at least the early 20th Century. However, nowhere on the continent was a strict form of communism ever practiced. What were practiced were hybrid forms of socialism, including some that eclectically borrowed from Marxist-Leninist and Maoist theory. Communism is a particular form of socialism. According to Marxist theory, in its most advanced form it involves state control by the working class. However, at this moment in history, nowhere in Africa have there been political and economic systems that were based solely on communist principles; nor has there ever been a strictly working class revolution. The terms communism and socialism have come in some places to be used interchangeably. Also, socialism is not practiced exclusively in one type of political system. Most socialist systems today are participatory democracies. What is often referred to as Marxism-Leninism rejects participatory democracy in favor of a disciplined, vanguard party in which democracy is practiced only in the central leadership organs of the party. It also involves a rejection of the free market and the private ownership of property. The first appearances of communist ideas in Africa were introduced by European workers in newly industrializing colonies with a significant concentration of settlers. Such ideas also were introduced to African students in their formal European-based education systems. Between World Wars I and II some Africans had lived and work in Europe and this experience produced many of the leaders and intelligentsia who would return to Africa with ideas about how to change their own societies and to end colonial rule. African elites who were exposed to socialist ideas either in the workplace or through the writings of theorists such as Karl Marx and V. I. Lenin and were attracted by the notions of social equality, mutual respect and the sharing of labor. These were seen as values that were common in African traditions. Even though socialist ideas were popular among African intellectuals, the emerging nationalists on the continent felt that these ideas had to somehow be molded to fit the realities of the African condition. This resulted in the widespread popularity of the ideas of Pan Africanists from America, Europe and the Caribbean such as George Padmore and W.E.B. Dubois and the proponents of the concept of Négritude as espoused by Leopold Senghor of Senegal and Aimé Césaire from Martinique. Perhaps the most influential anti-colonial thinker of the time was Frantz Fanon, a professional psychiatrist and philosopher. Fanon was responsible for promoting from a socialist perspective the intersectionality of colonialism and racism, and the idea of popular struggles for African national liberation.

**General Overviews**

Although the communist ideas and arguments of such European theorists as Marx and Engels since just before the turn of the 20th century, they have never been widespread. Historically Communism on the continent was strongest in Egypt, Sudan, Algeria and South Africa which had significant European settlement, such ideas remained foreign to the African masses until the principles of Marxism-Leninism became popular among intellectuals around the time of World War I (Drew 2014). Communist parties in these colonies were constantly under pressure by either the colonial government or a white dominated regime. Drew provides an excellent account of the development of both the Algerian and South African Communist parties over time. The emergence of nationalist movements on the continent coincided with the beginning of the Cold War, and the ideological and strategic competition involving the United States and the Soviet Union and China for client-states in Africa. Thus the superpowers were very much responsible for the emergence of communist orientations in some African nationalist movements. If African movements and parties after independence allied themselves with the US, China, or the USSR, they were labelled as either capitalist or communist (Young 1982, Idahosa, 2004 Rosberg and Callaghy 1979, and Friedland and Rosberg 1964). However, these alliances were made primarily because they offered material support to the movement or dominant party in a regime, rather than being based on a clear and consistent acceptance of the guiding ideology of either the Western or Communist partner. It was evident from the very beginning of African independence that individual leaders accepted a form of socialism based on the humanistic aspects of that ideology. This meant, at least from the public pronouncement of leaders, their commitment to egalitarianism. At the same time what they liked about Soviet style socialism was not so much the notion of a proletarian revolution but of the need for role for a disciplined vanguard party. Nationalist movements more closely aligned with the major communist regimes, the USSR and China, did not begin to surface until the 1970s particularly in Lusophone Africa (Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau) and Ethiopia, where liberation revolutionary movements developed. Once these movements assumed power they were termed Afro-Marxist regimes (Ottaway and Ottaway 1986, Keller and Rothchild 1987 and Munslow 1986). In other places such as Madagascar, Benin, Congo-Brazzaville and Zimbabwe leaders of independent regimes merely claimed to be Marxist-Leninist without usually developing policies consistent with a firm commitment to a particular ideological or institutional persuasion.

Drew, Allison. “\*Communism in Africa.

\*” in Stephen A. Smith, ed., 2014.*The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism Online*. http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199602056.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199602056-e-003

This is an excellent treatment of the origins and development of communism or socialism on the African continent. The article is particularly useful in understanding the history of communist parties and movements throughout Africa.

Friedland, William H., and Carl G.Rosberg, Jr., eds.1964. *African Socialism*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

When it was published, this book was considered perhaps the most authoritative analyses on African socialism. Rather than being seen as a form of communism, African socialism was viewed as a pragmatic ideology that blended some aspects of classical socialism, communism, Pan-Africanism and African traditional values. Its definition varied from place to place and person to person.

Idahosa, P. L. E. 2004.The Populist Dimension to African Political Thought: Critical Essays in Reconstruction and Retrieval. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press.

This book critically examines the relationship of the post- independence African state, popular classes, and development. It is argued that populist thinkers Nyerere, Cabral and Fanon shared a common passion for a brand of socialism that was democratic and rooted in pre-colonial traditions as well as in Marxist-Leninist theory. Their thought also considered the critical need to control capital without being exploited by it.

Keller, Edmond J. and Donald Rothchild, eds. 1987. *Afro-Marxist Regimes: Ideology and Public Policy.* Boulder, CO: Rienner.

This book presents an analysis of the scope and quality of a selected number of African states that came to espouse Marxism-Leninism or “scientific socialism” during their heyday. It highlights the impact of the Cold War on their growth and policy performance. It is argued that these states can be divided into “orthodox” and “heterodox” categories depending on how closely their governments aligned with the thinking of the Russian communist party.

Munslow, Barry, ed. 1986. *Africa: Problems in the Transition to Socialism.* London: Zed Books.

The chapters in this book offer analyses of the socialist strategies of African liberation movements that assumed control of independent governments and common problems they have faced in the process of transitioning from colonial domination.

Ottaway, Marina and David Ottaway. 1986. *Afrocommunism*. New York: Africana. 2d Edition.

First published in the early 1980s this book is essential reading for those interested in identifying why the most orthodox Afromarxist regimes of the time chose development strategies rooted in “scientific socialism”, or variants of Marxism-Leninism.

Rosberg, Carl and Thomas Callaghy, eds. 1979. *Socialism in Sub-Sahara Africa: A New Assessment.* Berkeley: Institute of International Studies.

This edited volume seeks to evaluate what is termed the “second wave” of socialist experiments in Africa. The analysis of the “first wave” had taken place fifteen years prior to the publication of this book in the early post-independence period. It exposes the shortcomings of so-called African socialism in practice. The authors contend that in practice the aspiring ideology did not provide a clear strategy for social transformation after colonialism.

Young, Crawford. 1982. *Ideology and Development*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

This award winning book provides a useful framework for analyzing various forms of socialist ideologies and institutional choice in Africa from the ‘60’s to the ‘80’s.

**Bibliographies**

The particular bibliographies identified here as a group are relatively comprehensive representations of the state of knowledge on this subject in the West from the colonial period to the present. *The Africa Bibliography* covers a period from the early days of African independence to today. Its strength is its online acceccibility of every item cited in the bibliography since 1984 online**.** *The International African Bibliography* would be most useful to scholrs documenting the history of leftist ideologies and policies on the entire continent. The major value of A Current Bibliography on African Affairs is that it comprehensively covers current developments relating to leftist thought and practice over the length and breadth of Africa.

*\*Africa Bibliography*[http://africabibliography.cambridge.org/]\*

This is an authoritative guide to works on Africa published annually since 1984 by the International African Institute. It is currently published online publication bringing together every record collected since the bibliography’s foundation, and accessible to scholars interested in the study of Africa.

*\*The International African Bibliography (IAB).* [http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/iabi]\*

The IAB is aimed at all scholars and students interested in African societies. It provides links to historical as well as current academic research published internationally on Africa. The IAB concentrates on publications dealing with the African Continent as a whole. Titles are arranged by discipline, theme and region.

*\*A Current Bibliography on African Affairs*[https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/a-current-bibliography-on-african-affairs/journal202404]\*, 1962-present.

This is an annotated quarterly guide to current African published and forthcoming works on African developments. It prides itself on being timely and comprehensive. The bibliography is extremely useful to those interested in current developments in Africa itself and in Africanist scholarship.

**Reference Works**

Apart for the *Monthly Review Press*, the works cited here are of two distinct categories. The Monthly Review Press is an extremely valuable outlet for the intellectual history of leftist thought and practice in Africa. The other categories of publications represented consist of handbooks (e.g. the two collections edited by Celistin Monga and Justin Yifu Lin who concentrate on publications relating relevant economic theories and policies); and works that identify the history and politics of Africa today (e.g. the Oxford and Routlidge handbooks) that at least partially cover several aspects of the topics of Communisism, Marxism-Leninism and African Socialism. Also included in this groups is an important essay by Motola detailing consititional developments during the era of Afro-Marxist regimes. A second category of the items in this section represents party manifestos and statements of particular applications of leftist or populist ideologies and policies in particular countiries. *Enufforethiopia,* 2012, in Amharic, lays out the vision of the ruling Marxist Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front for transforming that country’s political economy while taking advantage of the benefits of a neo-liberal development agenda. *The Arusha Declaration* details President Julius Nyerere’s philosophy of socialism and self reliance and *Katiba ya CCM*. 2005, articulates a new approach to development in Tanzanian while remaining true to the principles of African Socialism as originally articulated by Nyerere. In contrast to Tanzania, shortly after Kenya’s independence the ruling party, the Kenya African Democratic Union, appropriated the term socialism to describe its development agenda while embracing a development strategy that was socialist only in rhetoric.

*Enufforethiopia,* 2012. “\*TPLF/EPRDF’s Strategies for Establishing its Hegemony and perpetuating its rule[http://www.enufforethiopia.net/pdf/Revolutionary\_Democr-acy\_EthRev 96.pdf]\*”.

# This is an abridged translation of a 68-page Amharic document of the TPLF/EPRDF, the ruling party in Ethiopia, published in 1993. The document spells out the long-term goals of the party’s political and economic strategies. It lays out the challenges faced by the party in implementing its Marxist ideology while at the same time being dependent on assistance from Western donors pressing for democracy and not socialism.

*.*.*Katiba ya CCM. 2005*. “\*The Constitution of Chama cha Mapinduzi [http://ccmtz.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Katiba\_ya\_CCM\_\_\_\_ENG\_2005\_.pdf]\*”, Dar es Salaam (2006).

This is the reformed party constitution dealing with the significance of the joining of the Tanganyika African Nation Union with the Zanzibar-based Afro Sharazi Party. The joint party took on the name of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the Party of the Revolution.

Monga, Celestin and Justin Yifu Lin eds. 2013. *The Oxford Handbook of Africa and Economics Volume 1: Context and Concepts*. London: Oxford University Press.

This volume is the first of two featuring analytical essays that make new and original arguments about perspectives on African political economy.

Monga, Celestin and Justin Yifu Lin eds. 2015. *The Oxford Handbook of Africa and Economics Volume 2: Policies and Practices*. London: Oxford University Press.

This volume critically re-evaluates the economic policies and practices observed across the continent since independence. It offers a collection of analyses by some of the leading economists and development thinkers of our time, and reflects a wide range of perspectives and viewpoints-even on the topic.

**Monthly Review Press**

The Press is an independent socialist publisher that seeks to contribute to the critique of capitalism, and document and analyze struggles for a social order based on human need and potential rather than corporate profit. It tries to promote rational argument and open debate within a broad socialist culture, rather than advancing the perspectives of any organization or tendency within the socialist camp. Of particular interest is its African Archives.

Motola, Ziyad. 1990. “An Evaluation of the Constitutions and Influence of Soviet Constitutional Law on Afro-Marxist Countries: Has it provided a Viable Model of Government for African Countries?. *Capital University Law Review.* Vol. 19,187-209.

This article critically evaluates whether or not the constitutions of Afro-Marxist regimes established in Lusophone Africa have been patterned after the Soviet constitution. It is argued that while Mozambique and Angola by the early 1990shad had limited success at doing this, the regime in independent Guinea-Bissau has not.

Parker, John and Richard Reid, eds. 2013.*The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History*. London: Oxford University Press.

This reference work is a very useful resource for students and scholars of African studies. It focuses on the political, economic, social, and cultural dimension of the continent over the past two hundred years.

Republic of Kenya. 1965 *Socialism and Its Application to Planning in Kenya.* Nairobi: World Bank.

This pamphlet is a representation of how the term “African Socialism” was appropriated by nationalists even though they were committed to capitalist development. They saw the role of the state as the provider of welfare support for the citizenry rather than as the vanguard of a social revolution.

#### [Cheeseman](file:///%5C%5Cauthor%5CNic_Cheeseman%3Bjsessionid%3DheR6VvUhLPxSKmXIL4StciFP) , Nic, [David M. Anderson](file:///%5C%5Cauthor%5CDavid%20M._Anderson%3Bjsessionid%3DheR6VvUhLPxSKmXIL4StciFP) , [Andrea Schreiber](file:///%5C%5Cauthor%5CAndrea_Scheibler%3Bjsessionid%3DheR6VvUhLPxSKmXIL4StciFP), eds. 2013.Routledge Handbook of African Politics. New York: Taylor and Francis Group.

This project gives detailed analyses of some of the leading debates and controversies relating to African politics today. Each chapter deals with a specific topic, providing an overview of the main arguments and theories and explaining the empirical evidence that they are based on polities such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Africa, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, as well as important contemporary themes including socialism and Marxism-Leninism..

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Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). 1967. \**The Arusha Declaration and TANU’s Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance*[https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/nyerere/1967/arusha-declaration.htm]\**.* Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

This is the most authoritative statement of the structure and objectives of TANU, Tanzania’s dominant party’s ideology at independence. It spells out what Nyerere’s principles on which *Ujamaa* (Family hood) Socialism is based. It was influenced by Marxist and Maoist theory but was at the same time rooted in Tanzanian culture.

**Journals**

Although there are numerous journals and reviews that may have relevant materials relating to this topic the ones listed here are seen as particularly useful, especially from the 1960s to the 1990s. Those relating to communist, socialist and Marxist thought and criticism including Africa are \*\**The African Communist\*\*,* and \*\**Review of African Political Economy\*\*.* More general African Studies oriented publications include the \*\**Journal of Modern African Studies\*\*, \*\*African Affairs\*\*,* the \*\**Canadian Journal of African Studies\*\* and the \*\*African Studies Review\*\*.* Other general scholarly journals that would be useful include the \*\**Journal of Comparative and Commonwealth Politics\*\**, and \*\**Présence Africaine\*\*.*

*The African Communist* http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=africancommunist

This is a magazine established in 1959 in South Africa by a group of Marxist-Leninists in Africa. Its purpose was to defend and spread the liberating ideas of Communism throughout Africa. It is unofficially associated with the South African Communist Party (SACP).

*Review of African Political Economy (ROAPE)* http://roape.net/

*ROAPE* was founded in 1974 to provide radical analysis of issues, trends and social processes in Africa. It is committed to understanding the scope and depth of radical socialist transformation on the continent. It consistently examines the nature of power and the state, class, gender, race and other forms of domination and exploitation in the context of the current spread of worldwide capitalist expansion.

*Journal of Modern African Studies (JMAS)* https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-modern-african-studies

The JMAS publishes quarterly and primarily concerns itself with current African politics and society and international relations. It also has a well-regarded book review section.

*Journal of Comparative and Commonwealth Politics* http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/fccp20/current

This quarterly scholarly publication was first published in 1961 as the journal of *Commonwealth Political Studies.* It was renamed in 1998. It is the premier comparative politics journal in Britain and the Commonwealth. The Journal mainly publishes research on British Commonwealth relating to important issues in the field of comparative politics. It also publishes scholarly work in the general field of comparative politics that enables comparison with issues relevant to Commonwealth countries.

*African Affairs* https://academic.oup.com/afraf

This is a peer reviewed quarterly publication on behalf of the Royal African Society. Since 1944 it has focused on interdisciplinary scholarship. Some consider it the most the most influential journal that focuses on contemporary Africa in the world. A valuable feature of this resource is its publication of a current bibliography of recent relevant books and articles.

*African Studies Review (ASR)* https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/african-studies-review

The ASR is the primary scholarly journal of the African Studies Association in the US. It is published three times per year. Its mission is to publish high quality disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary academic articles, and book and film reviews relating to African societies broadly conceived.

*Canadian Journal of African Studies* http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rcas20/current

This is the official publication of the Canadian Association of African Studies (CAAS). It is bilingual multidisciplinary and is one of only two international journals in African studies which have consistently published in both English and French.

*Présence Africaine* <http://www.cairn.info/revue-presence-africaine.htm>

*Présence Africaine* is a [pan-African](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan-Africanism) quarterly cultural, political, and literary magazine, published in [Paris, France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris%2C_France), and founded by [Alioune Diop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alioune_Diop) in 1947. In the immediate post-war period, the journal was highly influential in the [Pan-Africanist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan-Africanism) movement, the [decolonization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decolonization) struggle of former [French colonies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_colonial_empire), and the birth of the [Négritude](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/N%C3%A9gritude) movement. Between 1955 and 1960 there was an English edition, but before that time the journal was and is presently published exclusively in French.

**African Nationalist Movements and Communism**

In order to understand the impact of communist ideologies on post-independence Africa one must distinguish between theory and practice. In terms of the ideological basis of communist or socialist ideas on the political discourse in Africa in the 1900s, communist notions of how to organize a society free of colonialism and capitalist exploitation appeared on the continent as early as the 1920s. Such ideas reached their apogee roughly over a quarter of a decade beginning in the 1960s. Most notable among African intellectuals espousing some variant of communist or socialist ideas adapted from Western thinkers were such figures as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana; Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria; A.M. Babu of Tanzania; and Amilcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau. Wherever they were found such ideas were adapted to the context of the location in which they were applied. It is important to note, however, until now no pure form of communism was ever actually implemented in Africa. Also, even though some African nationalist leaders cultivated good relations with such communist superpowers as the Soviet Union, Communist China and Cuba, none ever attempted to simply replicate the policies and programs of the communist parties which governed these non-African countries. Rather than the importance of class struggle, African applications of socialist ideas tended to emphasize humanism and social cooperation. This could clearly be seen in such countries as Egypt, Algeria, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia and South Africa.

**Theory and Philosophy**

The African push for decolonization began not in Africa but in Europe among African students and Intellectuals living there at the end of World War II. It was in Europe that the Pan African movement was born (Padmore 1956; Dia 1961) as well as the notion of Négritude (Senghor 1964). The objective of both these inter-related movements was to assert the human dignity of African people wherever they were. Europe was also where Marxism-Leninism became popular among future African nationalist leaders. Once back on the African continent these leaders crafted their own ideologies based on what they felt were African values in their traditions. Some drew from Marxism a passion for eliminating inequalities in their societies, particularly as these inequalities were a product of European colonialism and racism (Fanon 1967). Franz Fanon, a Martiniquean who was among the adherents to Pan Africanism in France made the linkage between colonialism and racism and by extension colonial capitalism. The anti-colonialism/racism on the continent gave rise to a call for African nationalism in individual colonies and this was transferred to Africa at large. Socialism, not communism per say, became a part of this discussion, but there were different ideas about what that meant. Some saw socialism as having been ingrained in African humanistic traditions (Senghor 1964, Kaunda 1974; Nyerere 1969; Idahosa 2004); others saw it as requiring a scientific approach to rebuilding their societies after colonialism (Nkrumah1964), and still others were critical of either approach as it was taking form just after independence (Armah 1967; Babu 1981; Dia 1961). Related to the Pan African movements was the notion of Arab Nationalism which also borrowed Marxist ideas (Qaadafi 1999). It is important to note that several national independence movements began simply as a call for ending colonialism. Their objectives were more political than economic and the thought was that once independence was achieved all other aspects of the community could develop in a progressive manner. Nkrumah is said to have asserted, “Seek ye first the political kingdom and all things shall be added unto you” (Biney 2011). The tilt towards socialism, scientific and otherwise, in most places did not emerge until the phase of constructing Africa’s independent states. Exceptions to this could be seen in the national liberation movements in Lusophone Africa. There revolutionary movements endorsed Marxist-Leninist ideologies and relied upon the Soviet Union, and sometimes China and even Cuba, for both material and political support.

Armah, Ayi Kwei, “African Socialism: Utopian or Scientific?” 1967. *Présence Africaine,* Nouvelle série, No. 64 (4e TRIMESTRE), pp. 6-30.

This article critically compares different approaches to socialism in post-colonial Africa to the way Marx had established the superiority of “scientific socialism” over “utopian socialism”. Armah is extremely critical of the concept of African socialism and even Nkrumah’s notion of “scientific socialism”. He predicted that the attempt to Africanize Marx without the notion of class struggle wi fail, giving way to popular revolution.

Babu, Abdulrahman Mohamed, 1981. African Socialism or Socialist Africa? London: Zed Press.

This book provides a very effective application of historical materialism theory and its application to Africa. However, the author seems too quick to downplay Africa’s tendencies towards capitalist development and forcefully argues that socialism is the only realistic path in Africa’s future.

Biney, Ama, 2011.*The political and social thought of Kwame Nkrumah*. New York: Palgrave.

This is a very comprehensive examination of the life and contribution of the most important figure in the African Independence Movement. Nkrumah envisioned not only the liberation of Ghana from colonialism but also the emergence of a “United States of Africa”.

Dia, Mamadou. 1961. *The African Nations and World Solidarity.* New York: Praeger.

Dia like other Pan Africanists of his time was influenced by Marxist ideas but he rejected communism and communist methods. At the same time he advocated a more radical approach to development than was currently being practiced.

Fanon, Franz. 1967. *Black Skin, White Mask.* New York: Grove Press.

This book clearly draws the link between colonialism and racism. Fanon highlights the relationship between dependency and the sense of inferiority and alienation among black people in the colonial situation. This notion was critical in the formation of many of the ideas which propelled the African nationalist movement into action.

Idahosa, P. L. E. 2004.The Populist Dimension to African Political Thought: Critical Essays in Reconstruction and Retrieval. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press.

Idahosa assesses the political thought of three of the most prominent anti-colonialthinkers/leaders of the early postcolonial era in Africa: Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cabral, and Julius Nyerere. Each is said to have had a distinct profile and a unique experience: "Fanon was the revolutionary witnessing national liberation; Cabral, the revolutionary activist engaged in national liberation and the partial construction of state power; and Nyerere, the philosopher-statesman who achieved state power"

[**Kaunda, Kenneth. 1974.** *Humanism in Zambia and a Guide to its Implementation, Part II*](http://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=979789367&searchurl=tn%3Dhumanism%2Bzambia%2Bguide%2Bits%2Bimplementation%26sortby%3D17). Lusaka: Division of National Guidance.

Kaunda saw humanism as both a philosophy and a way of life. It is said to have its roots in an African society that has always been community-centered, rather than socialism. Kaunda contends that in Zambia humanism stems from the structure of traditional society and its effects upon African psychology.

Nkrumah, Kwame. *Consciencism.* 1964. New York: Monthly Review Press.

## In this book published shortly before he was overthrown as President of Ghana, Nkrumah made an argument for a new form of socialism based in the humanistic values of traditional African society. The proper path was in his view a new form of “scientific” socialism.

Padmore, George. 1956. *Pan-Africanism or Communism: The Coming Struggle for Africa.* London: Dennis Dobson.

Padmore was a passionate Pan-Africanist. He held some of the same ideas for social development as some Marxists, but he suggested that Africans should avoid being wooed into the orbit of Soviet communists. Instead he called for reason on the part of European colonialists, and their pledge to make up for past wrongs against African peoples by willingly financing the social and economic development of former African colonies.

## Qaadafi, Muammar al.\**The Green Book*\**.*1999.Reading, UK: Ithaca Press. [http://www.bgf.nu/greenbook.pdf]

This short book, first published in 1975, was required reading by all Libyans. It sets out the socialist philosophy of Col. [Muammar Qaadafi.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muammar_Gaddafi)

Nyerere, [Julius K.](https://www.amazon.com/s/ref%3Ddp_byline_sr_book_1?ie=UTF8&text=Julius+K.+Nyerere&search-alias=books&field-author=Julius+K.+Nyerere&sort=relevancerank) 1968. *Freedom and Socialism: “Uhuru na Ujamaa”: A Selection from Writings & Speeches, 1965–1967*. Oxford University Press.

This collection is one of several published by Oxford University Press after Nyerere began to clearly articulate his notion of Ujamaa socialism, and how it might be applied to independent Tanzania. He emphatically separates his ideas from classical Marxism-Leninism and defines a purely African form of socialism, rooted in tradition. This particular collection includes the acclaimed blueprints for development in an underdeveloped society, the “Arusha Declaration”, and “Education for Self-reliance”.

Senghor, Leopold.1964. *On African Socialism*. New York: Praeger.

# Here Senghor presents his own version of African Socialism. He shows how it aligns with the concept of *Négritude.* For Senghor the concepts are valued for their emphasis on humanism. *Négritude* is more of a political philosophy than it is a programmatic ideology. This book is translated from French to English by Mercer Cook.

**Marxism-Leninism and Crafting a Path to Liberation**

The influence of Marxist ideas first penetrated Africa following the First World War, promoted by African students who had been formally educated in a European tradition and by workers and political parties organized by Europeans in urban areas. In Egypt students championed the Marxist-Leninism causes of anti-imperialism and anti-elitism. At the time, they were being pulled by a stronger current of Pan Arabism (Tareq and El-Sa’id 1990). The most ardent Marxist-Leninists in Arab North Africa were such Algerian Communist Party leaders as Ahmed ben Bella who became the first president of Algeria (Ottaway and Ottaway 1970). In sub-Saharan Africa Marxist ideas were introduced in South Africa at about the same time and via the same vehicles as in Egypt and Algeria, workers and intellectuals. However, The African nationalists who assumed power after the demise of the *Apartheid Regime* in the early 1990s had Marxist-Leninist leanings, but the dominant tendency among the leaders of the dominant African National Congress (ANC) was a commitment to multi-racial democracy (Johns and Davis 1991). In most of Sub-Saharan Africa communists were communists only by attribution or aspiration. During the Cold War leaders and movements were labeled according to their superpower associations. For example, the leader of the Belgian Congo independence movement, Patrice Lumumba was no communist, but because of his association with Soviet Russia he was labeled a “communist” (Marxists Internet Archive n.d.). Independence movements in Lusophone Africa, on the other hand, are prime examples of the acceptance of Marxism-Leninism in Africa as an integral part of the struggle for independence. Fanon had concluded that violent struggle against colonial regimes was the appropriate path to true liberation (Fanon 1968). He was not a communist, but he accepted many Marxist-Leninist ;ideas. However, he believed that the struggle had to be rooted in the realities of African culture. The leaders of independence movements in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau committed themselves to the path of scientific socialism during the struggle for independence, and this commitment transferred to the institutions built and policies pursued once independence was achieved. This can clearly be seen in the speeches and writings of such leaders as Machel (Munslow 1985) and Cabral (Chilcote 1991; Handyside 1969). Southall (2013) examines the global dimensions of African liberation movements in Southern Africa. He argues that as these movements approached independence and afterwards they came to embrace capitalist development despite their rhetorical commitment to socialism.

Chilcote, Ronald. 1991. *Amilcar Cabral’s Revolutionary Theory and Practice: A Critical Guide.* Boulder: Rienner.

This is a guide to the life and thought of Amilcar Cabral one of the most important thinkers of the African liberation movement. It shows how Cabral borrowed from Marxist-Leninist theory while firmly situating his analysis in the context of the realities of the challenges of liberating the peasantry of his country from the grip of colonialism and imperialism. Importantly he did not apply Marxism-Leninism to Guinea in a wholesale manner, but bent it to fit conditions on the ground.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. 1968. New York: Grove.

Fanon saw the value in Marxist thought, but cautioned against the colonized being seduced by European socialist and communist views rooted in their own societies. He called for refashioning Marxist thought and the creation of a revolutionary theory that combined colonialism, racism and capitalism. For those oppressed by colonialism and racism, as well as capitalism, true liberation demanded a theoretical model rooted in the conditions experienced by the oppressed.

Handyside, Richard. 1969. *Revolution in Guinea: Selected Texts by Amilcar Cabral.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

This is Cabral in his own words as he worked to draw relevant ideas from various Leftist thinkers of the time, and to selectively apply them to the objectives of the anti-colonial/anti-imperialist revolution in Guinea in order to create a vision for the egalitarian society that was to follow once victory was achieved.

Ismael, Tareq Y. and Rifa'at El-Sa'id. 1990. *The Communist Movement in Egypt, 1920-1988.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Communism was introduced in Egypt by European educated Egyptian students. It appealed to the masses because it was anti-imperialist and anti-elitist. It supported independence and promised to do away with social and economic inequalities in the country. In the end, the pull of Arab nationalism prevailed among Egyptian intellectuals as well as among the masses. Therefore communism in Egypt remained confined to the urban intellectual elite and industrial workers.

Johns, Sheridan and R. Hunt Davis, Jr.1991. *Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress: The Struggle against Apartheid, 1948-1960---A documentary Survey.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This collectionfollows the shifting nature of South African politics during the era of the Apartheid Regime. It provides insights into the thinking of top leaders of the African National Congress (ANC), Mandela and Tambo, from their beginnings as leaders of the ANC Youth League until the demise of the Apartheid Regime. Today, as shown in document in the volume, the ANC has evolved into a “socialist oriented” nationalist party.

# Marxist Internet Archive. n.d. *\*Patrice Lumumba: Marxism and Anti-imperialism in Africa* [https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=lumumba+and+Marxism]\**.*

# This short collection of Lumumba’s speeches clearly establishes that even though he endorsed socialist ideals, Lumumba was no communist as his anti-communist critics had constantly claimed. He was much more of Pan Africanist who turned to the Soviet Union for material and political support when he seemed to have no options in the West

# Munslow, Barry, ed. 1985. *Samora Machel: An African Revolutionary--- Selected Speeches and Writings*. London: Zed Books.

# In this collection of Machel’s speeches and writings we have a clear understanding of his Marxist-Leninist credentials and his notion that in the early days of independent Mozambique *Frelimo* (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique), now a governing party, rather than the popular classes had the responsibility to be the vanguard for the social revolution.

# Ottaway, David and Marina Ottaway. 1970. *Algeria: The Politics of Socialist Revolution.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

# This is a useful survey of Algerian history and the Algerian revolution. The analysis of revolutionary and post-independence political leadership is highlighted.

Southall, Roger. 2013. *Liberation movements in power: party and state in southern Africa.* Rochester, NY: James Currey.

# This book critically examines in a comparative manner the post-independence performances of the ANC in South Africa, of ZANU in Zimbabwe, and of SWAPO in Namibia. Southall argues that in the process of negotiating an end to alien rule each movement agreed to a transitional compromise that has prevented the independent governing parties from implementing a thoroughgoing socialist socio-economic program. Southall in the end argues that the movements “sold out” their revolutions.

**Early African Post-colonial States and Liberation Movements and Socialism**

Once independence was achieved, the leaders of African states set about devising their governance strategies. There seemed to be universal agreement among them that ideology and central planning were essential. Some leaders chose to follow a self-designed path of African socialism; others espoused “scientific socialism” that stopped short of being communist; and still others were less explicit, claiming that they would return to the traditional African modes of thinking about human relations and obligations. They sometimes called this African socialism even though it was not based on any structured ideology. At the time all African independent states were claimed to be nominally democratic. The challenges they .faced had mainly to do with ethnic diversity and no sense of a prior multi-ethnic state and economies that had been underdeveloped and dependent during the colonial era. Quickly these challenges proved to be overwhelming in most places and governing leaders drifted towards autocratic rule in the form of one-party regimes and military rule. Such was the case until the ending of the Cold War and the worldwide trend towards neo-liberalism and a return to multi-party democracy throughout most parts of Africa. Following the demise of the Soviet Union African socialist regimes began to become less politically ideological. This coincided with the beginning of the “second wave of democratization in Africa” marked by the abandonment of one party regimes in favor of nominally democratic multiparty systems. As for the Lusophone African countries and Ethiopia they too were impacted by the trend towards neoliberalism even though they clung at least rhetorically and institutionally to strict party discipline and their own brand of “scientific socialism”. In most of the rest of the continent parties that had previously espoused a socialist strategy now committed themselves publically to democracy. In the process such regimes retained their autocratic grip on the direction of their economies as they minimized their socialist ideologies and anti-capitalist rhetoric and attempted to fashion themselves into explicitly market driven *developmental states*.

**State-Building and Party Development**

Among the countries that chose African socialism as opposed to scientific socialism after independence Tanzania stands out. Under the leadership of the country’s founding president and the founder of the dominant party in the country, *Chama Cha Mapinduzi (*The Party of the Revolution) Julius Nyerere, the guiding ideology of *Ujamaa socialism* came to serve as a blueprint for Tanzania’s non-capitalist road to development. It was influenced by Leninist theory as well as Maoism. The emphasis was to collectivize rural agriculture much as had happened in Communist China. However, ultimately this strategy failed (Hyden 1980; Ergas 1980). Ethiopia following the end of imperial rule was initially committed by the military junta, the *Derg* (Committee), that came to power committed to a brand of African socialism that was referred to as *Ethiopia Tikkdem* (Ethiopia First!). Within two years it shifted to a form of scientific socialism, based upon the Soviet Communist Party’s definition of a non-capitalist path to communist development (Donham 1999; Halliday 1981; Harbison 1988; Keller 1988; Pausewang et.al. 2002)). Today, the regime of the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), while still paying “lip service” to democratic socialism, follows a neo-liberal capitalist development strategy. The book by Hill and Rosskam (2009) provides several penetrating critiques of the impact of the global trend towards neoliberal economics even on the most ardent avowedly developing socialist countries. The chapter on Mozambique is particularly revealing. In South Africa the ruling African National Congress (ANC) while not a communist party has historically had associations with the South African Communist Party and has been committed to eliminating social inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa. However, Bond (2004), Southall (2008), and Turok (2010), three of the most ardent leftists in South Africa, have been vocal in their criticism of the party for having been captured by a neo-liberal agenda that is geared towards promoting a small group of African entrepreneurs to join the ranks of the white “captains of industry” in the country rather than meeting the needs of the poorest of the poor.

Bond, Patrick. 2004. “\*The ANC's ‘Left Turn’ & South African sub-imperialism

\*”, *Review of African Political Economy*, 31:102, 599-616. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0305624042000327778]

Bond offers a radical critique of the ANC’s socio-political agenda over its first decade of governance. He argues that the radical rhetoric of the regime is only a disguise of its real neo-liberal capitalist agenda. He argues that what is needed is for the party to move away from its sub-imperialist leanings and to implement an agenda in keeping with the radical transformative agenda it seemed to promise during its struggle for power.

Donald L. Donham. 1999. *Marxist Modern: An Ethnographic History of the Ethiopian Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

# Based on extensive history and ethnographic fieldwork as well as sophisticated post structuralist theory, this work highlights the role of modernist ideas in providing the intellectual basis for the Ethiopian Revolution in the 1970s and 1980s. Modern ideas are shown to interact with various forms of local traditions, creating a powerful state apparatus that was able to move rural communities according to its own Marxist objectives.

Ergas, Zaki.1980. “Why Did the Ujamaa Village Policy Fail? -Towards a Global Analysis”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.18, No. 3 pp. 387-410.

This article critically assesses the failure of Tanzania’s efforts to implement its rural development strategy that was significantly influenced by the approach used by Mao Tse-tung in Communist China.

Halliday, Fred and Maxine Molyneus.1981.*The Ethiopian Revolution.* London: Verso.

This is a valuable analysis of the early progress of the post-revolutionary Ethiopian state in moving towards a society based on the principles of scientific socialism. The relations between Ethiopia and the Soviet Communist Party are highlighted. At the time the authors saw the real possibility that Ethiopia could eventually develop into a socialist oriented state. However, this has not proven to be the case. Also, the possibility of a counter revolution was not anticipated.

Harbeson, John. 1988. The Ethiopian Transformation: The Quest for the Post-Imperial State. Boulder, CO: Westview.

This is an insightful critique of the early years of military rule in post-imperial Ethiopia. Its primary argument is that even though the *Derg* adopted a form of Marxism-Leninism months after it seized power in 1974, a decade later the political revolution had not materialized. This failure is said to have been caused by the Derg’s uncompromising pursuit of power and a failure to adequately understand continuing social contradictions. .

Hyden, Goran.1980. *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and the Uncaptured Peasantry.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

This book offers a penetrating seminal Marxist critique of Tanzania’s effort to implement its post-independence rural development strategy. It shows that the peasantry would not be manipulated from above, and developed strategis for keeping the state at bay rather than doing its bidding.

# Hill, Dave and Ellen Rosskam, eds. 2009. *The Developing World and State Education: Neoliberal Depredation and Egalitarian Alternatives.* New York: Routledge.

# This collection examines critically the impact of neoliberalism on education in developing countries. It devotes a chapter to considering this topic in Mozambique. It finds that this is a neocolonial agenda and democracy is *mirage* for most of the populace. The author concludes that what the country needs is a new social movement for democratic transformation.

Keller, Edmond J. 1988. *Revolutionary Ethiopia: From Empire to Peoples’ Republic.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

# This book traces the transformation of Ethiopia from its ancient imperialist past to the onset of a political revolution in the early 1970s. This change was attributed to social contradictions that resulted from the attempt by the historical bureaucratic empire to remake itself into a modern capitalist state without genuine political democracy. A highlight of the book is a critical analysis of the regime’s alignment with Soviet-style Leninism and the construction of the Worker’s Party of Ethiopia.

Pausewang, Siegfried, Kjetil Tronvoll and Lovise Aalen. 2002. *Ethiopia since the Derg: A Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance.* London: Zed Books.

## This is an important wide ranging analysis of the transformation of Ethiopia’s political economy a decade after the EPRDF came to power. It provides insight into the challenges faced by the regime as it struggled to remain true to its socialist principles while pursuing a neo-liberal economic agenda and submitting to the demands of democratization.

## Southall, Roger. 2008. “The ANC for Sale? Money, Morality & Business in South Africa”. *ROAPE*. Vol. 35, No: 116.

This is a trenchant critique of the economic direction of the South African economy under the almost decade and a half rule of the ANC. Southall argues that the party has completely forsaken the moral principles it espoused during the struggle to end apartheid. The article is representative of the left’s critique of the ANC’s willing capture by global capitalism.

## Turok, Ben. 2010. *The ANC and the turn to armed struggle, 1950-1970.* Auckland Park, South Africa.

# This book, written by an insider, was first published in the late 1960s. It addresses the ideological and policy issues faced by the liberation movement at the time, including the turn to armed struggle. It also deals with the relationship between the organization and the South African Communist Party.