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Historians, Nationalism, and Pan-Africanism: Myths and Realities

By

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Introduction

This paper analyzes the role of African historians have played in interpreting and producing knowledge on nationalism and pan-Africanism. The historical interpretation of nationalism and pan-Africanism has been shrouded in myths of various kinds. Many critics have argued that the twin ideology of proto-nationalism and pan-Africanism informing the production and teaching of history in the early years of independence merely celebrated the founding of African nations – largely ignoring the social-based contradictions in the political economy. As a result, political leaders of the nascent nations of Africa were absolved of the responsibility of aggravating economic miseries and hardships among the masses in the period immediately after independence. In their assessment of the nationalist historiography D. Denoon and A. A. Kuper, put it more bluntly as follows:

…the new historiography has adopted the political philosophy of current African nationalism, and has used it to inform the study of African history. The commitment inclines the school towards rhetoric in defense of narrowly selected themes and interpretations, and the stereotyping and total rejection of other views.

The essence of their argument is that nationalist and pan-Africanist scholarship was designed to meet ideological needs of nascent states and the ideals they forged of unifying Africa. The main concern of nationalist and pan-Africanist scholarship was to celebrate and glorify African past achievements amid critiques that social and economic disparities dogged political relations in Africa as ever.

Thus, the scholarship of the 1960s searched for heroes in the African past. The search and production of historical knowledge indirectly or directly consolidated the

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1 For definition of nationalism and pan-Africanism see Solofo Randrianja, “Nationalism, Ethnicity and Democracy.” In Stephen Ellis (Ed.), Africa Now: People, Policies and Institutions, London: James Currey, 1996, pp. 20-24. Randrianja defines nationalism as an anti-colonial ideology “extolling unity against the foreign oppressor” – it was progressively transformed into the all-important ideology of consolidating independence in Africa. Pan-Africanism, on the other hand, is solidarity based on racial principles. There is yet another definition of pan-Africanism, being the idea and program of envisioned continental unity. See Basil Davidson, The Search for Africa: A History in the Making, London: James Currey, 1994, pp. 65-74.


6 E. S. Atieno-Odhiambo “Synthesizing Kenya History,” 1974, p. 36.
colonial legacy by maintaining the existing colonial institutions in independent Africa, including the government administration, education, housing, health and the legal system.

Having provided the propitious conditions in which the nationalist historiography flourished, I will argue that the production of social and historical knowledge obliges one to define one’s ideological position from which to proceed. One is compelled to consciously select those aspects of social knowledge one wishes to popularize and inculcate. For such social and historical knowledge to be worthwhile, it must address the burning issues of the day in the society in question. I will also argue in the following pages that intellectuals and political leaders could use the nationalist and pan-Africanist ideals in the African renaissance the way they used nationalism and pan-Africanism to consolidate their newly independent states in Africa.

Bethwell Alan Ogot reminds us that, “political independence could only have meaning if it was accompanied by historical independence.” Thus, the foregoing statement summarizes what African scholars perceived their role in intellectual leadership to be. Indeed, African social scientists were faced with challenges of building institutions to decolonize the minds of their compatriots and the masses by deliberately producing usable past knowledge. They were charged with the responsibility of producing the history of ideas relating to their socio-political and economic realities obtaining in the early years of independence. Ali Mazrui has such a tale to tell when once in the 1960s as professor of political science at Makerere University in Uganda, he was challenged by a high placed government official to state the role of the African intellectual in the new nations.

The fact that the decade of the 1960s marked a high noon in the discourse and debates on nationalism and pan-Africanism as rallying points in the memory and social imaginare of Africa cannot be overstated. Caroline Neale has argued that:

The coming of independence was not seen as any ordinary change of government. It was to entail a fundamental change in the relationship of black nations to white nations, and of black to white Africa, and it called for a new representation of the relationship that had obtained up to that point. There had been a political statement that black and white were to be treated as equals; now there was needed a cultural demonstration that something was possible.

Thus, the first decade of independence was a time when African historians across the continent celebrated the event of independence. The endeavor was described as the “new historiography” because historians laid emphasis on nationalism and pan-Africanism – ideals largely ignored by colonial historiography save for the Afrikaner nationalist

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2 See Ali A. Mazrui, *Political Values and the Educated Class in Africa*, London: Heinemann, 1978. Mazrui was challenged by Akena Odoko, chief of staff to debate publicly what the role of the intellectual in Africa was. This followed an earlier lecture that Mazrui had given and defined an intellectual as a person fascinated with ideas. According state officials in Uganda an African intellectual had to be committed to his/her society. They thought that African intellectuals had no luxury to be engaged in what they perceived to be meaningless juggling with ideas for the sake of it. They were required to produce useful social knowledge.
historiography in the racially segregated South Africa. If social science scholars produced knowledge that came to be known as “usable pasts,” it was because of the functions the knowledge played in generally consolidating the gains of independence and restoring the lost African dignity during the colonial period.

African political leaders urged historians to produce a new historiography whose role would be to do service to newly independent nations. On the occasion of opening the international congress of African historians held at the University College of Dar es Salaam from 26th September to 2nd October 1965, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania advised African historians at the African university and other institutions of higher learning to take a leading part in the recovery of an edifying African past. In Nyerere’s perception:

> The primary sources are here in Africa, and the primary interest is not really other peoples desire to understand us, but our own desire to understand ourselves and our societies, so that we can build the future on a firm foundation… I believe that in this forward looking discussion the Africans among you have a very special responsibility. Because they are of this continent, and concerned so intimately with its future as well as its past, the citizens of Africa should be able to indicate where our needs for historical knowledge press most heavily upon us.

The new historiography provided the impetus for Africans to find pride in their past achievements in all spheres of life. This included demonstrating that Africans contributed to the cultural, political, social, historical, religious, scientific and philosophical realms of their own societies. Therefore historians needed to explain African achievements in world civilization in their writings. The 1960s and the early 1970s would witness the growth in historical research on the so-called recovery of African initiatives in history.

African scholars like other black scholars across the globe argued that Africans erected pillars of their own civilization devoid of patronage from outside. They worked within the popular framework of the day – the Ebonics’ – and the considerations in locating social progress and civilization on the historical plane. They saw Ebonics as a viable discourse that informed the place of historical memory and cultural continuity in

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10 Henry Slater, “Southern Africa and the Production and dissemination of Historical Knowledge” In J. R. Mlahagwa, L. M. Sago, F. Lutatenekwa and G. T. Mishambi (Eds.), *Landmarks in Southern African History*, Dar es Salaam: The Historical Association of Tanzania, 1989, pp. 27-28. According to Afrikaner nationalism racial differences were markers of socio-political and economic development in South Africa. Thus, they proposed segregated policy of separate development know as apartheid.


13 George G. M. James, *Stolen Legacy: The Greeks were not the Authors of Greek Philosophy, but the People of North Africa, Commonly Called Ethiopians*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1954.
the production of social and historical knowledge on Africa. Working from the assumption that Africans had a rich cultural past, the paper draws on the canonical works of historians and other African researchers who espoused nationalist and pan-Africanist ideals. I will also interrogate the works by critics of the nationalist school of historiography – these were chiefly Marxists and rightwing or liberal western scholars.

**African Historians and the Past at Independence**

With the triumph of the nationalist ideology over colonialism a foundation was laid for developing a forcefully, but dignifying nationalist political perspective. It was obvious that the political status of Africa had re-ordered social and economic relations. An African historiography followed closely on its heels as the politics of African universities were redefined by the event of independence in search of relevance. Thanks to the liberation struggles of the 1950s and 1960s, which were concerned with the mental and physical decolonization of Africans. It is no small wonder, then, that Patrice E. Lumumba prophetically asserted that:

> History will have its say one day – not the history they teach in Brussels, Paris, Washington or the United Nations, but the history taught in the countries set free from colonialism and its puppet rulers. Africa will write her own history, and both north and south of the Sahara it will be a history of glory and dignity.

Arguably, African historians and social scientists of the period generally aimed at enhancing nationalist and pan-Africanist ideals on the continent following on the heels of independence leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Abdel Nasser, Julius Nyerere, Modipo Keita, Haile Selassie, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Jomo Kenyatta, Kenneth Kaunda and

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Ahmed Sekou Toure among others. Their goals were to rally the citizens of the individual African countries towards nurturing the ideals of nationalism, the consolidation of black solidarity, and uniting the entire continent of Africa. Nkrumah, Nasser, Selassie and Toure believed in the pan-Africanist ideal and how it could be used in the efforts of nation-building and to enhance social, political and economic institutions in independent Africa.

In retrospect, in December 5-13, 1958, the above-mentioned ‘philosopher kings’ had convened the first All-African Peoples’ Conference (AAPC) in Accra, Ghana. The conference was regarded as the successor to the Pan-African Congress held in Manchester, England in 1945. In attendance were 500 trade unions and political party delegates from twenty-eight African countries. This meeting followed the twelfth General Assembly of the United Nations held on 26th November 1957 where it was resolved to establish the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Thus, the idea of functional pan-Africanism jelled in the minds of African political leaders and intellectuals.

Led by Nkrumah, African political leaders strongly came out to support the pan-Africanist idea of establishing a continental government. However, the idea of an African government did not come to fruition owing to individual ideological differences dogging African political leadership. Instead, the differences gave way a loose idea of a compromise continental body, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. The founders of the organization wanted to put aside their ideological differences and complete the process of decolonization, and to dismantle the apartheid system in South Africa, and lay a firm foundation of African unity.

But, the OAU proved to be less effective in consolidating pan-Africanism as an idea of forging solid continental unity. With the lukewarm reception of pan-Africanist ideas and erosion of basis of continental solidarity, nationalist ideals and sentiments found fertile ground on which to flourish. Different leaders of African states opted to pursue national programs, giving rise to the various strands of African socialism across the continent. For example, on April 27th of 1967 and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) of Zambia under the leadership of Kenneth Kaunda adopted Zambian humanism as its official ideology at a meeting held at Matero in Lusaka. One can as well argue that Zambian humanism was adopted against the background of nation-building and cultivating a national identity.

Thus, African leaders who seemed to be less radical and believed in celebrating and glorifying African past achievements or what has been described as “merrie” Africa within the confines of colonial-inherited boundaries chose to pursue purely nationalist
programs. Nyerere, Senghor, and Keita like Kaunda opted to experiment with African communalism and the various shades of socialism. They emphasized on how indigenous institutions could be useful in spurring economic and social development on community-based self-help programs. This explains, for instance, why at the launch of his policy on African socialism Nyerere came up with a policy paper entitled *Arusha Declaration*.

African intellectuals re-invented different national traditions by postulating that African socialism was the most appropriate ideology in the process of charting out strategies for development of the continent. In 1967, Nyerere undertook an experiment in African communalism (*ujamaa*), while Kenyatta and Keita among others adopted African socialism and applied it as a development strategy of their respective countries. On the other hand, Senghor strove to nurture the ideals of negritude by integrating values espoused by black and white as bases of creating a new African personality in Senegal and bound her boundaries. Senghor’s type of negritude presupposes ontologically that there are two aspects of negritude, one constituted of the old and dead past, and the other being the new created or invented Africa. According Senghor the aspects were important in the African gnosia.

Working in alliance of white liberal scholars, therefore, African historians and social scientists would interpret the past as a service to consolidating nationalism and pan-Africanism. Three distinct centers of academic debates seemed to have emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s in Africa. These were; the Cheikh Anta Diop school of thought under Abdoulaye Ly and Joseph Ki-Zerbo based at the University of Dakar in Senegal; and the Ibadan nationalist school of historiography at Ibadan University in Nigeria under the likes of K. O. Dike, S. O. Biobaku, A. E. Afigbo, E. A. Ayandele and Jacob Ajayi; and the Dar es Salaam school of historiography under Terence Ranger at University College of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. The dominating themes of the early period of African independence were African resistance versus African oppression.

Less important but forceful, however, was a school of historiography that emerged within the national boundaries of the South African apartheid system. This school of historiography promoted the study of bourgeois nationalist history in South Africa for the privileged Afrikaner settler community. But Afrikaner nationalism was not without its detractors. There were contradictory ideologies and social philosophies in southern Africa. In fact, there was no consensus on how citizenship of the country ought to be defined in the absolute sense. The main contradictions in socio-political and economic projection are neatly captured in five schools of historical thought namely; the British Settler, Afrikaner Settler, South African Settler, Indigenous African or Africanist, and Liberal or Multiracial schools of thought. However, these schools of thought did not develop at the same time – they were a product of the historical and social conditions obtaining in the country.

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The appearance of competing ideologies and histories of these schools of thought are a function of the changing patterns of contradictions within the South African social relationships. The British settler tradition had its roots in the British settler colonies of the Cape and Natal. The Afrikaner settler communities seeking to establish independent Afrikaner republics gave rise to this version of nationalism. The South African Settler community celebrates the role of all European settlers of South Africa. The Liberal or Multiracial school tends to handle the issue of race using a pluralist approach. The Africanist approach engages in an uncritical celebration of anti-imperialist history.

Notwithstanding the different schools of thought given above, they essentially represented different ideologies based on race and class reflecting the power struggles inherent in South Africa.

In the meantime, however, many a scholar came to do research on the roles of African heroes such as Samori Toure of West Africa, Shaka of Zulu, Kinjiketile of the Matumbi and the resistance movements of Chimurenga of Southern Rhodesia, and the Herero/Nama of Namibia. The nationalist school of historiography with its variant strands was chiefly concerned with establishing chronology and reconstructing political and military activities of Africans in the past. Whether in South Africa or other parts of the continent the researchers were least concerned with social and economic changes than they were with establishing chronology and progress. It is my contention that much as the need to have an ideology that facilitated the struggle for independence, they wanted knowledge that was useful for enhancing their position in society. Paul E. Lovejoy has argued that research on:

“Kings and battles” was the order of the day; only to the extent that Africans as a collectivity were the oppressed people of a European-dominated world order did those other than the mighty and powerful enter into the historical record.

It was important that African scholars of the 1960s sought to place African history within a chronological and modernization framework in order to account for their political past. Their efforts were largely functional to nationalism considering that they celebrated the triumph of nationalist struggles in the liberation of Africa. Whereas the mainstream nationalist historiography emphasized on African choice, African initiatives, African adaptations just to mention a few, the South African historiography was steeped in a peculiar variant of nationalist historiography that reflected competing currents in power relations – the place of race and class in national identity.

**Critique of Nationalist Historiography: Which way Forward?**

The nationalist period was an important epoch in modern African history because it provided intellectuals on continent with various strands of nationalist and pan-Africanist frameworks. The used the frameworks to assess their own conditions.

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Different African socialisms, including *ujamaa*, consciencism, the concept of *harambee* and negritude emerged and were seized upon by African scholars as framework of analyses.\(^{30}\) We noted above that while the nationalist schools of history in South Africa reflected the competing socio-political voices and economic contradictions, the mainstream nationalist historiography in the rest of sub-Saharan and Arabic Africa provided newly independent African states with an ideology that inspired collective responses towards efforts of building nascent nations and consolidating their newly won independence.

Bethwell Alan Ogot has argued that in the 1960s historians had to demonstrate that African societies had well-organized states and engaged in long distance trade with properly organized markets, for instance. Thus, social science scholars went ahead to argue that Africans had religions, philosophies, military organization, legal systems, medicine and technology among others.\(^{31}\) However, the critics of the nationalist historiography have been quick to point out that in the process of highlighting the achievements, historians and other social scientists romanticized the past, stripping off African history its dynamism, contradictions and, antagonisms, class struggles, and socio-political and economic transformations that people experienced at various levels.\(^{32}\) For example, K. O. Dike’s study of the commerce among the Niger Delta communities treated African peoples’ involvement in the trade as a political event and not merely commercial activities. Dike belabored the fact that Africans were also traders in their own right and, therefore, deserved a place in the history textbooks. Likewise Ogot’s own work on the history of southern Luo considered the different communities as a homogenous entity that did not exhibit remarkable social contradictions and dynamism.\(^{33}\)

The first generation of African historians overlooked many factors that constrained and impinged upon social and political relations in the African past experience. These included the dictatorial and authoritarian nature of some of the indigenous leaders.\(^{34}\) In their concern to produce usable knowledge African historians believed they could help to nurture African personhood and a vibrant sense of nationhood across the continent. European authorship of the Enlightenment period to the early years of African independence argued that Africa was eclipsed by darkness, and, that “darkness was no suitable subject for history.”\(^{35}\) However, buoyed by the nationalist spirit and employing the same concepts that characterized pan-Africanism, they problematized

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African identities on their own terms. In effect they helped to reclaim the African past that some western scholars had banished to dustbin of history.

Yet, by the same token (in using methodologies as their mentors) African historians remained trapped in the problematique of colonial or bourgeois history they so vehemently criticized. In fact, they did not engage in serious theoretical analyses that placed them “at the service of masses in the effort to understand their past against the forces of exploitation.”

Writing on the theoretical poverty of the nationalists’ historiography, Henry Slater has observed that:

…”bourgeois nationalist” historiography was criticized for its concentration on politics conceived in a vacuum, and for its romantic emphasis upon the role of African initiative, both of which singularly failed to provide a historical explanation of the present condition of African economic and political powerlessness. How then could such knowledge contribute to Africa’s contemporary struggles to overcome these conditions of powerlessness?

Slater’s argument underscored the all-important fact – of historians’ partial representation of the different forces at work in the colonial past. Only by identifying the social and economic contradictions and the relations of power in society, so could historians’ contribute to finding solutions for the numerous problems of the new states were facing. Few historians, however, seriously analyzed the contradictions in society. What, then, are some of the pertinent issues to be considered?

One needs to examine the role of the OAU, and several other sub-regional groupings and intellectual consortiums such as Casablanca, Monrovia and the Frontline states whose aims were to liberate the entire continent from colonial yoke and end minority white settler rule in Southern Africa. Pan-Africanists looked forward to a dispensation whereby Africans would redeem themselves from a world system that largely marginalized because of their skin pigmentation. Certainly these were a positive indicator of the nationalist and pan-Africanist intellectual endeavors to grapple with issues of national and continental concern.

The more relevant question that remains on our minds is: whither nationalist historiography?

Given the cultural and economic marginalization that Africa is suffering currently, it behooves historians and other social scientists to revisit the role of nationalism and pan-Africanism played in debates and discourses on the African condition. Already debates are emerging on the immediate challenges facing Africa as it seeks to forge new social and political initiatives in the implementation of policies to enhance development in the face of ravages of global capitalism. My argument is that African historians should delve deep into the African past in order to bring to fore the knowledge that could be used to rejuvenate socio-political and economic institutions of the continent.

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Indeed, it is important that our reflection on the future of African societies is firmly based on objective analyses and evaluations of our past. Suffice it to state again that proto-nationalist historiographers recognized the power of history in awakening political consciousness of Africans during the colonial period and independent struggles. To them, African renaissance was but the way to go in rallying the masses. They were convinced that every nation was charged with the responsibility of building its future based on its past. Thus, they immersed themselves in historical researches on pre-colonial institutions. As we have already noted above the Diops, Ogots, Ajayis, Vansinas, and Dikes played a great role in exhuming the past that colonial writers ignored.

Now, as in the early years of independence, African political leaders are yearning for a renaissance after decades of institutional decay and the wastage of resources of every kind by post-independence political leaders and service managers. Instead of merely glorifying the so-called undifferentiated African past, historians should re-conceptualize and theorize on the institutions of governance by promoting concepts of human rights as seen by Africans themselves – the ideals that would enhance African citizenship. The main question here is to rethink the place of civil society in creating an African citizenship – how did historians problematize regional citizenship? How did historians interpret the experiences of peoples living in proximity – what did communities borrow from each other in their attempts to create regional citizenship? What were the constraints that people experienced towards regional citizenship and what was the take of historians to them? What role should historians play in the renaissance of Africa?

Most of Africa possesses an interlinked historical heritage dating back into the remote pre-colonial period. During pre-colonial times people intermingled freely without restrictions of artificial boundaries of country-specific laws. Africans traded among themselves in short and long distance commercial activities, intermarrying and relating at various social and political levels provided by host communities. For instance, Waswahili traders from the East African coastal region established chiefdoms and kingdoms in areas as far as the Great Lakes of East Africa in the nineteenth century prior to colonialism. There were long distance trading activities between different peoples of West Africa such as the Hausa, the Yoruba and Dyula. They also intermarried in the process creating a viable citizenship. Paul Tiyambwe Zeleza has argued about the interactions African were involved in as follows:

Family, clan and ethnic associations, both real and affected, played an important role in the provision of trading skills, capital and credit, and information. Traders formed alliances in foreign countries through marriage and blood brotherhood. The careers of the famous Swahili and Nyamwezi traders, such as Tippu Tip and Msiri who created commercial empires in Kasongo and Katanga respectively,

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were built on shrewd alliances with local rulers or people based on either marriage or fictional kinship ties.  

There is no doubt that the reason why the rulers created the empires was to secure important scarce items and products of daily use, which were not otherwise readily available in their local environments. Furthermore, they needed to purchase goods for exchange in the vibrant export and import trade of the nineteenth century. It behooves all of us to explain why some regions in Africa had well-connected local and long distance trade. For instance, in present day Uganda around Kibero on Lake Kyoga and Bunyoro, there were specialized activities in the production of salt and iron respectively.  

The inhabitants of the sub-regions promoted inter-regional trade among themselves. This leads one to conclude that African states could promote regional trade by drawing from the lessons provided by pre-colonial historical experiences.

It is crucial that historians undertake comparative studies on different social systems of the past in view of the theoretical significance of such studies to the social terrain of interaction as illuminant of economic development. Historians ought to study the constitutionality of integration with the view to explaining how African citizenship could be built in the hope of having a shared space to pursue socio-political and economic activities across national borders. An explanation of efforts of integration could help to chart avenues for the region’s stability through enhanced citizenship and the full realization of the potential of human resources for progress and development. Such an endeavor could also lessen the problem of refugees, which has impacted security and the process of development in Africa. African nations have in the past concentrated refugees from Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Somalia in the various camps within the region. In other instances, refugees and immigrants have been denied employment because of their citizenship to individual countries.

African historians are cognizant of an unjust international economic order, otherwise known as the New International Economic Order (NIEO). The NIEO favors developed countries over developing ones. As a consequence, developing countries, particularly those of Africa have been trapped in the negative effects of the deteriorating terms of trade and high interest rates, a situation which made it difficult for them to earn the much-needed foreign exchange resources for the purposes of development. In the light of these developments African leaders appear to have adopted new tactics to deal with the unfavorable economic relations.

In the late 1970s African leaders began to change their strategies in the management of their economies. They sought appropriate solutions to their dire economic and social problems. Working with this understanding in mind, African intellectuals and policy specialists met in Monrovia in February of 1979 to discuss development prospects.

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in Africa. They were concerned with the type of development and the means that would transform the functionality of African social and economic systems as they approached the twenty-first century. Other meetings followed thereafter with the most important of them, perhaps, being the sixteenth session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government OAU in July of 1979 in Monrovia. The outcome is what was known as the “Monrovia Declaration of Commitment.” The strategy that they adopted laid emphasis on three basic principles: namely, self-reliance, self-sustainment and economic cooperation and integration. According to them this strategy would help African leaders to solve its social, political and economic problems. Yet, the most glaring omission is the role that historians could play in the efforts re-igniting an African renaissance.

**Conclusion**

In this ongoing conceptual paper, I have attempted to explain to explain the roles African historians have played in using nationalist and pan-Africanist concepts in the African renaissance. I have tried to explain their efforts in the period immediately after *uhuru* and the challenges they faced – they were faced with the task of rallying citizens of individual countries towards building national identities. I have, however, noted that in their efforts to rally citizens toward nationalism they did not consider the fact that Africa was not undifferentiated entity – thus, they ignored the dangers of authoritarian rule and dictatorship that led wastage of national resources.

There is a new spirit of reviving African institutions, thus, calling upon historians among other social science scholars to probematize African citizenship anew. This entails the recognition of individual and civil rights as a security guarantee within the region, a factor that would enable free movement of people and their interactions and policing criminal activities in the borders. It is my proposal that the previous approaches to nationalism and pan-Africanism be rethought to give more attention to the bottom-up approach, an approach that considers a broader, but responsible African citizenship. What this calls for is grounding debates on the essence of constitutionalism and the possibility of constitutional consensus by way of debates. The assumption is that, if consensus can be achieved in the process of politics within the region, the politically established boundaries will be rendered inconsequential with time and natural integration would take place. My assumption is that there would be greater respect for human rights and the possibility to achieve the much-sought economic development by harnessing human resources and capital freely across the continent.