

A Critical Intersectional Reading of African Political Thought: Towards the Africanization of Theoretical Models

قراءة نقدية تقاطعية للفكر السياسي الأفريقي: نحو أفارقة النموذج النظري

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المخلص:

تقترح هذه الدراسة قراءة نقدية تقاطعية للفكر السياسي الأفريقي كإطار لتحدي الهيمنة الفكرية الغربية وتعزيز أفارقة النموذج النظري. ومن خلال دمج المقاربات ما بعد الاستعمارية والنقدية والتقاطعية ترى الدراسة أن الفكر السياسي الأفريقي لا يعكس فقط التجارب التاريخية والثقافية للقارة، بل يوفر أيضا أدوات لإعادة صياغة المفاهيم الأساسية مثل السيادة، والعدالة، والتنمية، وتهدف الدراسة إلى إظهار كيف يمكن للتقاليد الفكرية الأفريقية أن تشكل أساسا لإزالة الاستعمار من العلاقات الدولية وبناء نموذج نظري تعددي يفسر بشكل أفضل واقع الدول الأفريقية ضمن النظام العالمي. كما تسعى الدراسة إلى استكشاف الإمكانيات التجديدية للفكر السياسي الأفريقي في بناء أطر نظرية مستقلة تعكس خصوصية القارة. ويسهم هذا المشروع الفكري في تفكيك النماذج الغربية المهيمنة، وتعزيز التنوع الثقافي، وإثراء الحوار العالمي في مجال العلاقات الدولية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفكر السياسي الأفريقي؛ النظرية ما بعد الاستعمارية؛ التقاطعية؛ إزالة الاستعمار.

Abstract:

This study proposes a critical intersectional reading of African political thought to challenge Western intellectual hegemony and advance the Africanization of Theoretical theory. By integrating postcolonial, critical, and intersectional approaches, it highlights how African thought reflects the continent's historical and cultural experiences and offers tools to reformulate key concepts such as sovereignty, justice, and development. The study demonstrates how African intellectual traditions can decolonize international relations and build pluralistic frameworks that reflect African realities, contributing to dismantling Western paradigms and promoting cultural diversity in global dialogue.

Key words: African political thought; Postcolonial theory; Intersectionality; Decolonization.

INTRODUCTION

African political thought is the product of a complex interaction between local experiences and the colonial heritage that has left its mark on the continent's political and social structures. Since the postcolonial era, African intellectuals have sought to reinterpret the political system based on the specific historical and cultural realities of the continent, leading to the emergence of a critical intellectual model that reformulates the concepts of sovereignty and justice in a manner that challenges traditional Western theories.

In light of global transformations, a question arises regarding how to reinterpret this thought from a postcolonial perspective that revisits international relations away from conventional Western hegemony. Accordingly, the study aims to analyze African intellectual experiences and highlight models that work toward reformulating international relations in a way that respects the particularities of the African context, as well as to shed light on the contributions of African political thought in shaping political theories.

This research represents an analytical framework for re-reading African political thought from a postcolonial perspective, emphasizing its contributions in reshaping theories of international relations in line with the experiences of African peoples and their aspirations for genuine independence. It also serves as a critical framework intended to provide a new interpretation of African political thought, one that transcends the conventional templates imposed from outside and builds a theoretical model reflecting the uniqueness of African experiences and aspirations, away from traditional Western concepts. This approach allows for the construction of an intellectual model based on an intersectional methodology that enriches global dialogue in international relations.

Based on this, the study poses the following research question: To what extent are Western models suitable for explaining the reality of African states, and how can an African theoretical model based on local experiences be constructed?

Hypothesis:

The application of a postcolonial model leads to a redistribution of intellectual power and a reformulation of international relations concepts, making them more comprehensive and pluralistic.

Study Objectives:

- To analyze the historical legacy of African political thought and postcolonialism.
- To critique traditional Western models of international relations.
- To propose an alternative theoretical framework that reconstructs a theoretical model in the context of African experiences.

1. The methodological approach

1.1 The critical analytical approach

The study employed the critical analytical approach, which is an approach that involves questioning all the axioms related to the production of the concept of “truth,” also known as methodological skepticism or critical analysis. This approach is based on challenging the fundamental assumptions and conventional standards that define what is considered “truth.” It seeks to analyze the historical and cultural contexts that shape these axioms, interrogate the intellectual and linguistic structures that contribute to the production of truth, and offer alternative perspectives that challenge preconceived assumptions, ultimately leading to a more comprehensive and pluralistic understanding of the concept of truth.¹

It raises questions about the structural foundations of power and the effects of colonial and cultural legacies on the international system. Critical studies differ from traditional theories (such as realism and liberalism) in that they aim to expose the hidden mechanisms upon which international relations are built and reveal the ways in which hegemony is reproduced through political and economic discourses. This process was carried out through:

1.1.1 Critique of Traditional Models of International Relations

Traditional theories of international relations, such as realism and liberalism, are considered central concepts that rely on assumptions related to sovereignty, power, and bilateral relations between states. In contrast, critical studies re-examine these assumptions by focusing on the dimensions of hidden power, the mechanisms of “symbolic violence,” and the reproduction of the social, economic, and political structures that contribute to the marginalization of certain states or groups. Consequently², they critique traditional models in international relations by questioning the way in which discourses that define what is considered political truth are produced, thus opening the door to a re-reading of international relations as a phenomenon based on contradictions.³

1.1.2 Reading the Colonial and Cultural Impact

Critical studies highlight that international relations are not free from the influences of the colonial and cultural legacy, as current international systems have long been entrenched in discourses and structures that prevailed during the colonial era. The colonial experience left a permanent mark on the political and economic institutions of states, necessitating a reframing of the concepts of sovereignty and international justice based on local experiences.⁴ Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of returning to the “triadic heritage” that combines the traditional, the colonial, and the modern in order to understand international interactions in a critical manner that takes into account cultural and historical diversity.⁵

1.2 The Intersectionality Approach

The introduction of the intersectionality methodology^{*} is considered one of the innovative ideas in re-reading African political thought; it addresses identity issues through the interplay of factors such as race, gender, social class, and culture. This approach enables a deeper analysis of how these factors influence the formation of the international political system and the production of policies. This process is carried out through:

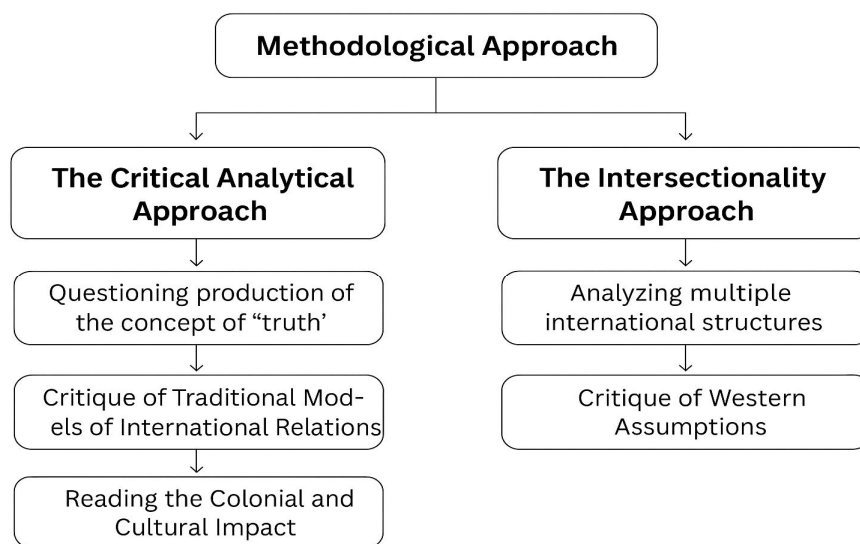
1.2.1 Analysis of Multiple International Structures

Researchers can use the intersectionality approach to analyze international relations as a result of the interaction of multiple identities, such as the role of women from different racial and cultural backgrounds in shaping international policies, or how class disparities affect the distribution of global wealth.

1.2.2 Critique of Western Assumptions

Traditional Western theories such as realism and liberalism are considered incapable of explaining phenomena related to diversity and difference in the international system, as the intersectionality approach helps provide new interpretations that reconsider the concepts of sovereignty and democracy by taking the intersecting experiences of identity factors as a fundamental element⁶

Figure N°1. Methodological Approaches in African Political Thought



Source: Prepared by the researcher

The figure illustrates a comparative analytical framework that highlights the areas of focus and the contributions of each approach in the construction of political knowledge.

2. A Conceptual Approach

A significant part of the process of constructing perceptions and understanding political phenomena is achieved through the study of the concepts related to the phenomenon, due to the deep understanding and comprehension they provide.

2.1 Definition of African Political Thought

African political thought is defined as the collection of ideas, concepts, and theories that have emerged from the historical and cultural experiences in Africa, and which seek to reframe the concepts of power, sovereignty, justice, and development within a framework that suits the realities of African peoples. This thought differs from Western models in that it focuses on the social and historical contexts specific to the continent and regards local experiences—whether traditional or modern—as a fundamental axis for understanding the political process. In essence, African political thought can be defined as the set of ideas and theories that stem from the historical and cultural experiences of African countries.⁷

2.2 Historical Stages in the Evolution of African Political Thought

African political thought traces its roots to the historical legacy that included traditional systems of governance and inherited social practices that predate colonialism. However, the colonial era imposed external political models that were incompatible with local experiences, affecting political identity and leading to a crisis in the concepts of sovereignty and power. This experience influenced post-independence political thought, as scholars and intellectuals sought to reclaim national identity and formulate a theoretical framework aligned with the realities of the continent.⁸

2.2.1 Traditional Systems Before Colonialism

African societies were characterized by traditional systems of governance built on values of transparency and community participation long before the arrival of colonial powers. Authority was exercised cooperatively among members of society, and this heritage contributed to shaping the political identity that distinguishes the continent from Western models based on individualism and centralization. These systems were founded on principles of social justice and solidarity;⁹ however, colonial experiences imposed external political models that led to the marginalization of local systems and the formation of a new political identity. Moreover, the psychological and social impacts of colonialism continue to influence the political understanding of African countries.¹⁰

Consequently, African societies were originally marked by governance systems grounded in participation and social justice before being subjected to colonial models. This traditional heritage is one of the fundamental pillars that should be taken into account when re-reading political thought in Africa.¹¹ Colonial experiences brought about a radical transformation, as Western powers imposed new political frameworks that marginalized local structures¹². This influence is manifested through:

- The Destruction of Traditional Systems

Pre-colonial African societies relied on governance systems built on collective principles and social justice, but the colonial experience led to their marginalization and replacement by externally imposed administrative systems, creating a gap between local heritage and the new political reality.¹³

- The Imposition of New Political Models

Colonial powers imposed Western political and legal frameworks, shifting the perspective on sovereignty and justice from a local to a Western-centric viewpoint—a legacy that persists even after independence.¹⁴

2.2.2 The Colonial Experience and Beyond

After independence, a wave of intellectuals emerged who aimed to reclaim national identity and reconstruct political thought on a foundation that reflects African realities. This approach relies on a critical postcolonial framework that re-evaluates the imposed discourses and political models of the past, emphasizing the need to overcome colonial intellectual constraints to establish a framework that truly represents the diversity and multiplicity of African societies.¹⁵

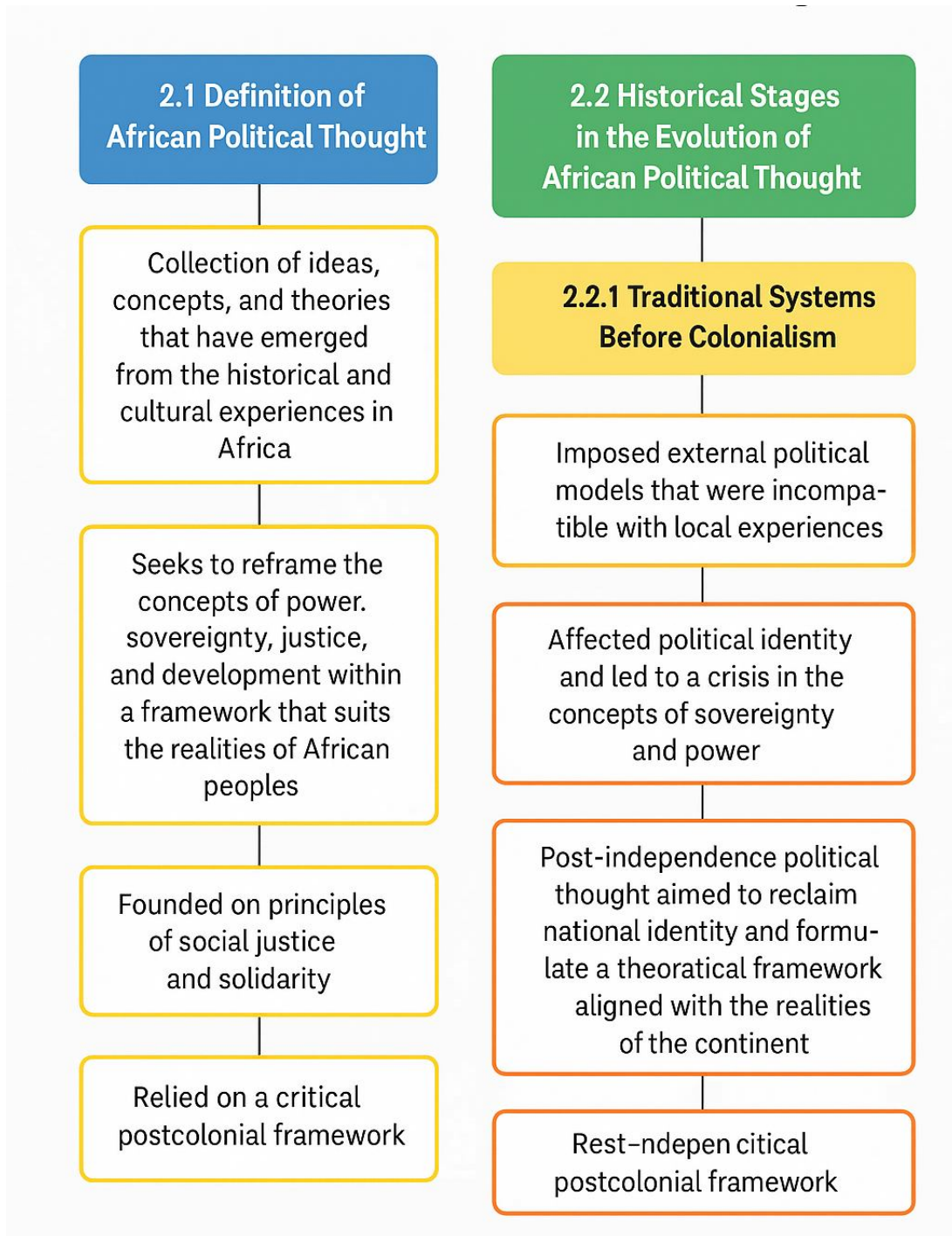
The postcolonial model in international relations represents a critical framework that re-reads the global system based on the impacts of the colonial and cultural legacy. This is achieved through integrating critical studies with a postcolonial approach, thereby allowing for the reformulation of the concepts of sovereignty, justice, and development to more accurately reflect the diverse experiences and historical dynamics of non-Western countries. This approach opens up prospects for constructing a pluralistic international system that includes the voices of all peoples.¹⁶ In light of critical studies, the postcolonial model poses a challenge to traditional theories such as realism and liberalism, which focus on concepts of sovereignty and power without taking into account the historical and cultural experiences of non-Western nations. The postcolonial model is defined as the theoretical framework that seeks to:

- **Analyze the Colonial Legacy:** Study how the colonial era impacted the political, economic, and social structures of countries, and highlight how these influences continue to shape the international system.

- **Reframe the Concepts of Sovereignty and Justice:** Redefine sovereignty and justice away from traditional Western models to encompass the historical, cultural, and experiential dimensions of liberated countries. Postcolonial political thought reimagines sovereignty to include broader aspects such as popular participation and social justice—challenging the Western models based solely on military and economic power.¹⁷

- **Emphasize Cultural Diversity and Local Experiences:** Rely on local experiences and cultural traditions in crafting an alternative political model that respects the unique characteristics of non-Western nations.

Figure N°2. The Historical and Conceptual Evolution of African Political



Source: Prepared by the researcher

3. African Critique and Intellectual Renewal

Traditional international relations theories form the basis for analyzing global politics, while postcolonial approaches offer a critical reading that re-evaluates these foundations by focusing on the colonial legacy and cultural identity. The dialogue between these two approaches leads to the construction of an alternative theoretical framework that is more comprehensive and pluralistic, enriching our understanding of international relations and contributing to the creation of a global system that takes into account historical and cultural diversity.

Similarly, traditional Western theories in international relations—such as realism and liberalism—establish a conceptual framework based on ideas like absolute sovereignty, the balance of power, and reliance on military and economic might as the foundation of international relations. These theories have been sharply criticized by African thinkers, who argue that they do not take into account the unique historical and cultural experiences of African states. Below is an overview of the key points of the African critique.

3.1 Deconstructing Western Discourses and Intellectual Hegemony

Traditional international relations theories—such as realism, liberalism, and constructivism—form the foundational pillars for understanding state interactions in the global system. These theories often focus on concepts like sovereignty, power, and international cooperation, operating under the assumption that Western experiences serve as the primary benchmark. In contrast, postcolonial approaches present critical challenges that re-examine these assumptions by emphasizing the colonial legacy, cultural identity, and the unique history of non-Western nations. This leads to a reformulation of traditional international relations concepts. Accordingly, postcolonial approaches re-read the historical and cultural experiences of non-Western countries and critique the traditional theories that regard European standards as universal.¹⁸

African political thought also works to deconstruct Western discourses that once imposed unified political models incapable of accommodating the continent's internal diversity. This critique emphasizes that sovereignty is not merely about possessing military or economic power, but is rather a comprehensive social and cultural process.

"Modern African political thought has been based on a critical postcolonial approach aimed at deconstructing prevailing Western discourses and re-evaluating local experiences. The African political identity is shaped by a threefold interaction between tribal heritage, colonialism, and global modernity.¹⁹ Modern studies also highlight the importance of integrating traditional values with a critical approach to analyze issues of democracy and development on the continent. How can self-criticism reshape the discourses that reinforce Western authority, thereby opening the door for the inclusion of the voices and experiences of African peoples in international dialogue.²⁰

3.2 Reframing the Central Concepts

African political thought criticizes Western theories for treating sovereignty and justice as fixed values that can be universally applied without considering cultural and historical differences. African intellectuals call for an alternative political model that redefines these concepts according to local experiences. It is emphasized that postcolonial experiences have opened up the opportunity for a critical reinterpretation of sovereignty and justice, thereby redefining the relationship between the state and the people.²¹

Reconfiguring the Concepts of Power and Justice

The lasting effects of this experience on political identity and in shaping the concept of sovereignty are evident.²² Similarly, the colonial mentality continued to frame political discourses even after independence. The contributions of African political thought were not limited to rearticulating concepts internally; they also influenced the field of international relations and global dialogue. African political thought challenges Western intellectual hegemony by offering alternative perspectives that reconsider international relations as the product of complex social and historical relationships.

4. Building the New African Model

The new African theoretical model represents a radical step in transcending traditional Western intellectual hegemony by re-reading the colonial heritage and local experiences using innovative critical tools such as the intersectional approach. This model opens up prospects for a more just and inclusive redistribution of international power and contributes to building an international system that reflects the cultural and historical diversity of peoples.

African intellectuals seek to build alternative political theories that take into account cultural pluralism and historical particularities. This framework is an attempt to establish a political model rooted in the experiences of African peoples—one that redefines the concepts of democracy, justice, and development in a way that serves the interests of the entire society. The introduction of the intersectionality methodology is regarded as one of the innovative ideas in re-reading African political thought; it addresses issues of identity through the interaction of race, gender, social class, and culture. This approach enables a deeper analysis of how these factors influence the shaping of the international political system and the production of policies.

Critical studies show that traditional theories of international relations often overlook the intersections between different identities, thereby oversimplifying the complex reality experienced by individuals and communities. The intersectional approach helps shed light on how multiple factors influence the distribution of international power and the production of policies that may marginalize certain groups in the global community.²³

4.1 The Cultural Approach

Within the postcolonial framework, intellectuals offer perspectives on how to integrate cultural identity and local experiences into the analysis of international relations, leading to an

alternative model that respects cultural diversity.²⁴ Emphasizing cultural identity plays a central role in African political thought, as it is seen as pivotal in the construction of both the state and society. Furthermore, critiquing Western discourses is regarded as a means to restore a sense of belonging and national dignity.²⁵

This approach calls for the “decolonization of the mind,” as proposed by Ngũgĩ and Thiong’o, whereby language and culture are re-embedded as essential tools for understanding political reality—resulting in a more transparent and comprehensive reading of African history.²⁶ This process is carried out through:

1. **Re-embedding Knowledge:** Reclaiming local knowledge and cultural traditions as the foundation for formulating alternative political theories.
2. **Redistributing Intellectual Power:** Dismantling the Western epistemological hegemony that persisted after colonialism.²⁷

The approach focuses on deconstructing the dominant discourses produced by colonialism and re-reading knowledge and the social sciences from a perspective that liberates them from the constraints of Western hegemony. In this context, the work of Walter Dignolo is considered a modern reference, as he highlights the importance of re-reading scientific knowledge so that it becomes a platform reflecting local experiences rather than imposed Western models.²⁸

4.2 Integrating Critical Analysis with Local Experiences

These approaches indicate that traditional Western theories tend to present a one-dimensional model based on criteria of power and sovereignty, ignoring the cultural and historical differences of peoples. By applying postcolonial, critical, and feminist theories, it becomes possible to develop an alternative theoretical model that demonstrates that sovereignty and justice are not fixed values but rather the results of complex historical and cultural processes. This model provides an opportunity to build a more inclusive and diverse international political system—one that considers multiple voices and redistributes power more justly.

4.3 Integrating Traditional Knowledge – Ubuntu

The integration of traditional principles based on the values of “Ubuntu”—which emphasize sharing and solidarity—²⁹is central to this discourse. Concepts like Ubuntu, examined in multiple studies of African thought, provide a framework that reflects human interconnectedness and mutual support. This framework is akin to cosmopolitan ideas; it underscores that truth and human knowledge are not derived solely from the individual but emerge from one’s interactions and relationships with others. This principle stands in contrast to Western theories that are based on individualism and competitiveness, and it places greater value on participation and cooperation.³⁰

The concept of Ubuntu is one of the profound philosophical and social concepts that emerged in South Africa. It conveys the idea that the individual is an integral part of the whole, encapsulated in the phrase “I am because we are.” Rooted in principles of solidarity, shared responsibility, and common humanity, Ubuntu has played a significant role in shaping Africa’s cultural and social identity. It posits that individual identity is deeply connected to community, as expressed by “I am because we are,” which signifies social interaction and mutual support. The roots of this concept lie in the traditions of the Bantu peoples of South Africa, and it has since evolved into a symbol of African thought in rebuilding social and human relations after periods of colonialism and conflict.³¹

4.4 Gender and Western Political Structures

The feminist approach presents a significant challenge to traditional Western models by critiquing political structures based on gender inequality. It demonstrates how Western political ideas often neglect women’s experiences and perpetuate a system that maintains male dominance. This calls for a re-reading of the concepts of power—redefining them to include the dimension of social justice from a gender perspective. Incorporating dimensions of identity, gender, and race into political analysis is an innovative step that illustrates how various factors intersect in shaping the African political experience. This approach aids in deconstructing traditional European assumptions and in reconstructing concepts of power on more inclusive foundations.³²

4.5 Cosmopolitanism and Political Identity

Cosmopolitanism is defined as a vision that reinforces the idea of global citizenship, where the individual is seen as part of humanity as a whole rather than confined to a national or regional identity. In the context of African political thought, this vision is used to reframe the concepts of sovereignty and justice so that they reflect the experiences of African peoples and their aspirations for an integrated global society.

The cosmopolitan approach re-reads the concepts of identity and sovereignty to transcend traditional national boundaries, demonstrating that global belonging can enrich international political dialogue. It is a critical vision that redistributes intellectual power and reframes knowledge to include marginalized voices.³³

These modern approaches—combining cosmopolitanism with African philosophical thought—form an alternative theoretical model that re-reads African political thought in light of local experiences and global challenges. They call for transcending the constraints imposed by the colonial legacy and traditional Western models, and they strive to build a more pluralistic and inclusive international system founded on the principles of justice and global participation. This critical reading invites a reconsideration of traditional political concepts and opens new horizons for constructing a new African theoretical model that enriches global discourse in international relations.³⁴

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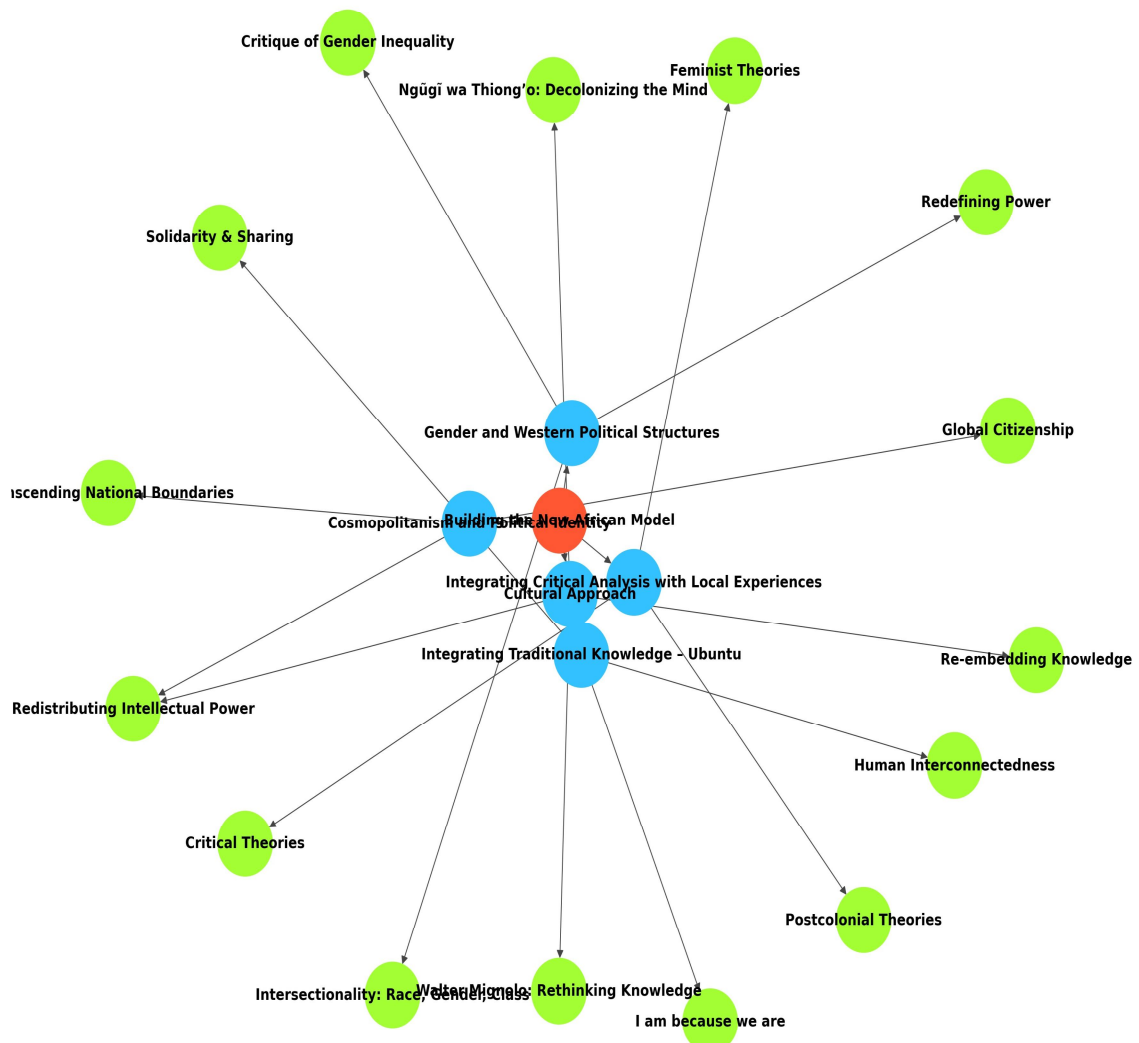
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The new model requires opening up horizons for dialogue among different cultures in the international community, integrating African experiences with those from other regions. This would lead to a multipolar international system that respects cultural and historical diversity³⁵. By combining postcolonial, critical, feminist, and cosmopolitan approaches, it is possible to build an integrated theoretical model that redistributes intellectual power globally, paving the way for a more comprehensive global dialogue—one based on non-Western experiences and knowledge that break traditional constraints and call for a new political model reflective of the world's plurality.

Figure N°3. Building the New African Model

Source: Prepared by the researcher

The diagram illustrates the New African Model as a branching intellectual structure that seeks to transcend Western hegemony through multiple, integrated approaches. At the



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center, the model appears as the core idea, from which five major axes emerge: the cultural approach, the integration of critical analysis with local experiences, the incorporation of traditional knowledge such as Ubuntu philosophy, the feminist critique of Western structures, and the cosmopolitan vision of identity and sovereignty. Each axis branches into detailed elements that clarify the mechanisms of reinterpreting knowledge and redistributing power in a more just manner. The colors and connections in the figure embody the hierarchy and interlinkages among these levels, reflecting the nature of the New African project, which is grounded in intellectual plurality, the revalorization of local identity, and openness to more inclusive human values in order to build a balanced global system.

Building on the above, and as illustrated in the following figure, the foundations of the African model can be identified as follows:

1. **Relational Sovereignty:** Sovereignty as a collective practice based on dignity and mutual recognition.
2. **Justice and Global Equality:** Interpreting justice in light of the colonial context and structural inequalities.
3. **Collective and Solidarity Dimensions:** Prioritizing the group over the individual, as reflected in institutional experiences such as the African Union.
4. **Cultural and Epistemic Dimensions:** The role of African philosophies, such as Ubuntu and Négritude, in reshaping identity and sovereignty while promoting social and ethical values, thereby contributing to the construction of a political model grounded in solidarity and mutual respect among peoples and institutions.

Table N°2. Dimensions of the African Model

Dimension	Description	Examples
Relational Sovereignty	Sovereignty as a collective practice based on dignity and mutual recognition	Ubuntu in South Africa
Justice and Global Equality	Interpreting justice in light of the colonial context and structural inequalities	Sustainable development policies in Kenya and Rwanda
Collective and Solidarity Dimensions	Prioritizing the group over the individual	African Union, Non-Aligned Movement
Cultural and Epistemic Dimensions	Role of African philosophies in reshaping identity and sovereignty	Négritude, African feminism

Source: Prepared by the researcher

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The table illustrates the intellectual and philosophical foundations of the African model in understanding sovereignty, justice, solidarity, and identity.

1. Relational Sovereignty

In the African model, sovereignty is not merely the absolute authority of the state as in the Western model. Rather, it is a collective practice built upon mutual dignity and reciprocal recognition among peoples and states. This concept goes beyond the idea of borders and control, laying the foundation for relationships based on mutual respect. For example, the principles of the Organization of African Unity (later the African Union) emphasized respect for state sovereignty while at the same time promoting collective cooperation to confront colonialism and apartheid.³⁶

2. Justice and Global Equalit

Justice is understood within a specifically African context, one that takes into account the colonial experience and the structural inequalities it produced. Justice here is not only legal or individual but also tied to correcting historical injustices and ensuring equal opportunities at the global level. For instance, African states have called at the United Nations for reforming the global economic system (the Bretton Woods institutions) and for debt relief, viewing debt as a colonial legacy.³⁷

3. Collective and Solidarity Dimensions

Priority is given to the group over the individual, reflecting the nature of African societies that are rooted in solidarity and cooperation. This stands in contrast to Western liberal philosophy, which glorifies individualism. The African model views identity and rights as constructed through belonging to the group. A clear example is the African Union, which acts as an institution expressing regional solidarity—such as collective interventions in the crises of Sudan or Somalia under the principle of “African solutions to African problems.”³⁸

4. Cultural and Epistemic Dimensions

The reliance on African philosophies such as *Ubuntu* (“I am because we are”) and *Négritude* (a cultural and intellectual movement affirming pride in African identity) reshapes the concepts of identity and sovereignty. This dimension emerges as a rejection of Western epistemic dominance and as a search for intellectual alternatives rooted in the African experience itself. For example, the application of *Ubuntu* in South Africa’s national reconciliation process after the end of apartheid emphasized forgiveness and coexistence rather than revenge.³⁹

The African model rests on the integration of politics, justice, solidarity, and culture, making it a holistic vision that transcends the traditional Western conception of sovereignty and justice. It is a model rooted in Africa’s historical particularity (colonialism, exploitation, marginalization), and it rearticulates its principles in service of dignity, unity, and epistemic liberation.

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Table N°3. Comparison between the African Model and the Western Model

Dimension	African Model	Western Model
Sovereignty	Relational sovereignty based on mutual recognition and collective cooperation.	Absolute sovereignty of the nation-state, focused on borders and control.
Justice	Justice is tied to addressing historical injustices (colonialism, exploitation) and achieving structural global equality.	Justice is individual and legal, focusing on equality before the law without necessarily considering historical contexts.
Individual vs. Community	Priority to the community and social solidarity (Ubuntu: “I am because we are”).	Priority to the individual and individual rights, even at the expense of collective interest.
Culture & Knowledge	Relies on local philosophies such as Ubuntu and Négritude to redefine identity and sovereignty.	Relies on European modernist philosophies (liberalism, rationalism, secularism).
Institutions	Institutions reflecting collective solidarity, e.g., the African Union and the principle of “African solutions to African problems.”	International institutions with a competitive/individualistic logic (e.g., United Nations, NATO) focusing on balance of power and interests.

Source: Prepared by the researcher

The comparative analysis highlights that the African model is distinguished by its emphasis on collectivity, solidarity, and mutual recognition. Sovereignty is conceived as a relational and participatory construct, while justice is understood primarily as the rectification of historical injustices. This orientation is exemplified by South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which employed the concept of Ubuntu to foster forgiveness, reconciliation, and social coexistence rather than focusing exclusively on punitive measures. Conversely, the Western model is grounded in individualism and the absolute sovereignty of the state, with justice defined through abstract legal frameworks. This is illustrated by the Nuremberg Trials, which prioritized individual accountability and legal sanction. Accordingly, the African model may be regarded as more holistic and historically situated, whereas the Western model remains predominantly legalistic and abstract.

Conclusion:

African political thought constitutes a fundamental pillar in rearticulating political theories on a global scale, offering a critical perspective that liberates thought from colonial constraints and imposed Western models. By critiquing these models and constructing an alternative theoretical framework grounded in cultural identity and local history, African

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political thought opens new horizons for understanding international relations from a pluralistic and inclusive perspective aimed at justice and sustainable development in Africa.

The study emphasizes that adopting a post-colonial perspective is a crucial step toward breaking the dominance of Western paradigms and rebuilding international relations theories on more independent foundations that reflect African specificities. This perspective also highlights the importance of recovering local political practices and reassessing historical experiences, both successes and failures, in attempts to build alternative and sustainable political models.

Key Findings:

- Western models continue to exert strong influence on academic and political spheres, hindering the emergence of locally grounded alternatives.
- African political thought struggles to translate critical ideas into practical policies that bring tangible social, political, and economic changes.
- Successful cases demonstrate that integrating local history, culture, and social structures can significantly enhance governance effectiveness.
- There is a growing recognition of the need for inclusive approaches that consider gender, youth, and minority participation in decision-making processes.

Recommendations

1- Enhancing Field Research and Qualitative Analysis:

- Support empirical studies to document local governance and administrative practices across African countries.
- Employ qualitative critical analysis tools to understand how African political thought can inform actionable policies.

2- Activating Dialogue Between Intellectual and Theoretical Cultures:

- Encourage critical dialogue between African and Western theoretical models to enrich mutual understanding and facilitate knowledge exchange.
- Use this dialogue to develop more pluralistic and inclusive political models and international relations frameworks.

3- Adopting Comprehensive Developmental Strategies Based on Local Specificities:

- Design development policies according to each country's historical, cultural, and social context, thereby enhancing political and economic independence.
- Integrate inclusivity and social justice principles into national and regional policy design to ensure the participation of all social groups, particularly women, youth, and minorities.

4- Strengthening Political and Cultural Education:

- Promote awareness of the importance of African political thought among students, researchers, and policymakers.
- Develop training programs and workshops on post-colonial approaches and the value of local experiences in policy formulation.

Implementing these recommendations can help bridge the gap between critical African political theory and practical policymaking, fostering governance systems that are more inclusive, culturally grounded, and capable of driving sustainable development across the continent.

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