



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

**COURSE CODE:POL 122**

**COURSE TITLE:INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN  
POLITICS**

<b>COURSE GUIDE</b>
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**POL 122  
INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN POLITICS**

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## **Introduction**

### ***Welcome to POS 102: Introduction to African Politics***

This course is a three-credit unit course for undergraduate students in Political Science. The materials have been developed with the African continent in view. This course guide gives you an overview of the course. It also provides you with relevant information on the organization and requirements of the course.

## **Course Aims**

The aims are to help you understand the theory and practice of African politics; the problems associated with governance in Africa and the way forward. The broad aims will be achieved by:

- Introducing you to African politics, its origins, nature and character.

- Demonstrating how Africa's encounter with the Europeans had created a legacy, this substantially influenced, and indeed determined the practice of politics in the continent to date.
- Equip you with the knowledge and understanding of the internal forces that are subtly manipulating African politics, and the tools that will assist in achieving true liberation.

### **Course Objectives**

To achieve the aims set out above, POL 122 has broad objectives. In addition, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are at the beginning of each unit. I advise that you read them before you start working through the unit. You may refer to them in the course of the unit to personally monitor your progress.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- (a) Define and conceptualize the nature of African politics
- (b) Understand the colonial influence on the nature and character of African politics.
- (c) Appreciate the modalities of nationalist agitations and the manner of colonial disengagement
- (d) Explain the predominance of foreign influence in African politics.
- (e) Know the interplay of economic interests/forces and political events in Africa.
- (f) Offer explanations for political instability in Africa
- (g) Explain why a military regime cannot be a viable alternative to a democratic government and the self-serving arguments behind the advocacy of one party system in Africa.
- (i) Understand why African states are marginal players/actors in world Affairs.

## **Working through This Course**

To complete the course you are required to read the study units and other related material. You will also need to undertake practical exercises for which you need a pen, a note-book, and other materials that will be listed in this guide. The exercises are to aid you, and to facilitate your understanding of the concepts and issues being presented. At the end of each unit, you will be required to submit written assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, you will write a final examination.

## **Course Materials**

The major materials you will need for this course are:

- Course guide
- Study units
- Assignment file
- Relevant textbooks including the ones listed under each unit.
- You may also need to listen to programme and news on the radio and television, local and foreign.
- As a beginner, you need to read newspapers, magazines, journals and if possible log on to the internet.

## **Study Units**

There are 21 units (of five modules) in this course. They are listed below:

## **Module 1      Background to African Politics**

Unit 1	Nature and Character of African Politics
Unit 2	Politics in Pre-Colonial Africa
Unit 3	Origins and Problems of African Politics
Unit 4	Primordial Politics and Conflicts in Africa

## **Module 2                      Colonialism and Nationalism**

Unit 1	Meaning and Nature of Colonialism
Unit 2	Africa and the Colonial Metropoles
Unit 3	Problems and Legacies of Colonialism
Unit 4	Meaning, and Nature of Nationalism
Unit 5	Nationalism and Decolonization Process

## **Module 3      Neo-colonialism and African Economy**

Unit 1	Meaning and Features of Neo-Colonialism
Unit 2	Neo-Colonialism- Its Mechanism and Impacts
Unit 3	The Political Economy of African States
Unit 4	The Doctrine and Reality of African Socialism



## **Module 4 Political Instability and Sustainable Democracy in Africa**

Unit 1	One party Rule in Africa
Unit 2	The Military in African Politics
Unit 3	Contending Explanatory Models of Instability
Unit 4	Democracy and Constitutionalism
Unit 5	Instability and Crises of Succession in Africa

## **Module 5 Race/Gender Relations and World Order**

Unit 1	Racism and Liberation in Southern Africa
Unit 2	Gender Politics in Africa
Unit 3	Gender Affirmative Action and Government Response
Unit 4	Africa in International Affairs
Unit 5	Africa in Search for a New World Order

### **Textbooks and References**

Certain books have been recommended in the course. You will have to supplement this by reading from library, or purchase them.

### **Assessment File**

An assessment file and a marking scheme will be made available to you. In the assessment file, you will find details of the works you must submit to your tutor for marking. There are five aspects of the assessment of this

courses the tutor marked and the written examination. The marks you obtain in these two areas will make up your final marks. The assignment must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadline stated in the presentation

Schedules and the Assignment file. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will account for 30% of your total score.

### **Tutor-Marked Assignment**

You will have to submit a specified number of the (TMAs). Every unit in this course has a tutor marked assignment. You will be assessed on four of them but the best three performances from the (TMAs) will be used for computing your 30%. When you have completed each assignment, send it together with a Tutor marked Assignment form, to your Tutor. Make sure each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline for submissions. If for any reason, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor for a discussion on the possibility of an extension. Extensions will not be granted after the due date unless under exceptional circumstances.

### **Final Examination and Grading**

The final examination will be a test of three hours. All areas of the course will be examined. Find time to read the unit all over before your examination. The final examination will attract 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions, which reflect the kind of self-assessment exercise, and tutor marked assignment you have previously encountered. You should use the time between completing the last unit, and taking the examination to revise the entire course.

## Course Marking Scheme

The following table lays out how the actual course mark allocation is broken down.

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Marks</b>
Assignments (Best Three) Assignment out of Four Marked	30 %
Final Examination	70 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 %</b>

## Presentation Schedule

The dates for submission of all assignment will be communicated to you. You will also be told the date of completing the study units and dates for examinations.

## Course Overview

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Title of work</b>	<b>Weeks Activity</b>

	Course Guide		
Module 1		Background to African Politics	
	Nature and Character of African Politics	Week	Assignment 1
	Politics in Pre-colonial Africa	Week	Assignment 2
	Origins and Problems of African Politics	Week	Assignment 3
	Primordial Politics in Africa	Week	Assignment 4

			g n m e n t 4
<b>Module 2                      Colonialism and</b> <b>Nationalism</b>			
	Meaning and Nature Colonialism	Week	A s s i g n m e n t 1
	Africa and the Colonial Metropoles	Week	A s s i g n m e n t 2
	Problems and Legacies of Colonialism	Week	A s s i g n m e n

				t 3
	Meaning and Nature of Nationalism		Week	A s s i g n m e n t 4
	Nationalism and Decolonization Process		Week	A s s i g n m e n t 5
<b>Module 3 Neo-Colonialism And African Political Economy</b>				
	Meaning and features of Neo- colonialism		Week 10	A s s i g n m e n t 1
	Neo- colonialism- mechanisms	Its and	Week 11	A s s

	impacts		i g n m e n t 2
	African Political Economy	Week 12	A s s i g n m e n t 3
	The Doctrine and Reality of African Socialism	Week 13	A s s i g n m e n t 4
<b>Module 4 Political Instability and Sustainable Democracy in Africa</b>			
	One party Rule in Africa	Week 14	A s s i g n m e

			n t 1
	The Military in African Politics	Week 15	A s s i g n m e n t 2
	Contending Explanatory models of Instability	Week 16	A s s i g n m e n t 3
	Democracy and Constitutionalism in Africa	Week 17	A s s i g n m e n t 4
	Instability and crises of succession	Week 18	A s s i



			g n m e n t 5
<b>Module 5      Race/Gender Relations and World Order</b>			
	Racism      and Liberation      in Southern Africa	eek 19	A s s i g n m e n t 1
	Gender Politics in Africa	eek 20	A s s i g n m e n t 2
	Gender Affirmative      Action and      Government Response	eek 21	A s s i g n m e n

			t 3
	Africa in International Affairs	Week 22	A s s i g n m e n t 4
	Africa in Search of a New World Order	Week 23	A s s i g n m e n t 5
	Revision		
	Examination		
	<b>Total</b>		

### How to Get the Most from This Course

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the

study units tell you where to read, and which are your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise. Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a Reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organize a Study Schedule. Design a 'Course Over' to guide you through the Course, Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you choose, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason why students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late to help.

4. Turn to Unit I, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
6. Keep in touch with your study center. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.
7. Well before the relevant due dates (about 4 weeks before due dates), keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination. Submit all assignments not later than the due date.
8. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them, if you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
9. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
10. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
11. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

## **Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials**

Information relating to the tutorials will be provided at the appropriate time. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must take your tutor-marked assignments to the study center well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor if you need help. Contact your tutor if:

- You do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings
- You have difficulty with the exercises
- You have a question or problem with an assignment or with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussion actively.

### **Summary**

The course guide gives you an overview of what to expect in the course of this study. The course teaches you the basic principles of news reporting and writing and how these principles can be applied. It also acquaints you with the legal and ethical rules guiding your job as a reporter.

We wish you success with the course and hope that you will find it both interesting and useful.

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**MODULE 1**

Unit 1	Nature and Character of African Politics
Unit 2	Politics in Pre-Colonial Africa
Unit 3	Origins and Problems of African Politics
Unit 4	Primordial Politics and Conflicts in Africa

**UNIT 1 THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF AFRICAN POLITICS****CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Background to African Politics
3.2	Party-Politics in Post-Independence Era
3.3	Features of African Politics
3.4	Recurring Political Instability
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will be introduced to African Politics. This is a follow-up to your study of Introduction to politics. This unit will introduce you to the application of the major principles and concepts you have studied. The various issues that will be examined in this unit include the colonial background of African politics, the structure and nuances of political party formations in the post-independence era, and the major indices that define the nature and character of African politics. The unit will introduce you to the factors that are responsible for unstable political systems in Africa, and problems associated with such upheavals.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES**

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the major features of African politics
- appreciate that African politics is largely characterized by instability
- explain the factors responsible for this instability.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Background to African Politics**

It is difficult to explain and analyse the nature and character of African politics without taking into account the encounter of these states with foreign influence, under colonial rule. What is now described as colonial legacy is an admission that this asymmetric colonial relation had a formative, if not disruptive or destructive influence on politics in Africa. Almost five decades after that threshold popularly referred to as the “African Year of Independence”, it would amount to self-delusion to claim that African states today are free from the corrosive effects of European values, systems and institutions. Indeed, the manner these foreign models were grafted into African indigenous structures, continue to have consequences for contemporary African politics.

The key issue here is whether an ex-colonial, new state in Africa, and a plural society, composed of old nations can evolve viable political systems, institutions and structures that can sustain political order. The reality today is that African post-colonial political setting is a confusing mixture of authoritarian and democratic parliamentary/liberal institutions. While the ideas of supremacy of the law and the structuring and organizations of a political community from which authority derives were consciously introduced by the colonial administration, corresponding consciousness that the ultimate control of government power lay with the people was lacking. According to Jordan (1978:60), The absence of these elements of modern constitutionalism added to the existing confusion due basically to the co-existence of elements belonging to three constitutional traditions: pre-colonial African constitutionalism, the constitutional system of indirect rule and authoritarian administration and the Western model of liberal democracy.

This created an almost irreconcilable gap between the authority of a strong and effective government struggling to modernize and integrate, and the liberty of the citizens, who were anxious to translate the pre-independence “revolution of rising expectations” into concrete developmental fulfillments. The failure to resolve this conflict, which had its roots in the colonial era, was the major dilemma faced by African leaders in the immediate post-independence era. Rather than find solutions to this problem, the inheritors of political offices were so much pre-occupied with the struggle for power and appropriating to themselves the privileges of offices vacated by the colonialists that little time was left for constructing political agenda appropriate for a developing society.

In a recent commentary on Africa's unique sociological setting, Henry Kissinger (2001:203) remarked thus: "in no other continent did national borders emerge so directly and intrinsically from the way the imperial powers delineated their spheres of control". Awolowo's (1947) description of Nigeria as a "mere geographic expression", a phrase arising from the country's colonial origin is, therefore, equally applicable to most African states. This explains why unlike in most countries in the world where the state precede the nation, in Africa the nation precede the state. Consequently, it is difficult in African states to wrest a national consciousness from among a plethora of ethnic groups, or forge a national identity where centrifugal forces are strong.

### **3.2 Party-Politics in Post-Independence Era**

In the movement towards national independence of African states, political parties were in the vanguard of that struggle. In Nigeria, for example the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC), led by Herbert Macaulay, and later, Nnamdi Azikiwe gave nationalist struggle a boost. In former Gold Coast, now Ghana, the struggle for independence was initiated by the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), until Kwame Nkrumah broke away and formed the Convention Peoples' Party (CPP), proclaimed Positive Action and won independence for Ghana in 1957. In Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone National Council, (SLNC), in Gambia, the Peoples Progressive Party, in Zimbabwe, both ZANU and ZAPU formed the Patriotic Front to demand for self-government, and eventually led their countries in the immediate post-independence era. In South Africa, the ANC struggled, not for independence, but for majority rule from the apartheid regime.

During the struggle for independence two factors accelerated the pace of parties' formation: the devolution of power by colonial authorities who attracted the nationalists, and induced them to convert their movements to political parties, and the modification of electoral system and constitutional adjustments that made it technically possible for political parties to seek power constitutionally (Sklar 1983). It is a fact that political parties were the prime force in the struggle for independence in Africa; it is however an irony that immediately independence was granted, they became sources of instability and undemocratic policies. The reason for this is not far fetched. Unlike in the advanced democracies like Britain where the party system is at the center of parliamentary government, political parties in African states are rarely institutionalized, lack clear cut ideology, are not issues or programme driven, not properly organized, lack party discipline and are not mass-based movements, that can speak for the whole country.

In his study of political parties in French West Africa, Morgenthau (1964:336-41) made a distinction between what he called “patron” and “mass” parties. Although Smith (2003: 151) described the distinction as “less neat in fact than in definition,” yet it gives us an idea of the organisational structure of parties in most African states in the early years of independence. By Morgenthau’s definition patron parties were weakly organized, undisciplined, with little direct membership participation. The individuals were of interest to patron parties only for the purposes of exercising their franchise. Most parties in Africa fit into this category. In the rare cases like in Ghana, Ivory Coast or Guinea where we had “mass” parties, citizens were often mobilized or driven by ideologies to perpetuate leaders in office.

We must, however, admit that in spite of the observed deficiencies in parties their leaders were wise enough to close ranks, and forged a common front to demand for, and win-self government for their countries. But they faced the first major challenge in transiting from anti-colonial agitators to managers of newly independent states. Because these parties were a curious combination of traditionalism and liberalism, they were therefore unable to reconcile these conflicting values. Traditionalism enjoined political leaders to take care of everyone regardless of party differences. However liberal democracy dictated that government should alternate between the majority and the minority. But in a continent where divisions are along tribal, ethnic or religious lines, the opposition, often the minority ethnic groups, usually found it difficult to understand the idea of their permanent exclusion from power, along with the privileges it confers. Under this circumstance, the political process boils down to a quest for domination, even repression, not alternation in office.

This is the context within which the tug of war arena developed, and which in turn defines the nature and character of African politics. We can now identify and explain the salient features of African politics.

### **3.3 Features of African Politics**

#### **a. Crises of Legitimacy**

The first major feature of African politics is the problem of leadership legitimacy. Legitimacy simply connotes wide acceptability of the government in power by the entire citizens. According to S.M. (1963) Lipset in his book “Political Man”, legitimacy of a government is determined by three factors: how power is acquired, the performance or efficiency of government, and the level of freedom and welfare enjoyed by the citizens. In Africa, rules governing electoral competition are not followed, elections, are not free and fair, the performance of most

governments are poor, while the freedom and welfare of the people are not guaranteed.

A government that lacks legitimacy is prone to have its policies misinterpreted, creates communication gaps between the government and the governed and may not enjoy the benefits of feed back on its policies that can assist in policy re-evaluation, and re-formulation. In the extreme, an illegitimate government imposes a reign of terror on the citizens to force them into submission or acquiescence. The regimes of blood-thirsty Idi Amin Dada of Uganda typified this tendency in the past, and its contemporary equivalent is Robert Mugabe's infamous rule in Zimbabwe. In the December 2007 General Elections in Kenya, incumbent President Muai Kibaki manipulated the electoral commission to deny the opposition candidate, Raila Odinga of Orange Democratic Coalition from emerging victorious.

After months of violence Kibaki agreed to a power sharing formulae, which created and gave the post of Prime Minister to the opposition candidate. In March 2008, Robert Mugabe re-enacted the Kenya drama in Zimbabwe, and ensured that the opposition challenger, Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change did not secure the mandatory 50 plus one percentage of the votes, required to win the election in the first ballot. Before he resigned as President, Thabo Mbeki of South Africa successfully brokered a power sharing deal between the two feuding parties. Whatever the pretences by Kikabi and Mugabe, there is no doubt that they no longer enjoy credibility as leaders and their governments have also ceased to possess electoral legitimacy. The Kenya and Zimbabwe's cases are, by no means, unique; they merely represent the latest, and the frightful dimensions the crisis of legitimacy is assuming in Africa.

#### **b. Corruption and Monetized Politics**

Corruption has remained the bane of African politics. It has continued to undermine the effectiveness of political leadership. Awolowo (1966) defines corruption as abuse, misuse and disuse of power. Forms of corruption in African politics include bribery and manipulation of electoral process, nepotism in award of contracts and favouritism in dispensing patronage. While clientilism and patron-client relations are common in all societies, they define, and constitute the essence of African politics. Using Nigeria as a case study, Richard Joseph (2006) coined the word ‘prebendalism’ to describe a situation “where an individual seeks a patron and leans on him in order to benefit from the privileges of the upper class” Joseph’s formulation is not too distinct from Karl Marx’s notion of “primitive accumulation” – acquiring wealth in excess of what is reasonably or economically justifiable. J.F. Bayart’s coinage of the term “politics of the belly” is understandable given the high level of poverty in most African states, but certainly was not intended to justify the massive corruption and looting of public treasury by some African leaders.

Before their exit from power, some Africa leaders, notably Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire (now CDR) were infamously reputed to be richer than their states. The consequence of the pervasiveness of corruption in African politics is not only absence of development but also decline in state capacity; and ultimate state failure. This problem is a major factor in the deepened economic stagnation and under-development of African states, arising from diversion of states resources meant for development to serve the private interests of political leadership.

In Nigeria, recent scandalous revelations about the diversion of PTDF funds, aviation intervention funds, National Integrated Power Project (NIPP), award of oil blocs and payment for signatures bonuses, are enough for us to conclude that in spite of public pretences to fight corruption, the menace appears to have been institutionalized in the nation’s body polity. When this is added to the God fathers syndrome, and the monetisation of the political space, it is no surprise that the culture of impunity is gaining ground in the country.

The Nigerian case illustrates the trend in most African states where governments are rarely responsible because they run from accountability at the polls. The process of governance not only lacks transparency, the rule of law is weak, while the mass media and civil society groups that are to serve as watch dogs are either inept, or have been compromised. It is a fact that where there is power and discretion there is always the possibility of abuse, especially when the power and discretion have to be exercised within the context of scarcity. This problem therefore calls for appropriate policy response, process monitoring and system re-alignment.



**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Explain the influence of money in African politics.

**c. Personalised Leadership**

As a result of the dominance of a few individuals in the politics of African states, politics has always been based on personalized leadership. Ali Mazrui (1997:7) identified five leadership styles among African leaders:

- i. Intimidatory leader, who relies primarily on fear and instrument of coercion to assert his authority, and specialized in the use and/or threat of use of force to extract compliance from his fellow country men;
- ii. The patriarchal leader, basically one who commanded neo-filia reverence, a near father like figure like Jomo Kenyatta and Nelson Mandela;
- iii. The leader of Reconciliation, who relied for his effectiveness on qualities of tactical accommodation and capacity to discover areas of compromise between otherwise antagonistic view points; such leaders like Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria and Milton Obote of Uganda remained in control as long as he was successful in politics of compromise and synthesis;
- iv. Mobilization leader, whose main drive was ideology, with a dose of charismatic qualities, which helped in mobilizing the populace in the direction of a particular social action, as effectively employed by Nyerere in Tanzania, and perhaps, Nkrumah, in Ghana;

- v. Bureaucratic leader; the low-key type who relied on efficiency rather than evocation, procedure rather than passion.

Mazru's typologies are closely related to David Apter's views on political leadership in Africa, except that he laid emphasis on the integrative role of leaders in a plural African setting, in order to cope with the turbulence of political modernization. Hesitant to repress, but anxious to dominate the political scene, African political leadership, especially in the first decade of independence created a personality cult around themselves. Kwame Nkrumah, for instance, preferred to be called Osagefor (The saviour) while Nyerere also admired being called Nwalimu (The Great Teacher). Rather than institutions driving the political process the personal attributes of African leaders, either to hold the state together, or cause crises, are more important than the form of government, or the institution of checks and balances. For Instance, the stability which Ivory Coast enjoyed under Felix Houphouet Boigny, disappeared after his death and exit from office. While laying claim to be democratic most African leaders behave in the manner of maximum-military rulers, in effectively demonstrating J.J. Rousseaus view that "the strongest is never strong enough to be master unless he transforms might into right and obedience into duty".

#### **d. Sit-Tight Syndrome**

Another feature of African politics is the sit-tight syndrome. This is the desire and consistent refusal of rulers and leaders in Africa to leave office at the end of their tenure; even when they had become unpopular. Whether elected into office, or they accede to power through a military coup such leaders begin to scheme and plot how to stay in power indefinitely. Obafemi Awolowo described this virus in African politics as "tenacity of office", which in turn makes the opposition parties to develop the tactics of "pull him down syndrome". For this reason in most African states the electorates have lost faith in the ballot box as the only legitimate means of changing a bad government. Until recently, military intervention is considered the only available option, lending credence to the axiom that "those who make peaceful change impossible makes violent change inevitable".

Beyond the lust for power, another cause of the sit-tight syndrome in Africa is corruption. There is the pervading fear that a succeeding government could call an ex-leader to account for his stewardship. Therefore, there is the tendency by incumbents to tinker with the constitution in order to secure for them an extended or elongated tenure. To an average African politician the positive definition of jurisprudence that law is written unaffected by the desire of anyone is meaningless. The list of sit-tight African leaders is endless. In Gabon, Omar Albert-

Bernard Bongo had been in power since 1967, and from 1971, he had been re-elected for about seven times. Mummar Gadaffi in Libya (1969), Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe 1980, Hosni Mubarak in Egypt (1981), Paul Biya Cameroon (1982), Yoweri, Museveni in Uganda (1986), Blaise Campore of Burkina Faso (1987), Omar Al – Bashir of Sudan (1989) and Yahaya Jamel in Gambia 1994. In the recent past, the unduly long tenure of Nyerere in Tanzania, Kaunda in Zambia, Eyadema in Togo, Mobutu Seseseko in Zaire, Houphouet-Boigny in Ivory coast, Kerekou in Benin Republic, Banda in Malawi and Sekou Toure in Guinea, cannot be justified other than on account of lust for power. This second category of African leaders either died in office, or was humiliated out of office. Uganda, in addition, had the odd record of producing Presidents Yusuf Lule and Goddfrey Binassa who both served for few days, both of which were symptomatic of the political instability in the country. South Africa is a singular positive exception where Nelson Mandela graciously bowed out of office after completing a single tenure of four years.

In Nigeria, General Abacha, as a serving military head of state was adopted by the then five registered political parties as their sole candidate; as a ploy to prolong his government (Babatope 2003). Similarly, until the plan was frustrated by the National Assembly, it was no secret that President Olusegun Obasanjo nursed and pursued a self-succession bid that would have entailed an amendment of the constitution to enable him contest for a third term in office.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Discuss the influence of the character of political leadership on African politics.

### **3.4 Recurring Political Instability**

The combined effect of the problems we identified above is that political instability has become a recurring feature of African politics. Being plural societies, African states are divided along segmental cleavages. These cleavages may be religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial or ethnic in nature; which are advanced in their primordial forms, or promoted, at times, extra-territorially. The fundamental assumption of the western model of democracy is that politics arises out of diversity of interests, which can be aggregated, reconciled and resolved, using established rules and mechanisms. But because in Africa there is absence of agreed traditions in politics, rival groups or claimants to political offices employ illegal or unconstitutional means, including enlisting the support of the military, to secure advantage. The consequence is recurring political instability.

In every political system, those who are in power face democratic opposition, who would normally replace them, either to change or modify existing policies. But in Africa the ruling party equate opposition with treason, or in the extreme are defined as “separatists” or “secessionists” Desperate to contain what is ideally a legitimate contribution to constructive dialogue, the sitting government often pushes the opposition groups underground, where they remain and continue as potent threats to political stability.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We have introduced you to the course African politics. We began by acknowledging the impact of colonialism on the nature and character of African politics. We also recognized that a society just emerging from colonial rule had many ills to correct, and many problems to solve, and that the failure of African political leadership to frontally confront this challenge is at the root of political crises in Africa. We identified the salient features of African politics, and explained why political instability is a recurring decimal in the continent.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have discussed in general terms the nature and character of African politics. In subsequent units, we shall discuss in greater details all the relevant issues, events and episode-past and present – that have defined the complexion of politics in Africa. In specific terms, the basic issues we addressed in this unit include:

- The impact of colonialism on the evolution of extant political values, process and systems in Africa.
- Failure of African politicians to abide by the rules of the game and the consequent volatility of African politics
- The wide gulf that exist between the government and the governed, arising from failure on both sides, to reconcile authority with liberty.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Identify and discuss the major features of African politics
2. Discuss with illustrations the sit-tight syndrome in African politics.
3. In what ways is the problem of corruption related to the crises of legitimacy in African politics

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## **UNIT 2      POLITICS IN PRE-COLONIAL AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

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- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Africa Traditional Political Institutions.
  - 3.2 Colonial Ideologies and Erosion of African Institutions
    - 3.2.1 Colonial ideologies of legitimization
    - 3.2.2 Impact of Colonialism on Traditional institution
  - 3.3 Resurgence and Relevance of Traditional institutions
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The long period of foreign rule in Africa and the success of colonial ideologies have led to the mistaken belief that traditional institutions if they ever existed, are hardly relevant today, or were of any enduring value or impact. This unit examines the importance of traditional institutions to the colonial enterprise, and how their incorporation into the colonial administrative structure facilitated the attainment of the colonial objectives. The unit recognizes that traditional institutions suffered erosion in their influence and legitimacy, yet in the post-colonial era they are witnessing revival and resurgence in their importance.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- know that well established forms of political and administrative systems existed in African societies prior to colonial era
- how colonialism displaced traditional institutions from their primacy, eroded their influence, and subordinated them to educated Africans in modern government
- explain why moves are now being intensified to transform them from symbolic, to constitutional relevance in many African states.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 African Traditional Political Institutions**

Max Weber, a German sociologist identified three basic ways of assuming leadership positions, or what is popularly known as political legitimacy-legal-rational, traditional and charismatic. In this unit, we are concerned with the traditional form of authority. The legal-rational acquired through established laws and the charismatic authority accepted as a result of the personal qualities and attributes of a leader, are not strictly relevant to pre-colonial African society. What distinguishes traditional authority from the other two is that it has become part of the pristine life of the African people; It is neither learnt, borrowed nor acquired but inherent in the people.

We can therefore define a traditional society in Africa as a territorially or tribally defined community which existed before the intrusion of colonial rule, and led by traditional rulers and chiefs, who constituted traditional political elites. In relation to modern or European societies which are structurally differentiated and complex, traditional societies are not only pre-industrial, simple but also agrarian-based settings. According to Mengisteab (2003) pre-colonial African societies had “a rich tradition of political, economic and social institutions that dealt with allocation of resources, law making and social control. He noted that in some parts of Africa the powers of rulers were restricted through the institutions of council of chiefs, while in others, such as Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) and Rwanda, the rulers were more absolute.

It is a fact that before colonial penetration it is impossible to speak of a single political system in Africa, since there were various systems in different parts of Africa. The differences, perhaps, were due to local adaptations, the structure of power, as well as the size of the polity. In spite of these differences, all the pre-colonial political systems in Africa possessed all the key attributes of a modern political system. David Easton explained that in a political system there must be a set of interactions resulting in the authoritative allocation of values. Evidence exists that in pre-colonial Africa goals were set, human and material resources allocated, and policy and objectives clearly pursued. Also, all the key elements identified in Robert Dahl’s definition of a political system-power, rule and authority- were visible in these societies.

The colonial anthropologists made a primary distinction between a state and stateless societies. But rather than been stateless societies, in pre-colonial Africa, there were nominal appearance of the state structures. We can identify certain features. First, unlike the modern system there were no elaborate legislative, executive, judicial and bureaucratic



institutions to maintain law and order, and adjudicate in disputes. Second, the mode of governance was not embodied in a written document while the machinery of government do not intrude into the private realms of individuals and groups. Instead, pre-colonial societies lived by unwritten constitutions, based on customs and conventions. Third, it also incorporated a system of social sanctions and checks and balances which prevented violation of norms by the people and extreme leadership tyranny. The idea of a chief in council is not new to Africa. The Asante in Ghana, for instance, had chiefs elected for specific tasks such as finance and defence (Jordan, 1978).

A major feature of traditional Africa was decentralization of governance and authority. In the “Mind of Africa”, W.E. Abraham insists that African “palaver” by which various opinions are arrived at after long and patient discussions are just as democratic as, if not more democratic, than the counting of heads, and making decisions based on majority votes. The African form of democracy-“communocracy”, which is based on consensus, is close to what some post-independence African leaders now call democratic centralism. The idea is that once a decision is taken, no participant in the deliberations, even when he disagrees initially, could openly refuse obligations arising from the decision. Disputes were also settled through consensual system, and narrowing of differences through negotiations, without producing winners and losers. The three fundamental principles of pre-colonial Africa as outlined by Legese (2000) were:

- a. Curbing concentration of power in an institution or person (separation of powers)
- b. Averting the emergence of a rigid hierarchy (devolution of powers)
- c. Avoiding the settlement of disputes through adversarial procedures (Alternative dispute resolution)

Other characteristics include respect for ancestors, elders, (gerontocracy) rights of individuals, and community norms and laws. Membership of lineage, kinship, and ethnic groups assured numbers of protection of rights of both the strong and weak. In spite of their merits African institutions of governance had some limitations. Participation of women in political institutions are limited, and the systems are too complex to cope with the challenges of modern developmental oriented government.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Describe the features of a traditional political system?

## **3.2 Colonial Ideologies and Erosion of African Political Institutions**

### **3.2.1 Colonial Ideologies of Legitimizing**

One of the most effective colonial ideologies used to justify colonial rule was to describe Africa as backward and without a glorious past. Africa was also portrayed as having made no contribution to world history. Peter Eke (1978) described this as colonial ideologies, invented to persuade Africans by the colonizing Europeans that colonization was in their moral and physical interests. In a report on amalgamation in Nigeria, Lord Lugard wrote “the Southern protectorate was populated by tribes in the lowest stage of primitive savagery...” In his Dual Mandate, Lugard wrote further “Europe was in Africa for the mutual benefit of her own industrial classes and of the native races in their progress to a higher plane”.

This colonial ideology popularly known as the “civilizing mission” was meant to soften the minds of Africans to accept the superior legitimacy of foreign rule, in place of traditional authority. As Peter Eke remarked “the essence of colonial history is the demonstration of the benefits of European “intervention” in Africa... (Where this succeeds) ... Africans have been sufficiently prepared to accept a definition of European rule in terms of its benefits, but hardly in terms of its costs”.

But contrary to the biased or pejorative European view, we have seen that, at the inception of foreign rule, Europeans met in different African societies well established political institutions. With varying degrees of success, and after some modifications these institutions aided the introduction of colonial administration; particularly the practice of the British policy of Indirect Rule. In Northern Nigeria, for example, the 1804 Holy Jihad led by Uthman Dan Fodio had ensured about a century old of a centralized system of government, until it was forcefully disrupted by the British in 1903. It was the existence of organized political system before colonial rule that persuaded traditional rulers like Jaja of Opobo and Sultan Attahiru to resist colonial rule, or made Alake Sagbua of Egbaland to be deceived by Britain to enter into a treaty of friendship and commerce, with Queen Victoria of England in 1893.

The reality of the imperial interest dawned on Egba people, as it did in many African societies, when Lugard in 1914 seized upon a local feud to abrogate the treaty by fiat, marking the integration of the Egbas into the colonial administration. Similar integration had earlier been accomplished by force of arms in Northern Nigeria in 1903. This was how colonial administration accommodated traditional rulers as

subordinate, residual institutions to facilitate the attainment of colonial objectives.

### **3.2.2 Impact of Colonial Administration on Traditional Institutions**

Rather than strengthen their claims to legitimacy, the encounter of traditional rulers with colonial administrators, weakened them in many ways. First, traditional rulers were perceived by their subjects as willing tools of colonial control and collaborators in repression. In Abeokuta, for example Alake Ademola was forced to abdicate in 1948 in protest against payment of colonial imposed taxation. By relying on the co-option of traditional authorities colonialism undermined their legitimacy. Hoogvelt (1978:1071) stated that colonialism invested chiefs with more power than they traditionally enjoyed in return for their support and cooperation. The effect was to create a distance between the chiefs and their people, thus opening political space for new educated elites.

Secondly, colonial inherent logic set in motion the process that progressively weakened the power, and eroded the influence of traditional rulers, even where they were initially supportive of colonial administration. The introduction of Western education and culture introduced a more liberal value within the colonial milieu; a value that questioned the absolute grip of traditional rulers over their subjects. A debate thereby ensued on the relevance of acquired status which traditional rulers relied upon for their legitimacy vis-à-vis achieved status, which educated African nationalists professed. The debate was eventually resolved in favour of emerging educated nationalists who spoke the language of liberty, freedom and democracy and whose claims to be the natural successors to white rulers, were strengthened by their successful explosion of the myth of white superiority. The fact that the first generation African traditional rulers were not educated made African growing intelligential to view them as irrelevant to post-colonial Africa.

The explanation for this is simple. The African state today is a creation of imperialism; it inherited the characteristics of the colonial state and, by extension largely ineffective in advancing the interests of society. As Mengisteab (2003) argues “the African state, run by functionaries whose interests are closely tied with external forces can hardly be expected to link itself with its institutional roots...” Noting the detachment of Africa’s present from its past, Eke also wrote: “the post- colonial era is not as differentiated from the colonial era as the colonial era from the pre-colonial era”. In other words, if there is any continuity in African

political structure, it is only from the colonial to the post-colonial and not from the pre-colonial to the colonial.

What colonialism achieved therefore was to displace traditional rulers from their primacy. From the re-organization of the emirate system in Northern Nigeria, the desecration of the authority of the Ashante here in the old Gold Coast as symbolized in the revered “Golden stool”, to the disruptions of the Buganda in Uganda, the Mendes in Sierra Leone and the Wolofs in Gambia, colonialism successfully alienated traditional rulers from the people. It not only destroyed the consensus based equilibrium of Africa, caused tensions between the educated elites and traditional rulers, and also foisted political dualism, or what Sklar (2003: 3-25) called “mixed polity” or “mixed” government” in Africa.

### **3.3 Resurgence and Relevance of Traditional Institutions**

In recent years, many states are coming to terms with the relevance of traditional institutions and seeking to incorporate them into the machinery of modern government. This revival or resurgence led Richard Sklar (1993) to coin the concept of “mixed government” to describe the trend in which traditional institutions are now accepted as occupying a second dimension of political space; behind the sovereign state. Before discussing the nature of this resurgence, it might be necessary to ask: What is responsible for it? The answer lie both in the unceasing demands by traditional rulers to seek more relevance and recognition by the holders of state powers that they could play more than symbolic role, in modern government. It was also admitted that in spite of efforts by constitutional makers to consign traditional rulers into the dustbin of history, people in many African societies still continue to owe allegiance to the institution of traditional leadership (Oomen 2003). Added to this is the realization, especially in Anglophone countries where this revival is higher, that Britain has successfully shown through the monarchy institution in England, that traditional institutions could be safely integrated into modern government. Indeed, the success of the indirect rule system bears eloquent testimony to the utility of traditional institutions.

In many African states traditional institutions and rulers are being recognized, accommodated and given more political weight in different ways:

- i. In the kingdoms of Lesotho and Swaziland the two dimensions of power-traditional and modern-coincide, or are the same, in the sovereign state. For example, King Letsie III of Lesotho functions as the head of state.

- ii. The 1992 Ghanaian constitution established a National House of Chiefs and restricted the state from appointing or refusing to recognize chiefs. 30% of the seats in the district assembly were also reserved for chiefs
- iii. In South Africa, despite the association of many chiefs with the apartheid regime, the country's 1996 constitution recognizes and protects the institution, status and role of traditional leadership, according to customary law. The South African interim constitution of 1994 specifically provided for a constitutional monarchy in the Kwazulu Natal province, to accommodate the powerful Inkhatha freedom party, led by Chief Butulezi
- iv. In 1993, Uganda amended its constitution in order to legalize the coronation of the Kabaka of Buganda, Mutebi II. Also, when the constitution was fully redrawn in 1995, chapter 16 was solely devoted to the traditional rulers.
- v. In Nigeria, though traditional rulers are yet to be given constitutional role, they have proved useful as unofficial consultative organs of governments, and in resolving disputes. A body known as the Advisory forum of Traditional Rulers and Eminent persons on Peace and Unity in Nigeria was set up in the country to discuss issues that could threaten or disrupt national unity.

A major factor why traditional institutions are considered a relic of the past is due to its undemocratic nature. But it is unlikely to expect that an institution which rests its claims to legitimacy on tradition will yield ground to the forces of democratization which swept across the continent in the 1990s. But astonishingly, the revival of traditional institutions in many African states coincided with the post-cold war era, when the push towards democracy gathered steam in Africa (Englebert 2003:41). There are possible explanations for this anomaly. One is that democratization opened the political space, and the traditional rulers, like other groups regained their voice in the process. Another factor is that the economic crises in many African states were interpreted by citizens as failure in state capacity. To survive, many citizens found safety net in other forms of sub national identity to substitute for the state. Eghosa Osaghae (1995) noted an increase in ethnic associations and solidarities in the wake of structural adjustment in Nigeria. Therefore, traditional institutions have valuable characteristics that can assist democratic governance and promote development.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Suggest possible roles for traditional rulers in modern government.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In pre-colonial Africa traditional institutions occupied pre-eminent positions in the lives of African people. They exercised both symbolic and executive powers, only restrained by customs and traditions. Colonialism displaced them from their primacy and only accommodated them within the colonial apparatus, if it was convenient to do so. Therefore under colonial rule traditional rulers relied on colonial authorities to function, and retain their legitimacy, thereby making foreigners the real power behind the throne. Since independence traditional rulers have begun moves to regain their lost status, and are now re-asserting themselves in a way that will make their relevance transcend the symbolic, to the substantive. The extent to which they will succeed in this respect will depend on how far they can lay claims to legitimacy, beyond mere tradition, or circumstances of birth.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this Unit we have examined the place and role of traditional institutions and rulers prior to colonial period. We have carefully outlined how colonialism reduced them to subordination, if not subservient positions. We underscored how they competed with the educated elites in the struggle to succeed colonial rulers and why they failed in inheriting the vacated colonial throne. We finally recognized that traditional rulers are beginning to gradually gain their relevance in modern government and administration.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Explain how the British system of Indirect Rule benefited from traditional political institutions in a given British Colony.
2. In what ways are traditional political institutions relevant to modern government?
3. Describe the ways colonial rule eroded the structures and values of traditional institutions.

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## **UNIT 3      ORIGINS AND PROBLEMS OF AFRICAN POLITICS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Benefits Derived from Colonial Origins of African Politics
  - 3.2 Problems Created for African Politics by its Colonial Origin
    - 3.2.1 Lack of Institutionalisation
    - 3.2.2 Tribalism/Ethnicity
    - 3.2.3 Double Allegiance
    - 3.2.4 Crisis of Modernization
    - 3.2.5 Weak Political Authority
    - 3.2.6 Weak Economic Base
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In Unit 1 we discussed the nature and character of African politics. Another way of looking at the issues raised in this unit is to look at them as problems confronting African politics. Certainly these problems were created by certain historical forces, though external in nature, but were re-in forced by other factors, internal to the continent. This unit will also discuss the origins and problems of African politics.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- know that in some ways, African politics has benefited from its colonial origins
- understand the ways colonialism has created problems for African politics
- conclude whether we can still lay the blame of the problems facing African politics today to their origin.



### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Benefits Derived from the Colonial Origins of African Politics**

The title of this section is not intended to convey the impression that there was no politics in pre-colonial Africa. This mistaken view, believed in some quarters, will form the subject of a latter unit. Rather we are interested here with politics in post-colonial Africa, the origins and its associated problems. It is tempting to say there was nothing of value in colonialism; even if those benefits were not originally intended by the authors of the colonial script. This will be uncharitable and will amount to an incomplete history of colonial rule in Africa.

##### **i. Creation of Nation-State**

First, foreign rule created modern nation-states, with defined boundaries and capitals. Before colonial rule there were hundreds of clans, lineages, city-states, kingdom and empires, with “shifting and indeterminate frontiers”. Reader (1998:604) argues that “whatever the iniquities of colonial boundaries, they also contributed to peace in the continent”. His contention is that virtually all the wars in Africa since the colonial period have been intra-state, and not interstate. It should be noted, however, that most of the wars have been attributed to the indiscriminate and arbitrary boundaries bequeathed to the continent at independence of these states.

##### **ii. Western Education**

Africans were introduced to Western education which ironically equipped them with tools of resistance. As it is well known education stimulates people to want what they do not have. British colonial administration established Achimota College in Gold Coast, Yaba Higher College in Nigeria, Fourah Bay in Sierraleone and Makerere in Uganda. The French established William Party School in Dakar. In Nyasaland, present-day Malawi, Africans were educated at Lovedale. The curriculum was though foreign. Instead of dividing seasons into rain and hamattan, that would have been appropriate for the tropics, Africans were introduced into temperate classification into spring, summer, autumn, and winter. This foreign content, notwithstanding, colonial education produced many Africans who later became leaders in their countries.

##### **iii. The Mandate system**

The League of Nations mandates under which former German colonies were assigned to victorious European nations stipulated that they should be governed as “a sacred trust of civilization” until they could stand on

their own feet. This injunction was implemented in various ways. In her colonies Britain substituted the idea of paramount chiefs/kings with the familiar institution of constitutional Monarchy. When France discovered that kinship was no longer compatible with her republican tradition, it was abolished.

#### **iv. Economic Activity**

Relative peace and security also stimulated economic activity. The overriding priority of colonial administration was to make the colonies self-supporting. This was the purpose of the amalgamation then in Nigeria in 1914. Western education emptied the villages, populated the cities, increased mobility and urbanization. If urbanization forced Africans to mix, even if they failed to congeal, it created an awareness of their similarities, as well as their distinctiveness from others. Ali Mazrui argues that colonialism made Africans realize they are one: “a sentiment was created on the African continent-a sentiment of oneness’ (Mazrui 1978:38).

### **3.2 Problems Created for African Politics by its Colonial Origins**

We may have attributed some gains to colonialism in some areas. But this is not to deny that, in other vital areas, colonialism created problems for African politics, in its system and process, as well as the policies pursued by its practitioners in the continent. Gabriel Almond et al (2003) identified systems, process and policy as three critical areas to view politics and assess government. This section will deal with the first two. Let us now discuss the critical problem areas in African politics.

#### **3.2.1 Lack of Institutionalisation**

The absence of effective political institution is a major problem in African politics. This has, in turn contributed to the inability of most African states to establish and sustain political order. S.P. Huntington (1981) argues that, unlike developed countries, most third world nations, including Africa lacked “strong, adaptable, coherent political institutions”. Worse still, virtually all African states have borrowed foreign institutions developed for different setting.

He identified the following systems and process deficiencies: lack of well organized political parties; inefficient bureaucracies; low degree of popular participation in public affairs; ineffective structure of civilian control over the military, and absence of relatively effective procedure for regulating succession, and resolving political conflicts. The

implication of these systems and process deficiencies is failure to create political order in Africa.

### **3.2.2 Tribalism/Ethnicity**

Tribalism is one of the dangerous legacies of colonial rule. Tribes had existed before colonial rule, but the arbitrary manner the partition of Africa was delineated complicated tribal relations. The word tribalism, according to the Oxford English Dictionary was coined in 1886; and was used to refer to a condition where “no national life, much less civilization, was possible”. In Africa, tribalism has a negative connotation, though there are ethnic groups in other parts of the world, who are equally, or highly antagonistic as those in Africa, but their differences like the one between the Serbs and the Croats are attributed to religion, not tribe. Consequently, the relations between the Maasai and Kikuyu in Kenya, the Hutu and the Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi, the Zulu and Xhosa in South Africa are perceived in competitive, and sometimes, acrimonious terms. This was also promoted in the service of colonialism.

For example, the British invented and promoted the fiction that the Kikuyu and Maasai were strong enemies. In Rwanda and Burundi, colonial policies eroded the previous reciprocal balance in the relationship that had existed between the Hutus and Tutsi, which promoted the latter, also the minority group into a ruling caste. Having enjoyed benefits within the upper colonial hierarchy, the minority Tutsi would obviously perceive the idea of democracy, or majority rule a threat to their privilege. The 1994 genocide of the ethnic Tutsi, and moderate Hutus was to redress balance of power which Surento favoured the Tutsi. But before this time the Tutsi and Hutus were cordial, they intermarried and even looked alike, the only difference being that the Hutus were agriculturalist, while the Tutsi were pastoralists.

This confirmed Reader’s view that ethnic thinking had colonial origin. According to him, ethnicity or tribalism was not a cultural characteristic that was deeply rooted in African past; “it was a consciously crafted ideological tradition that was introduced during the colonial presence”.

### **3.2.3 Double Allegiance**

The other negative implication of ethnicity in African politics is that it has made the task of nation-building difficult. Colonial policies promoted the view that every African, belonged to a tribe, just as every European belonged to a nation. Since a tribe was defined as distinct cultural units, with a common language and a single social system, the

impression was created that every tribe could stand on its own; with any multi-ethnic arrangement viewed as a burden, and a violation of cultural purity. The disservice of this policy to nation building effort in Africa is that while 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe witnessed the unification of Germany and Italy, in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, colonial rule perfected the policy of divide and rule in Africa. Africans therefore found it difficult to accept the boundaries of the nation states as legitimate when those boundaries had their origins in alien rule.

### **3.2.4 Crisis of Modernization**

Africa like most third world states are said not to be politically developed. The ingredients of political development include rationalization of authority and differentiation of structure. But social Darwinism places Africa at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder (Smith 2003:44.53). Because most African States are in a hurry to modernize, in order to escape from the trap created by their past; a gap inevitably developed between the limited capacity of institutions and the expanded levels of political mobilization. Huntington (1968:45) developed this proposition from de Toeque Ville's thesis which says "among the laws that rule human societies, there is one which seems to be more precise than others. If men are to remain civilized or to become so, the art of associating together must grow and improve in the same ratio in which equality of conditions is increased". This is not the case in Africa.

### **3.2.5 Weak Political Authority**

Politics in Africa are not supported by values that strengthen representative government. To remain in power most governments in Africa substitute power for authority. The conception of state power and authority of government in developed countries differ. In America, for example, rather than creation of authority and accumulation of power, the system works best with limitation of authority, division and devolution of powers, checks and balances, and recognition and guarantee of rights. In the federalist, No 51, James Madison had the American experience in mind when he advised on how to frame a government which is to be administered by men: "the great difficulty lies in this". You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself". For most African States, the two goals have remained an elusive dream.

### **3.2.6 Weak Economic Base**

Most African States are still struggling to provide for their citizens basic necessities of life. For this reason most people view competitive party-based politics as unnecessary waste of scarce resources, while elected

political structures and their salaries and other perquisites as needless drain of resources those most African economies can hardly support. In terms of cost-benefit analysis, there is widespread belief that the poor performance of most governments in Africa does not justify the huge amount spent to erect and support democratic structures. It is instructive that in Nigeria, most citizens opposed the recommendations by the National Revenue Mobilization and Fiscal Commission that the salary of political office holders in the country be increased by over 100 percent.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Examine the origin of African politics

1. What are the benefits of colonial legacy to African politics?
2. In what ways is tribalism related to double allegiance in African politics?

### **3.3 Problems of Politics and Failures of African Government**

In the previous unit we discussed some constraints facing African politics in the areas of systems and process. In this section we will discuss how failures in these two areas have also created problems for government policies in Africa. Ideally government exists to guarantee public order and security, build political community, protect properties and other rights, promote economic growth and development, protect the weak and ensure social justice (Almond et.al 2005:3-6). However in most African states government have been recording failures in these respects. It is either the machinery of government has totally collapsed in some, or the state institution itself is collapsing, failing, or has failed. The examples of Liberia and Sierra Leone, in recent times, or Somalia and Sudan presently occupy both sides of the spectrum of state incapacity.

#### **i. Destruction of Sense of Community**

Most governments in Africa, far from building a political community, destroyed the sense of community that is gradually developing among its people. Many of the citizens are remote from the centre of activities, such that they are not affected by government policies. The effect of this is more severe in Africa where government is expected to fill a major space in the lives of the citizens. In many African States, there is scant regard for the provision of basic infrastructure and welfare facilities. This has contributed in creating disconnect between the government and the governed, and a feeling of alienation from the government, and the state, and what they stand for.

## **ii. Violation of Basic Rights**

There are also a few African States like Zimbabwe and Sudan where consideration for regime survival, has elevated human rights abuse to the official policy of the state. The International Criminal Court in March 2009 issued a warrant of arrest for the Sudanese leader, Omar Al-Basar, for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. In the aftermath of the general elections in Zimbabwe in March 2008, many opposition elements were murdered by agents of the ruling ZANUPFF, led by Robert Mugabe. In the words of Almond et.al (2005), “while those who have power are corrupted, those without it are degraded and alienated”. The reign of terror in some of these states is justified by reference to Rousseau’s oft-quoted phrase “the strongest is never strong enough to be always the master, unless he transforms strength into right and obedience into duty”

## **iii. Government for Private Gains**

The transformation of public office to an avenue for private gain is another explanation for failure of government and state incapacity in Africa. Most leaders in government are self-centered and self – seeking, and not benevolent. Before he was deposed in 1977, after he ruled Congo, which he renamed Zaire, for 30years, Mobutu Seseseko (1930 – 1977) accumulated huge personal fortunes, while the living standards of Congolese plummeted (Almond 2005)

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Modern politics in Africa had its roots in the colonial period. The central proposition of this unit is that colonialism was a mixed-grill for African politics, while recognizing that the score sheet is loaded more on the negative side. Cicero wrote over 2000 years ago that history “is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; illuminates realities and vitalizes memory”. Close to half a century after African year (1960), African leaders by a new approach to governance should begin to re-write a new positive history for African politics. This is the only way that the colonial encounter, no matter how long its history, or deep its impact, in creating problems for African politics, will become a foot note in future narration and analysis.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we established that colonialism created major problems for African politics. We also noted its positive effects in some minor areas. We observed that the problems are in the area of systems and process, which also influenced the dominant policies adopted by the political

class in many African States. We also identified as a major bane of African politics the manner the political leadership substitute excessive use of power, for its declining authority.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Explain the relevance of tribalism/ethnicity in the Analysis of African politics.
2. How is the problem of nation-building in a given African state related to the concept of double allegiance?
3. Suggest ways African politics can free itself from the legacy and constraints imposed by colonialism.

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## **UNIT 4      PRIMORDIAL POLITICS AND CONFLICTS IN AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Character of Primordial Politics in Africa
  - 3.2 Ethnicity in Africa Politics
    - 3.2.1 Elites in African Politics Conflict
    - 3.2.2 Class Relations in African politics
  - 3.3 Nature of Primordial Politics in Africa
  - 3.4 Negative Connotations of Primordial Terms
  - 3.5 Reality of Primordial Politics in Africa
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Unlike in developed countries of the world where class, and to some extent, race are major issues in national politics, in Africa what has been described as primordial factors are more salient. Issues that readily come within this category include ethnicity, language, religion and growing level, elitism.

These factors have come to define African politics, either singly, or in combinations. This unit will discuss the interplay of these major factors. It will also highlight how the multi-ethnic nature of post-colonial states in Africa has made the recourse to primordial politics almost inevitable.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you are expected to:

- know the role of ethnicity, tribalism and other primordial factors in African politics
- understand the connection between elite and class and their place in African politics.



### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Character of Primordial Politics in Africa**

##### **3.1.1 Ethnic Politics**

Whether called ethnicity or tribalism, it means a general feeling of allegiance, attachments or loyalty to one's primordial group at the expense of the others. In most states, electoral constituencies were drawn to coincide with ethnic territorial boundaries. Accordingly, ethnic groups became the power base of politicians and political parties. In order to get elected, politicians are invariably compelled to play on ethnic sentiments. This situation has made it difficult for a national leader acceptable to all communities to emerge in post-independent African states. A leader is first and foremost seen as a representative of a particular group, and his leadership position at the national level is cited as an evidence of domination of one ethnic, and the marginalisation, or exclusion of the other groups.

In pursuit of ethnic politics, most African states have discarded merit and embraced ethnic balancing or what is called federal character in Nigeria. This idea of ethnic arithmetic has the consequence of imposing nepotism and mediocrity at the expense of merit in governance. Other negative impact of ethnic politics include incessant struggles for superiority, sit-tight syndrome, threats of secession or division, ethnic nationalism and prolonged civil strife, which assumed genocidal levels in Rwanda and Liberia in the early 90s.

##### **3.1.2 Elites in African Politics**

The elite is a group of people who are set off from the rest of the society as superior because of certain qualities they possess by virtue of ascription or achievements. Ascription is by birth while achievement is by personally acquired traits. Elite theorists such as C.W. Mills wrote of power elite that control every political system, and indeed argued that the US is not a democracy but an oligarchy. Robert Mitchel, another elite theorist wrote of an "Iron Law of Oligarchy". The theory holds that in any organization only a small percentage of members hold the rein of political and administrative leadership. In any political system, because the citizens are generally dormant, only tiny groups who are active control the political leadership. This influential minority whether in the military, business or professions, seeks to use the machinery of the state to achieve their narrow objectives.

The African elites just like in every other region of the world are the better educated elites who secured independence for their countries.

Leaders like Nkrumah, Nyerere, Azikiwe were politically enlightened, more attentive to information, able to make use of opportunities, were able to develop participant attitudes, and consequently assumed the leadership of their respective countries. Though African elites claimed that they sought power for the public good, but experience have shown that they have been unable to distinguish between their public and personal interests. During the era of military incursions into the politics of African states, the military elites had an advantage. But to be able to rule they co-opted the politicians into political offices. Yet, the military elite is bound together by their common calling, esprit de corps and discipline. Today, in countries like Nigeria (until recently), Gambia, Burkina Faso, Uganda, etc, former military rulers are at the head of government in these countries.

### **3.1.3 Class Relations in African Politics**

The class analysis rejects all pluralist perspectives of analyzing African politics. According to Karl Marx, “the history of all societies is a history of class struggle” between the “haves” and “have-nots”. In any society where a dichotomy exists between the upper and the lower class, a contradiction will develop that will lead to class-consciousness. The theory posits that each class recognizes its position in the society and always seeks political power to defend its class interest. Kwame Nkrumah (1970:10 -16) admitted that, historically, Africa has always been a class-based society, which was reinforced under colonialism which created the European and the Africa sector, the former exploiting the latter. In his view, class distinction was submerged during the struggle for independence, but it re-emerged immediately after self-government was attained.

Today in Africa, class formations have developed around the wage earners, and the local bourgeoisie. But the local capitalists in Africa are not independent because they rely on the state apparatus for sustenance, and since the state economy itself is tied to the global economy they employ the weapons of religion and tribalism to cause divisions among the people, in order to promote their narrow class interest. The Sudanese crises which has raged for close to a quarter of a century between the North and South and which appeared to have been inspired by religion is, in reality, a struggle for power sharing and control over oil resource.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

What is the relevance of tribe, class and elitism to primordialism in African politics?

### 3.2 Nature of Primordial Conflicts in Africa

The question of ethnicity in Africa has been on ground before colonialism. It was however after colonization that the issue of ethnicity became more pronounced. The reason is that colonial rule brought together number of people with different ethnic affiliations, and divergent religious and cultural beliefs. This forced merger led to the emergence of separatist movements, either for regrouping, or outright secession; which invariably led to conflicts and wars. A distinction must be drawn between inter-state and intra-state conflicts, while recognizing that the two could be mutually reinforcing. In the immediate post independence period, Africa witnessed a number of inter-state wars, reflecting many border disputes and the politics of the Cold War. Examples are Morocco vs Algeria, Ethiopia vs Somalia and Guinea vs Senegal. In recent years, Africa also witnessed more intra-state conflicts in Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, D.R. Congo, and Uganda.

Origins and causes of conflicts in Africa are varied and complex, and rooted in international and national arenas, encompassing economic, political, cultural and social parameters. Among the international factors are the consequences derived from the end of the Cold War and its aftermath, the role of international arms merchants, hostile international environment, as well as the globalization and liberalization of the world economy-which have generated a sense of political and economic insecurity in Africa. However internal factors have contributed more in igniting intra-state conflicts. These include circumstances surrounding the attainment of independence and the multi-ethnic composition of the independent states. Factor subsumed under the generic label “governance” include exclusion or perceived exclusion from the political process, for reasons of personal, ethnic or value difference; lack of social political unity; lack of genuine access to national institutions of governance, centralized and highly personalized form of governance, and perception of inequality and discrimination.

In view of the implications of conflict for peace and development, efforts are now being directed by all stakeholders to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. But these efforts can only succeed if: causes of conflicts are known, whether, social, political, or economic; the level of conflicts are determined - is it crisis, or war; and the costs of dealing with the conflicts-financial, institutional and human are considered. Responsibilities for conflict prevention and resolution should be delineated along sub-regional, regional and international levels. Africa conflicts have persisted because of inadequate resources, limited financial assistance from international agencies, to enable Africa deal with conflict related commitments, including refuge assistance, and failure of preventive diplomacy, in the final analysis, resolution of

conflicts lies with the conflicting parties and third party intervention can not be successful if the conflicting parties are unwilling to stop the carnage.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Identify the causes of political conflicts in Africa.

### **3.3 Negative Connotations of Primordial Terms**

There are problems and academic controversies associated with the description of some terms like tribe or tribalism in pejorative terms. The controversy, and indeed confusion originates from the Europeans. The term in modern time is almost exclusively reserved to describe conglomeration of in Third World, particularly in Africa. The term is hardly used to describe human groups in Western Europe, and even Russia. Similarly, the application of the term is indeed extended for the description of other social relations issues, beyond politics. For this reason the word or label has acquired negative or pejorative connotations because it is intended to diminish or relegate the image of Africans in relations to their European counterparts (Adeyemi, 2001).

For the Africans, the word “tribe” provokes negative emotions and reactions because it is always asserted that where the label sticks, and is manifested in political and social relations, it constitutes an impediment to development. This assumption is widely disseminated by the Europeans and accepted “a priori” by others without any scientific basis to validate it. This has led to interventions from other scholars to give correct meaning, context and interpretation to the word. S.L Andreski, a Social Scientist contends that the use of the word tribe exclusively for Africans is ambiguous. He argues that there is no ethno-scientific basis to describe a group of people of about a million in Europe as a nation while numerous groups in Africa forming millions of population with distinct cultural traits, are described as tribe. Andreski therefore concludes that judging by the known criteria of nationhood-common history, and language, population, and shared aspiration for the future-the groups referred to as tribe in Africa qualify to be called nations, if not under international law, but under sociological considerations. Today, with the possible exception of United Germany, it is not common to find a single nationality forming a nation state under international law, but conglomeration of nations forming states (Huntington 1997:28).

Emmanuel Wallestine (1978) a political scientist sought to clarify the usage of the term tribe. According to him, those who live in rural areas shall be called tribe, but those who have their origins in the rural areas

but live in the cities constitute ethnic groups. The term nation which is the correct one is hardly applied in the description of cultural groups like Yoruba, Kikuyu or Asante in Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana, respectively. For these group to become nations in the context of African politics is usually through secession which is often resisted by force, as the Nigerian and Sudanese cases demonstrate. The implication of this is that if the desire of every ethnic group within the multi-ethnic make up of African states is encouraged, a flood gate will be opened for secession bids in the continents.

### **3.4 The Reality of Primordial Politics in Africa**

Before contacts with Europeans, politics in Africa was described as traditional. Today it is no longer accurate to apply the descriptive word tradition, because it suggests that colonialism left traditional institutions, intact or untouched. This is far from the truth. The word primordial also came into use when what is called “modern” came in contact with the “traditional” and with ideological laden suggestion or connotation that the former should be embraced. The use of the word primordial to describe African politics, therefore, is a descriptive label to describe tribal, ethnic, religious, or provincial based politics, as if societal cleavages are peculiar to Africa.

What is therefore important is not the label that is ascribed to political arrangement of a given society. The idea of party-based politics may be alien to traditional African politics, but it does not follow that competition for political offices did not take place; or that because there was no voting or the idea of suffrage; that African system was therefore indiscriminating in the choice of those who participated in public administration. The simple nature of a given African polity is a possible explanation for the non-complicated character of the political institutions, structures and procedures. So, whether one calls it tribalism, ethnicity or nationality, these terms have taken up a reality in Africa, and among the African leaders and people. It simply means no more than a general feeling of allegiance, attachment or loyalty to a way of life. Sometimes these ways of life may be romanticized or real. But beyond this it includes institutionalized modes of behaviour and codes of rights conduct. Within what a European called tribalism there are general ideas about good life. There was what is called the artifact of language that made allegiance possible. Even during the pre-colonial era; there were political arrangements like the Fulani, Mali and Songhai empires which clearly transcended the tribes, a fact which makes tribalism an inappropriate description of African politics.

Building on what began in the colonial era, today the distinction between rural dwellers as tribal and urban dwellers as ethnic group is

also no longer neat, since the two segments of the African society, have already been linked up through their national governments, as well as the activities of international organizations. Equally important, modern political arrangement is benefiting from the established norms of the African past, because experience has shown that mere reliance on law, without ethics is not sufficient to retain the cohesion that can sustain multi-ethnic groups within one state.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Analysis of politics in developed countries of the world, more often than not, follows class perspective. Where other sub national criteria are at work, more elevated terms such as nation, or grudgingly, race are employed. But in analyzing Africa politics, or interpreting conflicts, primordial labels like the tribe, ethnic, or religious affiliation of politicians are preferred as basis of analysis. African politicians themselves do not help matters because when it suits them they rely on their ethnic base, either to promote their political fortunes or career, and when they are at disadvantage blame the same for their woes. There is no country in the world that is not segmented along one cleavage – class, ethnic or racial – or another. But to continue to promote primordial values, to the detriment of merit or national interest constitutes a disservice to the aspiration of decent and refined politics in Africa.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we discussed the origin of primordial politics in Africa. We also discussed how it is related to the primordial issue of national questions, which most states in Africa are presently confronted with. We also discussed how the label tribe has been used in negative terms to describe African politics. We recognized that there is no society in the world without one form of division or the other.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. How appropriate is the term “primordialism” for the description of politics in Africa?
2. Explain the negative connotation of the term “tribalism” for the description of politics in Africa.

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## **MODULE 2**

Unit 1	Meaning and Nature of colonialism
Unit 2	Africa and the Colonial Metropoles
Unit 3	Problems and legacies of colonialism
Unit 4	Meaning, and Nature of Nationalism
Unit 5	Nationalism and Decolonization Process

### **UNIT 1      MEANING AND NATURE OF COLONIALISM**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Origins and Objectives.
3.2	Nature and Character of Colonialism
3.3	Economic Character
3.4	Political Character
3.5	Military Character
3.6	Society under Colonialism
3.7	What Aided Colonial Rule
3.8	Pattern of Colonial Society
4.0	Conclusion
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#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

Colonialism was a major phenomenon in Africa for about a century, and during the period a dominant-dominated relationship was created between the metropolitan powers and African colonies. The objective of colonialism was basically economic but the “dual mandate” system was deceptively proclaimed to convey the notion that exploitation involved a sacred duty towards the exploited peoples. It is said that the colonial subjects must serve the colonial interest, but in return they must be “civilized”, and “protected”. This Unit examines the origins and objectives of the colonial enterprise. It further explores its economic, political and military dimensions, and analyses its consequences and impacts on African politics and societies.



## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit you should be able to:

- know the origins and objectives of colonialism in Africa
- explain the nature and character of colonialism
- distinguish between a colonial territory and an independent nation.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Origins and Objectives of Colonialism

Colonialism is a form of imperialism. It represented a continuation of European encounter with, and penetration of Africa, after the era of slave trade, and what was described as “legitimate trade”. The basic driving force behind colonialism is economic. It was this motivation which encouraged Europeans to embark on the adventures of expeditions and missionary activities that provided the convenient fore runners, which facilitated imposition of colonial rule. In his “Towards Colonial Freedom”, Nkrumah (1947) identified the three fundamental doctrines in the philosophical analysis of imperialism as: (a) the doctrine of exploitation; (b) the doctrine of “trusteeship” or partnership; and (c) the doctrine of assimilation. From this doctrine we can see the connection between slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, its contemporary manifestation—as different forms of imperialism or exploitation.

But in order to disguise its economic motivation, the Europeans found it convenient to present the colonial enterprise as fulfilling for the African people, a “civilizing mission”, otherwise described by the “imperial destiny”. But in 1885, the year when the partition of Africa was concluded, Jules Ferry exploded this myth, and stated the three objectives why European nations desired colonies: to have access to raw materials; to provide markets for sale of manufactured goods; and as a field for the investment of surplus capital. In a more unmistakable term, Colonial Secretary of State for France said in 1923 “what is the use of painting the truth? Colonialism was not an act of civilization the origin of colonialism is nothing else than enterprise of individual interests, a one-sided egotistical imposition of the strong upon the weak (quoted in Nkrumah, 1973:19).

We can therefore define colonialism as the policy by which the “mother country”, the colonial power, binds her colonies to herself by political ties with the primary object of promoting her own economic advantage

to secure trading routes and safe ports. To give effect to the desire the scramble for colonies in Africa began among the leading European nations: Great Britain, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Belgium and Italy. At a conference in Berlin, chaired by German Chancellor, Otto Von Bismarck, African territory was carved out, to gratify European greed, and prevent wars among them.

The conference therefore ratified France's 1881 colonial sway over Tunisia, and Britain's seizure of Egypt in 1882. 1884 witnessed the establishment of the first German colony at Angra pequena in South West Africa, followed by the occupation of Togoland and Cameroon. Portugal took over Angola. Italy colonized Somaliland, Spain and France established joint protectorate of over Morocco, while Leopold II, of Belgium established a personal rule over "Congo free state", a colony sixty-six times the size of Belgium. In virtually all cases, colonies were established by force of arms, and it was through similar process that Germany lost her colonies after her defeat during World War I. But rather than apply the Wilsonian principle of self-determination to Africa, the colonies were passed over to the victorious nations, as mandated nations under the League of Nations.

In administering their colonies in Africa, European powers established different patterns. Britain was famous for its policy of Indirect Rule, a system which successfully adapted and integrated traditional institutions into her colonial administration. In her colonial policy Britain is widely believed to be more pragmatic than her European counterparts by recognizing the need to preserve indigenous cultures values and social structures where they did not jeopardize colonial interests. As Smith (2003:36) put it. "Britain's need for political control and the maintenance of stability was consistent with the preservation of indigenous practices." On the other hand, France pursued the policy of assimilation. This was intended to create new African French elite, through Western education. Its effect was that local political elites identified closely with Europe and European culture. (The assumption behind assimilation policy was that local culture was an obstacle to the spread of European civilization).

The enduring effect of this policy is still evident today in former French colonies in Africa. The application of the policy of assimilation in its extreme, found expression in Algeria, among others, a colony regarded by France as a department of Paris. Similarly, Portugal treated her African colonies as an extension of the government in Lisbon. But whether in British, French or Portuguese colonies, the essential feature of colonial government was a fusion of politics and administration, which Adamolekun (1993) labeled as "administocracy". A "minimum government" which administocracy provided was regarded as consistent

with the requirements of a colonial economy, which needed a regime of law and order, at limited cost, to thrive.

To Cohen (1973) colonialism entails the following: “economic exploitation combines with political domination and the superimposing of European control over indigenous political authority”. What is critical is that colonialism seeks to reverse the power relations between two countries.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

What is the relevance of the policy of assimilation in French African Colonies?

## **3.2 Nature and Character of Colonialism**

It is not easy to separate the whole colonial enterprise into its separate dimensions. However, it will serve academic purpose, and enrich analysis if we attempt to de-construct colonialism into its economic, political and military dimensions.

### **i. Economic Character**

A colonial rule is by definition a system of economic exploitation; the alienation of Africans from their lands, the enactment of chieftaincy and mineral ordinances, and the encouragement of cash crops. The selective construction of railways and roads were meant to serve colonial objectives. Indeed the hospitals and schools, which later became unintended by products or benefits of colonialism, were originally intended to serve the basic health and clerical needs of expatriate colonial staff. Nkrumah (1947) listed what the colonial powers did to sustain this economic objective.

- a. Colonies were made non-manufacturing dependencies.
- b. Colonial subjects were consciously prevented from acquiring the knowledge of modern means and techniques for developing their own industries.
- c. Colonial subjects were made simple producers of raw materials through cheap labour.
- d. Colonies were prohibited from trading with other nations except through the “mother country”. In short the slogans “trade follow the flag” and “buy British and trade imperial” eloquently demonstrate the economic character of colonialism.

## **ii. Political Character**

The partition of Africa at Berlin in 1884/85 was largely a political exercise. It was meant to create and preserve these colonies as spheres of influence for the political leverage and diplomatic maneuvers of the colonial powers. Indeed, possession of colonies was a mark of the imperial prestige and status, and an instrument of foreign policy by the European nations in their competition for world domination (Cohen 1973). The political character of colonialism can also be viewed from the fact that what eventually became the territories of post-colonial states in Africa were negotiated at the Berlin conference. But despite the fact that these boundaries were drawn regardless of ethnic, language or cultural factors, the inherited colonial territories were accepted as sacrosanct and inviolable by African states after independence, and endorsed as such by the international community.

Consequently, most African states today are multi ethnic and culturally diverse societies. This colonial bifurcation, in some cases, fostered by the policy of divide and rule still continues to have profound consequences for national integration efforts or what has come to be described as the national question in African states today. Similarly, the adoption of the language of the colonial master as the lingua franca, the embrace of Western education and culture as well as Western legal system, including the preference for Western fashion of liberal democracy, have far reaching and enduring implications, beyond the political in Africa today. Nkrumah (1947) confirmed the links between the economics and politics of colonialism when he wrote: “the basis of colonial territorial dependence is economic, but the basis of the solution to the problem is political”.

## **iii. Military Character**

The military institutions, which most African states inherited at independence, just as the states themselves owe their origins to colonial rule. So, by orientation the African military was infected by the values, mechanics and techniques of the Sandhurst or Mons military training schools. In the recruitment policy into the army the policy of divide and rule, and the device of balkanisation were employed. The objective was to recruit those who would not rebel against the colonial authorities. To achieve this colonial power preferred the uneducated, small ethnic groups, and conservative people to the educated, dominant ethnic groups. In Nigeria this translated to the army having more recruits from the Muslim dominated North than the Christian oriented south. Lord Lugard in particular believed that the educated constituted threats to colonial rule since according to him, “they are liberal, argue a lot,

critical and radical”, and as a result could not make good soldier”. In military he argued that “brawn” was more important than “brains”.

This consideration, which was reflected in the recruitment policy in other colonies, debarred and prevented the Ashanti of the old Gold Coast, and Sulu of South Africa (two famous warrior groups) from joining the army. The quota system was deliberately introduced in recruitment into the military in Nigeria, for example, to give the Igala, Tiv and other minority Christian ethnic groups more advantage than the Hausa Fulani Moslem of the North; and the whole North more opportunities than the combined South. This uneven access was carried over to the post-colonial era, and was to have consequences for military organization, discipline and cohesion, and by extension political stability, when the military intervened eventually in politics.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Describe the political character of colonialism.

## **SOCIETY UNDER COLONIALISM**

### **i. What Aided Imposition of Colonial Rule**

We already know that colonialism does not represent Africa’s first encounter with Europeans; it merely consummated the relationship, and made it overtly political. Before colonialism what Africa experienced was a form of imperialism a purely economic relations- which includes exploitation and inequality, but exclude domination. This is why Smith (2003: 23) sees imperialism as a mere economic concept while colonialism as a social and political concept. But this conception was not meant to deny the inherent economic impetus behind colonialism, but merely an attempt to subsume it within the social forces and political arrangements that helps in sustaining colonial rule. We can now identify the major factors beyond the civilizing mission thesis that facilitated the imposition and sustenance of colonialism.

- a. Technological developments in communications, and transportation improved access of European countries to Africa.
- b. Technology also provided opportunities for acquisition of and control over Africa.
- c. Technology made it possible for Europeans to develop new trade routes, especially the construction of railway lines into the interiors.
- d. Relatively advanced military weapons made it possible to seize African territories by force and their incorporation as colonies.

- e. Advances in medicines enabled Europeans to survive in otherwise inhospitable climates.
- f. Availability of fertile land and valuable mineral resources in many parts of Africa promoted colonialism, and in some cases, encouraged settler policy.
- g. Initially, water routes or harbour were keys to colonial penetration, and were critical in penetration to the hinterland.

In other words, land locked areas were not of feverish interest to colonialists except where they were rich in mineral resources or could be penetrated via adjoining colonies. For example when Sir Frederick Lugard 'discovered' River Niger he was reported to have said "A gate is open to every commercial nation to enter from West to the Eastern extremes of Africa (Ola Abiola 1972: 98).

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Colonialism was not meant to serve altruistic purpose no matter the pretensions of its proponents to the contrary. It represented the fulfillment of the imperial ambitions of Europeans after slavery was discredited as an economic ideology. Indeed colonialism itself did not succeed for the period it did without a supporting ideology with which it was rationalized. But in the fullness of time, and like in all deceptive games, the pillars and superstructures of colonialism crumbled, and collapsed in the face of pressures mounted by the nationalists. Africa was not the only continent that suffered from colonialism, but unlike Asia and Latin American countries where alien rule lasted longer, the continent is the least able to recover from the shock and exploitative consequences of colonial rule.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we discussed the origins of colonialism in Africa, formalized at the 1884/85 Berlin conference. We also underscored its economic objective, and stated the political and military dimensions of colonialism, without which its economic objective will be difficult to achieve. We also identified the factors which aided the imposition and the sustenance of colonial rule in Africa. We finally outlined the imprints and features of colonial society.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Account for the significance of the 1885 Berlin conference to colonialism in Africa.
2. Explain and justify the concept of the "Civilizing Mission" as a basis for colonial rule.
3. Briefly explain the links in the three dimensions of colonialism.

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## **UNIT 2      AFRICA AND THE COLONIAL METROPOLES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Background to Settler Societies
  - 3.2 Nature of Settler Politics
    - 3.2.1 Objective and Character of Settler Politics
  - 3.3 Resistance to Settler Politics
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    - 3.3.3 African Response and Achievement of Majority Rule
- 4.0 Conclusion
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- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Colonialism in Africa did not come in similar pattern; there were varieties in its intervention. It was either in the standard form of colonial rule or the settler form in which a sizable numbers of foreigners, often minority, but in significant numbers preferred to settle permanently in Africa. Where this was the case, the race question which has always been a problem in colonialism assumes more acute form, and usually complicated the relations among the inhabitants of such settler community. In this unit, we shall examine the background to colonial settler societies, the nature of settlement politics, and the form of resistance it engenders.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

In this unit you are expected to:

- know why some Europeans prefer to settle in Africa
- understand the advanced nature of racial discrimination in settler societies
- explain why and how the struggle for majority rule was fiercely resisted by the white minority.



### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Background to Settler Politics**

Most settler societies, like South Africa and Rhodesia came into being by tricks and force of arms. The blacks in South Africa initially resisted the penetration and eventual dominance of the whites, until black Africans were defeated by superior force. In Rhodesia, the British South African Company, after it had conquered the people of Matabele land and Mashonaland, immediately began exploitation of mineral and human resources of majority Africans. It is no accident that the name Rhodesia was coined from the name of Cecil Rhodes, the founder of the British South African company (Nkrumah, 1976:9).

Unlike British West Africa that was mosquito ridden, whites found it more hospitable to settle in “special” colonies like Kenya, Algeria, Zambia, Mozambique, Rhodesia and South Africa. First, these portions of Africa were free of “Killers” or “natural armies” (Mosquitoes) which helped in driving away whites, who could not settle in more “hostile” colonies of Ghana and Gold Coast, known as “Whiteman” grave. Second, the temperature of settler societies in Africa was also more conducive for whites who were forced to migrate out of Europe, due to over population, land pressure, post-war economic crises in Europe and the mal- adjustment of the capitalist system (Hobson 1902).

This factor has made the land question a central issue in settler societies in Africa. It was not without reason and consequence that the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 was made the “sheet- anchor” of settler power in Southern Rhodesia for example. The Act made more arable land available for the few whites in anticipation that many whites, just as the Jews did in the Middle East in the 1930’s, would migrate to Rhodesia in future. The first consequence is that the Act deprived majority blacks of land proportionate to their population and farming needs. For example, in Rhodesia of the available 85 million acres of land, the European settlers were allotted 41 millions, while Africans were given 44 million, in a colony where blacks outnumbered the whites by the ratio of 16 -1 (Nkrumah 1976:138). The other consequence is that it aggravated race relations in settler societies, complicated the de-colonization process later and has made land redistribution a central issue, which remains protracted in countries like Zimbabwe, till date.

We can summarize the pattern of colonial settlements as follows: British West Africa; comprising Nigeria, Ghana etc. was free of settlers while British East and Central Africa; consisting of Kenya, Malawi etc were colon ridden. Similarly, French West Africa which included Ivory Coast and Togo was colon free, but French North of African colonies of

Morocco, Tunisia etc was found suitable for settlers. For similar reasons, the Portuguese found their settlements in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau, more conducive.

### **3.2 Nature of Settler Politics**

In colonial Africa politics in settler societies was based on colour bar, or what was popularly known as racial discrimination. The party and franchise systems were narrow and restricted, which also assured the minority whites almost perpetual dominant position in national politics. The major party in Rhodesia which always won the settler general election was the Rhodesian Front Party, and was formerly called the Dominion party. Apart from rejecting the universally accepted principle of one man, one vote, the franchise was based on a complex, and discrimination scales of educational, financial and property qualifications which placed the blacks at a disadvantage.

For the greater majority of Africans who were deprived opportunities to receive secondary and post-secondary education, the educational qualifications were unattainable. Similarly the income qualification for the blacks was a major hurdle to cross. For example in Rhodesia, official statistics in 1962 revealed that only 41 percent of the total African labour force earned above the minimum amount to qualify for the B' roll of the income classifications. Also, the bulk of African land farmed on a communal tenure basis made blacks ineligible under property qualifications (Nkrumah 1976: 14-16). Due to this restrictive franchise, the political powers that voting rights could have conferred on blacks to redress the injustice they were subjected to be absent. The deprivation of Africans of the right to political expression created very attractive conditions for the influx of Europeans, to Rhodesia, where they were already assured of privileged status.

In Rhodesia and South Africa, like other settler territories an official justification was provided for the disenfranchisement of blacks. The argument was that political power in the hands of blacks presented a potential danger of expulsion for the whites who had migrated to the continent and found Africa their homes, or made these territories their countries. The settler regime did not accept the idea of one man, one vote because according to Hans Strigdom, a former South African Prime Minister "the only way the Europeans can maintain supremacy is by domination... and the only way they can maintain domination is by withholding the vote from non-Europeans" The effect of this was to destroy the most important bridge between the worlds of two races.

The implication of the limited franchise therefore was that the government of Rhodesia was elected by only 6 percent of the country's

population. In essence the remaining 94 percent of the population who were predominantly blacks were either in the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) or the Zimbabwe Africa National Union (ZANU), and were denied of voting rights. At a point when the Rhodesian government could no longer tolerate the nationalist activities of ZAPU, the party was proscribed. Leaders of ZAPU and ZANUPF, Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe were severally, banned, harassed, or restricted to remote areas (Smith et.al 1981). In "Zambia Shall be Free", Kenneth Kaunda (1962) chronicled instances of discriminations, harassments and unlawful arrests and detentions. In Malawi, former Nyasaland, Hastings Banda was similarly harangued by the settler's government. However, in 1964 both Zambia and Malawi became independent; an action which led to the dissolution of the Central African Federation; while Southern Rhodesia remained under minority settler government (Meredith 2006).

### **3.2.1 Objective and Character of Settlers Societies**

In settler societies, the objective of the colonial powers, like Britain for example, was to develop a multi-racial society, "a partnership between white and black, though under white leadership. According to Meredith (2006:78) "White leadership was regarded as indispensable for economic development". For these settler colonies, the white population was the mainstay of the colonial economy, because they possessed a reservoir of professional skills. In colonies of East and Central regions, the contacts between the blacks and whites were more recent, in contrast with those in West Africa, where foreign contacts had longer history. For this reason, Africans in the East and Central regions were perceived to be several generations behind in terms of political advancement, which implied that they needed longer tutelage before they could be considered fit for self-government.

This view appears to have some historical, if not justifiable validity. For instance, the first African was nominated to the Gold Coast legislative Council in 1888, but the first to be so nominated in Kenya was in 1944; in Tanganyika in 1945; Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) in 1948, and in Nyasaland (Malawi) in 1949. To re-enforce racist privilege the minority whites took conscious steps to ensure that Africans, including Asia migrants, did not advance at their expense; or upset the delicate racial imbalance. The steps taken included politically expedient but non-equitable racial ratio for representation. In Kenya the ratio was 2 Europeans representative to 1 African and 1 Asia - 2:1:1; In Uganda, the ratio was 1:2:1; while in Tanganyika, 1:1:1. (Meredith 2006).

To further entrench and perpetuate racial privilege, the idea of two dominions: one in East Africa (comprising Kenya, Uganda and

Tanganyika (now Tanzania) and one in Central Africa (comprising Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland) was floated by the white minorities in these colonies. This idea made little success in East Africa, but was accepted by Britain for her Central African Colonies, where the economic benefits to be derived from “partnership” between the blacks and whites were stressed. A former Southern Rhodesian Prime Minister, Sir Godfrey Huggins, put this relationship in a non-disguised racial tone, as: “the partnership between the horse and its rider”.

The governments of settler territories were linked with one another in the area of supply of cheap labour across frontiers, for mining activities. Just like the British East India Company was concerned with Britain’s economic interest in India; Royal Niger Company, in Nigeria; so was British South Africa (BSA) in Rhodesia and other Southern territories. In “Neo-colonialism the Last Stage of Imperialism”, Nkrumah (1974:153) described the B.S.A. as “Cecil Rhode” genius in empire building”. Together with Johannesburg Consolidated, Rhodesian Anglo American, Bancroft Mines, Tanganyika Concessions, Rio Tinto, Consolidated zinc and British Aluminum, they combined to dominate the mining, manufacturing, trading and transportation interests of the leading European powers in Southern and Ccentral Africa (Nkrumah 1974).

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

What was the significance of Land Apportionment Act in Rhodesia?

### **3.3 Resistance to Settler Politics**

#### **3.3.1 The Mau Mau Uprising**

The “Mau Mau” uprising in the early 1950’s marked the climax of blacks’ resistance to white domination, and naked denial of rights to land. The rebellion was sparked off by the forceful expulsion of Kikuyu peasants from 12,000 squares miles of the best agricultural land in the country; which was later re-allocated for the exclusive use of white farmers. Though the British authorities blamed Jomo Kenyatta for the escalation of the uprising into a war, which lasted for four years, yet the event forced Britain to rethink her policy towards Kenya. For many years afterwards the Mau Mau was cited by Britain as “an example of the atavistic nature of African Politics” (Meredith 2006). Similarly, the uprising and the one in Nyasaland later, severely damaged Britain’s worldwide reputation for progressive colonial management.

### **3.3.2 Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Rhodesia**

For a period of thirty years, Southern Rhodesia was ruled by the British South African Company as chartered concern of the British government. In the course of World War 1, the company surrendered its control to Britain, which now exercised suzerainty over Rhodesia. However in 1923, the minority whites were given the option of either affiliating the colony to South Africa, or becoming self-governing. They chose the later option in a referendum; which did not in any way reflect the views of the black majority for reasons which should be obvious to us now, Britain accepted the outcome of the referendum as representing the democratic wish of the Rhodesian people. This background, coupled with the assurance of British support emboldened Ian Smith to make a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) for Southern Rhodesia on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1965.

The import of UDI, which Smith legalized in a revised constitution in 1965 was that it asserted Rhodesian independence and repudiated British authority over Rhodesia. But legally and procedurally Ian Smith's action was viewed by more dis-interested bodies and nations (with the exception of Britain, Portugal and South Africa) as illegal. Technically and legally Rhodesia remained a British colony until an Act of British Parliament is passed transferring sovereignty to the Rhodesian Parliament. This imposed responsibility on Britain to ensure that Rhodesia, where it had a sitting colonial governor, Sir Humphrey Gibbs, did not violate international law and conventions. However, despite worldwide condemnations, Ian Smith went ahead to consolidate the UDI. The new constitution validated UDI and removed limitations on Rhodesia's sovereignty. A position of Head of State was created to replace the colonial Governor, and there was no longer provision for appeal to the Privy Council in London.

From the perspective of the minority whites in Rhodesia the idea of UDI was motivated by the fears of the dangers they could be exposed to, if Britain granted the colony independence under black majority. The whites argued that more than other African States with less experience of self government, which were already independent, Rhodesia, with more than forty years of self government had a stronger case for independence. In their views, internal self government had already enriched their understanding of standards of justice, order and responsible government, which could be relied upon to defend Western interests in Rhodesia. Therefore if Britain was not convinced that minority white rule in Rhodesia was in her enlightened interest, then a continuation of links with Britain constituted a threat to white survival; hence UDI.

### 3.3.3 Africa and World Responses

Most independent Africans reacted angrily against U.D.I. A meeting of concerned East African States: Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda, convened at the instance of Milton Obote held on 15<sup>th</sup> November, to find an African solution to the problems; especially, the dangers posed to Zambia, Rhodesia's northern neighbour. Nkrumah also spearheaded moves for a continental response from the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In March 1965, the OAU had earlier passed a resolution requesting Britain not to hand over power to the foreign minority in Rhodesia. But at the October OAU summit conference in Accra, the organization failed to approve Nkrumah's suggestion, for the establishment of an executive council or an African High command. OAU merely approved the imposition of economic sanctions on Rhodesia, which later proved not to be effective.

At the world level, the United Nation's General Assembly interrupted its general debate, condemned UDI and called on Britain to take the necessary action to put an end to Ian Smith's rebellion. This was in addition to UN Security Council's resolution declaring UDI illegal. Just like with the OAU, at the UN, Nkrumah did not succeed to get the organization approve the use of force against Rhodesia. Belatedly, and as a damage control device, the Harold Wilson government also imposed sanctions against the Smith's regime in Rhodesia. But this did not stop nine African States, led by Ghana, from breaking diplomatic ties with Britain. In compliance with an OAU Ultimatum which Britain failed to honour (Nkrumah 1976). For these countries, the severance of ties from Britain, automatically meant withdrawal from the Commonwealth of Nations. To douse tension, a Commonwealth Conference, the first outside Britain hurriedly convened in Lagos, to discuss the Rhodesia question.

Apart from its illegal and brazen nature, UDI posed a major military threat to the immediate neighbouring countries, and indeed African security. This is because Rhodesia alone inherited the military resources of the defunct central African federation. The air force unit of the military force that was put at the disposal of Rhodesia was reputed then to be "more powerful than the South African Force and also stronger than the metropolitan and colonial armed forces of Portugal put together" (Nkrumah 1976: 38). Though the African lobby at the United Nations led by Ghana raised the issue of security threats posed to other African States by the newly acquired military strength of Rhodesia, a solo veto by Britain blocked further discussions on the issue. Britain has always given support to minority regimes. Twice she granted independence to South Africa in 1910 and Zanzibar in December, 1963. In the case of South Africa, before apartheid was dismantled in 1994 all

the entrenched provisions to safeguard the interests of the black majority were progressively eroded, or completely removed (Reader 1997: 476)".

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Describe the nature of the Mau Mau movement.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

European economic interests in Africa were manifested, or justified under different guises, and spanned different eras. Settler regimes were one of the variants of colonial imperialism, and in those portions of Africa where it was practiced, the residue of the bitter racial relations it engendered are yet to subside or disappear. From Zambia to Zimbabwe, including South Africa, the question of land ownership, its alienation from the original owners, and (or) its forceful (re) take-over by Africans, remain a vexed issue, in black – white relations in these countries. However, the reality today is that the achievement of majority rule in settler societies has altered the power equation, which the blacks are now using to redress the past injustices done to them. But it is no longer in tune with the 21<sup>st</sup> century world to substitute black domination for white minority rule.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we discussed the background to settler societies in Africa. We also examined the nature and character of white minority rule in Africa, as well as the motivation behind it. We treated the concept of the Universal Declaration of independence, and placed it in its historical context. We finally examined African and world reaction to UDI.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. What role did discriminatory franchise play in the sustenance of white minority rule in Rhodesia?
2. What were the major features of the universal Declaration of independence made by Ian Smith in 1965?
3. How effective was African response to the UDI?

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## **UNIT 3      PROBLEMS AND LEGACIES OF COLONIALISM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Background to the Problems and Legacies.
  - 3.2    Political Legacy
  - 3.3    Economic Legacy
  - 3.4    Socio-Cultural Legacy
  - 3.5    Colonialism as an Imperial Ideology
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Readings

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

There is no doubt that colonialism produced in Africa consequences far beyond the period when alien rule was terminated. Those impacts are so deep, and the consequences so eroding on the social fabric of the African society that it is now convenient to label such as colonial legacy or heritage. Colonialism may not have completely transformed African society and people but it did not exactly leave Africa the manner it met it. This Unit will discuss the problems associated with, or consequent to, colonial rule, and the political, economic and cultural consequences it created for the continent and its people.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this Unit, you are expected to:

- know how colonialism created mini states in Africa and the elements of their political character
- understand the reasons for the weak economies of African states and their external orientation
- explain the role of colonialism in the fragmentation of African societies.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Background to the Problems and Legacies**

It is only logical that before we can reasonably discuss the problems and legacies of colonialism that we settle or agree on a point of departure. It

seems convenient that we commence from the period of independence, using 1960, African year of independence, as a base year. What we now call colonial legacy took the colonial powers more than a century to plant and nurture; it was only when the forces of nationalism made colonial business a more risky enterprise that colonial powers took steps to firmly root the crumbling pillars of alien rule in the consciousness of the African people. What most people now refer to as the history of colonialism is the drama of the Europeans who were eager to come to Africa but were reluctant to leave. But the real history of colonialism did not stop or terminate in 1960, or any other year, but its unbroken chain continued after wards, and have been sustained in many forms as the colonial heritage. Close to half a century after “Africa year”, there is no denying the fact that the influence of colonialism on Africa remains crippling. In the post-colonial era African leaders could not sustain the euphoria of anti-colonial nationalism, and failed to convert it into a rallying platform to build a nation out of colonially created artificial boundaries.

Why this was so can be explained from the factor of colonialism which transformed Africa from a purely traditional, to a quasi-modern societies, in which traditional authority exercised by chiefs was displaced, and replaced with charismatic, or achievement oriented legitimacy, claimed by educated nationalists; who eventually took over from the Europeans. But history has shown that charismatic legitimacy tends to emerge during period of national crisis, which is comparable to the period of African struggle for independence. However, this created a major challenge for the immediate post-colonial era due to the failure of African leaders to sustain the nationalist euphoria and transform it into an adhesive or sinew to forge a new national identity.

The colonial powers were deliberately hesitant, partial and reluctant to prepare African colonies because of the need to preserve and safeguard their interest. What the skewed negotiation for independence between the Africans and the Europeans produced was a post-colonial state, with over developed bureaucracy relative to other political institutions. This distorted state structure, gave birth to new brands of coercive organs like the police and military which though served colonialism so well, but was not suitable for Africa (Smith 2003).

### **Political Legacy**

When the former colonies emerged as independent states, they found themselves composed of varieties of tribes, social structures and cultures that were emotionally distant from one another. By extension post-colonial states were weak political entities, invested with political independence but lacked the muscles to assert their sovereignty. These

states were new to independence and power, but were anxious to prove the legitimacy of their national interests. Forging these diverse people into a single nation was not easy because it required more than geographic proximity. The citizens of these states were naturally oriented almost entirely towards their sub-national groups and were loosely identified with their new country or its government. More often than not, an African country becomes an independent state without a nation to provide a foundation. Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, has within its borders at least ten major ethnic groups, among which the pull of centrifugal forces led to a civil war in the 60s, and are still potent today (Baradat 2000).

This failure of groups within states in Africa to pull together is also due to the fragmenting impact of colonialism. Berman (1984) noted that the policy of "divide and rule" "obstructed the development of alignments on a national scale by encouraging identification with ethnicity and locality. He argues that this factor persisted into the post-colonial period and became a major source of "destabilizing political conflict". Also, African states have grafted the British parliamentary and the American inspired presidential systems into their political structures, but it has not produced comparable success. This reason for the failures is that Africa has uncritically embraced what is foreign irrespective of whether it is suitable for African political climate.

### **Economic Legacy**

Since we have largely identified colonialism with the economic interests of the Europeans, it is therefore not a surprise that its impact is more visible here. Colonialism created a dual economy in Africa, two economic systems co-existed within the society, but one was disarticulated, or not connected with the other: the village subsistence economy which served local needs, and the modern economy which fed the needs of international commerce (Onimode 1981:96).

This has resulted in contemporary African economy, according to Aluko into "an inconsistent combination of circumstances" of African states not producing what they consume and not consuming what they produce. Cash crop-based, mono-cultural economies, foreign orientation and dependence and fluctuations as well as vulnerabilities constitute the essence of national economies. The loss of control of production to foreigners, the external orientation of the economy and the manipulations of the international economic system has contributed to the destruction of Africa's pre-colonial self-reliance.

In pursuit of its economic interest colonialism fused political and economic relationship into one. In his comparative studies of African

colonies, Berman (1934) observed that colonialism established the state as the source of economic development, which was later transformed by African leaders into arena for managing and manipulating political (class) conflict. This view is close to the idea of a state as a parasite that extracts resources from society not for purposes of social reproduction, but to sustain the political elite. The mercantilist ethic inherent in colonialism also encouraged the introduction of commercial, together with a money economy. Western trade brought with it the profit motive, which is the basic goal of the capitalist system, encouraged the idea of competition, which fostered individualism, but destroyed the classless nature of African society. Among the Ibos in Nigeria and Creoles in Sierra Leone, African merchant elite emerged and this transformation led to a new commercial practice distinct from what existed in the traditional African societies.

Colonialism also introduced a modern system of taxation. Unlike in the past when traditional rulers irregularly merely collected tributes, taxation under colonial rule was standardized, and based on known assessment criteria. Though this policy was largely successful, it was violently resisted in the famous 1929 Aba riots of Eastern Nigeria and the 1854 hut tax riots in Sierra Leone (Jordan 1978:54). The failure of tax policy in Africa, even in the post-colonial era, is due to the inability of many citizens to identify with state, and the definition of their relationship with government in terms of what they receive from, rather than what they contribute to it. Peter Ekeh (1975) explained that colonialism has created two separate publics in political life in Africa: (a) amoral civil public from which one expects benefits but which is not important in the definition of duties; and (b) amoral primordial public, defined in terms of one's ethnic groups, to which relationships are phrased in terms of duty. What has worsened economic woes in Africa today is that most citizens extract resources from the state to serve the needs of their primordial groups; a carry over of colonial ethos.

Another legacy of foreign rule is that it deliberately pursued a policy of uneven development in the colonies. Though the policy was deemed consistent to the dictates of colonialism, its enduring impacts are still common place in Africa today. In Nigeria and Ghana, the South developed at a pace faster than the North. In Sierra Leone the Aborigines were distinct from the returnees; while in Rhodesia, Africans lived in fears of perpetual white minority rule. This uneven and separate development and treatment engendered permanent mutual suspicions among the groups, encouraged the adoption of ethnic quota or balancing devise, and has complicated nation building efforts.

## **Socio-Cultural Legacy**

A complete true historical account of colonialism is that the European wars of conquest dislocated and disintegrated African political institutions economic structures and social systems, and super-imposed their own. Britain not only welded different ethnic groups to make Nigeria a “geographic expression” but also coined, and gave the country a name. This is a common heritage for most African states except for a few like Ghana (formerly Gold Coast), Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta), Congo, which once changed to Zaire, before it reverted; Rhodesia, which split into Zambia and Zimbabwe, with the latter’s capital, changing from Salisbury to Harare, among others. But these obviously harmless, but symbolic changes have not in any significant ways altered European cultural penetration of Africa. One, Europeans imposed their different languages on the colonies, which eventually became the official language or lingua franca of these countries after independence. Consequently rather than use Yoruba, Swahili or Fanti to communicate, English, French or Portuguese are now being employed today as language of wider reach in Africa, even among inhabitants of the same country.

Two, colonial rule also selectively introduced educational opportunities, and unevenly promoted the adoption of Western culture within the same state. The effect is that at micro and macro levels, Africa remains divided. In the coaster areas where Western influence is understandably dominant, what we have are strong imitations or mimicry of western way of lives, but in the hinterlands where alien penetrations are restricted Western influence is limited, because it is being resisted. Colonial education itself was limited, and not oriented to serve the developmental aspirations, but to produce clerks and interpreters, who served the needs of colonial administration. According to Smith (2003:35) seventy five years of British rule in West Africa left one hospital for 30 million Nigerians, a ratio of doctors to inhabitants of 1:60, 000, and only half the children of one province surviving beyond their fifth year. Nigeria and Gold coast could only boast of one university each, university college of Ibadan, and university of Legon.

Colonialism has now completely disappeared from the continent Portugal was the first European country to have contact with Africa and the last to leave. Angola’s independence from Portugal, Namibia from South Africa’s “illegal” occupation, and the attainment of majority rule by Pretoria marked the end of colonialism, and racist’s minority rule in Africa. To chronologists who are interested in terminal dates, the end of colonialism represents the dusk of an old era, and the dawn of a new one. But to a political scientist who is interested more with reality than appearance, the year 1960 represented a new beginning for Africa to

confront the trappings of colonialism in their different guises. Indeed, it was not until after independence that radical Kwame Nkrumah realized that the eagerly awaited good life for Africans would not necessarily follow political independence (Nkrumah, 1964).

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Identify the major social-cultural legacies of colonialism.

### **3.5 Colonialism as an Imperial Ideology**

Colonialism is one of the most important events in international relations. It has not only defined relationships; it represents a policy to some people, a force to others and an experience to all. A number of reasons; political, economic, cultural and psychological have been identified to have been responsible for colonialism. What is however relevant here is that European powers employed colonialism to have a foothold in Africa and Asian countries.

The partition of Africa at the Berlin conference, held in Germany between Nov. 1884 and February 1885 formalized the intrusion of the European power into Africa, which began through the activities of their trading companies, the signing of treaties with Africa rulers, and their conquest and subjugation of their domains. As a result, Britain established control over 4 million square miles of territory, France ruled over 3 ½ million and Belgium with about 1 million (Adeniran, 1983:194). A major policy of colonial rule was the policy of divide and rule. This was to ensure complete domination and to prevent organized resistance against their rule from hitherto homogeneous ethnic group balkanized into separate states: Due to this artificial partition, the Yoruba and Hausa were divided between France in Benin Republic, and Britain in Nigeria.

This division was further strengthened when Britain adopted the policy of Association to rule her colonies while France preferred the policy of assimilation to administer her territories. Worse still, French and English languages, the official language of colonial masters became the lingua franca in the respective colonies, which further compounded efforts at integration after interdependence (Nkrumah, 1963: 216 – 222).

Just like it began colonial rule was sustained by force, but the colonialists particularly, the British were diplomatic enough to know when to apply the break. France, however, suffered the bitter consequences of defeat in the Algerian War of Independence. Portugal was also late in accepting the reality that independence must be granted

to her colonies because they were seen as extension of the territories of the imperial powers.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5**

What is the term colonial imperial ideology?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Today, African states are free from political domination; but the legacies of that foreign rule are still almost intact. In addition to these legacies, colonialism also created problems that have continued to define Africa presently. Therefore the challenge before African political leadership is how to shake off this externally created syndrome, and reshape African political, economic and social institutions towards meeting the true needs of African society. What makes this challenge a difficult one is the conditions of post-colonial dependency, which most African states currently face?

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have briefly examined the problems and legacies of colonialism. We de-constructed this legacy into its political, economic and socio-cultural manifestations. We also recommend that Africa must free herself from this crippling colonial legacy to truly develop.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. What do you understand by colonial legacy? Explain how it is shaping Africa today.
2. Distinguish between the political and economic legacies of colonialism and how they are related.
3. Explain why Western influence is not evenly distributed across a given post-colonial state in Africa.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 4      MEANING AND NATURE OF NATIONALISM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Definitions and Concepts
  - 3.2 Classifications
  - 3.3 Nationalist Factors
    - 3.3.1 Internal Factors
    - 3.3.2 External Factors
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Nationalism may be seen in different angles by different people at different periods. To the Europeans, it simply means “national feeling” as was demonstrated in the German and Italian unification in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But in Africa, nationalism; especially in the post World War II era meant opposition to foreign or alien rule, and desire for self-government. This unit examines the meaning of nationalism, its different conceptualization according to several scholars and the factors that stimulated nationalist movements in Africa.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of unit 1, you should be able to:

- define nationalism in Africa and distinguish it from the European- based variant or form
- understand the different classifications of nationalism
- know the factors that influenced the growth of nationalism in Africa.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Definitions and Conceptualizations**

A discussion of the phenomenon of nationalism in Africa must begin with an attempt at first distinguishing related concepts of nation, nationality, state and nationalism. A state is a political institution while a nation is an intangible, sociological concept. A nation-state therefore, is



a fusion of the nation(s) into a state. Within a state, it is possible to have people of different nationalities. As a result of the legacy of colonial rule most states in Africa are multi-national. However, nationalism in Africa is far from the desire for self-determination by these different ethnic groups, rather it represents opposition to colonial subjugation and desire for self-government. Given the dominant-dominated context of colonialism, it created an awareness and consciousness among Africans to resist foreign rule, so as to put an end to the humiliation, exploitation, injustice and discrimination inherent in colonial subjugation.

Nationalism can be described as an act of political consciousness concerned primarily with achieving independence for the different African colonies from foreign rule. Nationalism is also taken to mean self-assertion against the humiliating and exploitative tendencies of colonialism. For our purpose, we can define nationalism as the patriotic sentiment or activities on the part of groups of people held together by the bonds of common experience and their assertion of their inalienable right to be free to determine their common desires.

### **3.2 Classifications**

Some Political Scientists have described nationalism in Africa as a child of the twentieth century. James S. Coleman (1958) in particular, insisted that it is a misuse of the term to apply the expression the rise of nationalism to describe independence movements in Africa. He argues that since most African states at the terminal stage of colonial rule were not yet nations, it is misnomer to adopt the term nationalism. Coleman preferred to describe them as reactive anti-colonial movements, or movements for independence, rather than nationalist movements. He categorized these movements into three kinds. The traditionalist, the Syncretic and Modernist independence movement. We will now elaborate on each of them.

#### **Traditionalists**

The traditionalists are those immediate spontaneous movements of resistance led by the likes of Jaja of Opobo in British, and Samore Taore in French territories. European scholars writing from the European perspective, called these traditionalist as nativistic to describe the Mau Mau movement in Kenya, or the Messianic or madhistic movement of Sudan. Contrary to these views, these traditionalists offered legitimate resistance to the Europeans, when after the abolition of slave trade, they sought to penetrate Africa, using unfair trade, and later direct foreign rule. For their bravery, or in European perceptions, effrontery, Jaja of Opobo was exiled to the West Indies; Ovwerami of Benin lost his empire, and was deported to Calabar where he died. Kosoko lost the

battle against the occupation of Lagos, and was later expelled to the mosquito infested town of Badagry.

### **Syncretism**

The syncretic movements are the separatist religious movements led by Rev. James Johnson aimed at preventing the white-man from controlling the religious beliefs of the African people. These break away kind of movements from the Anglican, Methodist and Catholic churches realized that the European churches were themselves organs of colonial rule. In colonial Nigeria, we could categorise kinship groups such as the Imo State Union, Egbe Omo Oduduwa, as syncretic in form and character. According to Esedebe (1978:88) separatism began to manifest in churches in West and South African churches as from 1870's. As he explained, the cause of this important secession was not only opposition to European control, but also a positive desire to adapt the message of the church to the heritage of the African people. The syncretics argued that if the Queen of England was the head of the English church, so the African paramount chief must provide leadership for these break away churches. These churches rather than being center of worship became fora for political agitations. To guard against this, the Portuguese firmly restricted the entry of protestant missions into their territories because they were seen as "the advance-guard of African nationalism".

### **Modernists**

The Modernist nationalists, which Coleman obviously preferred were the economic and labour groups, principally trade unions and co-operative societies, and the professional middle class movements led by Western educated Africans, who fought against racism and discrimination, and struggled to advance the well being and economic status of members of their group. Coleman's preference for the modernists is because these were educated Africans who have traveled to Europe and North America, and have picked up the language of democracy and freedom from the American war of Independence and the vocabulary of liberty, equality and fraternity, made popular during the French Revolution. Within this group, one can include the pan-Africanists and the Trans-territorial movements. These were movements based in Diaspora, spurred by racial consciousness, and spearheading agitations for the advancement of the interest of the coloured and African peoples. The Marcus Garvey's National Association for the Advancement of coloured People and the Back to Africa movement.

In retrospect, we can say that James Coleman was in error to have made this distinction between these three categories. The correct approach or interpretation is to look at the objective of these different groups, and

not the means or methods they employed. In all these groups, the sentiments of nationalism were reflected, irrespective of who led it, or the means and methods employed, and the fact that none of the three can be treated in isolation. The important criteria in nationalism are resistance to alien rule, protest against maltreatment and the desire for self-government. One major feature of nationalism in Africa is that it was a reactive movement rather than assertive nationalism in the sense that the presence of a common enemy – the European colonizers brought nationalists together. But when the enemy disappeared, they disintegrated. It is important to emphasize that nationalism is essentially a political movement motivated primarily to eradicate colonial domination. The presence of colonial rulers contributed to it because it was then easier to distinguish between “them” and “you”, and “theirs” and ours”. That visibility factor is important, because if the colonizers were not visible, then the need to show the discrimination and subjugation inherent in colonial rule would have been difficult to establish.

### **3.3 Nationalist Factors**

A number of factors- political, economic social and cultural-combined to push forward the course of nationalism in Africa. These factors can be further subdivided into internal and external factors. We will first examine the followings.

#### **3.3.1 Internal Factors**

##### **i. Discrimination against Africans**

As we already know the philosophical underpinning of colonialism is the idea of inherent white-man superiority over the blacks. This myth was reflected in the various discriminatory colonial policies in the provision of residential recreational, educational and health facilities. Worse still, educated Africans were excluded from senior administrative positions in the colonial service. The implication of this was that foreigners made key decisions and policies while Africans were made to carry out those policies, even when they were skewed against them. Africans were also deprived opportunities of participating in political activities, even though they paid tax. The famous 1929 Aba riot in Nigeria and the 1854 hut tax riots in Sierra Leone were reminders of the popular slogan “no taxation without representation” employed by the Americans colonies during their struggle for independence from Britain. (Jordan; 1978: 54). The determination of African educated elites to reverse the situation was a major stimulant to nationalist movements in Africa.

## **ii. Emergence of Political Parties**

The emergence of political parties especially in the post war II era gave added impetus to nationalism. The activities of the NCNC in Nigeria, the C.P.P in Gold Coast, for example, transformed the agitation for independence into a mass movement in these countries. The motto of the C.P.P was particularly deviant when it announced that Ghanaians would “prefer self-government in danger to servitude in tranquility”.

## **iii. The Role of the Mass Media**

The print media in their vitriolic attacks on colonialism added fuel to the fire of nationalism already burning in most African colonies. In the old Gold Coast, the African Morning Post was in the vanguard of this struggle, and its motto”, which proclaimed its neutrality on every issue except Africa’s set the stage for the media in the nationalist struggle. In its famous articles “Does Europeans have a God” for which its editor, Dr. Azikiwe was charged for sedition, the medium eloquently demonstrated the pivotal role played by the press. In Nigeria, Dr. Azikiwe used the medium of the powerful West African Pilot to show the Nigerian youths the way which they eagerly followed.

## **iv. Economic Factor**

Colonialism encouraged the transformation of Africa from subsistence to a money-based economy. This change led to the introduction of currency, which was consciously encouraged by the colonial government in order to increase the export of primary produce. This created one of the first economic sources of problems to colonial rule. The cash nexus linked the colonial territories to the mother country in four ways.

First, it led to the growth of a wage-labour force. This resulted in considerable proletarianization among substantial number of Africans, living on the fringes of newly emergent cities. Second, colonial rule contributed to the rise of a new middle class in and around most urban centers. The middle class, which had different values and orientation, used their vanguard intermediate position of influence to spread nationalist sentiments. Third, with urbanization went the second phenomenon of social mobility. The new immigrants to the cities felt they could make demand on colonial government for better condition of services, the right to be promoted in the civil service, and the right to better life. The last sociological factor was western education. It provided for a common lingua franca-English in British colonies, and French in French colonies. This afforded the colonies an opportunity for diverse colonial peoples to communicate and plan together in a common

language. Although originally intended to help service colonial rule, a common language provided one of the powerful factors that helped dig colonial grave in Africa.

### **3.3.2 External Factors**

#### **i. Impact of World War II**

Although World-War I encouraged the spread of idea of self-determination, but World War II had significant weakening impact on colonial empires in Africa. The war not only destroyed the myth of white superiority, it also significantly weakened European economies and made it difficult for them to sustain their empires. During the war, Britain was particularly humiliated by the Japanese, while France was occupied by Germany. For Britain, it was a double jeopardy for her, for a non-European power to humble her until Britain and France were rescued by the Allied forces. Britain's World War II trauma spurred discontent in the West Indies and led to the institution of the Royal Commission to probe the unrest. Its aftermath was the granting of independence to India in 1947, making her the first non-white country to join the Common wealth.

#### **ii. Atlantic Charter**

At the peak of World War II in 1942, the Atlantic Charter which provided under Article 3 for the principle of self-determination of all peoples was signed between US's F.D. Roosevelt and UK's Winston Churchill. African nationalists employed the charter as an additional weapon to intensify nationalist struggle, and rejected Churchill's belated remark that the charter was a guide and not a rule. In frustration Churchill later retorted: "I have not become the Queen's chief minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire".

#### **iii. The Anti-Colonial Posture of USA**

The United States of America from the days of its declaration and war of independence had proclaimed the pursuit of liberty and freedom as article of faith. From the period of Woodrow Wilson when U.S intervened in world war I to make the world safe for democracy, to the era of Roosevelt, when America nurtured the idea of the United Nations and championed the principle of self-determination, successive U.S governments have not hidden their opposition to colonial empires. America's disassociation from colonial policy was promoted through the activities of American Negro leaders and scholars such as Dubois and Ralph Bunch.

#### **iv. The Role of the British Labour Party**

Churchill led Britain to victory in World War II but his party lost the first post war General elections to the labour party, led by Clement Atlee. The labour therefore promptly translated its known programme of rejection and repudiation of colonialism to the official policy of the British government. The Atlee government speedily enacted the Development and Welfare Act for the colonies in 1948, which accelerated the pace of constitutional reforms; leading to the grant of early self-government in British colonies.

#### **v. The Pan African Movement**

The pan-African movement exploded the fallacy that Africa unity is not possible because the continent lacks a common race, culture and language. From the first pan African Congress held in Paris in 1919; the second in London in 1921, the third in London in 1923; the fourth in New York in 1927, and the fifth in Manchester in 1945, the flame of African nationalism was spread across the globe. The Manchester congress attended by over 200 delegates called on African elites to be awake to their responsibilities to their people, and made definite demand for constitutional change and for universal adult suffrage (Nkrumah 1963:134).

#### **vi. The West African Students Union**

The role played by the West African students union was also significant. The union was formed in 1925 by Ladipo Solanke, a Nigerian. Member of the union were not satisfied with the rate of progress made by Britain in granting constitutional reforms in West Africa.

As a result, they wrote series of petitions, to the British government demanding self-government for West African colonies.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Examine the factors that stimulated nationalist activities in Africa.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Nationalism in Africa, especially in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was essentially opposition to alien rule and demand for political independence. The movement succeeded largely because nationalists were able to deploy the same liberal weapons of self – determination and democracy, also employed by the West in their own struggle in the two world wars. However, with political independence, African struggle for genuine national liberation was far from being won.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we have examined the phenomenon of nationalism in Africa. We recognized that resistance and opposition to alien rule took different forms, but were all aimed at the same objective. We also identified the internal and external factors that stimulated nationalist activities; yet the role of World War II as a major catalyst to nationalism was noted.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. How valid is the view that the Second World War was a major catalyst to nationalist agitations in Africa?
2. Examine the various forms of nationalist activities in Africa and how they are related to one another

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 5      NATIONALISM AND DECOLONIZATION PROCESS IN AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Nature of African Nationalism and Decolonization Process
  - 3.2    Differences in Tempo of Nationalism
  - 3.3    Impact of Nationalism
  - 3.4    Process of Liberation
  - 3.5    Nationalism after Independence
- 4.0.   Conclusion
- 5.0.   Summary
- 6.0.   Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0.   References/Further Readings

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

In the previous unit, we have discussed the concept of nationalism in the African context but in this unit we shall emphasize the influence of the concept in relation to the struggle by African nationalist for decolonization and independence.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, the student should be able to:

- understand the import of colonialism on African people
- appreciate the contribution of African nationalist to decolonization

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Nature and Critique of African Nationalism**

Basically, there are two ideal types of approaches open to any colonial people struggling for independence. The two types can be examined from experiences of countries like Nigeria and Gambia, on the one hand, and experiences of Algeria, Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Bissau, on the other. In between these two cases are the cases of Mau-Mau of Kenya and the Gold Coast (now Ghana) which combine the method of type A group of countries with the method of type B group of countries. A colony can either adopt a constitutional, evolutionary approach to independence – that involves gradual constitutional process of evolution



of power as was the case in Nigeria from the 1950s, through 1960. With the type B situation, the choice open to the nationalists was not the luxury of a round table conference; but the dictates of the battle front-struggle through military force to wrest power from an unwilling colonial power. The Zimbabwean approach typified the military option towards independence.

The question may be posed: what determines a given course of action open to the colonized people? In an attempt to answer this question, a number of factors must be considered. Perhaps the most critical relate to whether or not a given colonized people had presence or absence on its territory a sizeable colonial settlement. Where the settler population is high like Rhodesia, Kenya and Algeria there is high resistance to nationalist struggle, but in the West African colonies of Nigeria Gold Coast and the Gambia, already labeled as the “White-man’s grave”, the opposition to nationalism was less militant. In other words, while the constitutional approach was irrelevant in the former, it was suitable in the latter. In Algeria, for example France had to face the humiliation of defeat in a war of liberation waged by armed nationalists. In the case of Portuguese colonies, Portugal was the first colonial master to come to Africa and the last to leave, in the mid-1970s, fifteen years after African year of Independence.

In some settler colonies, the option of Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) was employed. The idea was to accord dominion status to the white settlers while the blacks remained under minority white rule as Ian Smith attempted to do in Rhodesia in 1965. However, under the pressure of sanctions, Ian Smith could not sustain for long his illegal declaration of independence.

### **3.2 Differences in Tempo of Nationalism**

#### **Between British and French colonies**

It is evident from the history of nationalism in Africa that the movement towards independence began earlier in the British colonies than the French colonies. The activities of the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBW) and the formation of the Nigerian National Democratic party (NNDP) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were pointers to the early embrace of nationalist struggle in British colonies. Many factors accounted for this:

##### **i. The British Policy of Indirect Rule**

It created a division between the traditional rulers and the educated elites. Because the educated Africans were excluded from the colonial

administration, they therefore portrayed the traditional rulers as agents of colonial rule. In order to moderate opposition to their rule, the British rulers deliberately introduced constitutional reforms to accommodate the educated elites which in turn, speeded their agitation for right to fully control their affairs. On the other hand, the French policy of direct rule consciously made African French educated elites member of the French parliament. The idea was to give them a false sense that they were part of the administration of their colonies. For instance in 1946, M. Houphouet – Boigny, who later became the President of Ivory Coast, in response to clamour for independence said: “there are no separatists on these benches...” In the same vein, Lepold Sengor of Senegal was quoted to have said: “The French Union must be a conjunction of civilizations, a melting point of culture it is a marriage rather than association (Nkrumah, 1965:24).

These words, coming from leading Africans were confirmation that the French policy of assimilation which was aimed at producing an elite class was a success in her colonies in Africa.

## **ii. Political Parties**

Unlike France, Britain did not discourage her colony from forming political parties. For example, while the first party emerged in Nigeria in 1922, no political party was formed in any French colonies until after World War II.

## **iii. Restriction of Western Education in French Colonies**

French colonial administration directly limited the spread of Western education to few Africans. Missionaries were not allowed to build schools until 1943. The only grammar school for the whole of French West Africa was ECCLE Normale Willita penty in Dakar, Senegal.

In summary, while Britain consciously and gradually worked her colonies towards independence, France and to a greater extent, Portugal saw their colonies as extensions of the metropolitan, mother country.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Account for the differences in the tempo of nationalism between the British and French colonies.

## **3.3 Impact of Nationalism**

The nationalist movements made a lot of impacts on the course of the decolonization process in Africa. They can be summarized as follows:

- i. The enactment of colonial Development and Welfare Act 1945-50 led to improvement of social amenities. It also contributed to the establishment of higher institutions, construction of roads and health institutions.
- ii. Nationalism also provided training grounds for new African political leadership in the post-independence era, and also inculcated political education into the masse.
- iii. It accelerated progress towards independence for many African colonies. On the eve of World War II, only Liberia, Ethiopia and Egypt were independent. By 1959, six independent African states joined the league: Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Ghana and Guinea. 1960, African Year of independence witnessed the granting of independence to seventeen African states, including Nigeria.

It must be stressed that this phenomenal increase was as a result of the intensification of nationalist struggle especially in the 1950s. It began with the Afro-Asian conference held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955; Cairo solidarity conference held in Cairo in 1956, that ratified the decision of the Bandung conference; conference of Independent African states held in Accra Ghana in 1958, and the All-African Peoples Conference also hosted in Ghana in the same year. Delegates at all these conference condemned colonialism and racialism, and agreed to set up continental framework to secure independence for the remaining African colonies (Okoye 1964 188 - 190).

### **3.4 Process of Liberation**

The experience of African Countries, more than four decades after independence, has shown that liberation is a historical process. Africans were right to have demanded for political independence, but they were wrong to have assumed that freedom would necessarily, and without additional effort, follow liberation from alien rule. To liberate means to set free, to set free from something, this inhibits action or thought. Liberation is therefore not absolute but a relative condition. For example a man can achieve physical freedom while he is still mentally enslaved. Liberation is not a single action, which can be completed at once, and celebrated annually.

For the Africans, according to Nyerere, (quoted in Otite 1978:336) liberation has four aspects: freedom from colonialism and racial minority rule; freedom from external economic domination; freedom from poverty and from injustice and oppression imposed upon Africans by Africans; and mental freedom. As at today, most African countries

have only achieved the first liberation, while the struggle for the other three stages is yet to begin. According to Basil Davidson (2000: 167 – 168) what occurred at independence in Africa was a mere adjustment of imperial attitudes towards educated minorities, and to their personal and collective ambitions as political elites. For real and genuine transfer of power to take place, he argues, it must involve the destruction of all the pillars and structures erected by colonialism.

### **3.5 Nationalism after Independence**

After independence, the immediate task which faced newly independent African states was how to create a stable relationship between the nationalist parties and the machinery of government, inherited from the colonial powers. Thus, the negative need to be politically de-colonised was replaced by a positive desire to ensure the security of the new states in order to build a new nation. For African states the European experience in nation-building provided a clear model for them to follow. What is however different in the African experience in nation-building is that unlike in Europe, the international environment has not been equally supportive. Also while it took European countries centuries to nurture their nation- states to maturity; African states do not have comparable luxury of time to transform into nations.

At the point of independence, virtually all African states were at pre-industrial stage. In the European case, particularly in Britain, industrialization helped to break down existing ways of living and methods of social organization. Industrial Revolution ensured that low productivity agriculture yielded place to high productivity manufacture, the primacy previously accorded to land - a fixed factor of production, shifted to capital, a mobile factor, as well as the transformation of rural but dis-articulated life, into a more integrated urban society. These positive by-products of industrialization were absent in Africa of the 1960's, and therefore deprived the continent of the benefits of the lever of take-off needed at the point of independence.

From the European experience, the development of transportation and communication systems; the drift from the village to the urban centers; the emergence of industrial towns and the spread of factory system of production, aided more integration of citizens across societal divides. All this facilitated the process of forging national consciousness. Jordan (1978: 10-13) called this "Integrative Nationalism", as distinct from the Africa experience, which he labeled "Disintegrative Nationalism". The former serves as a unifying force, but because the latter works on the contours or the fault line of a nation-state, as it is in most African countries, it constitutes a dis-integrative, or indeed, destabilizing forces. With the possible exception of Tanzania where its ethnic groups (about

120) of almost equal sizes have successfully contained the pull of centrifugal forces; in most African countries, tribalism has remained the engine of ethnic consciousness, before and after independence. The Tutsi and Hutus acrimonies which spilled into about five African countries: Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania and Zaire (now Congo), and often assumed genocidal proportions, represents the extreme of the crises of nationalism in post-independent Africa (Meredith 2006: 480 – 523).

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Nationalism and de-colonization process in African colonies took different forms. In some colonies where the revolutionary option was taken, the governments that were formed in the immediate post-independent era sought to distance themselves from their former colonial masters. This was aimed at giving true meaning to their political independence. On the other hand, in the colonies where the gradualist constitutional approach was followed, it was done in such a way as to preserve the interest of the former colonial masters. These different and contradictory approaches later created divisions among African states and leadership and contributed largely to lack of common purpose and resolve to confront the forces of neo-colonialism in the continent.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The unit discussed the two major approaches to de-colonization and stated that what determined approaches African nationalist adopted was the nature of colonial settlement. We finally examined the impact of nationalism and recognized that it was the major factor in forcing the colonial masters to reluctantly disengage from Africa.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Account for the differences in the tempo of Nationalism between the British and French colonies
2. In what ways is the struggle for independence in Algeria different from that of Nigeria?

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **MODULE 3**

Unit 1	Meaning and Features of Neo-Colonialism
Unit 2	Neo-Colonialism- Its Mechanism and Impacts
Unit 3	The Political Economy of African States
Unit 4	The Doctrine and Reality of African Socialism

### **UNIT 1      MEANING AND FEATURES OF NEO-COLONIALISM**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Neo-Colonialism-A Conceptual Analysis
3.2	Origins of Neo-Colonialism
3.3	Features of Neo-Colonialism
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

Neo-colonialism is a policy by which a foreign power binds territories to herself by political ties with the primary object of promoting her economic advantage. Rather than attaining genuine sovereign status, a neo-colonial state is granted what is called 'flag' independence. With neo-colonialism, it then became almost impossible for African states to translate into concrete terms the pre-independence revolution of rising expectations. Thus, within a few years of independence slogans such as "seek ye first the political kingdom and every other thing shall be added unto it" turned into a mirage, or pipe dream. This unit discusses the concept of neo-colonialism, its origins and features.

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

Essentially, this unit is aimed at the following objectives:

- to expose you to the concept of neo-colonialism and how it is relevant to the understanding of post-independent African society
- to give you an idea of how neo-colonialism originated and its major features.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Definition of Neo-Colonialism

The concept of neo-colonialism was developed to describe the phenomenon where the attainment of political independence by African States was not accompanied with economic independence. In other words, it is being applied to describe a situation where the acquisition of juridical independence has not succeeded in eliminating colonial exploitation. In one of his earliest books, written in 1945, but not published until 1962, Kwame Nkrumah (1962:1) identified three doctrines of colonialism as the doctrine of exploitation, the doctrine of trusteeship or partnership, and the doctrine of assimilation. But with neo-colonialism, the essence of these doctrines was retained in a subtle, but even more effective form. In an earlier book, Nkrumah (1963:173) set the stage for a more profound and incisive definition of neo-colonialism. In his 1963 publication, Nkrumah attributed the creation of pawn or client states", who are independent in name", to the covert subtleties and maneuvers of neo-colonial forces. Also, in his 1965 publication, which drew the anger of the State Department in the United States, (Nkrumah 1973:311) and which many believed led to his fall in 1966, Nkrumah was more profound and penetrating in his description and exposition of neo-colonial intrigues and maneuvers in Africa. He described neo-colonialism "as the last stage of imperialism" Nkrumah wrote: "The essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subject to it is in theory independent and has the outward trappings of sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside". (Nkrumah 1965: p.ix).

Under direct colonialism, where the institution of the colonial powers could be easily identified, colonialists were compelled to justify their rule, like Lord Lugard did, in his Dual Mandate (Lugard 1922). But with neo-colonialism the picture is different. As Nkrumah explained "neo-colonialism is also the worst form of imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from, it, it means exploitation without redress" (Nkrumah 1965 XI).

From the writings of other scholars such as Frantz Fanon, Samir Amir, and Julius Nyerere the evils and intrigues of neo-colonialism were revealed. In the early 1960s, in the aftermath of African independence, Frantz Fanon in the "Wretched of the Earth" warned of the dangers posed to true African independence, the un-liberated condition of African States, whose economies were still dominated by the former colonizers. (Fanon; 1968).



Julius Nyerere, also bemoaned the absence of such things as a national economy in African States, and described the neo-colonial status of African States, as reflected in the “various economic activities... owned by people outside its jurisdiction, which are directed at external needs, and which are run in the interests of external economic powers (Nyerere 1978:338).

A Nigerian scholar Iweriebor (1997:30) in his own conceptualization, argues that neo-colonialism is not simply economic control and exploitation, but a comprehensive phenomenon, whose objective is to fashion subordinate peripheral capitalist societies in the third world”.

### 3.2 Origins of Neo-Colonialism

In his short, but scholarly work on neo-colonialism, Iweriebor (1997:3) identified four stages in African transition to a neo-colonial status. During these stages which, according to him, spanned a period of five centuries, Africa was subjected to both open exploitation and subsequently, underdevelopment of her economies. Iweriebor's classifications are, perhaps a summary of Walter Rodney's *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*, or Basil Davidson's book, with the title: *The Black Man's Burden* – Africa and the Curse of the Nation-state.

The first epoch of African encounter with the Europeans was the period of slave trade from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when slave trade was abolished, to pursue what was called ‘legitimate trade’. During this period Africans were parceled and shipped to Europe and North America to provide cheap labour. The “surplus value” produced as a result of this massive exploitation contributed significantly to the industrialization of Western Europe.

The period of mercantile trade or imperialism from the early to late 19<sup>th</sup> century constitutes the second era of exploitation. This epoch inaugurated in Africa the operations of British Companies like the British South African Company, British East African Company and the United African Company as well as companies of other colonial powers, like France, Portugal and Spain. (Iweriebor 1997:4). But because Western imperialism considered the exercise of sovereignty by Africa as exemplified in several treaties of friendship, signed with African traditional rulers objectionable, they pressurized their home countries to colonise Africa. This was the antecedent to the scramble for, and the eventual partition of Africa in Berlin in 1885; which set the stage for the third epoch.

The era of colonial domination was that of direct political domination, economic exploitation, and cultural imperialism. When it suited the

Europeans, this colonial subjugation of Africa by superior firepower was justified on the altruistic ground of “civilizing mission”. In other instances, it was based on the myth of racial superiority. The tenor of this era was the forceful conversion of African land and resources, as well as African rulers as colonial agents, under ordinances issued in the name of the Crown.

But the more enduring consequences of the colonial era were the establishment of the structure, and institutions to foster African economic and ideological dependence on the West. This was achieved through the development of export crops tied to external vagaries, commerce “base” tied to Western outlets and “investment” in extractive industries. Colonialism also created a bourgeois class which Nkrumah (1970:10) called “African bourgeoisie,” and described them as a “class which thrived under colonialism”, and benefiting still “under post-independence, neo-colonial period”.

This class-political, economic and intellectual – have been mentally and psychologically subjugated that it could only conceive its own society from Europe prisms, and apply models and tools provided by Western Imperialism. This class, ironically, also include some of the nationalists who championed the anti-colonial struggle but were yet to wean themselves from imperialist grip. This class in Iweriebor’s words: “represented African rejection of colonialism; but as a class it did not reject the Western Colonial model. The colonial era inexorably, set the stage for the fourth epoch, the neo-colonial stage, which is focus of this unit.

The root of neo-colonialism in Africa therefore has both internal and external dimensions. The ideologically backward, and reformist nationalist leadership that succeeded the colonial powers, and pursued economic and political interests against the common interests of the people, constitutes the internal dimension. The external dimension is represented by Western “neo-imperialism” represented by Western Capitalist States which offer various tempting financial, educational, and advisory aids to the new African States” (Iweriebor, 1997:5).

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Trace the origins of Neocolonialism in Africa.

### **3.3 Features of a Neo-Colonial State**

A neo-colonial is a client or pawn state, which enjoys nominal independence, but lack the essential attributes of a sovereign state. In other words a neo-colonial state is independent name, but is bereft of power to pursue independent action that will result in self-reliant

development. According to Nkrumah, because it was no longer possible to reverse the momentum generated by anti-colonial nationalism, “old fashioned colonialism” was everywhere on the retreat. In order to safeguard and preserve their economic interest, the imperialists took a retreat and resorted to a neo-colonial arrangement, as a tactical expedient.

In a neo-colonial state, the power exercising control is often the former colonial power as it is in most Franco phone African countries. The only exception was Guinea, under Sekou Toure, with a single dissenting No Vote to a proposal for a French Community at the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1958 referendum, organized at the instance of General de Gaulle. For this courageous decision, Guinea was made to suffer reprisals. It is also possible for another country, apart from the mother country to maintain a neo-colonial relation with another. A case in point is South Vietnam, which was colonized by France, but maintained a neo-colonial relation with U.S.A. Also, Congo, a former colony of Belgium, whose economy in the 60s was controlled by a consortium of foreign financial interests, is another variant of a neo-colonial relationship (Nkrumah 1965:10).

A neo-colonial state is also, usually, faced with internal contradictions. According to Nkrumah, to make it attractive to the citizens of such states, it must be shown to be capable of improving their standard of living. But this can only be achieved at the expense of neo-colonial interest, which is to keep African countries, economically subjected. A state in the grip of neo-colonialism is also not a master of its own destiny, and this constitutes a threat to world peace. In the Cold War era, the two super-powers employed neo-colonial states as pawns or proxies to fight their limited wars. The crisis, which engulfed Congo on attainment of independence, was a manifestation of neo-colonialism.

Being the final and perhaps, the most dangerous stage in the capitalist development, neo-colonial powers are never sensitive to the interests of the people of a neo-colonial state. Indeed, authority to govern is not from the people, but from the metropolitan power. It can even come from multi-national corporations, which dominate economies of African countries, because of their pervasive, and often, negative mode of operations.

The pervasive impact of these new global actors which operate across national frontiers has been illustrated by Joseph Nye (2000:8) thus: presently at least 12 transnational corporations have annual sales that are larger than the gross national product (GNP) of more than half of the states in the world. The turn over of companies such as Shell, IBM, or General Motors are larger than the GDP of countries such as Hungary, Ecuador or the Democratic Republic of Congo. Neo-colonialism is not

an exclusively African phenomenon. Rather, it has been an established practice in other parts of the world, especially in Asia and Latin America.

Since neo-colonialism, according to Lenin (1917), is imperialism in its “Last stage”, or in the words of Nkrumah (1964) in its’ highest stage”. It is based on exploitation, fragmentation and penetration. This was further elaborated by John Galtung in his structural theory of imperialism. The process includes an uneven trade pattern or flow of an asymmetric or unfair trade relations, and protective tariffs. The second component of dominance is fragmentation. The picture here is that of coordinated and united rich counties versus a disorganized and dis-united periphery. Also, while the center countries establish links in different directions, the poor countries concentrate their activities to the center. This was achieved, for example, in the early years of independence, by given African countries associate membership of bodies like the European community, which in actual fact amounted to de facto second class membership.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Evaluate the contributions of Kwame Nkrumah in exposing the dangers of Neo-colonialism to new states in Africa.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Neo-colonialism, otherwise called post-colonial dependency is a major feature of most African states today. Neo-colonial structure was deliberately put in place by the former colonial masters to ensure that their vital interests were not endangered in the newly independent African states. This was achieved through many forms: economic links, military ties, and political associations. African states were still largely dependent on the West, particularly their erstwhile colonial master.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we defined neo-colonialism, especially within an African perspective. We traced its origins and its major features as a post-colonial, imperial ideology in Africa. We explained that its major objective is to sustain the exploitative relations between African states and their former colonial masters.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the factors responsible for the imposition of neo-colonial structures on African States after their independence  
Identify and explain the major features of a neo-colonial society in Africa.

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## **UNIT 2      NEO-COLONIALISM: ITS MECHANISMS AND IMPACTS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Mechanisms of Neo-Colonialism
  - 3.2 Impacts of Neo-Colonialism
    - 3.2.1 Political Aspect
    - 3.2.2 Economic Aspect
    - 3.2.3 Military Aspect
  - 3.3 Neo- Colonialism and African Dependence
    - 3.3.1 Multinationals as Engine of Growth?
    - 3.3.2 Aid Programme and African Indebtedness
  - 3.4 Strategies to Combat Neo-Colonialism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

After our discussion of the origins and features of neo-colonialism, it is necessary that we examine its mechanism and impacts. Though the objectives of colonialism and neo-colonialism are basically similar, but their mechanisms differ. The impacts of both are related since neo – colonialism help in sustaining the conditions created under colonialism. It is understandable why neo-colonialism is operating in a subtle form, compared to the open method employed during the colonial era. The reason is that the predominant world values in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were not only intolerant of foreign domination, but also rejected alien rule in all its manifestations. This accounted for the change in strategy by the former colonial masters, and their new devise of packaging the old wine in a new bottle. This unit deals with the mechanisms of neo-colonialism and its impact on African society.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you are expected to:

- know the methods employed by neo-colonial powers to achieve their objectives in Africa
- understand why they had to employ new tactics to serve neo-colonial ends
- explain the effects of neo-colonialism on Africa today.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Mechanisms of Neo-Colonialism**

Neo-colonial control can be exercised or sustained in a country through many devices. To Nkrumah, balkanization of Africa into small states is the major instrument of neo-colonialism. (Nkrumah 1963:173). The objective is to create small and fragile states with neither the manpower nor resources to provide for integrity and viability. In order to survive, they must cling to the erstwhile colonial masters. France, for example, does not believe in the idea of ultimate independence for her former colonies; she preferred to keep them as tightly closed preserves.

Under the pretext of “aiding economic development” in her former colonies France created financial institutions like F.I.D.E.S and C.C.O.M (Nkrumah 1963:175). In reality those institutions were created to sustain the classical metropolitan-satellite relationship between France and her former colonies. According to Nkrumah, the balkanization of French West African federation and French Equatorial Africa, two large French territories governed as separate entities, during the colonial period, into numerous states at independence, was in pursuit of neo-colonial objectives.

At the Third All-African Peoples Conference held in 1961, which outlined the major manifestations and denounced neo-colonialism, some of its other mechanisms were identified. These include the propping up of puppet governments like in Congo under Mobutu Sese Seko, or foreign inspired fragmentation as it was the case in the Katanga province, where Moi Tshombe became an agent of neo-colonialism. Nkrumah in his book (1967) gave detailed account of the activities of neo-colonial forces in Congo that led to the assassination of Patrice Lumumba. Apart from using loans, monetary aid or technical assistance to infiltrate African economies, neo-colonialism also employs military pacts, and the establishment of military bases, to ensure African dependence in military terms. (Offiong, 1980:62).

Neo-colonialism is a form of neo-colonial dependency. According to a recent memoir by a French official, France in the 1960s punished and even helped assassinate African leaders who opposed French policies. France was also given open ended permission to intervene militarily in these countries. It was also reported that France auditioned a potential President of Gabon before allowing him to take office. Emperor Bokassa of Central African Republic was also on record to have called President de Gaulle of France, “papa” (Goldstein, 2004:471).

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Critical examine the role of foreign aid in African politics.

### **3.2 Impact of Neo-Colonialism**

We already know that colonialism was a huge economic enterprise, with other dimensions political and socio-cultural. So it is with neo-colonialism when it transformed to the “Last stage of imperialism” (Nkrumah, 1974). Therefore neo-colonialism has its political, economic, military and cultural aspect which we are now going to separate, for analytical purposes.

#### **3.2.1 Political Aspect**

We also know that African definition and conceptualization of democracy is Eurocentric. Africans borrowed foreign systems, institutions, and even process, and look toward the examples of the West when they seek to consolidate democracy. So democracy is not consolidated when it does not conform to western tradition or precepts. To nourish or renew the practice of democracy African leaders travel to western cities to learn about, or rework their political systems. Thus neo-colonial mentality was not accidental, it was deliberately ingrained in the consciousness of African nationalism Basil Davidson (2000: 13) called it “advisory democracy” to enable neo-colonialists retain levers of interest and influence.

##### **a. Retention of Colonial Frontiers**

Similar consideration made the former colonial masters to prefer the “moderate and responsible” nationalists to become the favoured recipients of power vacated by Europeans. But the “radicals” and malcontents”, who saw the dangers of “neo-colonialism, nation-statism” and pressed for inter-territorial federalism for Africa, were carefully identified, and often prevented from assuming power. Because the moderates were eager to assume power, they accepted the frontiers of colonial partition, and embraced the idea of fragmented nation – states. This was how neo-colonial intrigues laid the political foundation favourable for the sustenance of its interests in Africa.

##### **b. Acceptance of Language of Domination**

An uncritical view of the imposition of foreign language may be considered merely as a cultural aspect of neo-colonialism. It however has a deeper political connotation. The unwritten law of the decolonization process in Africa was that new nationalists had to be



fluent in at least one European language particularly that of the colonial master, as well as the culture and history of that language (Davidson 2000: 106). This was a pre-requisite before an African could be considered as having been “modernised” or westernized, without which he was not qualified for political leadership in independent Africa. This was to demonstrate the unbroken chain between the colonial era and the present era, the use of language as a weapon of political domination, and to further re-classify Africans today as “Anglophone,” Francophone or Lusophone.

Apart from the imposition of foreign languages as the lingua franca in most African states, including some North African States where there has been a strong Arab language renaissance, the use of language in a non – innocent form, began with the dawn of colonial rule in Africa. When Europeans came on their expeditions, they claimed to have “discovered” a “Dark” continent, as if Africa never existed before they came, and with all the connotations the label dark, or black suggest. Africans were also “pacified” when colonial rule stopped “inter-tribal” wars, as well as the urgency to “westernize” the “natives” so as to “detribalize Africans. The import of this was to portray the Europeans as the standard of humanity, to which Africans, even after independence must aspire. As argued by Iweriebor (1997:63) the designation of Africa, along with Asia as third world includes “assumed political, social, cultural, and probably even mental underdevelopment, each of which has its descriptive sub-categories.”

The idea of second liberation of Africa from neo-colonial grip which is being canvassed today is recognition of the limitations of “Flag” independence and to dismiss as a fiction what Harold Macmillan, a former British Prime Minister, described in 1960 as “a wind of change” blowing across Africa. Kwame Nkrumah was to later discover the emptiness of political independence without economic freedom. He wrote: “political independence is but a façade if economic freedom is not possible also (Nkrumah 1961:162)”.

### **3.2.2 Economic Aspect**

Having succeeded in the political aspect, it was then easier for neo-colonialism to accomplish its economic object, and consequently Africa’s sustained exploitation, dependence and underdevelopment. Neo-colonialism has therefore deepened African trade trap/gap, unequal exchange as well as resource and wealth depletion. In an article entitled “Looting Africa” in the Time magazine, its authors acknowledged that the tradition which began when Africans were “plundered by Slavers, its animals by Poachers and its mineral wealth by Miners”, continues today under neo-colonialism (Bond; 2006:55-56). Africa’s unfair integration

into the international capitalist system has also promoted export dependence, and falling terms of trade; due to high levels of price volatility, associated with primary production.

In the 1980's, prolonged economic down turns forced many African States to embrace Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) as a strategy for recovery. Iweriebor described SAP as the "Highest Stage of Neo-colonialism", because it was an attempt to re-colonise African countries. From Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda and other African countries where SAP was accepted as neo-liberal orthodoxy, the programme converted the states "into the executive agencies of Western imperialism". By accepting IMF package the sovereignty of these states was therefore compromised through the activities of the IMF.

### **3.2.3 Military Aspect**

Through military ties, neo-colonialism succeeded in enforcing and consolidating its grips on African States. The military aspect of triple – neo-colonial strategy was speedily affected in the early 1960s. Nkrumah (1967:XII) revealed that in 1966, there were seventeen foreign air bases, nine naval bases, owned and operated by members of the North Atlantic Organization (NATO) . In addition, foreign military missions were established in Kenya, Morocco, Liberia, Libya, South Africa, Senegal and Ivory Coast. Key NATO countries also possessed three rockets sites, and atomic testing range in North Africa.

In Nigeria, though Tafawa Balewa was forced by domestic pressure to abrogate the Anglo – Nigerian Defence Pact, his and subsequent Nigeria administrations depended on British military institution (for example Sandhurst) for the training of the country's military officers. Balewa was not restrained in his patronizing remarks about Britain: "we are grateful to the British officers whom we have known, first as masters and then as leaders and finally as partners, but always as friends "we shall never forget our old friends". Not a few post independence African leaders were of this frame of mind. This mind set was critical in the re-colonization of Africa's leadership, peoples and society, under the invisible regime of neo-colonialism.

## **3.3 Neo-Colonialism and Africa's Dependence**

### **3.3.1 Multinationals as Engine of Growth?**

Multi-national corporations emerged on the world scene in the post World War II era. These global giants became an economic necessity when it dawned on the colonial masters that direct rule was no longer realistic; and they needed a replacement that would serve the goal with

equal, if not greater efficiency. Though America was a forerunner in the global penetration of trans-nationals, but in Africa, European countries leveraged on the ties they maintained with their former colonies, to re-establish informal control, through these corporations. Thus in Africa Unilever, B.P and Royal Dutch shell, Philips and Peugeot Automobile took over European manufacturing, petroleum, electronics and automobile business interests in Africa (Oatley, 2000). Just like colonialism, the regime of multinational was promoted by the West as “engine of growth”. This is based on the assumption that their operation generates what economics call “positive externalities” in the host country: promote foreign investment, transfer of technology, and management expertise, and efficient allocation of resource.

Experience in Africa has shown that multi- nationals, rather than promote growth operates as instruments of capitalist domination. Oatley lamented:” it seems incongruous to achieve political independence from colonial powers and yet continue to struggle under the economic dominance of the colonial powers multinational firms”. From the list of the multinationals already mentioned it is obvious that they always engage in critical areas of national economy, in which the government is more interested and where conflict of interest often arise. This conflict of interest sometimes push multinationals, to dabble in the domestic politics, or try to undermine the security of the host country: the extreme is their strategy of beating around codes established to regulate their operations.

Vernon (1998: 28) provides a clue why this conflict of interest can not be avoided: “the regime of nation-state is built on the principle that the people in any national jurisdiction have the right to maximize their well being, as they define it.... The MNC, on the other hand, is bent on maximizing the well being of its stakeholders from global operations”. And more often than not, they succeed in this contest of power through devices such as “inter-locking directorship and cross-shareholdings: (Nkrumah, 1974:259). In 1979, Nigeria took a rare, but bold step when it nationalized the assets of the British Petroleum. The official reason given for the action was to prevent Nigeria oil from getting to the enemies of Africans in apartheid South Africa. But the un-stated and more convincing motivation was to force the hands of Margaret Thatcher led British government in the then protracted negotiation for Rhodesian (now Zimbabwe) independence (Aluko; 1981:212)

### **3.3.2 Aid Programmes and African Indebtedness**

Aid programme has been consistently promoted as a means of promoting growth and development in Africa. This is through the expected inflows of capital into recipient from donor nations or aid

agencies. A more critical analysis has, however revealed that Africa's indebtedness is directly linked to what is called "phantom" aid. Beham in "Economic Aid to underdeveloped countries" wrote "it is pleasant to feel that you are helping your neighbours, and at the same time increasing your own profits" (quoted in Nkrumah 1974: 51). Beham's notion of aid is closer to President John Kennedy's admission of the goal of American aid programme around the world. He defines foreign aid as "a method by which the United States maintains a position of influence and control around the world" (Effiong, 1980:143:144).

Therefore, apart from foreign debt and balance of payment problems, foreign aids have far reaching political consequences. After American failure in her direct military intervention in Southeast Asia (Vietnam in particular), contemporary imperialism has learnt a big lesson. Through aids programmes effective informal political control is assured when donors give specific directives on how aids funds are used. A good example was the food for peace aid programme under which U.S created business for its corporations (Effiong 1980). However in the present post –cold war era, when ideological competition between USA and the former Soviet Union, has receded, what we now experience is aid fatigue. There is also no need now, to use foreign aids to retain in offices unpopular African leaders, who are no longer relevant in the present world power equation. Fair trade rather than phantom aid is now being promoted.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

In what ways can language be employed as a weapon of domination?

### **3.4 Strategies to Combat Neo-Colonialism**

This analysis of neo-colonialism is not complete, if we fail to recommend "a correct and global strategy" to defeat it. Therefore the only way to discover and expose neo-colonial intrigues is to examine the nature of the struggle for independence. If the liberation movement is firmly established, the colonial power invariably resorts to a "containment" policy in order to stop any further progress, and slow or deaden its impact.

But the machinations of colonial power were bound to fail if the nationalist leaders maintained a clear spirit of vigilance and cultivated genuinely revolutionary qualities. The correct strategy should be preventive in nature; aimed at preventing a state from becoming a puppet or client state. But where neo-colonialism has become established African states must unite and deal with neo-colonialism on a

pan-African basis, otherwise, Euro-American forces will continue to undermine, selectively, African core interest.

For obvious reasons, Kwame Nkrumah's advocacy of a continental union for Africa was unpopular in the early sixties. The reason is not far fetched. Most African leaders were conscious and jealous of their newly won independence and were not prepared to compromise it in the name of African unity. But in this age when efforts are being made to convert the barrier of colonial imposed boundaries into a bridge of opportunities for cooperation among nations, Nkrumah's suggestion, in retrospect, has probably proven to be too attractive an idea to be totally ignored. Indeed the establishment of the African Union in 2001 is a step in this direction.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Neo-colonialism in its operations modified the mechanism of direct control, for a more subtle, and disguised strategy of manipulation of the economies of African states. Consequently, exploitation is more efficient under neo-colonialism while resistance to it elicits less mass support. Before granting independence to African States, the colonial masters took conscious steps to prepare the minds of Africans for "Flag" independence, even if it would mean handing over power to those who would collaborate with the Europeans in the exploitation of Africa. Whether it relied on the operations of multinational corporations, unfair trade arrangements, or foreign aid manipulation, neo-colonialism would not have succeeded if not for the fertile ground provided for it by African political leadership. Therefore, solutions to the problems created by neo-colonialism can be found within, than outside Africa.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we discussed different mechanisms employed by neo-colonialism to achieve its objectives. We also examined the political economic and military aspects of neo-colonialism. We further analyzed the role being played by Multinational Corporations in carrying out exploitation in the name of business activities. We also added that the concept of foreign aid is a major factor in Africa's external indebtedness, and consequent underdevelopment.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. How valid is the view that multinational corporations are "engine of growth in Africa?"
2. Describe the major mechanisms of neo-colonial control in Africa.
3. What are the major dimensions of neo-colonialism in Africa?

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## **UNIT 3 THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AFRICAN STATES**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Concept of African Development
  - 3.2 Neo-Colonialism and African Development
  - 3.3 The first Development Decade
  - 3.4 Structural Adjustment Programme
  - 3.5 Challenges of Industrialization and Globalization
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

African political economy emerged from the circumstances of her forceful integration with the international capitalist system. Through the successive and combined impact of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, African's economy today is not only underdeveloped, but also almost prostrate. More than four decades of "flag" independence has also failed to free African states from her precarious dependence and near stagnation. Rather than adopt correct development models, most African states have merely copied foreign inspired growth models that are unsuitable for a developing society. The effect is that, till date, most African economies continue to suffer from exploitation and underdeveloped. This unit examines the negative impact of neo-colonialism on African development, analyses the effectiveness of the structural adjustment programme, and recommends a more appropriate policy response to African crises of underdevelopment.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the major features and character of African political economy
- explain the role of neo-colonialism in the deepening of African dependence and underdevelopment
- understand what can be done to free Africa from the stranglehold of neo-colonial forces.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Concept of African Development**

The dominant theme of the penetration thesis is that the process of African development was arrested as a result of her encounter with Europe. During these five centuries of encounter, Africa was subordinated to, and served the economic, political and psychological interests of Western imperialism. Worse still, after political independence, when Africa was expected to pursue genuine programme of economic transformation, a developmental model, that have been programmed to perpetuate her underdevelopment, was imposed on the continent (Davidson: 1992).

Economists are united in their views that growth is not synonymous with development. Growth though can raise the general standard of living, and it is also a powerful weapon against poverty; but not everyone can benefit equally from growth. (Lipsey; 1963:715). In other words, growth can not eliminate all the major characteristics of an underdeveloped society, Obone (1977; 139) grouped the major characteristics of underdevelopment under five headings: economic, agricultural, demographic, cultural, political, and technological characteristics.

Nnoli (1981:29) dissected development into the economic, social and political aspects. Economic development, according to him, is concerned primarily with growth in GDP, industrialization and capital formation. Social development emphasizes the institutionalization of Western social norms and behavioural pattern while political development focuses on political stability and institutionalization of goals and means for achieving them. These three strands belong to the Western model of development.

But the Marxists have a different conception of development. They see man as the centerpiece of all development activities. Development, according to the Marxist, is a dialectical phenomenon in which individual and society interact with their environment and transform it for its own betterment (Nnoli 1981:36). Development, along this perspective, is changes in man's humanity and creative energies, not in things. It is a process of actualizing man's inherent capacity to live a better and more rewarding life. It also implies increasing skill and capacity to do things, greater freedom, self-confidence, and material wellbeing.

African Development, therefore, implies those political, economic and social attributes that will make the continent to chart the course of a



dynamic and self-reliant development. Beyond the statistical indices, the tangible parameter of development is qualitative rather than quantitative. While the former deals with the ability to use the state apparatus to realize the potential of a nation, the latter is merely concerned with measurable performance.

A society whose citizens are educationally cultivated, such that they can mobilize the latent resources to achieve maximum output, with minimum effort can be said to be developed. A society is also developed if resources are fairly distributed among its citizens, the economy is not vulnerable, or unduly exposed to external forces, and its political system is stable.

## **Neo-Colonialism and African Development**

### **1. First Development Decade**

Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana blazed the trail as the first Black African colony to attain political independence on March 5, 1957. This historic landmark was due to Nkrumah's radical nationalism and his deviant anti-colonial posture, as reflected in his slogan: "we prefer self-government in danger to servitude in tranquility". But Nkrumah did not see Ghana's destiny as being separate or distinct from the African destiny. In his view, the independence of Ghana would be meaningless, if it was not linked with the total liberation of African territories" "our task is not done and our own safety is not assured until the last vestiges of colonialism have been swept from Africa" (Nkrumah 1957:240).

Like Nkrumah, many African leaders realized that the much-desired economic independence would not naturally accompany political freedom. It was when they discovered that the legacy of colonial capitalism was deeply entrenched and resilient than earlier imagined, that they changed their famous anti-colonial slogan thus "political independence is meaningless without economic freedom". Having realized that the struggle had just begun "independence was then considered, not an end in itself, but a stage, the very first stage of the peoples' revolutionary struggle" (Nkrumah 1973:485).

In the early sixties, having just emerged from colonial rule, compared with the developed nations, African States are economically weak. The long dependence on European and American financial and technical assistance has prevented the growth of local capital and robbed them of technical knowledge to develop their resources. Till date, African greatness remains at the level of her vast potentials. Nkrumah wrote: "we have in Africa the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty and scarcity in the midst of abundance" (Nkrumah 1961:ix-x). However, the

search for outside aid to remedy this situation lay Africa open to a grave and new danger, which not merely threatens but could even destroy the continent's hard-won freedom.

In the immediate post independent period, most African Countries, embarked on national development programmes, with the sole objective of achieving economic breakthrough. The so called first "Development Decade" in Africa was characterized by the adoption of Western inspired economic policies, based on import substitution strategies and transfer of technology. Under the pretext of collaborating with the developed world, deceptive phrases such as "partners in progress" and "development aid" crept into the economic vocabulary of African States. But if properly analyzed, aid is harmful to African interest. It is an instrument of recolonization: "Aid to a neo-colonial state is merely a revolving credit, paid by the neo-colonial master passing through the neo-colonial state and master in the form of increased profits".

Therefore, the multi-lateral financial institutions like the World Bank and IMF through which these aids are channeled as conveyor belts are mere agents of international monopoly finance capital. In the same manner that multi-national corporations, rather than being "engines of growth", are actually agents to foster African underdevelopment. Though these corporations, according to Nwankwo, claim to provide development finance and technology transfer, but on the contrary, they are engaged in clandestine accumulation of capital, and restrict competition by establishing economic control in their spheres of operation (Nwankwo 1981:31-90).

African countries, during this period, also retained structures and patterns of economic activity, which helped to sustain neo-colonialism-production and export of raw materials, dependence on bilateral and multi-lateral agencies for development finance, and dependence on the West for the supply of industrial machinery. If Africa failed to achieve economic take-off in the first Development Decade, the 80s was also "the lost decade", because of African inability to recover from the economic crises of the decade. (Baradat 2000:284).

## **ii. Structural Adjustment Programme**

The 80s also marked the beginning of economic recovery programme under the dictation and supervision of I.M.F., a development, which has turned African, states to become the executive agencies of Western imperialism (Iweriebor 1997:2).

Nigeria, for example, like many other African countries, adopted the structural adjustment programme (SAP) in 1986. The objectives of SAP

were, to restructure the productive base of the nation's economy, achieve fiscal and balance of payment viability, and lay the basis for sustainable non-inflationary growth (Babangida 1986:23). Its principal elements such as currency devaluation, trade liberalization and subsidy removal, among others, which were rejected by Nigeria in a nation wide debate, were discreetly applied through the back door.

But, in spite of the firm insistence by the government, at the prompting of the I.M.F., that there was no alternative to SAP; more than two decades after SAP was introduced the major distortions in the nations persisted. Major indices to evaluate economic performance such as investment, employment and capacity utilization were still in the red, until SAP was discontinued. Similarly, danger signals such as unemployment, low productivity, inflation are also in ascendancy. A renowned Nigerian economist, Samuel Aluko in 1989 three years into the adoption of SAP wrote that Nigeria was on "the horns of policy dilemma", or what economist call "an inconsistent combination of circumstances". (The Guardian, February 11, 1988).

The economic scenario in Nigeria is not an isolated case. It was the same in other African States where I.M.F. economic prescriptions were adopted. Little wonder, a mere cursory survey of Africa today, in spite of her rich potential in national resource endowments will reveal that the major traits of underdevelopment are present in varying degrees. By all economic standards, Africa is the poorest continent in the world today. Income per head is low; a very high proportion of the people engage in agriculture with returns not commensurate with overlay; there is both unemployment and underemployment of labour.

Demographically, Africa presents a paradox. The continent enjoys a high fertility rate, in the face of inadequate nutrition and hygiene, which in turn result in high mortality rates. After many years of the illusion of "technological transfer", crude and obsolete implements and tools still dominate agricultural and industrial production. The import of the above is that development, in the real sense of it, has not only eluded Africa, the growth rate in the continent is also stunted.

Worse still, most African countries presently face heavy debt burden, a development that has impacted negatively on the ability of government to provide for the welfare of the citizens. Largely due to the magnitude and profile of debt owned by African States, more than a third of the foreign exchange earnings is usually set aside annually, to service foreign debt commitments. Nigeria in the 80s because of inability to regularly meet her repayment obligations was forced to engage in counter trade and debt-equity swaps, or enter into debt re-scheduling talks with either the Paris club or London club of creditors.

The debt question, initially an economic issue, has been converted to an instrument of neo-colonial political control. Thus, African States are incapacitated to take independent political actions. This was recognized several years back when radical African leaders advocated that African states should stand together politically, adopt a united foreign policy, a common defence plan and a fully integrated economic programme for the development of the whole continent.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

What role is the specialization of Africa in primary produce playing in sustaining the continent's neo-colonial status?

### **3.3 Challenges of Industrialization and Globalization**

Today with the whole world passing through the process of globalisation, neo-colonialism has entered a new phase. Through international trade, international migration and foreign direct investment, the process of interdependence among nations has been fostered. But Africa has not largely benefited from the capacity of globalisation to enhance the frontiers of growth and development. The fruits of globalisation have not spread evenly around the world, because Africa, like most developing countries, is precariously positioned in the present interdependent world, now labeled, a global village.

The challenge before Africa today is how to reverse the unfavourable terms of trade between her and the developed world. Mbaya Kamkwenda, UN Resident co-coordinator in Nigeria captured the essence of this challenge succinctly, when he said:

***The world is being globalised and Africa cannot afford to stay out of the process.***

***But she cannot resign herself to entering it with both hands and legs bound. She has to be a player and handle her insertion into the dynamics in the light of the development path that she defines for herself and thinks that is the best for the well being of her people. (Nigeria Tribune January 14, 2003).***

Neo-colonialism is, by far not the only problem militating against African development; even if it is a critical factor. Industrialization and its associated problems in economic realm have paradoxically turned against the continent. In the view of Baradat while industrialization has produced great wealth for developed countries, it has created a new kind of slavery for developing countries: "The new slaves be they industrial workers or neo-colonial suppliers of cheap raw materials, are exploited

more fully than those of the previous eras, because of the efficiency of modern system”. (Baradat 2000:4).

Thirdly, African States must radically break away from the development model designed by the West, or the hybrid of a system, disguised as “a mixed economy”. Instead, the paradigm shift must be informed and dictated by African needs and aspirations. The public sector should be converted to become the new engine of growth. We must understand that wrong policy prescriptions are responsible for the increasing phenomenon of “failed state” in Africa. But this is not a justification for states to abandon initiatives in national planning and economic development. Therefore, in view of the undeveloped nature of the private sector in Africa, a development programme which rely solely on the market forces, or what Adam Smith refers to as the “invisible hand,” work against the realization of development objectives in Africa.

Fourthly political stability is another pre-requisite for sustainable development. Therefore, African States can only pursue a programme of uninterrupted development under an atmosphere of political stability. This is the only way to realize the goal of African development.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

What is impact of globalization on African economy today?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Development is the goal of every society, whether advanced or simple. But what has made development efforts difficult in Africa is the history of her relations with other parts of the world. Whether defined in terms of slavery, colonialism, or its contemporary manifestations, neo-colonialism- Africa had, and still continues to be at the receiving end of global divide. Therefore, only a just re-arrangement of this international relationship can alter African position positively.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have defined and identified the main features of African political economy. We also explained why Africa is still trapped despite many years of independence. We also suggested strategies to bring about genuine development.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Identify the main features and character of African political economy
2. Assess the role of the Breton Wood institutions in the attempts by African States to grapple with the crises of development.
3. What is the relationship between political stability and economic development?

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## **UNIT 4 THE DOCTRINE OF AFRICAN SOCIALISM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Concept and Basic Tenets of African Socialism
  - 3.2 Historical Context
  - 3.3 Different Perspectives
  - 3.4 The Critique and Reality of African Socialism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Market Assignment
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The doctrine of African socialism was popular in the immediate post-colonial era. It was applied as a rallying point, and a convenient mass mobilization strategy, which replaced the dying concept of anti – colonial nationalism. African socialism rejects the fundamental Marxist proposition of class distinctions, economic antagonism and revolution as the realities of African societies. This unit discusses the doctrine of African socialism and how it differs from utopian and orthodox socialism. It examines the various views by African socialists, offered a critique and related their optimism to the objective reality of the African society.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the doctrine and tenets of African socialism
- differentiate African socialism from orthodox Marxist socialism
- evaluate the success of African socialism as a post-colonial ideology.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Concept and Basic Tenets of African Socialism**

The basic tenets of African socialism, can be summarized as follows: as a doctrine, it identifies with the historical progressive movement of African people; as an ideology, it seeks to create an identity for Africans

that will transcend tribal or sectional boundaries; and as a social system, it concentrates power in the hands of political elite to direct the affairs of their people, as they deem fit.

Since socialism is a way of life in traditional African society, a socialist society can only be built by those who believe in, and who themselves practice the principle of socialism. (Nyerere 1968:204). Apart from reducing the role of the individual within the society the basic principles of African socialism are manifested and reflected in the family, the nature and theory of society, as well as the role of the state and government.

A major principle of African socialism is that man has no distinct personality separate from that of society; his destiny or future is inseparable from that of the society. Therefore the prosperity of the individual is the prosperity of his brethren (Otite 1978:144). The family is also a major factor in the success or failure of African socialism, because as an agent of socialization or primary unit of enculturation, it is responsible for the production of social capital and the continuity of egalitarian African value, modeled on the concept of brother-hood and kinship symbolism.

African socialism does not believe in the Marxist prediction of the “withering away of the state”. On the contrary, government was urgently needed to provide the capital required for socio-economic development in order to meet the “revolution of rising expectations” that arose at the dawn of independence. Also, apart from adopting revolutionary language during the anti-colonial struggle, the only radical step embraced by African socialists was nationalization; which was seen as one way of improving the material comfort of Africans. This was seen as another way to safeguard the hard won independence of African states, from being lost to neo-colonial forces. In Nyerere’s words; “to nationalize in Africa is to socialize--- in our country nationalization means socialism” (Cited in Jordan 1978:41).

The adoption of African socialism has inevitably encouraged African leaders to promote a one party dominant regime, a phenomenon which Sekou Toure once described as “Democratic Centralism”. The argument is that having sufficiently mobilized the people under a strong national organization during nationalist agitations, it was only rational to allow the emergent political leaders at the threshold of independence to retain power, undistracted by divisive opposition elements, to pursue the programme of economic development of African states. It is, therefore the responsibility of the party to put forward the goals of the state while the government should carry them out. The trend towards one-party state in order to remove, according to Otite, antagonist pockets of



power, has become “a concomitant of African socialism (Otite 1978:148).

In the perception of African socialists, traditional African societies are classless, egalitarian and conflict free. Though, it is possible to discern something close to a client-patronage, or dependency relationships between the rulers and the led, especially during the infrequent moments of succession, yet, the over all structure of African society is that of harmony and unity of purpose. Also, because African societies rest on communalistic values rather than a net work of economic relations, it is possible for “we feeling” as against “I feelings” to prevail. The egalitarian structure of African society also influenced the conception and exercise of power. Since all units and actors within the society are complimentary power like every other organ of the society is exercised on behalf, and for the good of the society.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

What are the major tenets of African Socialism?

### **3.2 Historical Context of African Socialism**

Proponents of African socialism submit that socialism is at home in Africa. Pre-colonial Africa, according to them, was largely socialist or communalist until colonial penetration brought about a monetized economy, which is integral to the capitalist system. Tom Mboya argues that Africans need not learn socialism because it is indigenous to them. (Mboya 1963:163). In Africa, individual does not have a personality different from the community. According to Nkrumah, the “free development of the individual is a pre-requisite for the free development of their society (Nkrumah: 1964).

In pre-colonial Africa there was no private ownership of land, or primitive capitalist accumulation, which is a feature of a capitalist society. The central thesis of African socialism, therefore, is that African society is classless, and that the collective approach was central to the definition of societal goals and ends. Also in African society, power was held in trust by the rulers on behalf of the ruled, in pursuit of goals determined by all. A ruler could not be autocratic because there were accepted norms for leadership recruitment, legitimization, as well as social sanctions to check excesses. African socialism is, therefore, by definition African culture-bound: it is humanist and egalitarian, a defence of African communalism and a mechanism for reflecting on Africa’s originality, cultural and social exclusiveness, inspite of other diversities in the continent (Otite 1978:141).

### **3.3 Different Perspectives of African Socialism**

In the opinion of African leaders, the heart of socialism is to be found in the idea of community, and in the doctrine that men can realize their full potentials and achieve human emancipation within a continental framework. It was within this context that Leopold Senghor of Senegal developed Existentialist, or Negritude socialism, Kwame Nkrumah reaffirmed Positive Socialism. Nyerere coined Ujaamah (family hood) while Gamal Abdul Nasser of U.A.R propounded Arab socialism (Azikiwe 1979:64-67).

Of all African political leaders, Julius Nyerere's idea of Ujama's appears to be based on sound theoretical foundations. In his words, Ujamah is to grow a new African society out of their own roots, in a particular direction and towards a particular kind of objective. According to Nyerere, socialism is universal because its ideas and beliefs relate to man in society generally, adding "the universality of socialism only exists if it can take account of man's differences, and be equally valid for all of them".

Nyerere further submits that socialism like democracy is an attitude of the mind, and not a rigid adherence to a standard political pattern. Unlike capitalism, which is acquisitive, socialism in his view is, essentially, distributive. He stated further that in no African language is there a word for "class". While conceding that African for a long time has been a stratified society, the hierarchy in Africa, according to him, usually followed lines of families, age grades, secret societies, rather than economic classification (Nyerere, 1968:28-32).

In Nkrumah's views, communalism is the socio-political ancestor of socialism. In socialism, the principles underlying communalism are given expression in modern circumstances (Nkrumah 1964:73). Unlike other African leaders, Nkrumah believed in the social classification of African societies, and argued that "our society is not the old society, but a new society enlarged by Islamic and Euro-Christian influence" (Nkrumah 1973:81).

Sekou Toure, initially refused to be drawn into ideological debate or arguments. In his words ideologies are "theories which are strange to us" and had very little or nothing to do with the crucial tasks facing his country. But later he reversed his position and affirmed a commitment to a socialist society thus: "Socialism in Guinea is not and cannot be different from socialism in other countries" (Otite 1978; 189-171). Leopold Senghor of Senegal defined socialism as essentially, a new vision of the world, which can be applied to transform one's society. (Azikiwe 1979:65). Other African leaders such as Tom Mboya of Kenya, Modibo Keita of Mali as well as Azikiwe and Awolowo of Nigeria have all spoken and written about socialism.

From these different views of African leaders Onigu Otite has, however, attempted to summarize African socialism in this way: “it is an ideology for re-socializing and developing the new African society from the legacy of colonialism, as well as a tool for mobilizing the populace towards socio- economic development”. His basic thesis is that African socialism is basically a cultural context. But far from making a final pronouncement, he gave three different, but related meanings to African socialism: First, as developmental stage through capitalism to communism; second, a wishful target, an advanced form of a welfare state; and third as a description of what is considered to be an existing system (Otite 1978:128).

Conceptually, African Socialism is open to different usages and therefore does not lend itself to an acceptable definition. In the context of establishing an identity for African, African socialism belongs to the same category of concepts such as Negritude, or African personality, pan-Africanism, or indeed, Kenneth Kaunda’s notion of Humanism.

In broad terms, two schools of thoughts have emerged in the attempts to conceptualize African socialism. Nkrumah and Senghor led the first group. This group believes that it is not possible to recreate African past given the expansion of the grouper boundaries, which had made many communities anonymous. According to this school, Islamic exploits, colonial rule and the introduction of Christianity had effected fundamental changes in African societies. Nkrumah therefore canvassed for spiritual clarification and purification as the only realistic approach to African development. This he called “Philosophical Consciencism” (Nkrumah 1964:70). The second group led by Nyerere believes that African past can be recreated. This is possible, according to this school by emphasizing certain characteristics of African traditional past, and grafting or extending them so that they can embrace the possibilities of modern technology (cited in Azikiwe 1979:68). In spite of the differences between the two schools, they both recognized the need to revisit African past, as tools for mobilizing the people, and for articulating societal responsibility already inherent in them.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

What is the connection between the ideology of African Socialism and Nationalization in Africa?

### **3.4 Critique and Reality of African Socialism**

It is important to appraise the success or otherwise of African Socialism both as a theoretical solution for African socio-economic problems, and

also as an ideology, for mass political mobilization. This is necessary because the doctrine was propagated as if it possessed ready made answer that would cure the problems of African economic dependence, political instability and social inequality.

However, the reality in African today, many decades after political independence, and the adoption of African socialism, is that most African states are still dependent on their former Western colonial powers. Rather than preside over national and self-reliant economies, the present generation of African leaders glory in neo-colonial, client states who in theory, according to Nkrumah, possess all the trappings of independence, but in reality their economic system and political policy is directed from outside". (Nkrumah; 1965:ix). Consequently, the political economy of African states is not only asymmetrically tied to the international capitalist system, but operates in ways that make them vulnerable to the vagaries of the economies of the metropolitan Powers. The present plight of Africans in the prevalence of deepening economic crises of poverty, gross income inequality and unemployment can therefore be attributed in part, to the failure of African socialism.

Also under the guise of nationalization, most African states opted for the wrong indigenization policy, which has only succeeded in promoting indigenous bourgeoisie who now emerged as powerless, corporate boardroom members without effective control. In the process, these big companies rather than promoting indigenous entrepreneurship, are merely serving as agents of foreign business and commerce.

Politically, if the adoption of African socialism could be justified in the 1960s as a necessary post-colonial ideology to replace nationalism, it has only succeeded afterwards to produce a crop of African leaders, who created a cult of personality around themselves while pretending to be the messiahs of their people. In the process Nyerere became popular as "Mwalimu" (The Great Teacher) while Nkrumah was called "Osagyefo"; (The Redeemer) (Azikwe 1976:74) all in an attempt to portray themselves as indispensable or as human personification of their respective states. In summary, the reality of African states does not indicate that African socialism has fulfilled the objectives ascribed to it.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

From the foregoing it is obvious that both at the dusk of colonial rule, and at the threshold of independence in Africa, African socialism was a popular concept. Its popularity and general acceptance derived from the perception and belief of African leaders that it could be made a tool for political legitimation and economic transformation. But it was not long before many realized that African socialism was a mere charade,

especially when expected transformation of the economy of African states did not materialize.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have been exposed to the doctrine of African socialism. We have tried to show the distinction between African socialism and doctrinaire socialism. We explained why African leaders embraced African socialism as a post-colonial ideology. We further gave reasons why it failed to meet the aspirations of an average African citizen.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Define the concept of African socialism and elaborate on its tenets.
2. Assess the views of various African leaders on African socialism, and identify where they differ
3. To what extent can you say that African socialism succeed as a post-colonial ideology.

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## **MODULE 4**

Unit 1	One party Rule in Africa
Unit 2	The military in African Politics
Unit 3	Contending Explanatory Models of Instability
Unit 4	Democracy and Constitutionalism
Unit 5	Instability and Crises of Succession in Africa

### **UNIT 1      ONE PARTY SYSTEM IN AFRICA**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Emergency of One Party
3.2	Arguments for One Party
3.3	Arguments against One Party
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
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#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

No doubt, political parties in Africa made significant contributions towards the political emancipation of the continent from colonial rule. In the immediate post independent period however, African politics witnessed a trend towards a one, or single party government. In most of these countries, leaders who led the nationalist movements eventually became political heads at the period of independence. No sooner than they assumed office that they began moves to transform their respective states to one party system, to assure themselves monopoly of political leadership of their states. This Unit examines the rise of one party system in Africa, the case for or against it and attempts to distinguish genuine claims from mere rationalizations.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the background to the emergence of one party system in Africa
- know the arguments for and against the emergence of one party state in Africa
- separate the genuine imperatives for one party state from those advanced as mere arguments of convenience
- provide a true assessment of the role of one party in African politics and government.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Emergence of One Party

We can begin by observing that the trend towards one party regime in Africa was first noticed in French speaking countries of Guinea, Mali, Senegal etc (Mbah 2000:364). Party competitions lasted longer in English speaking Africa. Before independence in 1961, Tanganyika was almost a one party state. In 1965, Julius Nyerere eventually legalized TANU as the sole party for the newly united Tanzania. In Kenya, the Kenya Democratic Union (KADU) dissolved into Kenya Peoples' Union (KAPU). In 1982, Kenya effectively became a one party state. In quick succession, in Ghana, the Convention Peoples Party (CPP); and in Guinea, the Democratic Party of Guinea transformed into sole, officially recognized Parties in their respective countries.

In observing this tendency for single party systems in the early 1960s, Coleman and Rosberg produced a typology of parties based on a combination of ideological, participative and organizational variables. Africa's peculiar pressure to achieve integration made them to conclude that in "in all but a few of Africa's new states the primary structure... for coping with the myriad parochial and ethnic pressures is the national political party, the single or dominant party currently governing the state (Coleman and Rosberg 1964 p. 691). On assumption of powers post-independent African leaders have found various justifications to impose one party system on their countries.

Ideally, political parties should reflect the view that government is no longer the prerogative of an oligarch" or hereditary elite. This is in addition to the role of parties as instruments for interest aggregation, political socialization and legitimization of governments. However rather than make parties in Africa vehicles for periodic leadership recruitments, formation of coalition of powerful political interests to

sustain a government, and if need be renewal or termination of electoral mandates, one party regime in Africa served vested interests, how be it defined in nationalistic terms. In Africa, one party system provided the most important route to civilian monopoly of power, as well as legally sanctioned avenue into a political career, without a legitimate opposition or challenge. In countries where it was the rule, the doctrine of democratic centralism was used to explain away the preference for intra-party, rather than inter-party competition for power. But we must distinguish between one-party states from one party dominant government. In Nigeria, for example, where other parties are officially recognized but the Peoples Democratic (PDP) has been in power for almost a decade, and occupies a position of legislative and executive veto, in relation to other parties, is an example of the latter (Ojo 2006:7).

### **Arguments for One Party System**

At independence, political institutions in Africa were based on Western model. This model is based on competitive politics, and assumed that political parties would constitute the major vehicles for political mobilization, interest aggregation and alternation of governments, at regular intervals. The fact that the nationalist struggles for most Africa states were led by several political movements, advised constitutional makers to assume that the trend would continue, which also encouraged them to insert party-based, competitive politics into the independence constitution of African states. But since the emergence of single-party systems marked a radical departure from this expectation, African leaders were forced to look for explanations to justify one party system in their countries.

We can now identify some of the following arguments.

- i. **Nationalist Legitimacy.** It was argued that since political independence was won, largely, through the efforts of a single nationalist organization, it was perfectly legitimate for such organization to assume total control at independence. In the opinion of Kilson (1963:26) this victory over imperialism led to over whelming support and by extension such an organization would continue to reflect the common interests of all sections of the society. This type of popular support will therefore make it both unlawful and untenable for opposition parties to continue to exist. Thus de jure and de facto legitimacy is conferred on a single party. Nyerere belonged to this school when he said:

*The Nationalist movement which fights for and achieves independence inevitably forms the government of the new state. It would surely be ridiculous to expect that a country should voluntarily*



*divide itself for the sake of conforming to a particular expression of democracy and to do so during a struggle which calls for complete unity of its people.* (See Nkrumah 1963:69-70)

- ii. **Mobilization.** It was argued that a strong government was needed in African states after a long period of colonial rule to bring about rapid socio-economic development. A strong government that could mobilize all the resources of society-human, material and capital-and able to tackle the basic problems of hunger, poverty and squalor which usually face a country just emerging from colonial rule. Only a one party dominant organ which permitted the concentration of resources, and central planning was suitable to achieve rapid socio-economic developments.
- iii. **Stability.** This is argument to the effect that a single party system is essential to cope with the turbulent environment that comes with rapid socio-economic development. The point is that development inevitably engenders rival-urban migration, proliferation of crimes, conflicts and stress. One-party cohesive machinery, it was argued, would help stabilize the polity, and save it from the vicissitudes of socio-economic turbulence.
- iv. **Communocracy.** One party system is most compatible with the African society and its long established basis of rule. In pre-colonial Africa there was no distinction between “government” and “opposition”. Rather the emphasis tended to be on consensus. Along similar lines Smith (2003:143) argues that one party government in Africa was a reflection of autocratic form of government inherited from African traditional past and colonial history. As he puts it “pluralism and multi-party democracy are not inherited from the past, multi-party democracy was too alien an importation for it to survive in the local political culture, traditions and history”. Traditional society had its own forms of democratic decision-making, a sense in which basic political democracy functioned-could be adapted to contemporary democracy.
- v. **Integration/Homogeneity.** One-party system can help in achieving national integration. A given ex-colonial society given its hurried partition lacks a homogeneous political culture. Rather such a society tends to have a multiplicity of political culture that coincide with the diversities of society-ethnic, religion and linguistic. To allow a two party or multi-party systems in this type of society is to perpetuate the many competing culture, and to make the task of building a nation more difficult. On the other

hand, one party will help develop one standard culture out of the many competing values.

- vi. **Not Unique to Africa.** This is the argument to the effect that one party system is not unique to, or a novelty developed in Africa. Today China is a one party state. During the cold war era many East European countries were one party led. The former Soviet Union, and indeed, Russia, the successor state, despite pretence to democratization, are one party regime. It was even claimed that the united states of America, in the early years of her war of independence was led by the one party regime support was found for American precedent in the book “. The first New Nation” authored by Seymour Lipset. The argument goes further that if countries, which today are considered as bastion of democracy once embraced on party system Africa need not labour too much to convince on its desirability at least in the early years of independence.

### **Arguments against One Party**

Most of the arguments against one party system are predicated on the premise that it is an antithesis to the principles of liberal democracy. In a liberal democratic society there is emphasis on open competition, recognition of the right to political association and freedom of expression. Because these are not permitted under a one party regime makes it a negation of what democracy stands for. However in a genuinely socialist society, one party system is acceptable as a form of political organization, since the system is inherently supportive of a monolithic, highly centralized and revolutionary party system.

We must recognize that in a liberal society where the right to political association, right to political choices, and such other rights as that of expression and religion are recognized, the political organization considered acceptable is either a two party or multi-party system, and certainly not a one party system. A one party system is not acceptable here because it prevents the realization of liberal rights and freedom. In a socialist society, on the other hand, economic rights, such as right to work, right to equal benefits, from the state are more important than political rights. Socialists would even argue further that without these economic rights genuine political competition is not possible.

Let us now briefly identify the arguments against one party system in Africa by examining the flip side of some of the arguments advanced for it. In other words, has one party system achieved the goals of stability, mobilization and development, more than either the two-party, or multi-party option?

- i. **Stability Argument:** Two party and multi-party systems generate instability and turmoil, hence, the need for one party system. How realistic is this claim? This argument depends on the definition of stability. It may either be overt stability or concealed or covert instability. In a country where political opponents are coerced, intimidated, suppressed and imprisoned, and one party is imposed on the country, it may mean driving underground the sources and manifestations of conflicts, which can be more serious, and potentially explosive. This was the case in Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah when the opposition resorted to assassination attempts, throwing of bomb, and instigation of anti-government measures. This is evident that the opposition can not be permanently and completely suppressed, or denied self-expression, no matter how tyrannical, the government may be.
- ii. **Development Argument:** There is no doubt that under the watch of one party in Nkrumah's Ghana, the country experienced rapid rate of growth. The question is: can we attribute Ghana's growth rate under Nkrumah to the factor of one party system, or availability of resources, or prudent resource management. Whatever the answer to the question we can not deny the factor and role of cocoa to the Ghana wealth in the early 60s. In Ivory Coast, a country which also relied on export of cocoa, there was stable and sustained growth, though led by a dominant party, but not an officially recognized one party system. In countries like Guinea and Mali, where one party system was imposed, there was no commensurate high growth rate. This has exploded the developmental myth associated with one party system in Africa.
- iii. **Homogeneity/Integration Argument.** A one party system is not a realistic option in an heterogeneous, plural society like Nigeria. A case in point was the failure of Ironsi Unification Decree of 1966 in Nigeria, which provoked ethnic saucepans, rather than assuages them. Therefore one party may succeed in countries where the inhabitants of a country are not highly diversified. The relative success of one party system in Tanzania is perhaps due to the "more or less equally balanced ethnic groups without any major forms of social and economic stratification (in the country) (Smith 2003: 144).

### **Assessment of One Party System in Africa**

After stating the arguments for and against one party system in Africa, the next logical step is to attempt an assessment, or draw a balance sheet of the phenomenon of one party system in Africa. In doing this it is imperative to isolate proponents of one party system, who have real or genuine interests, from those offering ideological rationalizations do not

project general interests. In politics practitioners disguise motives like lust for power, money, or self interest, and ostensibly state their commitment to the cause of the people. Let us briefly carry out the assessment.

### **i. Human Lust for Power and Wealth**

In Africa, political power carries with it immense power and privileges that those who occupy offices are often reluctant to let go. The rewards of political office in the context of underdevelopment as Smith (2003) posits are so great that there must always be “a temptation to manipulate politics to exclude the organized opposition. Being an emerging bourgeoisie, African political leaders cannot look beyond the state for their sustenance. Because the state allow access to import licenses, export permits and foreign exchange, the state apparatus must be captured totally, and prevented from getting into the hands of political opponents.

In making this assessment we need to make a distinction between two types of leaders in Africa in the early years of independence. We must distinguish between the likes of Nyerere, on one hand and Mubutu Seseseko. If a Mobutu, Bokassa and Amin for example, established one-party political machinery, and invoked the need for stability, peace and progress, it must be questionable and dismissed. But with a leader like Julius Nyerere, his modest achievements in Tanzania appeared to have given some credibility to the rationale for one party system.

### **ii. The Zero Sum Nature of African Politics**

The zero sum nature of African politics where no rules of the game are observed provides a ‘pull’ and “push” context, which encourages politics of both annihilation and survival. Those in power employ the machinery of government to victimize, coerce and regiment opposition elements. Perhaps the reason for this is the character of the opposition parties. They are labeled by the ruling party as either secessionist; because they are ethnically based, “irresponsible”, because they oppose every government programme, or “seditionists” or “conspiratorial”, because they can do anything to bring down the government.

### **iii. Iron Law of African Politics**

It is sad but true that in African politics no governing party loses an election. This is not because such governments are popular, but African politics are skillful in manipulating the electoral system to retain power- opposition parties are not co-operative in their attitude because it is not in the character of African politicians to contemplate life outside office. In 1967 Sierra Leone recorded the only exception to that law when the ruling party of Albert Margain was defeated by the All Peoples

Congress (APC) of Siaka Stevens. Margai engineered a coup to prevent Siaka Stevens from assuming office. Eventually a coup de etat restored Steven to power. Stevens himself ruled Sierra Leone for seventeen uninterrupted years.

In the 1990s, the wave of democratization spread across the world, blew in Africa and swept from power dictatorial, one party, inspired leaders. Earlier in 1983 Senegal reverted to a two party system. Multi party democracy was also introduced in Algeria, Zambia, Cote de Voire, Mali, Congo etc. the flood gates also removed Kerekou from power in 1991 (Mbah: 371). In Zimbabwe Mugabe reluctantly accepted multi-partism which almost swept him from power in 2008. Yet in many African countries like Cameroon and Egypt despite pretence to multi-party democracy, it has been extremely difficult to dislodge the ruling party from power.

According to Meredith (2006:385 -386, out of fifty African countries in 1989, almost all were one party states or military dictatorships. In thirty – two states, opposition parties were illegal. Where elections were held, they were meant only to confirm the incumbents in power. Indeed, in about 150 elections held in twenty-nine African countries between 1960 and 1989, opposition parties were never allowed to win a single seat. It was only in three countries: Senegal, Gambia and Botswana that multi-party politics were allowed. Within a period of five years, most of the one party system that had lasted for a generation in Africa collapsed.

In Congo Brazzaville, General Denis Sassou-Nguesso, after twelve years in office conceded to a multiparty electoral contest, in which he lost. In Mali, the military terminated the reign of Traore, to pave the way for elections. In Chad, Idris Debbi ousted Hissen Habre from power in 1990, and established a multi-party system. Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia, after losing Soviet patronage conceded to the idea of multi-party system in the hope that it would assuage the opposition, but he was eventually forced out of power by the combined forces of Eritrean and Tigrayan rebels.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In the 1990s Africa began the movement away from authoritarian dictatorship. The trend could be attributed to two factors. One is the Gorbachev's political revolution in Eastern Europe which destroyed the ideological legitimation for one party type authoritarian rule. The other external factor is the new commitment of the developed western nations to use their economic assistance leverage to push the movement toward democratic rule in Africa. The combination of these two external factors produced an external environment which is as hostile to the continuation of one party rule, as it is hostile to dictatorship. This hostility along with

internal rejection of one party system derived from its self-limiting feature, and its failure to serve as a strategy for true and uninhibited governance of human societies.

However, in the late 1980s, the democratic waves in Europe which also swept across Africa forced African leaders to have a re-think in their advocacy for one party system. Julius Nyerere, the most articulate of them said “To view a one-party system in almost religious terms is wrong. It is not proper to treat a person who floats the idea of a multi-party system as someone who has committed treason.”

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit you have learnt about the promotion by post-independence African leaders of the ideology of one party state. We also discussed how the realities of the political economy of African states failed to justify the wild optimism of African leaders. We underscored that beneath the arguments lay the instated, but visible lust of African leaders to employ the idea of one party system to prolong their stay in power.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. To what extent would you agree that one party system in Africa was a mere ideology for self-perpetuation?
2. Examine the relationships between one party system and African socialism.
3. Using one African country as a case study, evaluate the success of one party system in Africa.

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## **UNIT 2 THE MILITARY IN AFRICAN POLITICS**

### **CONTENTS**

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The military has become an important factor in African politics.

Prior to 1966 any discussion on African politics could have scarcely mentioned the military. But after wards, it became difficult to fully discuss or analyze African politics without a prominent place being accorded to the military. Almost every country, in the continent has witnessed either a military coup or has been threatened by one. Despite the current spate of democratization in the continent the role of the military either as the guarantor of state's security or the custodian of constitutional order is still pivotal. This unit examines the origins of military institution in Africa, the erosion of its professionalism as a result of its involvement in politics, and the role of the military as a modernization agent in Africa.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you are expected to:

- understand the role of the military in African politics
- explain the reasons why the military has invited itself or been invited as an arbiter in political conflicts
- understand how military professionalism has suffered under the impact of military involvement in politics
- appreciate the imperative for the military to revert to its constitutional role, and resist the temptations for overt political role.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Origins and the Changing Role of Military Institution in Africa**

The military in Africa, as it exists today, was created by colonial rule to enhance its imperial interests. It was conceived as a vital wing of the colonial apparatus to pacify the various groups, and defend various territories against external aggression. The nature of the military which African states inherited at independence reflected the different colonial policies of the Imperial powers. While the military in the British were trained at, mainly, Sandhurst military school, those from French territories were brought together under the Federation of French West Africa. But despite the differences, from one country to another, the common pattern is that the military in independent Africa did not sever links with the former colonial authorities.

In most African states, they also shared the pattern of recruitment, largely drawing the rank and file from one ethnic group, a relatively small size at independence, but which was enlarged as situation demanded. For example, in 1966 the size of the Nigerian army was 10,506 men, the officers corps was only 51 of whom 330 were of combat status (Luckham 1975:90). But the small size does not stop the military from intervention in politics. When the Togolese military staged a coup in 1966, it has a total of 250 soldiers.

The phenomenon of coup in Africa which first began in Egypt in 1952 is a reflection of the changing perception of the military about its role in the political system. What S.P. Huntington (1964) in the "Soldier and the State" referred to as "the general politicization of social forces and institutions" occurred when the military felt, it had values that extended beyond defence, but also included a sense of how society should be organized. But the military cannot do this without subverting its tradition of professionalism, political neutrality and subordination to political leadership.

Every military regime, no matter how benevolent, is usually described as an aberration. It is considered as a violation of the military's guardian role in the body polity, and a prescription for recurring instability. By its training and disposition, the military is ill-suited for the civil society, and by its nature, it is inherently unstable because it does not provide established mechanisms for orderly succession. As Odetola (1978) argues, because the military is commandist in structure and paternalistic in orientation, its basic norms and values run counter to the objectives of a democratic and developing society. The military's projection of its custodian role to include overt political role, has consequently damaged



its professionalism, and created what Howe (2001:2) described as “the tension between military capabilities and political responsibility.”

### 3.2 African Military and Professionalism

Military professionalism is a two-way traffic. Civilian and military officials agree not to cross the divide into each others' affairs. A professional military enjoys considerable jurisdiction in military matters: selection and promotion of personnel based on merit, command, control, communication, intelligence and logistics done under military hierarchy. It also accepts state control and subsumes sub regional loyalties. Where professionalism is the rule unpopular military incursions into “foreign” terrain are resisted. But in most African states the civil-military divide has been breached by civilians attempting to manipulate military affairs, and by the military officers who pursue political control of the state. The consequence of this is that since 1963, Africa has witnessed about ninety military coups. In both Chad and Uganda former insurgents have assumed power. In the 1990s, the armies in Somalia, Liberia and Sierra Leone collapsed entirely. Botswana has enjoyed relative stability from insurgency, while the militaries in Senegal and Zambia have not staged coups (Howe 2001: 2-5).

We can now identify factors that have contributed to lack of professionalism in African military institution.

- i. **Personal Rule:** In Africa personal rulers are more concerned for political loyalty rather than that military efficiency. Since the interests of the new regimes and rulers, rather than those of the state are more paramount to African leaders, they prefer to sacrifice long-term institutionalization for short-term political expediency. According to Michael Schatzbeg, “One of the things Mobutu fears most is an effective military establishment”. To assure him of loyalty of the military, Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone made the military an extension of his party - All Peoples Congress (APC).
- ii. **Ethnic Recruitment:** In Africa personal rule is closely linked with the ethnicization of the military. Crawford young (1994) has observed that “the very nature of personal autocracy led rulers to build armies according to ethnic map”. In Liberia Samuel Doe appointed fellow Krahn, a group that comprised 4 percent of the country's population to top military posts. Siad Barre also transformed the Somali armed forces into a faction of the Maraheen ethnic group. In Kenya, Jomo removed soldiers of kamba extraction and replaced them with his Kikuyi tribesman.

- iii. **Lop Sided Promotion:** Rapid promotion which led to early retirements of competent officers robbed African military of expertise at the top echelons, and promoted patron-client syndrome. In Uganda, Idi Amin, within ten years, rose from effendi rank (between non-commissioned to a commissioned) to general. Coups de tat also depleted the military of seasoned officers, fractured existing command structure, and sowed the seeds of counter coups in many African states.
- iv. **Domestic Deployment:** Militaries have been traditionally trained for external combat. But in Africa they have been repeatedly engaged to suppress domestic uprising. Its notable effect is to narrow the division between civilian and military autonomy, weakens the force's unity, diminish its acceptance by the society as a neutral force, and reduces its external capabilities.
- v. **Creation of Parallel Forces:** In Africa, due to rulers' fears and suspicions of the regular force, they have promoted the idea of parallel security forces, as counter-weights. In the 1960s, Nkrumah had his President's Own Guard Regiment (POGR), Siaka Stevens's Special Security Division, Mobutu sese seko's Division specials Presidentielle and Sanni Abacha's Special Body Guard service. It is common for these parallel forces to prosper at the expense of the army, thus eroding on professionalism. Indeed, Kenya Services Unit, created by Daniel Arap Moi, was reputed to be capable of defeating the entire army by itself (Howe 2001.44)
- vi. **Corruption:** By focusing officer's attention on private gains, corruption continues to undermine professionalism in African military. In Nigeria, for example the settlement device was extended by Babangida to the military establishment. In Uganda, President Museveni could not act against General Salim Saleh, half brother and hero of the guerrilla struggle, even after he was indicted for corruption. The list is longer. Biya of Cameroon has his Beti, Eyadema of Togo had his Kabre and Moi of Kenya, his Kalenjin. Commenting on this unholy union, Decalo (1989) wrote "the glue binding military elites to civilian authority is pecuniary self interest".

Pye (1965) sees the military as any obvious alternative to a democratic government, as "possible saviours" where there is a "sense of failure" by the political class in the country.

### 3.3 Explaining Military Interventions

#### i. Forms of Intervention

Before explaining reasons for military interventions in Africa, it is important to first distinguish military involvement in politics from military intervention in politics. The former relates to the performance by the military of its constitutional role of defence against external aggression, while the latter is when the military assumes formal political power, formulates and executes policies;

In describing forms of intervention, Smith (2003:176) noted that the type of intervention, of the different forms that is of more academic interest is what he called “supplantment”. This is the act of taking political control by force and replacing civilian institutions with military leadership forming “a self-appointed junta, with absolute power unconstrained by any civilian political institutions.” Government is run by decree, constitutional and parliamentary procedure, popular consent is outlawed, elected assemblies dissolved and political parties are abolished. Another form of intervention is when the military displaces one civilian regime and replaces it with another. S.P. Huntington (1964) also classified military coups into four categories:

- a. **Guardian Coup:** A new military regime leaves the prevailing economic system intact, bring about minor change and install an interim administration to provide stability before handing power back to civilians.
- b. **Veto Coup:** This occurs when the military supplants a civilian government that is committed to radical social and economic reforms that will be to the detriment of the wealthier classes in society.
- c. **Anticipatory Coup:** This occurs when the military intervenes to pre-empt power passing to a revolutionary or radical government. The 1991 coup in Algeria when the military prevented the Islamic Salvation Front from taking over after winning the general elections in the country is often cited (Smith 2002). The annulment of the June 12 1993 presidential election in Nigeria also illustrates this form of intervention.
- d. **Reforming Coup:** This is when the military itself carry out fundamental restructuring of the state and society, and introduces a new ideological foundation. The Gamel Nasser’s coup of 1952 in Egypt was a case in point. Whatever the forms of intervention

carried out by the military, what is critical when a coup occurs is that the fundamental civil-military divide is blurred. Government no longer emerges through ballot but by bullet and coercion replaces consensus as a basis of administration.

## **ii. Reasons for Military Interventions**

It is difficult to generalize on the reasons or theories behind military coups in Africa, because the motives for coups differ from one country to another. Yet we can identify some factors that can singly, or in combinations push the military to seize power. They include.

- a. Inability of Civilian Government to Govern Effectively:** Once civilian government fails to maintain law and order, and is unable to cope with the challenges of governance, that government is inviting a military coup. This was the case in Nigeria in the first Republic when the government could not maintain essential services, and had to rely on the military to restore order, after it practically broke down in the old Western region (Luckham 1991:17). This was also true of Sudan in 1958, Congo in 1965, and Malagasy Republic in 1972 (Jemibewon 1978:4). Jemibewon (1978) disclosed that Colonel Afrifa, a prime mover of 24<sup>th</sup> February 1966 coup hinted that the coup option would not have been considered if there was any other to remove Nkrumah from power.
- b. Corruption among Political Leaders.** This is either by diverting public funds to party coffers, or for the personal enrichment of office holders, to the detriment of public welfare. In January 1966, Nzeogwu claimed his coup was aimed at removing “ten per centers” from power. Abacha leveled similar charge against Nigerian politicians in his coup broadcast of December 1983.
- c. Absence of Peaceful Means of Changing Governments.** During the 1960s, most civilian governments in Africa turned their countries into authoritarian one party state and where there were more than one party, the ruling party rigged elections to remain in power. Once all opportunities for coming into power through peaceful means have been blocked, the opposition encourages and openly calls on the military to intervene. During the second Republic in Nigeria, the opposition popularized the axiom “those who make peaceful change impossible makes violent change inevitable”.
- d. Personal and Corporate Interest of the military:** Coups in Africa have been attributed to the personal ambition of individual

army officers, and at times, corporate interest of the army as a whole. It is generally believed that the army does not move against a civilian government except its interest has been threatened. For example when President Ahomadegbe of Dahomey (now Republic of Benin) humiliated his chief of Army staff, a coup was staged the next stage to remove him from power. In Nigeria, Ben Gbulie (1981:13) observed that Zak Maimalari's meteoric rise from the rank of Captain to Brigadier in three years was a major cause of disaffection within the armed forces, which remotely spurred aggrieved officers to stage the 1966 January 15 coup to remedy what they considered "unmerited promotion..." as scandalous as concentrating all the most important of Nigeria's military installations and its best institutions in the North."

- e. **Fragile and Weak Political Institutions.** African states are yet to develop strong political institutions to manage and resolve political crises. This is unlike in advanced countries, where institutions have been tested, are matured and have developed self-regulating mechanisms to cope with political tensions. But in Africa where the military is the only institution sufficiently organized, in addition to its monopoly of instrument of violence, there is added incentive for it to come in when there is conflict as a strategically placed arbiter. This view which was largely attributed to Huntington was corroborated by S.F. Finer (1962:21) thus: "where public attachment to civilian institutions is weak or non-existent military intervention in politics will find wide scope-both in manner and substance".
- f. **Psychological/Contagious Effect.** This is the tendency of military officers to emulate their colleagues who have successfully staged coups in neighboring countries. What is otherwise called "bush fire effect" or what Ali Mazrui once called pan "African empathy" was carefully chronicled by Jemibewon (1979). The army mutinies in East Africa started in Zanzibar on 12 January 1964 spread to Tanganyika on 20 January, to Uganda on 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan., and to Kenya on 26 Jan 1964. Also the first four coups in Franco phone countries began in Zaire on 20<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1965, Benin Republic on 22 December 1965, the Central African Republic on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1966 and Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan. 1966. In Anglophone West Africa, Nigerian and Ghanaian coups were staged on 15<sup>th</sup> January and 24<sup>th</sup> February, 1966 respectively.
- g. **International Conspiracy.** This theory attributes military coups to foreign agents like the American Central Intelligence Agency

(CIA), and powerful multinational corporations. A de-classified CIA report later confirmed widespread rumour that the intelligence body was involved in the coup against Kwame Nkrumah (Odetola 1978: 32:33). In the final analysis, explaining military interventions in Africa is not markedly different from the analysis of military intervention in other societies, especially Latin American countries. Broadly, we can group these factors into two: environmental and organizational approaches. Much of our discussion so far have emphasized factors and issues specific to Africa, which suggest that the environmental explanations are more relevant to Africa.

However, Luckham (1977:4) has laboured with some degree of success to advance the course of what he called “organizational strain”. As he explained: “unity in format makes it possible for the military to act swiftly and decisively: integral boundaries insulate it from external conflict and preserve unity in command. Yet these features also made the army more prone to revolt and rebellion; to fratricidal conflict in which brothers became Judases”.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Identify and explain types of coups in Africa.

#### **3.4 The Military as a Modernizing Agent**

Due to the recurring nature of coups, and consequently military regimes in Africa, some scholars have attempted to ascribe some measure of legitimacy, to this occurrence, thereby presenting the military as an agent of modernization. This is in spite of the conservative bias of political science, by which any deviation from democratic norms, or the introduction of elements of coercion in the process of government is considered as abnormal.

S.P. Huntington who is prominent in this school asserts that military officers are frequently indifferent or hostile to needs of political institution building...” Nordlinger also argues that the military is inept, or politically incapable, since they view politics as a regulated conflict in which competition and compromise is transformed into government by fiat. However, those who hold the view that the military could be transformed into agents of modernization argue that in a developing and modernizing society such as in Africa, government must contain elements of coercion to be effective and show authority. The western concept of a government and a “loyal” opposition along parliamentary system is said to be unsuitable for Africa as a basis of legitimate rule. Given the ethnically diverse nature of post-colonial states in Africa,

multi-party system failed because it reflected pluralism and distrust within the political system. To escape from this, the military, just like the idea of one party system, came to be viewed as more capable to cope with this political turbulence (Odetola, 1978).

The questions that readily come to mind are: what is it about the military that enables it to serve as alternative government? Can the mere presence of the military ensure political stability, or promote economic development? In finding answers to these questions we must recognize that in a few African counties, like Egypt and Libya, at least in the early years, the military was able to establish authority and legitimacy, and achieved effectiveness, not by simple physical threats but primarily by adapting its organizational characteristics to the needs of a developing political society. While the military retained its organizational characteristics of order discipline and hierarchy to remain cohesive, it appropriately responded to the requirements of compromise and persuasion. For this reason, the military is always regarded as a potential factor of stability in Africa.

But the military balance sheet in Africa neither recommends it as agent of political stability nor as an alternative government. From one African country to another, the military has performed poorly in governance and has repeatedly failed to hold nation together peacefully. In Nigeria, before its disengagement from power in 1999, the military which was not a party to the struggle for the country's independence ruled for many more years than the politicians. Yet rather than succeed as corrective regimes or salvage the country, it subverted the civil society and almost dismembered the country.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

What role can the military in Africa play in promoting political stability?

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

From the foregoing it is obvious that military involvement in politics is not only an aberration but also an evidence of political underdevelopment in Africa. It has also contributed to the erosion of military professionalism as opined by S.E. Finer that the military engage in politics with relative haste but disengage if at all, with the greatest reluctance. Although, public opinion recently in Africa seems not to view military rule with favour, while the global community is equally opposed to it, yet the recent coups in Mauritania (August 2008) and Guinea (December 2008) as well as subtle military threats to civilian governments in other states, are pointers that Africa is yet to keep pace with established civility in other parts of the world.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have examined military interventions in politics of African states. We traced the colonial origins of the African military and discussed how the military violated professionalism, abandoned its traditional combat role and became involved in politics. We also identified factors that have encouraged military coups in Africa and how these incursions have not fostered political development in Africa, but weakened the institutionalization of democratic political culture.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Using one African country as a case study, examine factors contributing to military coups in Africa.
2. Identify and explain the factors that have eroded professionalism in the African military institutions.
3. “No matter how benevolent, a military rule is not an alternative to a democratic government” Discuss.

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### **UNIT 3      CONTENDING EXPLANATORY MODELS OF INSTABILITY**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Explaining Political Instability
  - 3.2    Modernization Model
    - 3.2.1   Institutional Fragility or Weakness
    - 3.2.2   Cultural Pluralism/Ethnic Conflict
    - 3.2.3   Political Economy Model
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
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#### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

The problem of political instability in Africa has continued to attract scholarly attention. Two broad approaches have emerged in an attempt to provide explanations for it: The Western explanatory model and the political economy paradigm. The former provides liberal, while the latter radical, explanations for political instability in Africa. This unit examines the two approaches and attempts to identify the model that is more suitable for a better understanding of political instability in Africa.

#### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- identify the indices of political instability in any society

- offer explanations from the two popular perspectives on political instability in Africa.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Defining the Concept of Political Instability**

To properly understand the phenomenon of political instability, it is important to comprehend the concept of stability. A political system is stable where there is widespread acceptance among the actors about the rules of the game, as well as consensus about the legitimacy of the institutions regulating political conduct. Also, the process of leadership succession is only regular, but predictable, and anchored on an enduring and sustainable political culture. Today conventional wisdom has assigned the virtue of political stability to the developed countries, whilst the reverse of instability with its associated ills, are attributed to the politics of Africa, and other third world countries.

In African states manifestations of political instability include electoral induced crises, military coups, communal Conflicts and civil wars. These crises have been so grave and recurring that they have attracted the attention of political scholars. Since 1945, in the opinion of Smith (2003) both inter-state and intra-state conflicts moved from the developed, to developing countries, especially in Africa. An estimate put the number of deaths from civil war in Southern Africa alone at 1.5 million. At the end of 1990s over 40,000 Angola citizens were physically handicapped. The 10 year-civil war in Sierra Leone resulted in the death of about 200,000 lives (Smith).

The search for a solution for the problem of political instability, for most African states is labeled the national question. This question is so central to politics in Africa and is therefore related to stability, development and legitimacy. Stability is the condition for development. Such stability is not the stability of the colonial period, which Mahatma Gandhi once described as the peace of the grave yard'. 'Rather it is stability that promotes the dynamics of meaningful change. Development for Africa is trying to outgrow the stage of underdevelopment, and alter the prevailing vicious cycle of dependence and marginalisation, where Western nations pull the strings that determine African collective existence. Legitimacy set the limits of the government to government to the citizen such that the government is conscious of it and set limits on its power, and at the same time, it is recognized by the governed, such that acceptance of the authority of government is based on the peoples consent (Ajayi 1992). In Africa politics is beset with instability due to crises of development and legitimacy.

## 3.2 Explanatory Models for Political Instability in Africa

Reaction to colonial rule dictates the type of government that came into existence in the various independent African states. Those countries that gained political sovereignty through constitutional struggle inherited the Western model of parliamentary or presidential democracy, as a colonial legacy. The package of this model contains the following political ingredients: periodic elections, universal adult suffrage, free press, independent judiciary and legitimacy of freely elected leaders. The model also recognizes the existence of political parties, the struggle for power among these parties, the assumption to power of the winning party, the existence of opposition parties, and rejection of access to power through violent or unconstitutional means.

However, these features of constitutional democracy were observed in the breach in virtually all African countries. The basic questions are: What are the reasons for the violation of these basic norms in African politics? Why the model not properly handed over to the new states? Two contending school of thoughts/paradigms has been proposed by scholars to explain the phenomenon of political instability in Africa: The first is the Western /Modernization school of D.E Apter, B.A. Rustow, S.P. Huntington etc. The Western perspective can be further sub-divided into modernization and ethnic pluralism explanations. The second is the Political Economy explanation championed by Walter Rodney, Samin Amir, and Immanuel Wallerstin etc. Water Rodney's book *How Europe underdeveloped Africa* is a classic on this model.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the major argument of the modernization school.

#### 3.2.1 Institutional Fragility or Weakness

The modernization model identifies institutional fragility or weakness and lack of established culture in political competition as the basic cause of political instabilities in Africa. This school contends that African countries are experiencing rapid rate of modernization, and that the various changes taking place tend to weaken African traditional institutions. On the other hand, modern institutions capable of regulating new political behaviour are non-existent, and where they exist, they are yet to take root in the culture or tradition of the various African societies. For political life, the implication is that in Africa, there are no agreed set of rules and procedures capable of regulating political interactions, resulting in the use of unconstitutional means to gain elective office. While desperate rival and opposition groups employ all means including enlisting the support of the military, to unseat those in

power; the party in power employ state machinery to either suppress, or ban opposition elements.

### **3.2.2 Cultural Pluralism/Ethnic Conflict**

The second explanation of the Western model is African cultural pluralism or ethnic conflict. The central argument of this model is that various groups exist in the new states of Africa and these groups engage themselves in intense conflict to influence and dominate political power. The various groups are said to be culturally distinct from each other in terms of language, social organization, values, beliefs etc. the groups also have different interests and aspirations and tend to use the various resources available to assert their differences and power in relation to other groups. The argument goes that before colonialism the different groups functioned as self-contained communities.

However, when colonial rule forced them to live under one centralized political authority, the relation among them became one of competition for allocation of resources and other forms of colonial favour. On the attainment of independence the struggles and competition among the groups continued with the majority seeking to control and dominate key positions in government institutions, while the minority groups struggle for recognition and fair deal in the distribution of national resources. Political life in Africa therefore became an organized desire by the various groups to advance and protect their particularistic interest, thereby creating a tug of – war political arena in Africa.

### **3.2.3 Political Economy Model**

However, the political economy model challenged the premise of the Western school, and described it as static a-historical and non-explanatory. The political economy model further is anchored on finding solutions to: what accounts for competition among political actors? Why are resources scarce in African states? According to the political economy school, the search for meaningful answers to the above questions needs to go beyond what modernization and cultural explanations could offer. The major argument of this approach is that the political life of a particular society is a reflection of its material base. Thus political values, beliefs and institutions that shape political behaviour at a particular period have their roots and also reflect the material base or mode of production of that society.

From the above theoretical explanations, the school contends that the material conditions that influence and shape African politics include poverty, underdevelopment and dependence (Davidson 2000: 12-25). The political economy identifies poverty as a common feature among

African states. The problems of poverty, underdevelopment and dependence have created an economic base, which in turn generate political problems in African states. But the school argues that African countries are poor not because of a cause of nature, but because their resources have historically been exploited for the development of Western Europe. Furthermore, this school contends that the ethnic conflicts in Africa represent the economic interests of the various groups in the society, which compete among themselves for scarce resources. Ethnic prejudice and antagonisms are also prevalent, and do take violent character where business and pecuniary interests are involved. But where they agree on these issues members of different ethnic groups live together in harmony.

The political economy model argues further that political elites by definition represent certain economic interest in society, and always seek power to control the use of scarce resources to cater for their interest. It is also not true as the modernization theorists' claim that there are no rules or procedures in African states; but rather politicians have devised means to circumvent these rules. In very rare cases where promising leadership have merged in African states, the international community has the means to manipulate the internal politics in order to keep African states within the orbit of the international capitalist system. Therefore, to prevent external subversion African politicians are forced to be less assertive in international relations, and thus align themselves to the dictates of Western countries (Nkrumah 1963: 194-204).

Furthermore, the political economy perspective traced African political predicament to colonialism. Colonial rule not only carved out states along ethnic lines, it fostered ethnic particularism, encouraged the policy of divide and rule, and adopted the expedience of uneven development in various African states. Consequently, these problems created by colonialism have imposed a peculiar character on Africa today. According to Claude Ake, African leaders are in office and not in power. Therefore to adequately capture what Denis Austin called the "Africa's Predicament" we need to examine the internal dynamics within the continent in conjunction with its location in the world capitalist system.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

What are the major arguments of the political economy school?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In every academic discourse, there is always more than one side to an issue. This multi or plural perspectives not only enriches understanding

but also helps in expanding the frontiers of knowledge. What one can draw from the contending schools in the analysis of political instability in Africa is not to return the verdict that one is valid, and the other is not. Rather it is to appreciate that each of the two is based on different premise. While the Western model looks at what is; the political economy approach goes beneath the surface by providing the historical context for what is. Beyond the value judgment that may colour any academic discussion, a more objective approach is to look at the beneficial aspects of the two models, without rejecting either of them.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have examined the two contending models of analyzing political instability. The Western model traces the problem to weakness of African political institutions. But the political economy approach explained that a combination of historical circumstances provide more reasonable explanations for political instability in Africa.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the major arguments of the Western model of analysing of political instability in Africa.
2. What are the linkages between poverty and the stiff competition for political power in Africa?
3. How can you resolve the age-long debate between the Western and Political economy schools of African politics?

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## **UNIT 4      DEMOCRACY AND CONSTITUTIONALISM IN AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Concept of Democracy
  - 3.2    Features of Democracy
  - 3.3    Problems and Challenges of Democracy
  - 3.4    Consociational Democracy
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Readings

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Liberal democracy, in its party-based competitive form in Africa is a legacy of colonialism. Since the attainment of independence, and the adoption of the Western styled model, African states have been grappling with how to build and nurture democratic principles and practices. This unit will discuss how African countries have fared in this journey to democracy. The unit will also explore the possibility of a model of democracy that might be suitable for the peculiar African political context.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you are expected to:

- understand the meaning and practice of democracy within the African context
- know the problems militating against democratic sustenance and consolidation in Africa
- have an idea of how Africa states can develop a type of democracy suitable for their political setting.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Concept of Democracy**

Democracy is a concept that virtually defies definition. The popular definition of democracy offered by Abraham Lincoln as “government of



the people by the people and for the people” gives the impression that all citizens have the opportunity of participating or influencing the process of governance. But because the world has advanced beyond the Greek-city states, participatory democracy is no longer feasible, hence the necessity for representative democracy. The most basic idea in a democracy is that political power comes from the people and that government is legal when the governed consent. This is the basis of the theory of social contract as canvassed by political philosophers, in different forms, from Plato to J.J. Rousseau.

After colonial rule, African states focused on developing democracies styled after those of their former colonial masters. The problem of grafting democratic principles of competitive party politics, periodic elections, and struggling for political offices, which are alien to Africa, has been blamed as partly responsible for democratic failures in Africa. Others have located the problem around the pluralism of most African states, echoing Aristotle who said “it is difficult to achieve and maintain a stable democratic government in a plural society”. But beyond these preliminary points, the problems of democracy, democratization and constitutionalism in Africa lie in the failure of African leaders to appreciate that democracy, has both philosophical as well as procedural content. While principle democrats are concerned with the goals of democracy, the process democrats favour how to achieve democracy (Baradat, 2000:113-120).

Constitution is merely a charter of governance; it prescribes how the power of the state is to be distributed and the process of its amendments. Constitutions define the limits of a government authority, thereby automatically establishing and safeguarding human rights. A constitutional democracy is therefore a form of government which is defined and regulated by a constitution and whose procedure cannot be altered except by a method accepted by its citizen. Constitutionalism is not restricted to adherence to codified or written constitution, but also embodies customs and conventions as practiced in British democracy.

### **3.2 Features of Democracy**

The electoral system which is the process, through which citizens elect their representatives, at periodic intervals, is vital in any democracy. While the casting of vote is the highest point of an electoral process, others activities are involved without which the process cannot be said to be complete. These include the division of a country into electoral units known as constituencies, existence of political parties, registration and periodic revision, or revalidation of voters register, nomination of candidates for the election, political neutrality on the part of the electoral commission, opportunities for parties and candidates to campaign; equal

access to government media, avenue for legal redress for a defeated, but dissatisfied candidate; and power of recall, if the electorates so wish, before the expiration of tenure.

The success of any democratic political system, parliamentary or presidential is, to a large extent, determined by the willingness on the part of the political actors to comply with the rules of the game. It is therefore safe to say that a political system will remain stable if the process of leadership recruitment is legitimate, and majority of the citizens accept the electoral system as fair and just. In most African states, politicians have perfected the mean of perverting the electoral system. In a desperate bid to remain in power, the ruling party usually employ the privileges of incumbency to convert state coffers to finance their campaign expenses, prevent opposition parties from having equal access to government owned media houses, and use security agents, as it was the case in the 2003 and 2007 General elections in Nigeria, to intimidate the opposition elements. In Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah promulgated the obnoxious Preventive Detention Act to clamp opposition politicians into jails.

Until recently, in most African states the electorates have lost faith in the ballot box as the only legitimate means of changing a bad government. Rather they often look forward to the military as the only available option, thus lending credence to the axiom that “those who make peaceful change impossible makes violent change inevitable”. But experience has however shown that military regime is never an alternative to a democratic government. Writing on the Oliver Cromwell regime, Henry Hallam once wrote: “it is not in general difficult for an armed force to destroy a government, but something else other than the sword is required to create one”.(quoted in Williams 1982:XVIII)

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

In what ways is ethnic plurality a factor of instability in African Politics

### **3.3 Problems and Challenges of Democracy in Africa**

From the above it is obvious that democracy cannot be taken for granted; its form or contents, survival and growth depend on the collective will and commitment of the African society as a whole. Despite the numerous differences, which exist among African countries such as level of economic, social and political developments, territorial and population size, and colonial experiences, there are nevertheless, some common problems that face democracy and democratization process in Africa. The politics of poverty fosters the formation of groups and classes with conflicting material interests, and this tends to divide

society into hostile camps of peoples, often armed with strong (ideological) convictions on how society should be organized. For instance, the struggle which has been raging since 1983 in Sudan between the SPLA in the South and the North over control of central government was an organized effort by the Late John Garang led the South to have access to power, in order to ameliorate their conditions of poverty.

Poverty also accounts for ignorance and lack of political education, abridgement of political rights and duties, and lack of an appropriate political culture. In Africa where political culture is not well developed, there is limited emphasis on political participation, voters education, respect of the rule of law, tolerance of opposition, and supremacy of the will of the people, as expressed in a free and fair electoral process. Two related components are critical in understanding political culture: The attitude to the political institutions of the state, and the degree to which citizens feel they can influence and participate in the decision making process. In Africa, the civic culture or political efficacy, which is most likely to ensure political stability is either low, or even absent. In a parochial political culture of Africa, citizens see themselves as distant from the government, and not a participant. This problem in turn accounts for lack of patriotism among the citizens because of the disconnect between power and responsibility.

Rather than being a means of empowerment, power in African states is being applied as an instrument of domination. As Henry Kissinger put it; in the absence of an overriding shared values, self determination amount to partition and majority rule to domination". In spite of the problem associated with democracy in Africa, some scholars such as Claude Ake argued that democracy is feasible and achievable in Africa. This is not by transferring wholesale the Western model of democracy, but the type that meet the peculiar needs of Africa; that will de-emphasis the manipulative role of the political elites, and possibly ensure political integration of African States.

In a few African countries, there were electoral contests in which the incumbents were defeated by the opposition parties. In 1991, in Benin Republic, Mathew Kerekou lost to Nicephore Soglo, in Zambia, in October of 1991, Kenneth Kaunda was defeated by Fredrick Chiluba, while in Malawi, Bakili Muluzi was victorious over Hastings Banda. But in Ghana, Adu Boahen could not unseat Rawlings in the 1992 presidential elections. Similar fate befell Gilchrist Olympio, against Eyadema in Togo. In Kenya, Arap Moi narrowly defeated the trio of Kenneth Matiba, Oginga Odinga, and Mwai Kabaki in 1992. But today in most of these countries the former sit-tight leaders are gradually yielding their thrones, though reluctantly, to the opposition, or cleverly,

anointing successors. In Ghana, Rawlings lost his grips on power to the opposition, but in Senegal, Senghor, deftly handed over to Abdou Diouf, in two instances of change of guards.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

What are the Impediments to the success of liberal democracy in Africa?

### **3.4 A Case for Consociational Democracy**

In view of the problems associated with the practice and survival of democracy in Africa, a model, or variant called consociational democracy has been suggested for African states. Both Arthur Lewis and Claude Ake are of the view that democratic goals can be achieved where there is a clear division of power, or a reasonable degree of provincial devolution of power. Specifically consociational democracy can be divided in terms of four characteristics: (a) grand coalition of political leaders (b) mutual veto (c) proportional representation and (d) segmental autonomy. We shall now discuss each of these features in some details.

#### **i. Grand Coalition**

Under this arrangement all political leaders of all segments of the plural society co-operate to govern the country. This is clearly in contrast with the requirement of the British model of government-versus opposition. In forming grand coalition, the size principle is applied depending on whether the country is homogeneous or plural in nature. In the British and American system, where the political culture tends to be homogenous, political process takes on the form of a game. But in African plural society, where most states are culturally diverse, political stakes are often too high, and tend to assume war like form. As Gabriel & Almod (1960) puts it “a game is a good game when the outcome is in doubt and when the stakes are not too high. But when the stakes are too high (as they are in Africa) the tone (of politics) changes from excitement to anxiety”. Where this is the case, a grand coalition will help to eliminate the bitter rivalry and tug of war scenery associated with zero-sum based party competitions, or majority rule system

#### **ii. Mutual Veto**

Mere participation in a grand coalition offers important political protection for minority segment, yet no absolute protection. The idea of mutual veto is therefore encouraged where vital interests of the minority are involved and where defeat of such interests by a majority vote may endanger inter-segmental elite co-operation. The minority veto, which is

synonymous with what is called concurrent majority guarantees political protection of the minority interests and serve other goals. It invest each segment with the power of protecting itself, and places the rights and safety of each where only they can be securely placed, under its own guardianship. Without this, there can be no systematic, peaceful, or effective resistance to the natural tendency of each to come into conflict with the others. The principle of mutual veto, if introduced in Sudan, Somalia and Rwanda where there is salience of ethnic-based rivalry can help in building and sustaining democracy in those countries.

### **iii. Principle of Proportionality**

Proportional representation also represents a significant deviation from majority rule systems. It serves two important functions. First, it is a method of allocating civil service appointments and scarce financial resources among different segments. It is different from the winner-take-all principle in that it allow for the spoils of government to be divided among participants, based on their performance at elections. Second, proportionality as a neutral and impartial standard of allocation removes a larger number of potentially divisive problems from the decision making process and this lightens the burdens of consociational government. What makes the proportional model suitable for the African setting is that all groups influence a decision in proportion to their numerical strength and every decision making process entails an element of bargaining.

South Africa is one country that has tried with success the principle of proportional representation. Proportionality enabled the once racially divided country to now strike a balance between the more economically advanced white minority and the now politically dominant black majority, with minimum tension. Other African countries may see the wisdom in embracing proportional representation, especially when majority rule system appears to have failed the test of prudence in the multi-ethnic setting of the continent.

### **iv. Segmental Autonomy**

This is simply rule by the minority over itself in the area of the minority exclusive concern. Under this principle, on all other matters of common interest, decisions should be made by all of the segments together with roughly proportional degree of influence. On all other matters, however the decisions and their execution should be left to the separated segments. The delegation of rule-making and rule-application powers to the segments, together with the allocation of funds to each segment, is a power stimulus to the various segmental organizations.

One aspect of the definition of a plural society is that the representative organization of the society follows segmental cleavages. This means that segmental autonomy increases the plural nature of an already plural society. On the face of it, this principle may appear divisive, or further complicate the process of national integration. But on a closer look, if we recognize that federalism is a means of achieving segmental autonomy it then becomes evident why the formulae has become a necessity in many African states. This is closely related to what Chief Awolowo (1966) called the “linguistic principle” as the basis for creation of states, in a federal system of government.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Democracy is essentially, a contested concept, which adds to its controversial nature. Yet in developed nations of the world peoples have lived under and benefited from democratic governments, no matter the label ascribed to it. However, in Africa most states are still grappling with the task of establishing the basic rudiments of democracy, let alone sustaining or consolidating it. In effect, since independence most states in Africa have been in throes of transition from semi-oligarchic, authoritarian, to representative government. While conceding that Africa is at liberty to adapt the practice of democracy to its peculiarities, we must recognize that the principles and essence of democracy are universal in nature.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this Unit, we have examined the concept and principles of democracy. We have equally stated the problems and challenges facing democratization process in Africa. We also recognized the need for Africa to design a democratic framework that will take account of its peculiarities, without compromising the imports of democracy as a political philosophical concept.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. What is your assessment of the success of democracy in Africa?
2. In what ways is consociational democracy relevant to the needs of African states?
3. Identify and explain the problems and challenges facing democracy in Africa.

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## **UNIT 5      INSTABILITY AND CRISES OF SUCCESSION IN AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Explaining Crises of Succession and Instability
  - 3.2 Party Politics and Instability
  - 3.3 Manifestations of Instability
    - 3.3.1 Secession
    - 3.3.2 Civil war
    - 3.3.3 Military Coups
  - 3.4 Crisis of State Authority
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The crises of leadership succession are related to the problem of political instability in Africa. This twin problem is a result of the failure of African states to truly embrace the basic requirements of party politics and principles of democracy. This unit will explore various manifestations of instability in Africa, and how they have contributed to the failure of African states to properly integrate, and to the crisis of state authority.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the relationships between leadership succession and political instability
- identify the various symptoms and manifestations of instability
- know the factors responsible for crises of state authority and weakness in state capacity.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Explaining Crisis of Succession and Instability**

We have briefly explained the concept of political instability in Unit 3 of this Module. Our task here is to enrich that discussion by stating the link



or nexus between crisis of succession and political instability. One of the requirements needed to identify a democracy that is consolidated is how it is able to meet the transfer of power test, or what Ojo (2006) called the “two-election test”. He explained that democracy is consolidated when “a government that has itself been elected in a free and fair context is defeated at a subsequent election and accepts the result.” What is more important is accepting the result when the incumbent government is defeated at the polls and without hesitation voluntarily hands over to the winning party. This criterion is perhaps the major hurdle to democratization and a major factor in political instability in Africa. Since independence most African states have been grappling with this challenge.

In Ghana, the failure of the opposition to change the C.P.P. government led to a military coup in 1966. In 1983, the Shagari’s administration could not satisfy the two election test. In both Kenya and Zimbabwe, a hurriedly packaged, but potentially vulnerable inclusive governments saved the two countries from descending to anarchy. Liberia and Sierra Leone, for the greater part of 1990s, experienced protracted civil wars and Somalia, as we write (Sept. 2008) lacks a united central government.

Beyond the crises associated with problems of leadership succession other factors also combine to produce political instability in Africa. But the significance of each factor will vary according to the circumstances of each country, history, level of economic development, and place within the international system. The Nigerian civil war which raged for 30 months produced social economic, as well as political consequences, which successive regimes have not completely solved almost four decades after it ended. In Sudan, the ongoing civil war has cost more than 2 million lives and displaced more than 4 million others, according to a 2003 estimate (Smith: 2003).

In developed societies the values that are associated with stability of political systems are moderation, bargaining and accommodation. These values according to Almond and Verba (1963) are usually considered to be correlated with the level of a nation’s political culture. In their studies, they found out that for most African states there is absence of political stability because political attitudes do not recognize the primacy of territorial and constitutional arrangements, as well as the legitimacy of authority and willingness to accept the outcomes of the rules of the game. As a result rather than transit to, or consolidate democracy, what we see is constant regression to authoritarianism. And as posited by Gill (2000) “the danger of authoritarian regimes is that the weakness of institutional procedures for resolving disputes creates significant potential for instability”.

In recent times, there are rays of hope of stability in some part of Africa. Botswana, though a small country provides a good record of stability. Ghana and Nigeria have also met the two election test. In Angola, a General election was held, the first in fifteen years after a civil war and the signing of peace agreement. Zambia is also planning to organize a bye-election in October 2008 to elect a successor to Levi Wan Wasa, who died in July 2008.

### **3.2 Party Politics and Instability**

Political parties have been recognized by most states as necessary for political stability. S.P. Huntington (1968) has provided the most elaborate statement of this relationship. According to him, political parties help a state to absorb the increasing level of political participation, which is usually generated by modernization.

In his words “the stability of a modernizing political system depends on the strength of its political parties”. A party, in turn, is strong to the extent that it has institutionalized mass support. However in Africa, due to many factors political parties are weak and far from being institutionalized. They lack coherent organization, not cohesive, incapacitated by lack of independent sources of funding, and afraid of competition. Consequently citizens confer low legitimacy on parties and party systems.

What a closer study of African politics has revealed is that politicians selectively manipulate party structures, systems and arrangements to suit vested interest. The single party system which usually finds it difficult to incorporate all elements within a state without coercion used to be a popular brand in Africa. Similarly, the values inherent in multiparty option, which was meant to take into account the diversities of a typical African State are always eroded by the sweeping influence of the dominant party, as Nigeria presently experience with the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). But the two party systems, which has proven to be the most effective means of moderating polarization, given the experiences of Euro-American democracies, is not always a popular model in Africa. In the final analysis, if we recognize that China and Russia have made a success of one party system, Britain and USA of two-party, and Germany and France of multi-parties, it then becomes clear that what is important for Africa is the legitimization and institutionalization of parties in African political frame-work.

We can safely adapt to Africa the data generated by Mainwaring and Scully (1995) in their studies of Latin American countries, about the ingredients of party system institutionalization. These are:

- a. The rules governing party competition are commonly observed, widely understood and confidently anticipated;
- b. There is stability in the number of parties competing for office.
- c. Parties are strongly rooted in society, affecting political preferences, attracting stable electoral support and demonstrating continuity in ideological terms;
- d. Political elites recognize the legitimacy of electoral competition as the route to office; and
- e. Party organization exists independently of powerful leaders, with well resourced nation wide organizations and well established internal procedures for recruitment to party offices.

A cursory look at these criteria will reveal that party systems in Africa are both a negation and violation of them. In Africa rules governing competitions are skewed in favour of incumbents; parties are banned or selectively unbanned; they lack clear cut or differentiated ideological positions and rely on patronage from members in government to survive. For these reasons, parties out of power in African states increasingly find it difficult to survive. And it is common wisdom that the demise of party systems, especially the competitive type, as was witnessed in many African states in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, is a recipe for political instability. In Africa rather than deepen party systems, or consolidate democracy, what has been enriched is the idea that the only way to protect one's own interest is to acquire and hold on to a monopoly of power, to the exclusion of other groups.

### **3.3 Manifestations of Political Instability in Africa**

There are many instances and manifestations of political instability in Africa. These incidents were either caused by internal or external factors, or a combination of some of them.

#### **i. Secessions**

Secession may be defined as the formal separation of a region from a nation state of which it formerly constituted an integral part. For example, when an ethnic group or a combination of them threatens to separate. Where secession is threatened the parent state may seek to placate the dis-satisfied group by offering various constitutional concessions aimed at devolution of power, or creation of states. But this was not sufficient to switch the Eastern region of Nigeria from the direction of secession in 1967. Alternatively, the parent state may respond with repression like when the parent state of Ethiopia imposed nationality under its amended constitution (Ghai, 2000). Other repressive measures may range from cultural assimilation to genocide.

In those African states like Nigeria and Sudan where secession threats were actualized national governments often by force of arms frustrated the bids to prevent the break away regions leave with its rich mineral deposits. In Congo, the secession attempt of the mineral rich Katanga province, inspired by neo-colonial forces, was countered by the United Nations peace keeping force (Nkrumah 1967:18-20). In Morocco, King Hassan threatened resumption of war if the people of Western Sahara voted for any United Nations (UN) planned referendum (Smith 2003:196):

## **ii. Civil War**

Civil War may be a direct result of military response to secession, or may arise due to other factors. In Nigeria superior military force was used to suppress the Biafran rebellion against the federal government. Problems arising from the failure of African states to fully integrate may also lead to civil wars. The nation states in Africa were not built on a basis of common religious, cultural, linguistic or racial factors. The only common identity was anti-colonial nationalism. For this reason a crises of integration have been rearing for most African states because most of the national governments are failing in winning the full commitment of their citizens.

## **iii. Military Coups**

We have discussed extensively in unit 2 the military in African politics. We can only add here that military coup is another manifestation of instability. Military putsches are not only a disservice to the military itself, but also disruptive of the larger civil society. Incessant coups create high turn-over which the victorious coupists view as a tactical necessity to assure them of the loyalty of the rank and file. Mass executions that normally follow abortive plans and the forceful retirements of soldiers whose loyalties cannot be guaranteed constitute a drain on the national resource already spent to train them. Its may also breed counter coups, thereby promoting more instability.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

What is the relationship between secession and civil war in Africa?

### **3.4 Crisis of State Authority as a Factor of Instability**

It is important to identify and explain factors which predispose African states towards instability. They include:

### **i. Crisis of State Authority**

Most states in Africa often found it difficult to make their presence felt throughout the society. Though they parade an over-sized bureaucracy yet the public service apparatus is not efficient to deliver good governance to the people. Though citizens pay taxes, while the state daily extract the abundant God given mineral resources, but there are no qualitative improvement in the well being of the people. The machinery for maintenance of public order, law enforcement and speedy dispensation of justice is also deficient and inadequate. Most of them found it difficult to rid their territories of criminals and bandits or police their borders. But the strength of the state coercive apparatus which can not cope with, or suppress internal rebellion, or deter external aggression, is more than sufficient and often applied against defenseless citizens.

The history of Robert Mugabe best illustrates this contradiction. To ensure that he remained in power, Mugabe undermined the independence of his country's judiciary, took sweeping emergency powers, suppressed press freedom, politicised the police and committed murders of political opponents, where unlawful detentions were not effective. (Smith 2002:241). The consequence of this type of repression for Zimbabwe, which is not an isolated case but a common feature in Africa, is to create economic crises: large section of the population living below poverty line, unemployment and over 10,000 percent inflation level.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Identify factors that may contribute to crisis of state authority in Africa?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Crises of leadership succession are a major factor in political instability for many African states. This instability has manifested in many forms: secession bids, civil wars, military coups and failed states. During the Cold War era, the economic buffer and security umbrella provided by the two super powers ensured that scores of Africa states, which though stumbled from one crisis to another, yet retained their nominal status.

But in the post-cold War era many are either under instant threats, or engulfed in civil wars, when the external backings were withdrawn. This has forced many African leaders to begin to look inwards for solutions to the problem of political instability. It is only when it is recognized that the crisis of state authority or government legitimacy is

at the roots of African political predicament, that a search for a solution can be said to have begun.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this Unit we examined how the crisis of leadership succession has often led to political instability in Africa. We noted that the lack of institutionalization of party systems is also central to what is now called democratic deficits in Africa. We outlined the major features of instability and observed that we can hardly separate political failures from the economic crises, which many African states presently confront.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Explain the factors responsible for the crises of succession in Africa.
2. How can party-politics contribute to political instability in Africa?

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**MODULE 5**

Unit 1	Racism and Liberation in Southern Africa
Unit 2	Gender Politics in Africa
Unit 3	Gender Affirmative Action and Government Response
Unit 4	Africa in International Affairs
Unit 5	Africa in search for a New World Order

**UNIT 1 RACISM AND LIBERATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA****CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	The Concept of Racism
3.2	The Apartheid Policy in South Africa
3.3	Racism and Universal Declaration of Independence in Southern Africa
3.4	Achievement of Majority Rule
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Since the coming, and eventual settlement of whites in Southern part of Africa, the question of race/racism has become an issue in African Politics. The problem began during the period of total exclusion of majority blacks from the electoral process; through the era of the struggle for power sharing between the minority whites and the majority blacks. Today, the major issue is how the whites who, hitherto, were used to power and privileges are adjusting to the reality of black majority rule. This unit examines the changing fortunes in the power relations between the whites and blacks in Southern Africa, and their implication for political stability in the continent.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end this unit, you will understand:

- the place and role of race/racism in African politics
- the unique, and often violent character of the struggle for majority rule in Southern Africa
- the eventual establishment of black majority rule and peaceful race relations in Southern Africa.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The Concept of Racism**

After the success of the abolitionist movement the myth of colour superiority was invented. Therefore racism was a psychological concept that deepened the sense of blacks' inferiority in relation to whites, while slavery was purely economic in nature because it made cheap labour available to the whites. To prove the inferiority of the Africans or blacks, anything of value uncovered by them was attributed to the whites since Africans were portrayed as incapable of superior thinking. Indeed, the myth surrounding racism was responsible for racial segregation in Europe as well as the institution of white minority in Rhodesia, and the apartheid regime in South Africa. Adolf Hitler's support for anti-Semitism" which proclaimed the superiority of the Aryan race and the elimination of the Jews was the highest point of racist hatred.

In the 1920 and the 30s, the emergence of the New Negro Movement in the U.S A. and the National Congress of British West African (NCBWA) in the colonies brought about a re-awakening. Marcus Garvey, W.E.B Dubois, Kwegyir Aggrey, Casely Hayford and others were in the lead of Negroes who sought to restore the dignity of the African race, which climaxed in the great "Marches" of the Negro to Washington, the Solo effort of Miss Rose Parks who refused to give up her seat in a Bus at Alabama in 1955, and the celebrated legal case of Brown versus Board of Education in the U.S.A. in the 60s, Martin Luther King Jnr. before his assassination also led the popular civil disobedience movement to promote racial equality of his dream. Other groups involved in the struggle were the Congress of Racial Equality, the Blacks Muslims and the "blacks Power" movement (AZIKWE 1970: 141 – 143).



### 3.2 The Apartheid Policy in South Africa

The word apartheid was reportedly first used in 1917 by Jan Smut, who later became South African Prime Minister, in 1919. Apartheid is partially a legacy of British colonialism, which introduced pass law in the Cape Colony during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This resulted in the segregation of the blacks in the tribal regions from the whites and colonized. During the post-1948 government of the National party (NP) of Daniel Francois Malan, several discriminatory legislations were passed. Notable among them was the Separate Amenities Act of 1953, which among others, legislated on separate beaches, buses hospitals, schools and universities. Blacks and coloured were compelled to carry identity cards; they were also prohibited from living in or even visiting “white” towns without specific permission. Only blacks who were in employment were allowed to live with their family members, including wives and children.

The “Homeland” system also allowed blacks to become foreign guest laborers who merely worked in South Africa as the holders of temporary work permit. About eight-seven percent of the land was reserved for whites, about thirteen percent of the land was divided into ten “homelands” for blacks, who constituted 80% of the population. Until 1955, Sophia town had been one of the few urban centers where blacks were allowed to own lands, and was gradually growing to become a multi racial city. Both the blacks and coloured were denied voting rights. The theory was that the coloured minority could be granted voting rights, but the black majorities were to become citizens of independent homelands.

From 1949, the hitherto conservative ANC became more militant. The party developed an agenda which advocated open resistance against the apartheid policy, in the form of strikes, acts of public disobedience and protest matches. In 1955, along with other nationalist organizations, the ANC adopted the freedom charter. This articulated a vision of a non-racial democratic state.

In 1959, a group of disenchanted ANC members broke away to form the more militant Pan African Congress, which had a military wing. This radical transformation was in response to the Sharpsville’s Massacre. The South African government predictably responded by declaring a state of emergency and instituting other counter insurgency measures against the ANC and PAC campaign of sabotage. Nelson Mandela and seven other ANC leaders were subsequently arrested, charged for treason, and sentenced to life imprisonment in June 1964. The ANC, PAC and South Africa communists party were banned. Although, arch racist prime minister, Verwoerd was stabbed to death in parliament the

obnoxious racist policies continued under his successors, notably B.J. Vorster and later, P.W. Botha.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Discuss the Basic features of Apartheid Policy.

### **3.3 Racism and Universal Declaration of Independence**

In November 1965 Ian Smith made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence without altering the political arrangement, which excluded the blacks from the political process in the country. In December of the same year, in line with the resolution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Ghana led some African States to break diplomatic ties with Britain, protesting against Wilson's government support for the illegal racist regime in Rhodesia. In Namibia, formerly South West Africa, the situation presented a unique example of the struggle against both colonialism and racism. A former German territory, Namibia was handed over to South Africa by the League of Nations as a Mandated territory. Since the formation of the United Nations in 1945, South Africa refused UN's supervision of her mandate over Namibia (Garuba 1987).

In 1966, the UN General Assembly terminated South Africa's mandate over Namibia, and placed the country under the control of a newly created United Nations Council for Namibia. South Africa challenged UN's action but the international Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1971 ruled in favour of the UN, and declared South Africa's continued presence in Namibia as illegal. But South Africa ignored the ICJ ruling and continued to administer Namibia as an integral part of South Africa until 1978 when the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance devolved some power to Namibia. For the African states, especially the front line states, the liberation struggle in Namibia was linked with that of Angola. Angola not only shared its Southern border with Namibia, South African troops also invaded the country (Angola), in support of the US backed UNITA, and against the Soviet Union backed MPLA.

In a rare show of solidarity, African states using the platform provided by the OAU backed the radical MPLA and succeeded in securing independence for Angola, from Portuguese rule in 1976.

With Angola's independence, South Africa therefore failed in her bid to create a buffer state that would have insulated Namibia from freedom fighters under South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), and the Pan African Congress (PAC), and indeed South Africa itself from the urban guerrilla strikes of the banned African National Congress

(ANC). A combination of intra and extra- African factors forced the hands of the UN to adopt Resolutions 385, of 1976 designed to ensure an orderly transition, of Namibia to independence and 435 of 1978 which requested the UN Secretary General to appoint a Special Representative for Namibia. In December 1988, Cuban and South African troops withdrew from Namibia. In March 1989, Namibia became independent under the leadership of Sam Nujoma, effectively marking the end of colonialism in Africa.

### **3.4 Achievement of Majority Rule in South Africa**

Segregation of races in South Africa was not entirely new until the late 1940s when apartheid was institutionalized. Contempt for the non-whites who outnumbered the white's population by ratio 5 to 1 was almost an official policy of the major political parties in South Africa. It began in 1936 when the Representation Act removed the non-whites from the common electoral roll of Cape Province. From 1948 onwards, the theory of "Black Menace" which sought to promote the status and privileges of the whites was promoted. In 1956, the coloured electors (of mixed race) were removed from the register, pre-World War II pass laws were tightened, which ensured discrimination in education, housing and employment. The Immorality Act which, outlawed marriage among the races was strictly enforced to prevent miscegenation. But effective resistance to the Nationalists was almost impossible since strikes were banned, the ANC rendered powerless, and its leaders, including Nelson Mandela charged for treason and jailed.

If there is one issue in which African countries were united, it was opposition to apartheid and the restoration of the dignity of the black majority in South Africa. Nigeria, though, was not geographically contiguous to the South of the continent, was however designated a front line state in recognition of her leading role in the struggle against apartheid. In 1976 Nigeria set up the South Africa Relief's Fund, hosted a week long conference for Action against Apartheid, and chaired, for many years, the UN Committee against Apartheid. Nigeria also spearheaded the withdrawal of some African countries from the Montreal Olympics, in line with the 1977 Gleneagles Agreement of the Commonwealth, over the apartheid issue. In the Lusaka Manifesto of 1969, African states recognized that the situation in South Africa was not a case of classical colonialism, since the country had achieved dominion status since 1909. Rather it was a case of the whites who were not satisfied with the status of being Africans, but who preferred to be more than Africans.

During the Cold War era, the Western Powers, led by the United States strongly supported the racist regime in South Africa, frustrated the

United Nations anti-apartheid postures, and vetoed virtually all the Security Council resolutions targeted against South Africa. They also combined to undermine the ANC and other anti-apartheid movements because their resistance was regarded as communist inspired. The farthest the UN could go during the Cold War era was when in 1975 it equated Zionism in Israel with racism in South Africa. In America, President Reagan pursued a policy of constructive engagement with South Africa, but could not stop the US Congress from enacting a Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAA) of 1986, which imposed strong economic and diplomatic sanctions against South Africa. But after the Cold War era, the attitude of Western powers towards apartheid changed, and the policy witnessed significant reforms.

In 1989, Fredrick de Klerk became South African President. In quick succession he released Walter Sisulu and seven ANC colleagues from prison on October 14<sup>th</sup> and ordered the desegregation of all the beaches on November 16. A week after, de Klerk withdrew the last contingent of South African troops from Namibia, and met with Nelson Mandela in prison to discuss power sharing arrangement on December 13, and on February 2 1990, he legalized the ANC and other anti-apartheid political parties in South Africa. On February 11, 1990 he released Nelson Mandela from prison after twenty-seven years of incarceration. On June 8, the state of emergency in South Africa, excluding Natal Province was lifted. On August 6, the ANC formally ended its policy of armed struggle against the government of de Klerk. On June 11 1991, President Bush, in recognition of “profound and irreversible” change taking place in South Africa lifted US sanctions against South Africa. After an election which blacks participated as co-equals with whites, Nelson Mandela was sworn in as the first South African black President on May 10 1994. F.W. de Klerk became the Vice-President, formally bringing to an end the era of racist – supremacy regime in South Africa (Baker 1995).

In about fourteen years of majority rule, South Africa has produced two black Presidents. Nelson Mandela served for only one term in office and was succeeded by his deputy Thabo Mbeki, who is almost serving out his second term in office. Mbeki’s former Vice, Jacob Zuma who was sacked on allegations of rape in 2002 was cleared by a Johannesburg Court and is seriously positioning himself to take over from Thabo Mbeki, resigned towards the end of term in office. Mbeki’s former Vice, Jacob Zuma who was sacked on allegations of rape in 2002 was cleared by a Johannesburg court and is serious position himself to become next South African President. Earlier in December 2007, he was popularly elected as the Chairman of the ANC.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Discuss the step by step progress towards majority rule after the release of Nelson Mandela.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

For a long time, even after the end of formal colonial rule, racism and white minority rule remained a major problem which black Africans confronted in their relations with the white settlers. But with determination and sustained struggle Africa is today free of apartheid, or minority rule of any guise. In South Africa, the personality, sacrifice and forbearance of Nelson Mandela, along with the integrity of the African National Congress as an organization were central to the end of apartheid, and the establishment of black majority rule. Since 1994, the ANC has been in power for over a decade, one hopes in ruling the country, party's leadership will not substitute dictatorship of the majority for what is fought against-domination-and won a well deserved victory. The ANC leadership crisis which led to the resignation of Jacob Zuma has now climaxed in the 2008 resignation of Thabo Mbeki. Wole Soyinka wrote in 1994, "Rwandan is our (Africa) nightmare, South African is our dream". Time will tell if the ANC will keep the dream alive.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we defined and explained the concept of racism and how it was perfected and formalized as the official policy of the South African government – Apartheid. We noted the role of the ANC in resisting minority rule through armed struggle, the collaboration of leading Western nations with apartheid South African; the gradual loss of credibility of the apartheid policy as a racial ideology and the eventual dismantling of the system, and the institution of majority rule in South Africa.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Assess the role of the ANC and Nelson Mandela in the resistance against apartheid
2. What were the major pillars of the apartheid policy in South Africa?
3. Account for the role played by the Western Powers in sustaining apartheid until it collapsed in 1994.

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## **UNIT 2      GENDER POLITICS IN AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Defining and Explaining Gender
  - 3.2 Women in Pre-Colonial and Colonial Period
    - 3.2.1 Pre Colonial Period
    - 3.2.2 Colonial Period
  - 3.3 Factors Responsible for Marginalization
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

For long, African has been grappling with the problem of creating a fair, just and the equitable arrangements among its different peoples. One single development that has challenged the mainstream agenda is how to enhance the role of women in politics and governance. In this Unit we intend to give an appropriate definition to the term gender, as distinct from women advocacy. The unit will also examine status of women during the colonial era, and how colonial rule affected the role of women then and now.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

We hope that by the end of this chapter, you will have some sense of:

- gender as a global concern and how it has become a major issue in African politics
- factor responsible for the relative marginalisation of women in public life
- what is being done nationally and globally to empower them and increase their access to power

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Defining and Explaining Gender**

We must note at the beginning that women or men, male or female in politics do not convey any scientific meaning. For this reason we will

prefer and adopt the word “Gender” which has more academic value or utility. The term gender derives from the Latin noun “gender: which means kind or group. Until recently the word was used as a grammatical concept to classify word into masculine, feminine and neuter. Today, it has acquired political connotation and is being untidily used to denote the different and unequal perceptions, views, roles, relevance and rewards that a society assign to the two sex categories particularly the female, or women group.

In the world today, the female gender has always been considered the weaker of the human race. Women are generally considered, as “softies” who should be kept away from strenuous activities, especially politics. Initially women took this as a sign of respect from understanding of their delicate physical features. However, overtime they have come to resent this treatment that has consigned them to secondary role in society; which is preventing them from having equal chances to show their equal potentials and capabilities with men. This equal access cut a cross all facets, of human endeavours: sports, economy, and social activities, including politics. It is the political aspect of this discrimination that is of more importance to us in this unit.

Before discussing the African context of the gender problems and challenges, it is important to stress that there is no human society where women are not discriminated or marginalized. The reason is that to be male or female goes along with a number of stereo-types that eventually imposes both role performance possibilities and imitations/opportunities of different kinds. In the world today, though women constitute about 50% of the world population; and in Nigeria, according to the 1991 population census, they account for 51 percent of Country’s population, yet they do not occupy comparative positions in public offices.

Worldwide women only began to vote in national elections a little more than a century ago. In 1893 New Zealand was the first country to recognize the right of women to vote. Other countries followed. Switzerland in 1971 was the last economically developed conies (EDC) to allow female suffrage. With the exception of key Arab nations, most countries, have accepted role for women. The Benazar Butto in Pakistan is odd case. The first woman other than a monarch to become a head of state was President of the Presidium of Mongolia, Y.N. Shaataryn, and the first woman Prime Minister was S.R. Dias Bandaranaike of Ceylon, now Sri lanka in 1960

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Define the concept of gender equality.



## **3.2 Women in Pre-Colonial and Colonial Era**

### **3.2.1 Women in Pre-Colonial Era**

Though historical records show that pre-colonial Africa was largely patriarchal, yet women were not left out completely from the political scene. Though the power given to women varies from one place to another such powers range from equal, supportive, complementary, or subordinates (Oloyede 1990). A close analysis of pre-colonial power structure in Nigeria, for example, reveals three categories of women involvement in political arrangement: palace women (e.g. idia – king Esigie’s mother), leaders of women (Efusetan, Iyalode of Ibadan) and ruler (e.g. Queen Amina of Zaria). In most African societies seniority, not gender, ability or merit, which may account for success in life, quality of valor, which can enhance the rating of a women are possible criteria that gave a few women recognition and place in the traditionally male dominated African society.

### **3.2.2 Women in the Colonial Period**

Colonialism brought about a change in the social structure of the African society. A distinction was drawn between the traditional and modern sectors. The colonial structure limited the modern sector of the civil service and educational institutions to the male and reserved the traditional sector, i.e. subsistence and child up-bringing to the female. So with colonialism came a denial of equal access to power for women. Thus the era was characterized by women disenfranchisement, marginalization, and massive erosion of their power.

Colonialism was much detrimental in its effect on women in Africa. In pre-colonial Africa women had effective control of economic resources in many or land. But during the colonial period they were disadvantaged as their resources were forcefully incorporated into the cash – based economy. This was achieved through their exclusion from areas of production in which they had previously been involved and relegated to the domestic sphere, which was not remunerated or valued (Tordoff 1997.43). In short, colonialism introduced import and export trade, new technology, capital and wage employment, and benefit of western education; areas in which men had better comparative access.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Describe the main features of a patriarchal society.

### **3.3 Factors Responsible For Women Marginalisation**

As noted in the previous sections, the political importance of women began to reduce during colonial period. However, the relegation hit the critical mark when the colonialists left and the female gender found itself totally absent from the administration of post colonial African states. More than four decades after independence, women are still struggling to have a say, of meaningful representation, or participation in politics, if not gender parity, will remains a tall dream. We can identify the followings as several factors responsible for this:

#### **a. Social Cultural Factors**

Gender differences are created and sustained by society through its traditional customs, conventions, norms and regulations. The patriarchal system in Africa has contributed to the inferior roles ascribed to the female by the society, and not by nature. The overall impact is that a woman is constructed by the society to occupy subordinate positions vis-a vis men. This has also led to the stereotypes that portray women as timid, submissive and passive. Men on the other hand, are competent, rational and independent. Religion preaches; culture enforces and the people accept these norms skewed against women

#### **b. Economic Obstacles**

Apart from colonialism which had damaging effect on women economic status, the present economic system which is based on acute competition which, in most cases, does not favour women. Political campaign everywhere in the world is always a very expensive project. While men are willing to take risks, including taking loans, or selling their properties to finance their electioneering women are a verse to taking risks, or lack tangible properties to take off.

#### **c. Political Obstacles**

Until recently, political parties in most African states do not provide a level playing field for both male and female aspirants. Most African governments still fail or refuse to promote and implement gender friendly national laws and international conventions that can enhance unabridged access for women in politics and government. A United Nations statement once blamed the low number of women in government to the refusal to give women a fair deal in the nomination process.

#### **d. Statutory Hindrance**

The existing laws in some African countries do not give recognition to women as equal to men. Until 1988, a married Nigerian woman was given discriminating leave and housing allowance, while her husband obtained rebate in taxation on her behalf and her four children. Yet women prefer to be married because the society discriminates against unmarried woman.

#### **e. Lack of Equal Access to Education**

In Africa, most families prefer to send the male child rather than female child to school. The boy is considered the pillar of the family and the key to the continuation and retention of the family. The girl's education is not as important because she is expected to stay at home to help nurture her sibling, and to be married off soon. It is therefore not surprising that women constitute the majority of illiterate population in most African communities. Their lack of education makes them ineligible for either elective or appointive political offices. According to Lawal (2006:336) factors responsible for disparity between men and women can be grouped into three:

- a. Situational explanation** - which examined the different roles played by women at each stage of their adult life. These include "the burdens of motherhood and the role of housewife, both of which discouraged political participation.
- b. Structural explanation** – existence of gender inequality in other sectors of society such as economy, law and education.
- c. Socialization explanation** - which analysed the childhood socialization process of males and female into different participatory roles.

It is restating the obvious to say that women globally have been and remain second-class citizens economically, politically and socially. Current statistics are enough proof. No country has achieved gender equality socio-economic or political. Today women constitute 70 percent of the world's illiterates (Rourke Boyer 2003) women are less likely to have access to paid employment. Life for women is, on the average, not only hard and poorly compensated, it is dangerous. As the UN report put it, "the most painful devaluation of women is the physical and psychological violence that stalks them from cradle to grave" (UNDP 1995:7).

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In African society the patriarchal system has consigned women to the back stage in the scheme of things. This is reflected in the power

structure in Africa today that has survived the colonial interlude. Under patriarchy, motherhood is a crucial factor which excludes women from politics, and the fact that the home front will necessarily clash with the demands of the public sphere. To prevent this potential source of conflict, women education is discouraged, thereby giving men undue advantage to monopolize the center stage in politics and government. However, in recent times efforts are now being made nationally and internationally to give women more than a token representation in politics.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The unit examined the issue of gender politics in Africa. We noted that women participation in politics is low. We traced the changes in the status of women from the pre-colonial, through the colonial, until the present era. We identified the major impediments to women participation and their subsequent marginalization.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Examine the factors responsible for the marginalisation of women in African politics.
2. Suggest ways of enhancing the role of woman in African politics.

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## **UNIT 3      GENDER AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Affirmative Actions and Progress Made
  - 3.2    Progress in Nigeria
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  - 3.4    International Organizations and Affirmative Actions
- 4.0    Conclusion
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### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Since the 1995 Beijing platform of action for gender equality, concerted efforts have been made at national, regional and global levels. These multi-layered approach has brought into sharper focus the problems being faced by women, thrown up some challenges; but have also created openings for women in the organized private sector, institutions and organizations, governmental and non-governmental, at both national and international levels. This Unit examines the developments in the clamour for gender parity, especially since 1995, the challenges posed by the trend and the progress made so far.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- understand the idea of Affirmative Action
- understand the various statutes and conventions ratified at national, continental and global levels to achieve women empowerment
- evaluate the progress made in creating an enabling environment for women.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Affirmative Actions and Progress Made**

To address the problem and reverse the trend two international conferences were called in 1985 and 1995. They were to devise

strategies for women advancements in various countries, and they have had significant effects on the political agenda. Since the Nairobi 1985 and 1995 Beijing declaration women have continued to challenge men dominance of politics. Popularly referred to as the call for Affirmative Action or gender equality, the advocacy group, or protest movement is agitating for the amelioration of the social, economic and political plight of women. This movement is not restricted to Africa. It is a trend that has assumed global attention, particularly in parliamentary democracies.

In the world today, women empowerment is now being recognized as a precondition for, and also an indicator for the level of success in the attainment of human development. The world has now accepted women rights as human rights, and has designated 8<sup>th</sup> of March every year as International Women's day. Earlier in 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was being worked out, an earlier draft which stated "All men are equal" "was changed to "all human beings are equal" on the insistence of the female members of the drafting committee. The question now is: did the change of language change the position of women?

The United Nations charter also pledges equal opportunity for men and women. Yet within the global body women hold only 36 percent of key positions. In 2000 the United Nations also proclaimed eight point Millennium Development Goals (MDGS). One of the objectives targeted for the year 2015 is the goal of woman empowerment and gender equality.

The 1995 Beijing Declaration demanded for 30 percent women representation in government. Apart from the fact that the average woman representation is less than 5 percent, the few who are so elected or appointed benefit from tokenism" or pity extended to them, and they find themselves operating in male dominated environment, thereby aggravating their feeling of marginalization.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

What are the objectives of the 1995 Beijing platform of Action?

### **3.2 Nigerian Response**

In the Nigerian National Assembly today there are more female Senators and House members today than it was in the Second Republic when there was only one Senator and a female Speaker of House of Assembly. There are bodies such as the Ministry of Women Affairs headed by a female minister, a National Commission for Women Affairs, Nation Council for Women's Societies, women wings in virtually all the

political parties, and female heads of parastatals, especially NAFDAC, where a woman demonstrated that women in government can perform equally, or better than men. Two former Nigerian female ministers are now serving the World Bank, Ngozi Okonji Iweala as President and Obi Okwesilesi as the Regional chair person of the world financial institute.

In Nigeria, the National Gender Policy, which replaced the National Policy on Women, came into force in 2006. The goals of the National Gender policy is to “build a just society devoid of discrimination, harness the full potentials of all social groups regardless of sex or circumstance, promote the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and project the health, social, economic and political development of all citizens...” The policy is premised on certain principles:

1. Commitment to gender mainstreaming as a development approach and tool for achieving the reform agenda.
2. Recognition of gender issues as central to and critical to the achievement of national development goals.
3. Realisation that effective and results-focused implementation demands a cooperative interaction.
4. Promotion and protection of human rights, social justice and equity (National Gender Policy 2006)

To achieve the objectives of the national gender policy, Nigeria signed and ratified the various relevant international instruments, treaties and conventions. They include the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), Solemn Declaration for Gender Equality, African Protocol on Peoples Rights and Rights of women (APPRRW) and the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) since the adoption of these Protocols development policies in Nigeria are no longer gender-blind, but gender biased or friendly.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

State the objectives of the National Gender Policy in Nigeria.

### **3.3 African Response**

In Africa today, women issues center on access to education, child marriage, teenage pregnancy and women and development. African governments generally have also responded positively to this challenge by committing themselves to continent specific development goals, as expressed in the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR), adopted in 1981; the Women Rights Protocol of 2003 and the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Government, among others. Beyond Africa, it is now accepted globally that Promoting

gender equality is a development strategy for reducing poverty levels among men and women, improving health and living standard, enhancing efficiency of public investments, and a prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development.

Some African countries have made progress in giving better access to women in political representation. Uganda, Cameroon and Mozambique have achieved measurable result. According to the United Nations Human Development Index, women in Mozambique and Cameroon have 16 and 14 percent quota, respectively, reserved for them in parliament. In Uganda 39 out of 51 woman parliamentarians once took their seats through affirmative action. Presently, Gabon has actively promoted gender parity to the level that the countries now boast of women generals in its army. Uganda's Vice President and the Head of the civil service is a woman (Lawal 2006:332) though this data represent progress by African standards, but the record compares poorly with countries like Britain and USA where female representatives in their parliament jumped from 2.9 and 3.7 percent in 1980 to 9.1 and 9.0 percent in 1994, respectively.

### **3.4 Global Response**

#### **UN Decade for Women (1976 – 85)**

During the decade, a comprehensive survey on the role of women in development was produced. This was meant to be the first stage in developing effective strategies to reduce gender inequalities and improve the status of women around the world. At the United Nations Conference on Women held in Copenhagen in 1980, an action programme was approved. Its main theme, tagged “Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (FLSAW)” was approved at the third UNCW, held in Nairobi in 1985 (Steans and Pettiford 2005: 172).

#### **The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

This convention was developed by the Commission on the Status of Women (CEDAW). CEDAW represents the first international treaty dealing with the rights of women in global context. The convention set out an international standard for the term “equality” between men and women. It also covers not only the granting of formal rights, but also seeks to promote equality of access and opportunity. CEDAW also created a specialist body within the UN's organ to monitor states compliance with the treaty obligations.



## 4.0 CONCLUSION

There has been greater awareness in the last two decades about the status and role of women in politics and government. This renewed advocacy is centered on how to improve the status of women, increase women participation in public life, and gaining access to power. There is no doubt progress has been made in many spheres. Yet there are still many problems and challenges to confront. What is obvious today is that the world has moved from the cultural trap and prejudices of the past, and has now embraced a new, and more gender friendly paradigm. African states can help advance the status of women if they enact pro-women legislations and outlaw discriminatory policies.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we discussed the various gender – based affirmative actions since 1995. We examined the various conventions ratified in Nigeria, Africa and the world levels. We highlighted the problems and challenges being faced in actualizing the objective of women equality.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Identify and briefly explain the objectives of the various gender-based conventions ratified since 1995.
2. Explain with relevant examples from African countries the progress made in achieving gender equality in the continent.
3. Describe the efforts being made by your country (Nigeria for example) to enhance the status of women in politics and government.

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## **UNIT 4 AFRICA IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Background to African Role in International Affairs
  - 3.2 Power as a determinant Factor in African Role in International Affairs
  - 3.3 African contribution to International Affairs
  - 3.4 Strategies to Enhance Africa's position in World Affairs
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Today it is impossible to separate the affairs of Africa from the agenda of the world as a whole. However, in the past international relations was conducted as if Africa was not part of the world system. But there is a difference between being a part, and being considered a vital link, or a significant participant in world Affairs. This unit will discuss the manner Africa was introduced into international Affairs, and how this has affected Africa's present role and contribution in international politics.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain how Africa was introduced into World Affairs
- The role of power in explaining Africa's insignificant contribution to world Affairs
- identify measures to improve Africa's capacity for meaningful participation and contribution in world Affairs?

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Background to African Role in International Affairs**

It is not by accident that African states at independence were introduced into modern international affairs, most significantly, in the direction desired, by their former colonial masters. This is not to deny that there were no international intercourses among African kingdoms in the pre-

colonial era. What separates international relations of that era from its contemporary setting is that it was not properly structured, organized or conducted on the basis of codified international laws and conventions. Ofoegbu (1980:25) confirmed that “past interactions and past relationships which constituted the earliest international political systems were not global in nature”. In contemporary terminologies, international relations in pre-colonial era were regional and local. It was not possible to internationalize the practice of inter-state relations then because the world had not witnessed revolution in transportation and communication technology. This localized nature of international Affairs was not peculiar to Africa but extended to other regions. For example, the Chinese Empire which was Feudal covered 130 states, and lasted for 300 years. The ancient India Kingdom system was based on hegemony, which did not accept other kingdoms as equal.

African international system emerged from the European based system. Initially both were based on the primacy of kings, who owned or symbolized the states. In Europe the states, though independent of one another, were, however united by dynastic marriages and near identity of interests of the reigning monarchies. Later the forces of nationalism displaced the kings from their overarching positions and transformed citizens from being subjects of the kings, to that of the state. This was African inheritance from colonialism whereby international relations and by extension foreign policy is conducted by government in the name of the state, and on behalf of the citizens. But before their disengagement European powers forced Africa to fight in their wars. It would have been more appropriate to label World War I and II the Great Wars because the issues that led to the wars were European disputes, and America became justifiably involved in the wars because they affected her vital interests. But that was not the case for Africans, who were geographically remote from Europe, had no immediate interests, but were dragged to fight in the war because they were subjects of the major belligerents. In effect the War became truly World Wars because of the involvement of Africans.

Also, the pattern adopted in most European colonies was to extend to them first internal self-government, and later full independence. Put differently, colonial masters delayed granting to Africans power to conduct their foreign relations, not only because they felt that there were few Africans competent enough to handle the field, but more importantly because of the fear that any injudicious exercise of this power may jeopardize their core interests.

Such interests included ensuring that these colonies after independence does not fully break ties with the former colonial masters, or pursue unduly radical foreign policy. To demonstrate these importance foreign

affairs was more often than not made a department in the presidency. In Nigeria during the First Republic, the Prime Minister was in charge of foreign relations and Commonwealth Affairs (Akinyemi 1984). This arrangement was done to ensure that Tafawa-Balewa, in spite of the country's verbal commitments to the principles of non-alignment would steer Nigeria in the direction of British interests.

This consideration was important in the early years of independence, when Africa was divided into two blocs: the Monrovia group which preferred functional co-operation; and the Casablanca because which favoured immediate political unification. Balewa, a leader of the Monrovia bloc, believed in "unity of aspirations", and used his leadership of the group to frustrate the radical positions of the rival Casablanca on many issues. These include the Congo crises, the status of the provisional government (GPRA) in Algeria, the assassination of Sylvanus Olympio, and the testing of atomic bombs by France in the Sahara desert (Nkrumah 1963:144). Indeed, what emerged as the compromise charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, owed much to the cautious aspirations of the Balewa led Monrovia bloc. The implication of this for Africa's role in international affairs is that most Africa states emerged as actors on the world stage, tamed at both national and continental levels.

### **3.2 Power as a Determining Factor in International Politics**

In discussing Africa's role in international Affairs one does not have to be a realist to appreciate the importance of power in international relations. Power is important not only to aid the exercise of state sovereignty, but to also give capability and credibility to a nation's positions. However, Africa is deficient in both the tangible and the intangible elements of power, and this has, in turn, imposed limits on what states in Africa can do in world Affairs. This incapacity is both a legacy of colonialism as well as what African political leadership did with what was handed over to them. If we dissect power into potential or resource and capabilities, Africa can not be said to be adequate in the two (Goldstein 2003:76). One, the continent lacks the technology to transform power resource into capability that can be used in the short run. A major factor which added some bite to Nigeria foreign policy especially from the 1970s was oil wealth. But the technology in oil exploration, including the one used in processing other primary produce, which many African states rely on, are foreign. It is therefore not an exaggeration if we say Nigeria does not produce oil; rather oil is produced for Nigeria. This scenario is further complicated by the monocultural base of most national economies in Africa, excessive exposure to external vagaries, and consequent lack of self-reliance.

Any nation will need a sound economic base to create support and sustain all other tangible elements of power like military strength and a viable political system that will ensure stability of the polity. Since independence most African states have been battling to survive beyond subsistence levels. In the mid-eighties when the world price of primary commodities collapsed, many African countries, including Nigeria, approached the International Monetary Fund, and accepted its conditionalities to remain a float. When the foreign debt burden was becoming unbearable, even for those not classified as Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), a special arrangement was made to rescue them. In 2005, Nigeria paid \$ 12 billion to qualify for debt relief under the arrangement.

The realists view military force as the most important element, and see other elements as important to the extent that they can be converted to military power. Professor Ali Mazrui once lamented about Africa's military's weakness, and urged that the gap between the continent's physical centrality and military marginality be narrowed. If states employ power to compel obedience, Africa is also weak in the application of diplomacy, which a times, is more effective than overt power. James Baker (1995) once counseled: "a diplomat must juggle the opportunities and imperative created by personal politics, the constraints of domestic politics, and the perpetually changing realities of global politics". One other element of power is population, an area in which Africa is not doing poorly. Nigeria is the most populous in Africa, and one of the six countries in the world (others being China, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Indonesia) recording 50 percent of the world annual population growth (Goldstein 2003:438).

The food crises in many African States today are evident that the Malthusian prediction has been fulfilled. Most African states are in the middle of demographic transition, a situation where rapid population growth and a child-heavy population lead to low per capita income. This translates to heavy burden on the economy; Goldstein argues that democratic transition tends to widen international disparities of wealth and with far reaching implications for a nation's foreign policy.

### **3.3 African Contributions to International Affairs**

If African states are weak in all the dimensions of power, it stands to reason that they cannot make significant contributions to World Affairs. They therefore fall within the category of what Ofoegbu called new states in World Affairs. African states are new entrants into world scene because they are products of post-1945 de-colonization process. They are also Third World countries, a classification which followed the pre-Revolution division of France into three estates-noble, clergy and the

commoners. African position could be likened to that era when the commoners were “nothing” in the power equation, but were nearly everything” in terms of population.

Gunnar Myrdal, winner of the Nobel Prize for economics in 1974 once described the label third world on Africa, along with Asia and Latin America, as “diplomacy by language”. If the original meaning of “Third World” by Alfred Sauvy, who coined the term in the early 1950s, was meant to refer to countries outside the great power blocs, it has served the additional purpose of ranking according to positions, values and contribution in the world power hierarchy. It is not open to debate that, even within the third world, Africa occupies the bottom of the ladder, while Africa South of the Sahara, is the least in this global power configuration (Smith 2003:10-11).

We already know that Africa can assume world role at two levels: national and continental. Some African states like Nigeria have played key role in peace-keeping operations in troubled spots in the world such as Congo, Sudan and Lebanon. Indeed, Nigeria, notwithstanding domestic economic pressure midwived and largely financed the ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone .Egypt has also leveraged on her warm relations with the United States to successfully mediate in the Middle East peace process. After the dismantling of the apartheid structure, South Africa has also benefited from the high moral stature of Nelson Mandela, and this has robbed off on the continent as a whole. The manner the Truth and Reconciliation Commission handled its assignments after full disclosures of wrongs committed under apartheid also demonstrated that South Africa was ready for even global role. A country like Libya is now interested in shedding her pariah status, has renounced its support for terrorism, and is now seeking to become a reliable partner in promoting world peace.

Recognizing the role of economic factor in global ranking, Nigeria’s Olusegun Obasanjo; Algeria’s Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak and Senegal’s Abdoulaye Wade floated the idea of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Its founding Documents were signed by fifteen countries, in which they pledged to promote democratic principles, popular participation, good governance and sound economic management. They also agreed to set up an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to monitor their performance and punish defaulters. The objective was to make Africa a new destination for foreign investments, trade and to attract debt relief concessions. NEPAD’s slogan is “Better Africa, Better World”.

No doubt African states have been net recipients of aid from the rest of the world. Before he left office, President Bill Clinton got US Congress

to enact African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Similarly, while in office Tony Blair of Britain put in place the African Commission. There are other initiatives such as the Jubilee 2000, HIPCS, MDGS, Rollback malaria, meant to assist, and reverse Africa economic fortunes. At the same time Africa, over the years has been making her own modest contribution, especially in the area of human capital. Apart from Africa in Diaspora, whose contributions, including the involuntary ones at the early stages, helped to build Euro-American economies; there are many voluntary migrants who have Joined to add to the pile. Africans have served and continues to function as top executives of international organizations and specialized agencies. Prominent among the first group are Teslim Elias, Adeoye Lambo, Bola Ajibola, Adebayo Adedeji and Emeka Ayanoku, all from Nigeria; Helen Johnson Sirleaf from Liberia; and Koffi Anna from Ghana. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala of Nigeria is top in the second group, of those currently in office. Beyond the symbolism of being Africans, such appointments are of more concrete significance as the career of Koffi Anna as United Nations' scribe indicated. We shall discuss in the next unit the efforts of Anna to democratize the United Nations especially in the area of giving an African face to the Security Council.

### **3.4 Strategies to Enhance African Role in International Relations**

According to Peter Ekeh (1978:331) "solutions to problems demand contexts and sometimes models. Relying on the earlier work of Eberhard (1968), he said because the new nations operate under "historical disadvantage", the modern "world time" context will work against the strategy of physical isolation from world affairs.

In the early years of her nationhood America successfully chose isolation until she was compelled by external factors to enter international relations. China also chose isolation or autarky until it was no longer politically expedient. On the other hand Japan took the route of insulation. This entailed opening her doors to foreign trade and technology but closing or restricting them against intrusion of foreign culture. Ekeh therefore argues that if isolation is no longer practicable in modern world, can Africa choose insulation? If insulation worked for Japan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, could it have worked for Africa in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, or in this century?

The importance of discussing contexts and model is that if the former is properly understood, and the latter is correctly chosen, the combination can fast-track the process of national development. This is significant because we already know that Africa is weak internally, and with that

background, little or nothing can be achieved externally. But no model will work in the absence of political stability.

Therefore, the first challenge is how to create conditions in Africa that will promote political stability. It is well known that no nation or society can generate, or sustain economic growth and development in an atmosphere of political crises. If the Sudanese political crises is protracted; if Somalia is in turmoil, and if Ivory coast continues to fester there is no way Africa will not be distracted, or be able to benefit from peace dividends, or indeed, make any meaningful contribution to world peace and security. Henry Kissinger (2001:201) once lamented that America has no properly articulated African policy and argues that “the continent’s contemporary problems are a challenge to a world that aspires to build a global order.

In the early days of independence, a few African leaders, notably Kwame Nkrumah canvassed for a single African voice so that the continent can earn respect in world affairs. In the words of the late Ghanaian leader, citing the examples of the United States and the former Soviet Union, “a single representation, resting on the strength of a whole continent, would be more positive in its influence than all the separate representations of all the African states put together (Nkrumah 1963:195). Though with the passage of time and the consolidation of national sovereignty of African states, this proposition has lost attraction; yet the idea of a more politically integrated African Union (AU) is closer to Nkrumah’s vision. In intent, if not in form, African Parliament, the NEPAD initiative and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), have the potentials to give to Africa the benefits of continental solidarity, and possibly eliminate what Nkrumah called “irredentist dissensions”.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

It is obvious from the foregoing that the challenges of modern international affairs are more than those of the pre-colonial Africa. Revolutions in transportation and communication have encouraged contacts among peoples, contributed to spread of ideas and greater interdependence among nations. Africa’s late entry into the international arena has certainly imposed limits on her capacity and constrained the aspirations of her people. More worrisome, globalization is increasingly making the world a global village; which makes it more challenging for Africans to explore every available opportunity for self-expression, and more relevance within the world community. This is the only way Africans can rekindle the optimism of Harold Macmillan’s “Wind of change” and reverse the pessimism of Tony Blair’s “scar on the Conscience of the world”.



## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we have examined how Africa was cautiously, but deliberately introduced into international affairs. We discussed Africa's relatively weak position in all the dimensions of power. We observed the limited contribution Africa is making in international affairs. We finally suggested what can be done to improve Africa's bargaining position with other regions of the world.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain how colonial legacy affected Africa's role in international Affairs.
2. What is the role of power in explaining Africa's marginal role in world Affairs?
3. How realistic is the idea of political unification as a means of enhancing Africa's role in International Affairs?

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## **UNIT 5 AFRICA IN SEARCH OF A NEW WORLD ORDER**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Concept of World Order
  - 3.2 History and Structure of world Order
  - 3.3 African position in World Order
  - 3.4 Re-negotiation for a New Order
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Africa is often described as, potentially, the world richest in resource endowments, but the poorest in concrete development. It is not difficult to offer explanation for this paradox, which had its roots in the forceful integration of the continent into an unjust international system. Therefore, it is understandable if Africa today occupies a precarious position in the world, and plays a marginal role among the comity of nations. This Unit will examine Africa position within the present world system and the attempts being made to re-negotiate for better terms for Africa in the reigning world order.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this Unit you are expected to:

- have an idea about the concept of world order
- understand why Africa is not favorably positioned in the present world order
- know what is being done, or can be done to improve Africa's status in the world.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Concept of World Order**

A world order is a system of relationships that prevail among state actors during a particular period. In the economic realm, mercantilism, colonialism and neo-colonialism are forms of order. Before the success of the abolitionist movements, slavery was another form of order known

to history. Some of these different world orders were deliberately conceived, designed and established. Others have occurred as a result of the interplay of forces and elements that are inherent in the global political and economic relationships.

What is however significant about order, domestic or international, is that it is never neutral; because it is always biased towards one side or the other of the spectrum of contending political values. This is the more reason why no world order has been a direct product of global negotiation or consensus. Before 1914, world order was synonymous with European order, and it was settled on terms decided by the leading European nations. During the inter-war period (1918-1939) Adolf Hitler's attempt to re-negotiate the terms of world order by force of arms, led to World War II. The European-based world order suffered its first major decline in World War I, and collapsed almost irretrievably consequent to World War II devastations. In the post-war II era America briefly dominated the world in all the dimensions of power, until the Soviet Union attained nuclear parity in 1950, and strategic equivalence, with the United States in the 1970s, which transformed the world into a bipolar structure.

The bi-polar world order lasted for over four decades, in the middle of which the de-colonization process brought about independence to many African states, and along with it, the power to determine their foreign relations. But the successive eras of slave trade, "legitimate trade" and colonialism had weakened Africa's capacity and power potential to make substantive inroads into world politics. Just like every other third world nation in Asia and Latin America, African states came to be described as "new states" that had to enroll into international arena cautiously and could not speedily cut off the ties from their former colonial masters.

The import of this historical excursion is to stress that a world order is a legitimating of power over justice. In simple words "might is right". According to Akinyemi (1993:42) "the elements of the principles and institutions which constitute a world order are usually laid down by the victors, partly to regulate relationship among them, but mostly to regulate their relationship with the defeated and others. Similarly, Hedley Bull (1977:77) says order is not merely an "actual or possible condition or state of affairs in world politics", it is also regarded as a value. In effect what make a particular region or country dominant in a given world order is power differential and not innate superiority of race, culture or ideas.

### 3.2 History and Structure of World Order

What we refer to as the present world order has its foundations in the past. The Greek civilization preceeded the Roman era, and the latter gave birth to European supremacy, during which the British Empire, otherwise labeled Pax Britannica was uniquely “Great.” France on the other hand failed to achieve comparative regional or world hegemony at that time, even when it tried to achieve it militarily. European rivalry in the late 19th century and the impact of the two World Wars which that contest for power produced buried the European phase in world domination, from which American ascendancy sprouted. Saint Augustine once described this succession in world leadership as the “genetic continuity in stages in time, one emerging from the other” (quoted in Nisbet 1973:93).

Both Hedley Bull (1984) and S.P. Huntington (1987:83) better captured the 20<sup>th</sup> century background to the present world order. According to Bull, the ‘European or Western domination of the universal society may be said to have reached its apogee about the year 1900’. Huntington continued the narration thus; “from 1900 to 1945 Europe was divided against itself. In the 1940s, however the American phase of Western domination began; post-war de-colonization further reduced European influence. During the Cold War, however America military power was matched by that of the Soviets and American economic power declined relative to that of Japan”. In essence, Japan’s economic miracle after World War II nuclear devastations heralded what, was called the Pacific century, which is now being consolidated through Chinese assertions. John Hay, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century made a prediction of the rise of the Asiatic powers;” the Mediterranean is the ocean of the past, the Atlantic the ocean of the present and the Pacific the ocean of the future” (Baker 1995). Before the end of that century Hay’s predication had come to pass.

Today any definition of world order, at least, in economic terms, is not complete without taking Asian countries into account. Indeed, while China is using her permanent membership of the Security Council and a discretionary veto to further Asian political interest, Japan also leverages on her membership of the Group of 7 + 1 industrialized nations, to promote the economic equivalent of Asian interests. This is in addition to Asia demographic (population) preponderance, which was once a burden, but is now being transformed into an asset. This transformation was facilitated by the economic success story of Asian “Tigers” and “dragons”. J. Naisbitt and P. Aburdene (1990) revealed; “Today the Pacific Rim is undergoing the fastest period of economic expansion in history, growing at five times the growth rate during the Industrial Revolution”. These positive demographic and economic variables have

now given to the Pacific Rims a powerful and massive global presence. If many Asian countries, notably Japan, with the exception of China, leaned on the United States, at least at the initial stage, to lay the foundations for their growth and development, today they are now giving true meaning to the concept of inter-dependence. Unlike African countries whose relations of dependence on the West is uni-directional that of the West and Asia is characterized by mutual vulnerabilities, with the scale tilting gradually in the latter's favour. According to Huntington (1997) the present trend is that if the Japanese economy sneezes, Americans catch cold. To record this phenomena record while China took the path of isolation from the world, Japan pursued the strategy of insulation. This according to Otite (1978) enabled the two countries to develop at their own pace, and to fashion out work ethics which gave them springboards.

According to Onimode (2000) there are theoretical and empirical evidence to support the thesis that the rise and fall of nations and empires, and their hegemonic aspirations, and positions within the world order are directly correlated with their economic or material conditions. The Tony Blair Commission for Africa, in its report came to similar conclusion, while it also blamed internal factors for being "the primary culprit for economic stagnation or decline over the past three decades" (Bond 2006:95). It is the surplus of this economic factor in the United States, an area where Africa has been recording consistent deficits that has given Washington the capacity and leverage to dictate the rules of engagement, set global agenda and dominate the world. Guyatt (2003:61-63) observed that even the United Nations, despite its universal pretensions has found it nearly impossible to function without American support. Yet the U.S. is well able to pursue its objective without UN approval. As he puts it "the UN has become an additional resource in the American arsenal". When in 1991 at the conclusion of the Gulf war, President H.W. Bush proclaimed the dawn of a new world order, it was only because US policy makers had just succeeded in bending the UN to American purposes. But where they disagree, the US is always reluctant to strengthen it by withdrawing its funding of the world body. In short, what we call world order, or its equivalent, global governance is a euphemism for Western, or more appropriately, American rules over the world.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Assess how Africa's poor economy has affected her ranking in world affairs.

### 3.3 Africa's Position in the Present World Order

Given the long years of colonial exploitation and consequent underdevelopment, Africa's position in the present world power structure is understandably weak. There is an old saying that if you don't know where you're coming from, you can't at least know where you're going. From our studies so far, there is no argument about Africa's immediate or distant past. What may be in doubt is the direction of Africa's future and how to proceed. But Africa cannot become a respectable actor in world Affairs if her status of underdevelopment is not reversed. Walter Rodney (1974) wrote: 'any diagnosis of underdevelopment in Africa will reveal not just low per capita income and protein deficiencies, but also the gentlemen who dance in Abidjan, Accra and Kinshasa when music is played in Paris, London and New York'. With this background we can now discuss the position of Africa in the present world order.

In the immediate post-independence era African states sought relevance in the ideologically divided world. Most African states joined their Asian counterparts in the Non-aligned Movement, thereby proclaimed their neutrality, or what African leaders preferred to call "positive neutralism". The objectives of non-alignment were clearly articulated at the 1955 Bandung conference: non-commitment in the world's ideological blocs, preservation of independent rights and ability to judge world issues on their own merits and without undue external influences; and avoidance of routine and entangling alliance with the major powers (Ofoegbu 1980:132). But despite these rhetorical commitments most Africa leaders found it difficult to distant themselves from their erstwhile colonial masters with whom they were bound, politically, economically and culturally. In spite of independence Britain dictated the pace for her former colonies either as members of the Commonwealth of nations, or associate member of the old European Common Market.

Also within the more global United Nations Organization, African States neither played major role in its formation, nor participated in drawing its charter. Indeed in 1945 when the United Nation was founded, African states, with the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia were still colonial possessions. Thus the UN at inception was a compromise organization in that it reflected the Wilsonian idea of national self-determination, as well as the strategic imperative to restructure the world in order to preserve the interests of the victorious nations in World War II. The United Nations served dual purpose for the United States; it quickened the pace of de-colonization and weakened Europe by destroying the last vestiges of British and French Empires. Though post 1945 decolonization expanded the number of sovereign states, and by

implication membership of the United Nations, yet African States did not enjoy comparative power leverage, or enhanced diplomatic maneuvers within the global body. In 1961 African States occupied more than a quarter of the UN seats. The ratio is a bit higher today.

Within the General Assembly of the United Nations, African member states exercised power and enjoyed privileges commensurate to their status as sovereign, independent states. But the UN charter did not invest the Assembly with substantive function of security but to discuss “matters of common interest to members”. But there is no African permanent member in the Security Council where the real power lies. To justify the selective membership and privileged status accorded to five permanent members with veto; it was argued “the allocation of responsibilities among organizations and the definition of powers, composition should reflect difference of power, with the emphasis on the military element” (Goodrich 1974:60).

In effect the United Nations in its enabling charter legitimized and improved on international law and order, which had its roots in the 1648 treaty of Westphalia, 1815 Congress of Vienna, the 1899 Hague system, 1919 Versailles Treaty and Vienna conventions on diplomatic privileges and immunities. Worse still, when it was discovered that the inherited Euro-America biased world order did not reflect Africa’s interest, Africa could not effectively challenge it, because what was needed to succeed was more than “flag” or nominal independence.

### **3.4 Re-Negotiation for a New World Order**

It is not always easy to change or negotiate for a new order. The reason is that the beneficiaries of an existing order will seek to perpetuate the status quo because it favours them. On the other hand, the victims of a reigning order or those who find it unjust will seek to undermine, and possibly overthrow it, even by force. For this reason transition from one order to another is usually marked by force

Yet in recent world, history has recorded two non-violent transitions to a new world order: the first is the transition to a bi- polar world following the loss of European colonies in Africa and Asia; the second is the transformation of the world from 1990, confirming the emergence of the United States as the only super power, in all power dimensions (Akinyemi 1993:42).

But the transitions we have noted above, rather than liberate Africa have instead reinforced Africa’s weak positions, even while opening up little space for her Asia and Latin America counterparts to maneuver. This is why Ali Mazrui said that the primary concern of third world is the achievement of justice in the world community, even at the price of

order. Mazrui's intervention therefore raises the questions: order as defined by whom? And in whose interest? Hedley Bull (1977:78-79) also agrees that consideration of justice is different from considerations of law, because law is a-moral. He listed demands for justice in world politics to include the following:

- a. Removal of privileges or discrimination.
- b. Equality in the distribution or in the application of rights between the strong and weak, the rich and the poor, the black and the white, and the nuclear and the non-nuclear powers.
- c. More equitable distribution and benefits from the world resources.

Many people, including a former African UN scribe, Koffi Anna believed that no meaningful re-negotiation for a new world order could be achieved without a reform of the United Nations machinery and procedure, especially in the composition of the Security Council. Not a few people are of the view that an injustice was written into the terms of the United Nations charter which prescribe a system of collective security that can not be applied against UN permanent members.

Before he completed his two terms in office Anna put in motion the machinery for the reform of the UN, and accepted in principle the need to expand the permanent membership of the Security Council. Already three African countries: Nigeria, Egypt South Africa are front-liners hoping to occupy the single African slot, if approved. They are hoping to possibly join Germany, Japan Indian and Brazil from other regions. Africa seems to have a stronger moral case since it is the only region in the world without a permanent seat in the Council. But success in world politics is determined more by considerations, or dictates of power politics, prudence and interest, and not moral posturing.

In addition to making the Security Council to be truly representative of the realities of today's world, Anna also sought to strengthen democracy, promote rule of law and uphold human rights across the world. In September 2000, the United Nations launched eight- point agenda Millennium Development Goals, with the target date set at 2015. The objectives include:

- a. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.
- b. Combat HIV/Aids malaria other diseases.
- c. Attainment of universal primary education.
- d. Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment.
- e. Improve mental health.
- f. Ensure environmental sustainability.



- g. Reduce child mortality.
- h. Develop a global partnership for development.

It is expected that if these reforms are carried out and the MDGs achieved, we may well be moving in the direction of global power shift. Onimode (2001:214) was full of optimism when he said “if global power can shift to the Pacific Rims within one generation, then it can also shift to Africa, Latin America and the rest of Asia before the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century”.

No doubt, the anticipated reform of the United Nations is central to the goal of attaining an equitable global order. From Boutros Ghali’s “An Agenda For Peace” to Koffi Ana’s “Millennium Reform Agenda”, the United Nations now under Banki Mon faces many challenges: the multi-sided crises in the Middle East, especially the disputes generated by Iranian uranium enrichment programme; the dangers posed to the world by North Korean nuclear explosion; the increasing welfare gap between the global North and South; the world food crisis, the environmental nightmare caused by the depletion of the ozone layer (global warming), and threats of fundamentalism and terrorism. These are urgent world problems that require a more pro-active, and united international response, in which Africa, necessarily, has a role to play.

Without prejudice to the expected reforms of the United Nations it should not be carried out, as to weaken, or cripple the capacity of the organization, but rather to enhance the performance of its functions. In the specific case of the proposed enlargement of the Security Council, and hopefully its permanent membership, where high discretion in the use of veto has become the norm, a greater caution is required to avoid an unwinding size that may entammels the Council.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

What role did Koffi Anna play to improve Africa’s position in the present world order?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The demand for a just or more equitable world order will continue to be a contested issue in world politics. And it will not abate until that time when the factor of power politics, or the notion of “might is right” is downgraded in interstate relations. While recognizing that power is to politics; what energy is to physics, we may not achieve the goal of building a just world order if power remains the prime factor in interstate relations. With self –help as the most prudent means of survival in the anarchical setting of international politics, the reality of state

interdependence in the present globalized world should advise realists that not all issues are amenable to military solutions.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Africa fell, and surrendered to colonial rule, after the impact of superior force. But today the reigning orthodoxy is no longer brute force, but power of ideas. The continent deserves a giant leap forward to justify Pliny the Elder's saying "out of Africa always something new". The world is beginning to realize this reality as Bill Clinton, during his extended tour of Africa in 1998 remarked: "what can we do for Africa or about Africa? They were the wrong question. The right question is: what can we do with Africa? Clinton may have dressed up his speech with a gloss of optimism, however African leadership must be careful not to mistake hope for achievement.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have defined the concept of world order, and situated it within its historic context. We discussed the progressions and the dynamics of world order, especially from the era of European domination of the world, to the present period when America is indisputably the world leader. We noted that Africa presently occupies a weak position relative to other regions of the world. We also observed that the world is currently experiencing a gradual power shift in the direction of Asia, and hope that African will seize the initiative and benefit from this momentum.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Account for the factors responsible Africa's marginal role in the present world order.
2. How can the reforms of the United Nations improve African position in world Affairs?
3. Suggest strategies that can enhance Africa's ranking in world Affairs.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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