

**AMBO UNIVERSIT WOLISO CAMPS**

**SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE AND LAW**

**DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

*MODULE FOR*

**Governance and International Relations of Africa**

**(GaDS 207)**

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## **Unit One**

### **The study of African Politics**

#### **Introduction**

African politics, as a distinct field of inquiry, essentially begins in the 1950s, at a moment when the rise of African nationalism and seemingly short timetables for decolonization created the prospect of an early entry into the world system of more than 50 new states. The initial focus was African nationalism and the political parties through which it found expression. The rapid succession of dominant political forms and preoccupations brought corresponding shifts in analytical focus: transitions to independence; single-party systems; military intervention; ideological radicalization; patrimonial rule; state crisis and decline; economic and political liberalization. Interactively, a series of paradigmatic orientations shaped the study of African politics: modernization, dependency and neo-Marxism, rational choice, democratic transition and consolidation. The purpose of this unit is to enable you understand the variety of issues involved in the study of African politics and government. In this quite short unit we will introduce you both the issues involved in African politics and government and the variety of approaches utilized by scholars to study political behavior in Africa.

#### **1. Scope and Nature of the Field**

Africa is vast and diverse continent comprising 54 independent states. Except few states like Egypt, Ethiopia and Liberia these states are new that achieved independence in 1960's. It is somewhat confusing to lump these states together and to talk about African politics because there are important differences between them. The most important question that this section intends to answer is that, what are the most important premises that enable us to define African politics as unique field of study capable of generalizations?

##### **1.1 The scope of the field**

Officially, the African state system defines itself as coincident with the geographic continent and its offshore islands, symbolized in the membership of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). As a body of knowledge, however, African politics most frequently refers to the sub-Saharan states, which share a large range of cultural, sociological, and political traits. And these are, a shared legacy of colonialism; the fact that these states are searching for a new identity as a nation state; these states are mostly poor and depend on the vagaries of the world economy.

Apart from the shared legacy of colonialism and the relatively new experience with statehood, there are common trends which underpinned politics in Africa. The first and most obvious trend since independence was the move away from pluralism towards the centralization of power in the hands of a single party. Second and related trend was not only the centralization of power in the hands of a single party, but also the personalization of it in the hand of a single leader. A third trend, though not confined to one partyism, was the espousal of some form of socialism. A fourth trend which was observable before the emergence of military coups was the progressive decline of the party as the center of power and decision making and the corresponding rise of the bureaucracy. Another post independence trend was the overthrow civilian regimes by the military in the majority of African countries. Another post independence trend was the move from federal and quasi-federal systems to unitary structures. Another post independence trend which is more socio-economic than political, but which had political implication was rural urban migration leading to the spread of shanty towns, an increase in the number of school leavers for whom jobs were not available because the economy could not expand fast enough to absorb the rising school output. And the final trend is the recent resurgence of political liberalization and democratizations. These and other important trends which we have not mentioned here will enable us to study African politics from a continental perspective.

Since independence Africa has an extraordinary number of sovereign units (54 in 2011); however, comparative understandings of African political dynamics derive from a much smaller number of states that, by reason of their size, accessibility for research, or attractiveness as models, received disproportionate attention (for example: Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, Senegal, and Congo-Kinshasa).

Some particular aspects of the sociology of Africanist political knowledge merit note. There is a singular preponderance of external scholarship, North American and European, which only recently began to be balanced by African contributions. At first the paucity of African academics explained this phenomenon; subsequently, until the 1990s, most regimes had low tolerance for critical scholarship from their nationals, and by the 1970s the severe material deterioration of many African universities inhibited research from within. Methodologically, most scholarship relied upon qualitative approaches, which sharpened the debate around contending broad theoretical paradigms shaping such inquiry.

## **2. The evolution of the study of African politics**

### **2.1 Decolonization and the Origins of African Politics as a Field**

Until the 1950s, there were two distinct domains within African politics. At the top lay the colonial apparatus whose study was restricted to an administrative science conducted largely by colonial practitioners. At the base lay subordinated African societies whose study was confined to anthropologists, missionaries, and administrators. Knowledge thus generated influenced anthropological theory and the practice of 'native administration,' but was outside the realm of comparative politics.

African nationalism emerged as a potent political force in the 1950s; its leading students are the foundational generation of the African politics field. The defining attribute of African nationalism was its autonomy from the colonial state it sought to challenge, thus constituting an authentic field of African politics. With the approach of independence, focus shifted to political parties.

With independence achieved, analysis shifted to the political development of new states, along with a substantial infusion of comparative political theory. The various strands of modernization theory, rooted in the premise of duality of tradition and modernity, privileged the state as indispensable central instrument of progress. With rare exceptions, the dominant parties which assumed power with independence sought to consolidate their exclusive hold on power, and to co-opt, circumscribe, or often proscribe opposition. Thus, the widespread choice of African rulers for centralization and unification of the state, represented as nation in formation, was largely shared in the first years of independence by academic observers. Actual performance of such regimes proved indistinguishable from that of other party-states, deflating the military-as-modernizer theories.

Very quickly, the cluster of approaches labeled 'modernization theory' lost their hold on political inquiry, and the nature of rule predominant in Africa found its credibility beginning to erode. The master concept of modernization encountered sharp criticism for its linear notions of change, its insensitivity to social cleavage and conflict, and its teleological concept of progress.

The newly critical perspective towards the postcolonial state, as well as modernization theory, found potent expression in a family of conceptual approaches drawing in one way or another on Marxism. By the 1980s, patterns of decay became apparent in a number of states, and the notion of state crisis entered the analytical vocabulary. Corruption on a large, sometimes colossal scale became apparent. Another concept drawn from Weber, patrimonial rule, emerged as the key to understanding political practice. ‘

The unmistakable economic stagnation and symptoms of state crisis drew the international financial institutions into the dispute, at a moment when newly dominant political economy perspectives in the Western world called for far-reaching curtailment of the orbit of state action: privatization, deregulation, budgetary austerity, and rigor. The dilemmas of structural adjustment define an important fraction of African political studies of the 1980s and 1990s. The failure of reform to reverse economic decline in the 1980s led a growing number of voices to suggest that the underlying flaw lay in the patrimonial autocracies which continued to rule. Only political liberalization could empower an awakening civil society to discipline the state; accountability, transparency, and responsiveness necessitated democratization. The remarkable spectacle of the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, and collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, resonated powerfully. Leading Western donors now insisted on political reform as a condition for additional economic assistance. Democratization dominated the political scene in the 1990s, both on the ground and in the realm of African political study. Further, important changes had occurred in expanding political space for civil society, enlarging freedom of expression and media, and better observation of human rights. A complete collapse of state authority occurred in Somalia and Liberia in 1991, and spread to some other countries. In a quarter of the states, significant zones of the country were in the hands of diverse militia, opening an era of ‘warlord politics’

## Unit Two

### Pre-Colonial Africa

#### Introduction

Any comprehensive understanding of contemporary African politics and Society must draw upon Africa's past. The history of the pre-colonial Africa, the period which ended officially with the imposition of direct colonial rule in 1884-85 is rich with examples of political and economic sophistication. In this unit we will discuss briefly some instances of these political systems. Hence in the first section we will briefly discuss some of the frameworks which attempt to explain the social and political formation of the pre-colonial era. This will be followed by a discussion, in the second section, of some instances of state formation.

#### 2. 1 State formation in pre-colonial Africa

The Africa continent is the cradle of human kind. Yet western missionaries, soldiers of fortune and colonial administrators dismissed such a possibility as false on the wake of colonialism. Partly because of this they have denounced African civilization as “primitive”, “backward” and therefore inferior to the western civilization. The history of pre-colonial Africa, as opposed to what the western have thought, is rich with examples of economic and political sophistication. The focus in this section therefore is to shed light on the rich mosaic of political systems that existed in the pre-colonial period.

##### 2.1.1 The Pre-Colonial Social Formation

The per-colonial history of Africa, argues William Tordoff, has been pieced together from archeological findings, oral tradition and the records of Arab and other alien chronicles, such as *Ibn Batuta*, who travelled widely in the Muslim world in 14thc. A good deal is now known, for example the richness of the Egyptian civilization of the pre-Christian era, of the medieval empires of the *western Sudan, Ghana, Mali and Songhai*, and the forest kingdoms which subsequently emerged in West Africa. Some of these kingdoms extended at the height of their power over a wide area and were underpinned by a centralized bureaucracy. Such was Ashanti in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup>. *Benin* in present day Nigeria was another power full kingdom, which, according to oral tradition had been founded by immigrants from *Ife* some three centuries before the coming of the Portuguese,

possibly these immigrants brought with them the technique of casting in bronze which in *Benin*, as in *Ife* resulted in sculpture of world renown. Benin City, the capital, seemed to a Dutch Visitor to be comparable in many ways to similar with Amsterdam. Hence the argument that the political history in terms of statehood started with colonialism is not only false, but racist.

While there is no doubt that many such states existed in pre-colonial Africa in the Sudan, deep in the West African forest and in southern Africa they were not typical of pre-colonial Africa as whole. Many Africans lived in stateless societies, organized around the family, kinship groups and clan although this did not necessarily mean that they were more back ward. Generally, these societies share some general features in common. For instance, class was not the feature of pre-colonial African societies. This implies that there was no exploitation.

**Band** level of organization was another feature of pre-colonial African social formation. It involves hunting, gathering and nomadic way of life. This is a simple social formation which did not allow for the emergence of a very complex type of administrative system. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century no African society exhibited such type of organization with the exception two or three communities in the central and southern Africa.

**Tribal** society represents another tier of pre-colonial African society. This represents a much more organized mode of existence where agriculture is the predominant mode of production. Making tools from iron and the beginning of settled life was achieved at this level of social organization. The organization of power and authority is much more complex and it is at this stage of development that organization chiefs and elders emerged. The centralization of power and authority around the institutions of chieftaincy and elders was also sought. The power of the chiefs was not absolute and it is also a religious kind. Slavery made its appearance at this level of social organization. Technologically speaking most pre-colonial tribal societies are found at the “backward” stage of technology and a written script was not also developed. Land is under communal ownership which implied that there was no landless peasant and class antagonism, the feature of a feudal society.

### **2.1.2 The Framework to Explain State Formation in Pre-Colonial Africa**

There are different theories which come up with different kinds of explanations regarding the absence and existence of statehood in pre colonial Africa. And these are: the racist methodology of the colonial period, the Functionalist theory, the Africanists framework, and the Neo-Marxian framework.

The “racist methodology” subscribes to the notion that state formation as a process is foreign to Africa. This view is associated with colonial anthropology that argues Africans never created centralized states. Even in the pre colonial period the few states that we have in west, south and the horn of Africa are the results of conquest by “Hamites” who came from outside Africa and controlled Africa for the collection of tribute. From roughly 1850 to 1950, "The Hamitic Hypothesis" was generally accepted among historians. The "Hamitic Hypothesis" says that “migratory white tribes, known as Hamites, were wholly responsible for spreading civilized practices throughout Africa.”

The functionalist theory on the other hand argues that, only areas which exhibit high population density go through the process of state formation. Africa is the least densely populated continent in the world in the pre-colonial era. In this regard Jeffery Herbs argues that, we should not define and see state formation by using the European lens. Conflicts in pre-colonial Africa have never been about the control of land, it was about people. This, coupled with the difficult topographical and environmental factors involved, rendered the control of land unimportant. Because, there is an abundant source of arable land, societies could easily avoid the centralizing tendencies of pre-colonial social formation. The availability of such an exit option undermined the possibility of the emergence a centralized political organization.

The Africanists framework was a reaction to the colonial anthropology that argues, Africans are “primitive” and “backward”. Their concern is to demonstrate that state formation is indigenous to Africa and it was not imported from somewhere else as the colonial would have us to believe. Sheikh Anta Diop work on pre-colonial Africa is illuminative in this regard. Diop argued that, the experience of state formation and consolidation in pre-colonial Africa bore similarities with ancient Egyptian civilization, which itself is a black African civilization. His writing focused on five instances of sate formation: Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Mossi and Cayor. In many ways these states are

equivalent with western European feudalism during the medieval period. In terms of social structure, they are slave owning societies. The basic social division was between free men, composed of the *Ger* (the nobility and the agriculturalist) and *Neno* (refers to castes who specialized around certain work); and slaves, which in turn are divided in to the slaves of the king (provide man power for the army), slaves of the father (slaves engaged in direct production) and slaves of the mother (domestic production). The most exploited section of the society is the slaves of the father and poor farmers. Those who are high in the social hierarchy, the nobility were expected to help those who are poor and this in turn has reduced tension in the society. Some rudimentary form of bureaucracy with a degree of specialization existed in the state apparatus. Certain positions in the state were reserved for certain castes and slaves.

With the advent of Islam in West Africa Ghana, Mali and Songhai accepted Islam and this had transformed their political structure. Mossi and Cayor remained constitutional monarchies where the power of the monarchy was limited. Succession to the throne was based on the principle of matrilineal succession where the king's sister son succeeds the king. These empires collapsed with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in to the region and subsequently conquest by Spain and Portugal put an end to these indigenous African states. According to Diop, because of this the people of West Africa returned to the state of "re-tribalization" and when Europeans came to Africa what they found was not a state, but tribes. This framework, however, did not answer why and how state formation took place.

The fourth framework that we are going to discuss in this section is the neo Marxian framework. This framework is a critic and reaction both to the colonial anthropology (who denied Africa's achievement) and the Africanists framework for idealizing pre-colonial Africa. One of the most celebrated works in this framework is Archie Mafeje's celebrated book *the social theory and ethnography of Africa*. His work focused on the great lakes region (Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania) that in his opinion had a continued history of statehood up to the advent of colonialism in Africa. His central argument is that tribe and statehood were not mutually exclusive social organization in pre-colonial Africa.

## **2.2 Social Formation and Political Structures**

### **2.2.1 Segmented Political Systems**

One of the most difficult forms of African organization for westerners to understand is what anthropologists call a segmented political system. The term segmented refers to decentralized system marked by diffusion of power. Segmented political systems lacked a centralized state and a recognized political authority capable of enforcing a preferred set of policies throughout the territory. Though political authority was diffuse, many communities were still nations in that community members often shared the same language, customs and cultural history. The nation simply lacked a central political authority to which they owed allegiance. According to Christian Potholm, there are at least five types of segmented political systems.

#### **1. Band Organization**

The most decentralized political system in pre-colonial Africa was the band organization. Sharing the same language, customs, and cultural history, the population was divided into small hunter gatherer groups that ranged in size from several dozen people during times of plenty to ten twenty individuals during periods of economic hardships. The hunter gatherer groups were principally comprised of members of an extended family and did not have any form of centralized political authority. Even political authority at the higher level was neither formally structured nor personally embodied in one person. The band organization was the dominant form of political organization approximately 30,000 years ago but increasingly rare in Africa today. One of the most notable examples was the *san people (introduced to the world through the Gods must be crazy movie)*, who make up a very small portion of the populations of Namibia and Botswana.

#### **2. Classical Segmented System**

This system differed from band organization principally in terms of the size and scope of the distinct groups that composed the common nation. Individual groups based on kinship called clans could number in the tenth or hundreds of thousands of years to specific founding members. The size of the clan ensured that more formal forms of leadership, often a group of leaders or, a committee of elders emerged to manage clan affairs, although no central authority ever evolved. Classical segmented systems typically fostered competition and conflict between extended clan families, especially in

nomadic environments when drought and famine diminished already scarce water and food resources. The Somali ethnic groups constituted an excellent example of the classical segmented system (for detailed discussions of this type of political system refer to your Regional politics and Development in the horn of Africa module).

### **3. Universalistic Segmented System**

The universalistic segmented system constituted a slightly more centralized version of the classical segmented system. Despite the continued lack of any central authority the members of the various clan families were closely unified by the existence of age-grade system in which the period within which any individual was born was more important than actual standing in society. Age-grade systems were composed of specific age sets which differentiated groups of different ages. Age set status is applied regardless of the clan into which one was born and allowed for a more systematic organization of the social, economic and cultural affairs of the nation as a whole. These age sets predetermined an individual's assumption of various responsibilities with society, ranging from militarily defending the nation through the attainment of warrior status to entering the ranks of political header or senior elder. The *Masai* ethnic group was one of the most renowned examples of a universalistic segmented system. The pre-colonial clans of the *Masai* were joined by a complex age-set system for males that began when a young *Masai* was circumcised between the ages 13 and 17.

### **4. Ritually Stratified Segmented System**

In this system independent clans were unified in the spiritual realm by a commonly revered spiritual religious leader. Such leaders primarily served as symbols of national unity, with duties usually restricted to presiding over religious ceremony. They wielded very little if any political power, and were incapable of forcing disobedient clans and sub-clans to adopt specific courses of action. The *Shilluk* people of Sudan represented a ritually stratified segmented system. The symbolic head of the *Shiluk* nation was the *reth* (king). The *Reth* served as the embodiment of the spirit of *Nyikang*, a mythical savior who conquered a new home land for his people that was subsequently divided among the various *Shilluk* clans. The *Reth* enjoyed no formal authority over the *Shilluk* clans. He was a ritual leader who reigned but did not govern.

## 5. Autonomous Village Systems

As demonstrated in the previous four examples, most segmented societies are largely nomadic or semi-nomadic; their peoples followed transhumance patterns in which the pursuit of food, water and grazing lands were predetermined by seasonal changes in weather patterns. In the autonomous village systems however, urbanized groups sometimes ranging in the thousands and tens of thousands served as a cornerstone of local political organization. Despite sharing the same language and culture, the populations of these highly autonomous villages were not unified by a central political authority or a centralized state. As opposed to its autonomous village counterpart, the population of the city state was not ethnically homogenous. Individual city states enjoyed varying forms of centralized rule, ranging from despotic rules to more democratic city council. All these varied forms city state system belong under the broad category of segmented political system, because the city state as a whole were not controlled by a central authority.

A renowned example of an African city state existed along the Swahili coast of East Africa. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, a vast network of Swahili city states dotted the coast line from Mogadishu, the southern city of *kilua- kiswani* in present day Tanzania. A flourishing Indian Ocean trade network in gold and spices fueled the rise of these city states and particularly favored the geographically well-situated islands of Zanzibar and the *Lamu Archipllago*.

### 2.2.2 Centralized Political Systems

The diversity of segmented political systems was complemented by an equally rich number of centralized political systems. This type of political system corresponds to what westerners consider the “normal” form of political organization, a political authority controls a centralized state that can apply polices throughout a given territory and the inhabitants of this political system owe allegiance to the state. This broad category of system encompasses what westerner’s commonly call the *nation state*. In its purest form the nation state consists of one central authority (the state) and one ethnic group (the nation). In practice, however, most centralized political systems of the pre-colonial era were multi-ethnic, although one ethnic group dominated. Drawing up on Christian p. Potholoms work, one can distinguish three specific types of centralized political systems.

### **1. Pyramidal Monarchy**

The pyramidal monarchy had a centralized authority in control of a centralized state capable of enforcing its will throughout the nation. The system was nonetheless pyramidal in that the king despite his position at the top of the political pyramid did not wield absolute control over his kingdom. Instead, the political culture of the pyramidal monarchy dictated that non-royal clans and other ethnic groups enjoyed various degrees of autonomy from central government control most notably in terms of the ability to raise own taxes. The pyramidal monarchy therefore embodied a federal form of government. The Oyo Empire of the Yoruba people of present-day Nigeria reached its height during the eighteenth century, and is one of the best documented examples of pyramidal monarchy.

### **2. Associational Monarchy**

The associational monarchy was similar to its pyramidal counterpart in all respects, most notably in terms of maintaining a federal system in which non-royal clans and other ethnic groups enjoyed a certain measure of autonomy from the central authority. The unique aspect of this political system is the existence of national groups that transcended individual clan or ethnic attachments. These groups served as intermediaries between local villages and the central authorities and were often responsible for important duties, such as the collection of taxes within the political system. Membership was highly prized as it provided opportunity to make contacts beyond one's own clan or ethnic group in the pursuit of economic or political gain. The *Mende* people of Sierra Leone provide an interesting example of an associational monarchy. A unique aspect of this political system was the widespread adherence to secret societies, known as *Poros* society for men and the *Sande* society for women. Members were sworn to secrecy concerning the rites of passage. Societies transcended individual and groups within the *Mende* society and served both social and political function of the secret societies on policy matters grooming eventual leaders with strong ties to the *Poros* and *Sande* societies.

### **3. Centralized Monarchy**

The centralized monarchy was potentially the most authoritarian of the centralized political system. The most influential figure of what is also called a hierarchical political system was a king to whom all members a society were required to pledge their allegiance. The political system was based on a

very strong central authority that allowed little, if any, autonomy for non-royal clans or other ethnic groups. These groups were unified by an age set system that was completely loyal to the king. The Zulu empire under the leadership of *Shaka Zulu* at the beginning of the nineteenth century is one of the most famous centralized monarchies. The reign of *Shaka* is widely renowned for his creation a militaristic *Zulu* empire that expanded its authority by conquering neighboring peoples and absorbing their warriors in to the national army.

## **Unit Three**

### **The Colonial Interlude**

#### **Introduction**

This unit discusses the more recent history of Africa from approximately the 15th century to the early 1960s that marked European involvement in Africa—first through the early trade era (including the Atlantic Slave Trade), then through colonialism. This unit will look at some of the motivations, methods and impacts of European involvement in Africa. The unit has two sections. In the first section we will look briefly at Early European expansion and the rationale for early involvement in Africa; and African reaction with special emphasis on the Atlantic (triangular) Slave Trade and its horrific impact on Africa. The rationale, practice of colonialism in its different forms and the economic, social, cultural, and political impact and legacy of colonialism will be the focus of section two.

#### **3.1. Pre-colonial Euro African interactions and the "Scramble for Africa"**

##### **3.1.1 'The Age of Exploration' and Era of Slave Trade**

The more contemporary era of European colonialism that was set apart by the Berlin conference, was preceded by a gradual process of European expansion in to Africa over roughly 450 years which was said to start with what is often called the age of exploration: the charting and mapping of lands previously unknown to European powers before the ultimate imposition of colonial rule, including in Africa. The Portuguese were the pioneers in this regard. The overriding purpose of Portuguese exploration was to circumvent Arab traders who controlled Portugal's over land access to the gold trade of West Africa and the silk and spice trades of Asia.

There was an extensive trade in gold and salt across the Sahara Desert. Europeans had become involved in this trade and developed a strong demand for gold in their economy. However, Europeans were dependent on "middle-men" who would bring gold from the Kingdoms of West Africa across the Sahara Desert. But In the 1400s, Prince Henry of Portugal began an initiative to seek out direct sea routes to gain access to the gold trade in West Africa. But what began as a quest for trade in gold and spices, ended up becoming a trade network exporting African slaves, which

would continue for more than 400 years. In 1472, the Portuguese arrived in West Africa on an exploratory expedition with the hope that through West Africa, they could find a trade route to India. Instead, they encountered the African empire of Benin on the coast. Hitherto, most trade had been overland. Now the Portuguese established “factories” — as European trading stations were called — to purchase slaves and other commodities for which they traded firearms. Europe was hungry for pepper, ivory, timber, gold, and slaves however the slave trade soon dominated.

The slave trade dominated largely because the trading nations were also colonized the New World across the Atlantic. As the colonization was a brutal process during which much of the indigenous population died. This created a labor shortage, especially on the sugar-cane plantations that fed the European sweet tooth. Slaves were sought as sources of cheap labour to work on colonial plantations of the western hemisphere.

The Atlantic slave trade, and also called the European slave trade, begun during the 15<sup>th</sup>c and was dominated by European powers. In this regard Portugal was the first European nation that initiated and involved in these trade relations that grew into the Atlantic Slave Trade by establishing contacts from Mauritania, all the way down to the west coast of Africa and the Cape of Good Hope in the other side of Africa. Then The Dutch, French, Spanish, and British soon followed the Portuguese footsteps.

The slaves were crammed into ships that crossed the Atlantic in order to provide labor for large plantations in North and South America, which were growing cotton, sugar cane, and tobacco. These regions of North and South America were European colonies and served to provide raw materials to Europe for manufacturing. This long and treacherous journey has become known as the "Middle Passage." Historians estimate that as many as 20% died while crossing the ocean, not to mention those who died in the slave forts while still in Africa.

Generally speaking one of the most devastating aspects of rising European influence in Africa at the end of the fifteenth century was a global perception of slavery as a legitimate and necessary tool of political, military and economic expansion. A number of factors contributed to ending the Atlantic Slave Trade officially in the early 19th century after it had continued for over 400 years. Among these was a growing public revulsion against the slave trade. In addition, between 1801 and 1803,

there had been a successful slave revolt in the Caribbean island nation of Haiti, which shook people throughout the Americas to realize that this system of slavery could be challenged and overthrown. As a result, in 1804, Haiti became the first black republic in the world and the first country in the Western Hemisphere to abolish slavery.

Finally, the Industrial Revolution in Europe and North America, which occurred simultaneously with the Atlantic Slave Trade, was fueling a growing demand for free rather than servile labor. In the early years of the Industrial Revolution, cheap raw materials, such as cotton, produced by slave labor in the Americas were essential, but by the 19th century continued industrial expansion was dependent on a flexible and mobile labor force. Consequently, many European and American industrialists who supported the slave trade in the 18th century changed their minds when slavery was no longer an economic benefit.

The Atlantic Slave Trade had enormous negative effects on the continent of Africa. Many parts of Africa suffered from an increase in violence, drain of people, and an economy increasingly reliant on slavery. Over four hundred years of slave trade had transformed the African Continent from coastal regions (where most of the trading with Europeans took place) all the way to the interior of Africa (where many slaves were captured to be sold.). Thus, there is no doubt that the Atlantic Slave Trade changed the face of the earth in many ways and presented a huge challenge to Africa in trying to recover from this brutal period of its history.

### **3.1.2 Era of Legitimate Commerce or Informal Empire**

Britain's active opposition to the slave trade was not primarily driven by an enlightened vision of human kind that understood the west's domination of non-white peoples outside of Europe to be wrong. Rather the economic imperatives associated with the rise and spread of the industrial revolution had simply made it profitable for the colonial powers to engage in legitimate trade with the African continent, as opposed to the illegitimate trade in human beings. The transformation that took place from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup>c to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup>c entailed the gradual replacement of the slave trade with the production in Africa of numerous primary products. European manufactures also ultimately perceived the African continent as the target for sales of manufactured goods. Simply put, the European industrialists thought, why destroy African markets by exporting slaves to plantations

in the western hemisphere when we can better profit from trade with Africans who work their plantations closer to Europe.

Generally, the end of European trading in slaves left a need for commerce between Europe and Africa. Capitalists who have seen the light over slavery, but they still wanted to exploit the continent through new 'legitimate' trade. Explorers located vast reserves of raw materials; they plotted the course of trade routes, navigated rivers, and identified population centers which could be a market for manufactured goods from Europe. It was a time of plantations and cash crops, dedicating the region's workforce to producing rubber, coffee, sugar, palm oil, timber, etc for Europe. All these made more enticing the establishment of a colony that gave the European nation a monopoly.

### **3.1. 3 The Scramble for Africa**

The Scramble for Africa was a process of invasion, attack, occupation and annexation of sovereign African territory by European powers during the period, between the 1880s and the First World War in 1914. As Early European expeditions concentrated on colonizing previously uninhabited islands such as the Cape Verdes and Sao Tome Island, or establishing coastal forts as a base for trade, the vast interior of Africa was not colonized and indeed little-known to Europeans until the late nineteenth century. By 1835, Europeans had mapped most of northwestern Africa. However, European nations controlled only 10 percent of the continent. The most important holdings were Angola and Mozambique, held by Portugal; the Cape Colony, held by the United Kingdom; and Algeria, held by France. After centuries of neglect, Europeans began to expand their influence into Africa and soon, it took on a full-fledged land grab in Africa by European Powers. This came to be called the Scramble for Africa also known as the Race for Africa.

The partitioning of Africa started with the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 that established the principles on how Europeans would split Africa into spheres of influence, protectorates, free-trade areas, and colonies. The rules of the scramble for Africa were simple and straight forward; to obtain ownership of a given territory that would be recognized as legally binding by the colonial powers, the colonial power had to prove effective occupation by obtaining treaties signed by local African leaders. This pattern differed from that of an earlier age in which ownership is based on discovery-an explorer lands on territory previously unknown to the European world and claims ownership for his

country. The reason for the shift was that much of Africa was “known” to the various European colonial powers. The treaties signed with local leaders were dubious at best, in essence served only to validate claims among the various European powers. Many Europeans signed treaties with local inhabitants who were not in apposition of authority or who in any case were not allowed to by local custom to sign away lands. Even when proper officials signed the treaties, the fact that they were written in a foreign language often meant that their true intent was misunderstood or misrepresented.

There are many reasons for the colonization of Africa. The 19th century in Europe was a time of industrialization. Factories in Europe required raw materials to be manufactured into marketable products. As a result, Europeans sought both a source of raw materials, as well as, a market for manufactured goods in Africa. This economic motivation played a large role in the colonization of Africa. Politics in Europe also led to the colonization of Africa. Nationalism in Europe resulted in the formation of the nation-states in Europe that we are familiar with today. Nationalism-a strong sense of identification with and pride in one's nation-resulted in competition between European nations. This competition often resulted in wars between nations as was demonstrated in the late 19th century. Competition over colonial expansion in Africa was another way of that national competition between European nations. Thus, No major nation wanted to be without colonies. The competition was particularly strong between Britain, France, and Germany, the strongest European nation-states in the late 19th century.

In addition, ideologies of racial hierarchy were prevalent in Europe in the 19th century. Many Europeans viewed themselves as the most advanced civilization in the world, and some saw it as their mission to "enlighten" and "civilize" people in the rest of the world. In this regard many inaccurate and racialized stereotypes of African peoples, which existed at the time, were used to justify colonialism in Africa. Racist and self-serving rationales such as Britain's portrayal of its efforts as the “white man's burden” and France's pronouncement of its “mission civilisatrice” (civilizing mission) were offered to justify European domination over other peoples that deemed backward” ignorant” “uncivilized”, “barbaric”, “savage” and “godless heathen.

Except for the unique cases of Ethiopia and Liberia, the net result of the scramble for Africa was the imposition of foreign colonial-rule and the end of the independence era. By the beginning of WWI,

The African continent found itself divided into a series of colonial empires varying in size, shape, and geographical distribution. France and Britain maintained the most extensive colonial powers. Belgium and Portugal led the second-tier empires that were much less extensive than their French and British counterparts. Germany lost its geographically widespread colonies following defeat in World War I.

The physical occupation of the African continent by colonial powers was often met with political and even armed resistance from African kingdoms and ethnic groups. Several factors however, ensured that armed resistance would ultimately fail. First, the European powers regardless of their conflicts on the European continent were united in their quest to occupy the African continent. Second, the European powers enjoyed technological superiority in the field of armaments. Finally, the Europeans were able to exploit regional rivalries as part of a conscious policy of divide and conquer.

### **3.1.4 Types of Colonial Rule**

Establishing political control, or *sovereignty*, over their colonies was the primary objective of the colonial powers in the early years of colonialism. In this regard the colonial powers used a combination of warfare, threat of force, and treaty making with African rulers in their efforts to gain political control of African colonies. Then internal administration of their colonies became their concern. There are four main ways in which European nations ruled African colonies. Keep in mind that each of these four divisions is a broad category that historians use to talk about types of colonial rule. Within each category, details of individual and local situations varied from place to place.

**Economic Companies-** In the early days of colonialism, European nations allowed the establishment of private companies that were granted large territories to administer in Africa. These companies were formed by businessmen who were interested in exploiting the natural resources of the territories they were allowed to govern. These companies could set up their own systems of taxation and labor recruitment. For their part, the European powers that provided *charters* for these companies did so because the companies took responsibility for all of the expenses related to establishing and administering the colonies. This was a good deal for the European countries. They had the political benefit of having additional colonies in Africa, but not the expense! For example The British South Africa Company under the control of John Cecil Rhodes, using force and coercion colonized three territories in south-central Africa: Nyasaland (Malawi), Northern Rhodesia

(Zambia), and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). The Company governed these colonies until 1923. These companies were eventually unsuccessful in that they were unable to generate consistent profits for their shareholders. Governing a colony was expensive, and the companies faced opposition from Africans and missionaries over the harsh nature of company rule. By 1924, all Company rule was replaced by various forms of European colonial governance.

**Direct Rule-**The French, Belgians, Germans, and Portuguese are considered to have used this model in governing their African colonies. They had centralized administrations, usually in urban centers and stressed policies of *assimilation*. This means that the colonialists had the intention of "civilizing" African societies so they would be more like Europe. As part of this strategy, colonialists did not try to negotiate governance with indigenous African rulers and governments. Indigenous authorities had a subordinate place in these administrations.

**Indirect Rule-** This system of governance used indigenous African rulers within the colonial administration, although they often maintained an inferior role. Overall, it was a more cooperative model than direct rule. Primarily, the British used indirect rule to govern their colonies. Lord Lugard, a British colonial administrator, used this system of government first in Nigeria and later brought it to British East Africa. This system of government assumed that all Africans were organized as "tribes" with chiefs. As a result, indirect rule increased divisions between ethnic groups and gave power to certain "big men" who had never had it before in pre-colonial history. Consequences of these significant changes in social organization and identity are still being felt today.

**Settler Rule-** refers to the type of colonialism in southern Africa in which European settlers imposed direct rule on their colonies. Settler colonies differed from other colonies in Africa in that a significant number of immigrants from Europe settled in these colonies. These immigrants or settlers were not like missionaries or European colonial officials. Just like early European immigrants to the United States and Canada, settlers in Africa planned to make the colonies their permanent home. Settler rule was characterized by its harsh policies toward the indigenous African population. Settler colonies were found primarily in southern Africa including the colonies of South Africa, Southern and Northern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe and Zambia), Angola, Mozambique, and South West

Africa (Namibia). Settlers from Holland, Britain, Germany, and Portugal colonized these areas. In addition, settler rule was practiced in Kenya, a British colony in East Africa, and in Algeria, a French colony in North Africa. Once political control was realized and institutions of governance were in place, economics became the main concern of the colonial governments.

### **3.1.5 Colonial economic practice**

Two primary factors or agenda influenced colonial economic practice. First, from early in the 19th century, Europeans believed that Africa was rich in natural resources, and one of reasons for colonialism was the desire to gain control of Africa's rich natural resources. Secondly, European colonial powers did not want to spend their own money to establish and maintain their colonies in Africa. Rather, they insisted that each colony (if at all possible) supply the revenues necessary to govern the colony. The colonial administration in each colony was charged with raising the revenue necessary to pay for all expenses, including the colonial army and police force. Thus each individual colonial government in Africa developed economic policies and practices that fit these two agendas. Meeting these two goals -generating wealth for the colonial power in Europe and generating revenues for the local colonial rule -had a lasting impact on economic practice in Africa. Given the great geographic diversity of Africa in terms of natural resources, climate, vegetation, topography, and precipitation, that resulted in diverse economic activity there was no uniform model that the colonial powers used to raise revenue throughout Africa. Within this diversity, economic historians of Africa have identified **five** modes of economic activity and revenue generation in colonial Africa

In colonies where there were large deposits of minerals, colonial governments encouraged the exploitation of the minerals. Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and the Belgian Congo (Congo) are examples of colonies whose economies were dominated by copper production. In colonies in East and Southern Africa that had climates attractive to European settlers, the primary colonial economic activity and revenue generation was large scale farms owned by Europeans. Examples include Angola (coffee), Kenya (coffee, tea), and Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe (tobacco, beef). In this system, European settler farmers *needed* land and labor. To meet these *needs*, the colonial governments instituted unpopular policies that removed good farm land from the local population and forced some men to work as laborers on European controlled farms.

African colonies that had neither large deposits of minerals, nor the environment to encourage European settlement, the colonial governments actively encouraged farmers to grow special *cash crops* that would be exported to raise revenues. Cash crops included food crops such as groundnuts/peanuts (Senegal, Nigeria), coffee (Tanganyika, Rwanda, Uganda), cocoa (Ghana, Togo, Cote D'Ivoire) and non-food crops, such as cotton (Mali, Niger, Sudan) and tobacco (Malawi).

In those Parts of African colonies that were poor in natural resources the colonial regimes instituted policies that strongly *encouraged* able bodied men to leave their homes and migrate either to distant areas within the same colony or to neighboring colonies where they worked in mines or on large farms. Mine owners and commercial farmers paid a recruitment fee to the colonial government of the worker's home country. For example, in Southern Africa the colonies of Bechuanaland (Botswana), Basotholand (Lesotho), Swaziland, and parts of Mozambique and Malawi became labor reservoirs for the mines and large farms of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, and South Africa.

Generally, in spite of the existence of variety of types of colonial rule (Company, Direct, Indirect, and Settler) and the different types of colonial economies in Africa, all colonial systems share some common features in their political and economic practices. First, no matter what form colonial rule took, all colonial systems were **undemocratic**. Colonial governments did not allow popular participation. Decisions and policies were made with little or no input from the African peoples. Even in the case where decisions or policies may have benefited some people, they were still undemocratic since there were no mechanisms for the people to officially express their opinions.

Second, Law and Order ("Peace") was a primary objective of colonial governments, as colonial rule was most often imposed without consent from the African people. Understandably, people were not happy with being governed without any representation, and colonial governments faced the potential of civil disobedience or outright resistance to their rule. Consequently, the maintenance of "peace" and law and order was a top priority of colonial governments. As a result, in most African colonies, more money was spent on developing and maintaining a police force and an army than was spent on education, housing, and health-care combined!

Third, Colonial governments lacked capacity. Most colonial governments were not rich. The European colonial powers were not willing to fund the governing of their colonies in Africa fully. Each colony was responsible for raising most of the revenue (money) needed to fund the operations of colonial rule. But no matter how rich in resources a colony was, the government lacked the income and revenue necessary to develop a government system able to go beyond maintaining law and order. This meant that colonial governments were not able to provide basic infrastructure, such as roads and communication networks, nor were they able to provide basic social services such as education, health care, and housing.

Fourth, Colonial governments practiced "divide and rule". Given the lack of capacity and the strong emphasis on law and order, all forms of colonial rule engaged in "divide and rule," by implementing policies that intentionally weakened indigenous power networks and institutions.

The fifth similarity was emphasis on exploitation of raw materials for export. Colonial regimes concentrated on finding and exploiting the most profitable natural resources in each colony. In mineral-rich colonies, the emphasis was placed on mining. In other territories, the colonial power identified agricultural products suitable for export to Europe. In either case, the emphasis was on developing the resources for export, not for local use or consumption. Profits from the export of mineral and agricultural goods were also sent to Europe. Profits that could have been used to promote social and economic development in the colonies were not available. The small taxes levied on exports went to support colonial rule.

The sixth major similarity was high demand for labor. Mining of minerals and the production of crops for export necessitated a ready supply of inexpensive labor. Consequently, colonial governments exerted considerable effort "recruiting" labor for these endeavors. Towards this at times colonial governments resorted to policies of forced labor in order to provide adequate labor for mines and plantations. At other times, their tactics were not as harsh, but in almost all situations, Africans labored in poor working conditions, for long hours, with inadequate pay. The demand for labor also resulted in large-scale movements of people from areas that were not involved in colonial production to areas, including new urban areas, where colonial production occurred.

## **3.2 The Colonial State Structure and Their Impacts**

The colonial states created new governments, political practices, and institutions in Africa. These practices and institutions were passed on to the new governments at independence. This section will focus on the colonial state structure and its political, economic and social heritages that are important to understanding politics and government in post-colonial Africa.

### **3.2.1 The Colonial State Structure**

Two centuries ago at the end of the slave trade, when Europeans began to move into the interior of Africa for the first time, they used the term "tribe" to describe the groups of Africans with whom they came into contact. They used this term because they thought that all non-European peoples organized themselves into "tribes." Whatever the reason, it is clear the Europeans viewed "tribal" organization as less modern than European social and political organizations. Europe in the 19th century was organized into nation-states; Europeans considered "tribal" organization to be less modern, even "primitive," in comparison to a "nation-state." The belief that African societies were "tribal" in structure impacted the way in which colonial governance was organized. Although colonialism used the denial of African history to establish the necessity of the "white man's burden" and the "mission civilatrice", much is known about political system and governance in pre-colonial Africa. The political systems varied from highly centralized (kingdoms and empires) to highly decentralized political structures. Thus Prior to European conquest and occupation, Africa comprised of a mosaic of lineage and clan groups, city-states, kingdoms, empires, and acephalous states whose boundaries were not clearly defined or fixed". Moreover, they also characterized by autonomous, stable and democratically governed political systems devoid of dishonesty or corruption.

But these institutions and values were destroyed by colonialism replacing them with new colonial multiethnic provinces. During this period, existing African societies and cultures were divided into approximately fifty political units with clearly defined boundaries. In other words "Traditional political and social structures, incorporating a moral universe often based on the assumption of the existence of kin and blood relationships with other members of the immediate community and its polity, were either overlaid or replaced by a new abstract colonial state whose extensive rights were founded on an impersonal doctrine of sovereignty quite alien to most African cultures". They did so

with little regard for the people living in the newly controlled areas, or for existing geographic or cultural boundaries. Populations that had previously identified themselves as distinct, based on their cultural, ethnic, and/or religious heritage, were forced to unify under a single national identity. The new multiethnic colonial territories were maintained, upheld, and controlled through the use of violence, and through the implementation of imperialist policies. Certain populations were denied their political, economic, social, and human rights. Imperialist policies promoted ethnic rivalry by favoring one group above the others, distributed resources in an unequal manner, disallowed democratic governments, and prohibited local participation in governmental decisions and actions.

The state that developed during colonialism reflected neither Western values, nor African ones. Unlike Belgium, Britain or France where the majority of the citizens could vote for their leaders, Africans were oppressed under the guise of "law and order." Africans did not develop any affinity with the new institutions, since these were used to oppress them. Their own indigenous institutions were dismissed as "useless" and "backward".

State formation in pre-colonial Africa, as elsewhere, was an internal evolutionary and revolutionary process that involves conquest and assimilation of groups by stronger groups. The attributes of a state, namely: an autonomous government, a national foundation based on a population of citizens and a definite territory, are the end result of this process. However, unlike the pre-colonial state the colonial state in African did not emerge from an internal evolutionary and revolutionary process. It was externally and forcefully imposed as an instrument of suppression, not of governance.

The colonial state lacked the attributes of a state. It had no autonomous government; the territorial boundaries were arbitrary and therefore uncertain while the people within the territory were regarded as subjects, not citizens and so it also lacked a national foundation. In this regard Crawford Young has argued quite forcefully that the African colonial state derives its peculiarity from the fact that it enjoyed only some of the crucial attributes of the modern state (territory, population, sovereignty, power, law, and the state as nation, an international actor, and an idea) and could not exercise some of its imperatives (hegemony, autonomy, security, legitimacy, revenue, and accumulation). This is because the colonial state in Africa was created in the late nineteenth century; long after both the modern metropolitan state and the generic colonial state had been formed, which allowed for no

experimentation. Moreover, its territoriality was ambiguous, its sovereignty and institutions of rule were extraverted and resided in the imperial metropole, and its revenue base was weak. Charged with the onerous tasks of consolidating colonial rule, linking the colony to the metropole, and establishing or promoting colonial capitalism, the result was that the colonial state was both interventionist and fragile, authoritarian and weak, and exercised domination without hegemony, all of which ensured its eventual downfall.

Also, as a conquest state imposed by force, its hegemony was excessively coercive, so that it enjoyed little legitimacy. In order to perform its functions of suppressing a uneasy population of subjects and destroying their institutions and values and replacing them with those that are reflective of the colonizers needs and interest the colonial state used all the political economic, cultural, military and psychological instruments of oppression to weaken, kill the sense of self-worth, and zombiazed the Africans in to the living dead. Given the situation the colonial state could not but be authoritarian.

Since the colonial state was called upon by the peculiar circumstances of the colonial situation to carry out so many functions indeed to do everything it was all powerful. It needed to be all power not only to carry out its mission but also to survive along with the colonial order in the face of the resentment and the hostility of the colonised-the powers of the colonial state was not only absolute but also arbitrary. And so the structures of the colonial state-security forces, public administration, churches etc were designed to be authoritative since they were apparatuses of oppression and control rather than democratic governance and development.

### **3.2.2 The Political, Economic and Social Legacies of the Colonial States**

For a number of scholars' colonialism has had a powerful and lasting impact on Africa. For instance, Crawford Young states that Africa can neither be explained nor understood without first unraveling the continent's colonial experience. The colonial states created new governments, political practices, and political institutions in Africa. These practices and institutions were passed on to the new governments at independence. There are generally three aspects of the colonial political heritage that are important to understanding politics and government in post-colonial Africa.

### **3.2.2.1 The political legacy**

#### ***3.2.2.1.1 Application of the European Nation-State system to Africa***

The most far-reaching political-military impact of colonialism was the imposition of the European nation-state system onto the extremely rich and varied African political systems that existed during the pre-colonial independence era. The application of this system to Africa entailed the subdivision of the entire continent into separate colonies with clearly defined boundaries and centralized political authorities and with few exceptions, the boundaries of these colonial political units became the basis for the contemporary political map of Africa.

The imposition of the European nation-state system created series of artificial states that, unlike their counterparts in Europe, did not evolve gradually according to the wishes of local African peoples. They instead were constructed by European authorities with little concern for local socioeconomic or political-military conditions. As a result, the artificially created colonial territories bore little resemblance to the classic definition of a nation-state; one people or ethnic group (the nation) ruled by a legitimate centralized authority (the state). Moreover, the imposition of the European nation-state system resulted in the division of African ethnic groups among numerous colonial states and/or in the incorporation of Several African Nations into one State.

The Somali people of the Horn of Africa are a notable example for the first case. Previously united by a common culture but lacking a centralized authority, this classically segmented political system was subjugated and divided among four imperial powers. Britain's creation of Nigeria illustrates the incorporation of previously separate and highly diverse African peoples in one colonial state. Nigeria is composed of over 250 different ethnic groups. The post-colonial state, would find it a daunting task wielding these communities into one nation-state. Three major ethnic groups comprise roughly 66 percent of the total population and primarily reside in three geographical regions; the Igbo in the southeast, the Yoruba in the southwest and the Hausa/Fulani in the north. A number of practical challenges are associated with the creation and maintenance of such a territory. For example, how does one communicate effectively? Should all government documents be published in the four major languages or expanded to include the thirteen state languages or the fifty-four local languages? Which language should be used for political debate in the National Assembly? Must television and

radio broadcasting be transmitted in different languages? What should be the language of the nation's armed forces? Are some languages favored, providing a particular linguistic group an unfair advantage?

Moreover, In the case of Nigeria, religious diversity also posed a problem for the socio-political unity of the territory. Although numerous Nigerian ethnic groups adhered to a variety of traditional religions, the Hausa/Fulani had converted to Islam and the Yoruba had converted to Christianity. During colonial rule, social and political identity became fragmented by the imposition of "Nigeria", a concept that initially meant nothing to the diverse ethnic members of the new colonial state. How would individuals describe themselves over time? Am I British? Am I Nigerian? Am I Igbo? Or am I some combination of all or some of these identities?

The most notable challenge associated with the creation of these artificial colonial states was the potential clash between highly diverse political cultures. In the case of Nigeria, the hierarchical political culture of the Hausa/Fulani clashed with the egalitarian political culture of the Igbo. The Hausa/Fulani political culture demanded complete submission of its subjects to the proclamations of the emir (king), whereas the Igbo political culture considered it the citizen's duty to publicly challenge and criticize the errors of his leaders. A Hausa/Fulani subject was expected to bow face down, his nose touching the ground, as a sign of his deference. An Igbo would never bow. The political ramifications of these differences, especially when one multiplies them by the over 250 ethnic groups that compose Nigeria, were enormous even under the best of circumstances. The worst-case scenario emerged on May 30, 1967-70, when the Igbo formally seceded from Nigeria and declared an independent Igbo country known as Biafra. A brutal three-year civil war followed (1967-70), in which an ultimately victorious Nigerian military government that undertook a devastating policy of starvation designed to bring the secessionist Igbo's to their knees.

#### ***3.2.2.1.2 Authoritarian Political Legacy***

A final political-military impact of colonialism was an authoritarian legacy that permeated all aspects of political life. This is closely associated with the destruction and dismantling of the traditional checks-and-balances that regulated political systems during the precolonial independence

era. Traditional leaders answered to the political norms and customs of their individual societies during the precolonial independence era, the creation of the colonial state meant that the ultimate source of power became the European colonial administrator. In most cases, the European administrators would appoint only those Africans who pledged unswerving allegiance to the colonial power. Even under the British model of indirect rule, highly popular traditional rulers who were kept in power by British colonial administrators often saw their traditional power base deteriorate. Tensions frequently arose when the demands of British colonialism ran counter to the interests of the local population and the local ruler had to choose between siding with his people and risking removal from office or siding with the colonial authoritarian African leaders could count on remaining in power as long as they served the interests of the European colonial power. In a normally functioning democracy, the legitimacy of the state is based on the consent of the governed. The primary objective of the colonial state, however, was to achieve and maintain European domination. This authoritarian model of state-society relations became known as Bula Matari (“he who breaks all rocks”). In the context of state-society relations, Bula Matari embodied the vision of a state “which crushes all resistance.”

A coercive apparatus of police and military forces was created in every colony with the intention of ensuring local compliance with colonial rules and regulations. Success was achieved through a conscious policy of divide-and-rule. The coercive nature of colonial police and military forces contributed to the creation of an authoritarian environment that carried over into the contemporary independence era. The first generation of African elites, who were trained in this colonial system and who led their countries to independence, tended to create single-party political systems that banned political dissent. This authoritarian trend was matched by an explosion of military coups in the 1960s that replaced civilian regimes with various military forms of governance.

### **3.2.2.2 Socio-economic Impacts of Colonialism**

#### ***3.2.2.2.1 Creation of Closed Economic Systems***

In the aftermath of the imposition of direct colonial rule, colonial administrators oversaw the destruction of regional economic ties through the transformation of individual colonies into closed economic systems. Colonial administrators sought to ensure that all economic interaction within a given empire took place exclusively between the European colonial power and its colonies. In the case of the German colony of Togoland, German colonial administrators strove to eliminate cross-

border trade with the neighboring British colony of the Gold Coast (Ghana) and the neighboring French colonies of Dahomey (Benin) and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) and instead fostered strong exclusive economic ties with Germany. Company rule was one of the defining elements of the closed economic model.

The most important impact of these closed trading systems was that all regional trade, except that which took place in individual empires, was virtually destroyed as illustrated by the decline of the trans-Saharan trade network. Regional trade that once crisscrossed the Sahara desert was gradually replaced by the shipping of products from the interior to the coastal regions of individual colonies, for eventual transshipment to Europe and other outposts of the global European empires. As a result, the once vibrant outposts of the Sahara desert, such as the fabled city of Timbuktu, which were built on regional trade and economic development, entered a period of socioeconomic decline as their function as trade posts gradually disappeared. Indeed, one could associate emerging notions of the Sahara desert as a barrier to regional trade and investment with the gradual destruction of the trans-Saharan trade network at the end of the nineteenth century.

#### ***3.2.2.2 Creation of Export-Oriented Mono-Crop or Mono-Mineral Economies***

A second socioeconomic impact of colonialism was the transformation of individual colonies into export-oriented economies that, in the extreme, produced one primary product desired by the European colonial power. These so-called mono-crop economies or mono-mineral economies were designed to serve as convenient and cheap sources of raw materials for European industry once developed; the colonies were also expected to serve as markets for the sale of manufactured goods produced in Europe and other regions of the widely scattered European empires.

The promotion of mono-crop or mono-mineral colonial economies entailed serious costs from the local African populations and hindered the long-term economic development of the African continent. First, an economy geared toward the production of a primary product is vulnerable to the unreliability of international prices for that product. The economic history of the second half of the twentieth century clearly demonstrates that the prices for primary products fluctuate dramatically and in general have gradually declined relative to the costs of manufactured products. As a result, something as simple as estimating government revenues from taxes to ensure a variety of government services becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible.

A second important point revolves around the negative relationship between the promotion of primary products and food production. Specifically, the creation of mono-crop and mono-mineral colonial economies was directly associated with a decline in the production of traditional foodstuffs. This agricultural shortcoming carried over into the contemporary independence era as levels of food production declined relative to the needs of growing populations, contributing to malnutrition and chronic famine conditions in various regions,

#### ***3.2.2.2.3 Promotion of Perverse infrastructural Development***

A third socioeconomic impact of colonialism was the perverse development of the infrastructure, such as railroads and telecommunications, critical to economic development. An analysis of the railroad sector offers some telling insights. The colonial railroads were designed to haul primary products to the coast for eventual export to Europe and other geographical regions of the European empires.

The export-oriented railroad systems also fostered the growth of other perverse forms of infrastructural development. For example, the primary reason Bamako became the capital of Mali was its strategic location at the end of the Dakar-Bamako railway line. Indeed, the importance of the railroad as one of the cornerstones of the colonial economy ensured that, roads, telephone lines, and small towns would eventually be built along the main railway line.

Inappropriately designed infrastructure contributed to the uneven development of the African colonies, prompting some colonial observers to speak of the creation of dual economies, the first revolving around a European induced cash economy and the second revolving around African subsistence farming.

#### ***3.2.2.2.3 Authoritarian Legacy of the State***

A final socioeconomic impact of colonialism was an authoritarian legacy that permeated all aspect of economic life. The most evil side of this legacy was the institution of forced labor to ensure that sufficient numbers of farmers and workers were available to meet the needs of the colonial economy, such as tending plantation crops, working at the mines, and constructing roads and railroads.

Britain abolished forced labor in its colonies in 1923 but retained another less intrusive-yet nonetheless authoritarian-element of the colonial economy: marketing boards. This colonial economic institution, adopted in varying forms by all colonial powers, maintained monopolistic control over the buying and selling of primary products in each colony. Each year the board would determine a set price to be paid to farmers for a specific amount of a product. Lacking alternatives, the farmers had no choice but to sell their goods through the colonial marketing board. The most egregious injustice of this economic relationship was the marketing board practice of purchasing products at prices well below that of the international market. In turn, the marketing board would then sell the product at a handsome profit the colonial authority.

Although the most coercive elements of the colonial economy, such as forced labor, were eventually abolished, the coercive role of the state in the economic arena carried over into the contemporary independence era. During the first three decades of this era, most African policy makers oversaw the strengthening of state involvement in the economy. an important element of state economic involvement was the creation and rapid expansion of government-owned or government-controlled corporation (known as “parastatals”) in all sectors of the economy, especially telecommunications, energy, and transportation. The often corrupt and inefficient nature of these corporations contributed in the 1980s to what is now commonly called the “crisis of the African state” the increasing inability of the independent successor of the colonial state to respond to the day –to –day needs of African populations. The scope and impact of the political and economic legacies of the colonial state remain paramount issues at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

### **3.3 Nationalism and Decolonization**

#### **3.3.1 Trends of African Nationalism**

The concept of nationalism is defined as a sense of collective identity in which a people perceives itself as different than (and often superior to) others peoples. Nationalism also implies the existence of a variety of shared characteristics, most notably a common language and culture, but also race and religion, as shown by the rise of Islamic revivalist movements in North Africa and other regions of the world with sizable Muslim populations.

The emergence of African nationalism and African demands for national self-determination (independence) of individual colonies followed a different pattern than its classic European counterparts of earlier centuries. The emergence of European “nations” (i.e. cohesive group identities) generally preceded and contributed to the creation of European “states” (the structures of governance). The net result was the creation of viable nation-states that enjoyed the legitimacy of their peoples. This process was reversed in Africa. In most cases, the colonial state was created before any sense of nation existed. As a result, the creation and strengthening of a nationalist attachment to what in essence constituted artificially created African states became one of the supreme challenges of colonial administrators and the African leaders who replaced them during the contemporary independence era.

A second unique aspect of African nationalism was its inherently anti-colonial character. African nationalist movements were sharply divided on political agendas, ideological orientation, and economic programs. Regardless of their differences, however, the leaders of these of these movements did agree on one point: the necessity and desirability of independence from foreign control.

The process of decolonization unfolded gradually in a series of waves, beginning in the 1950s with groups of countries becoming independent during specific historical periods. Three countries, however, differed in this regard. Ethiopia was never colonized despite being occupied by fascist Italy from 1936 to 1941 during World War II. Liberia constituted at best a “quasi-American colony” that never fell under the direct authority of the U.S. government. Instead, the country, principally founded in 1822 by freed American slaves, declared independence in 1847 and successfully avoided European colonization. Egypt, too, held a unique position in African history. Despite being subjected to British colonial rule, Egypt achieved its independence in 1922.

The first wave of independence took place during the 1950s and was led by the heavily Arab-influenced North African countries of Libya (1951), Morocco (1956), and Tunisia (1956). Three countries outside North Africa also obtained independence during this period: the former British colonies of the Sudan in 1956 and the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1957, followed by the former French colony of Guinea in 1958.

The second wave of independence took place during the 1960s, when more than thirty African countries achieved independence. Most of these countries were former British and French colonies in East, Central, and West Africa. All three Belgian colonies Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo-Kinshasa) also acquired independence during this period and were joined by the Republic of Somalia, which represented a federation of the former British and Italian Somaliland territories. Aside from some noteworthy exceptions, most notably France's unsuccessful attempt to defeat a pro-independence guerrilla insurgency in Algeria, the decolonization process of the 1960s was also largely peaceful. The departing colonial powers had already accepted the inevitability of decolonization. Questions simply remained as to when and under what conditions.

The third wave of independence began in 1974. A military coup d'état in Portugal, led by junior military officers, resulted in a declaration that the Portuguese government intended to grant immediate independence to the colonies in Africa. Coup plotters sought to end what they perceived as a series of African military quagmires that pitted poorly trained and unmotivated Portuguese military forces against highly motivated and increasingly adept African guerrilla insurgencies; the Frente de Libertacao de Mozambique (FRELIMO, Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) in Mozambique, the Partido Africano da Independencia da Guine e Cabo Verde (PAIGC, Independence African party of Guinea and Cape Verde) in Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde, and three guerrilla groups in Angola—the Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (FNLA, National Front for the Liberation of Angola), the Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (UNTA, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), and the Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA, popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola). The violent path to independence in the former Portuguese colonies was further complicated in 1975, when Angolan guerrilla groups clashed in what would become an extended civil war over who would lead an independent Angola. The former French colonies of Comoros (1975), Seychelles (1972), and Djibouti (1977), however, achieved independence under largely peaceful terms.

The fourth wave of independence emerged during the 1980s. Except for the unique case of Eritrea, which gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993, this wave was directed against the minority white-ruled regimes in Southern Africa. Since 1948, South Africa was controlled by the descendants

of white settlers known as Afrikaners. These minority elite established a highly racist system known as apartheid (apartness) in which blacks and other minorities (roughly 85 percent of the population) were denied political rights. The apartheid system was eventually exported to the former German colony of Namibia after it became a South African mandate territory in the aftermath of World War I. White settlers in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) led by Ian Smith in 1965 instituted a regional variation of apartheid after they announced their Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from British colonial rule.

The minority white-ruled regimes of Southern Africa were confronted by guerrilla organizations that enjoyed regional and international support: the African national Congress (ANC) and the Pan-African Congress (PAC) in South Africa, the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia, and the Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Organization (SWAPO) IN Namibia, and the Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in Zimbabwe. In all three cases, military struggles were suspended after the white minority regimes agreed to negotiate transitions to black majority rule, Zimbabwe's transition to black majority rule in 1980 was followed by the creation of multiparty and multiracial democracies in Namibia in 1990 and south Africa in 1994 Except for some small coastal enclaves in Morocco (most notably Ceuta and Melilla) that remain under Spanish sovereignty, Nelson Mandela's emergence in 1994 as the first democratically elected leader of South Africa signaled the end of the decolonization process and the transition to the contemporary independence era.

### **3.3. 2 Domestic Influences on the Rise of Nationalism**

The socioeconomic and political military systems of the pre-colonial independence era underwent immense social change due to the imposition of colonial rule. Although the principal duty of colonial administrators was to ensure European domination in the colonies, social changes unleashed by colonial rule unconsciously sowed the seeds for colonial demise. Three patterns of social change in particular contributed to the rise of African nationalism and African demands for decolonization.

The first one is the Creation of Administrative Centers and the Rise of Urbanization. The creation of the colony itself, most notably the designation of regional administrative centers and a capital city,

played an important initial role in providing the basis for the emergence of nationalism. The urban areas served as magnets for Africans seeking employment and education, contributing to a process of urbanization in which Africans moved in increasing numbers from the country side to the capital cities and towns. In short, those who desired political and economic success in the colonial states were invariably drawn to emerging administrative centers.

The new towns served as the focal points of emerging national identities. In contrast to the relatively homogeneous nature of life in the villages, the colonial towns served as meeting grounds for the numerous ethnic groups that inhabited individual colonies. The towns served as “melting pots” in the sense that diverse ethnic cultures were gradually overshadowed by a sense of belonging to a larger political unit. Simply put, the colonial towns fostered the emergence of an overarching national culture and language while individuals maintained their specific cultural attachment, just as the separate ingredients of a mixed salad maintain their distinct flavors.

The promotion of educational training for select groups of Africans served as a second pattern of social change that contributed to the rise of nationalism. The practical problem colonial administrators confronted was that the small number of Europeans posted in each colony could not manage all aspects of the colonial economic and political systems. To ensure effective rule, colonial administrators oversaw a series of educational programs designed to train the local peoples in the language and philosophy of the colonial power; create an auxiliary technical staff capable of performing a variety of technical tasks, such as accounting, plumbing, and electrical work; and train an elite to collaborate with the colonial powers. Each colony therefore went beyond the traditional literacy programs of missionaries by creating grade schools, high schools, and technical training institutes.

Colonial education served as one of the seeds of nationalism that contributed to colonialisms’ ultimate demise. Small numbers of secondary schools for the most part located in the capital city meant that students selected by colonial administrators would arrive from all regions of the colony. As a result, students who had most likely never traveled outside their villages and who had rarely if ever met students their own ages from other ethnic groups suddenly found themselves in new surroundings with students from all over the colony. As time went by, friendships were created that

transcended ethnic lines. Students began seeing themselves as part of a larger entity (the colony) that was multiethnic.

The sense of belonging to something larger than a particular ethnic group developed further when students were sent to study at regional colonial schools. African students sent to Paris, London, and the capitals of other colonizing powers to pursue advanced education and training perhaps impacted nationalist demands for independence most. Africans studying abroad were also directly exposed to the inherent contradictions between the colonizer's democratic heritage and traditions and the reality of authoritarian rule at home in the colonies. Indeed, regardless of whether they studied in Paris, Brussels, London, Lisbon, Madrid, or Rome, African students were inevitably confronted by the chasm that existed between the practice of democracy in Europe and the undemocratic realities of day-to-day life in the colonies.

The Formation and Spread of Voluntary Associations was the third factor. The emergence of voluntary associations also contributed to the rise of nationalist demands for independence. The initial rise of voluntary associations was based on the willingness of individuals to join groups and cooperate to achieve a certain goal. The proliferation of such groups was especially tied to the urbanization process. Individuals uprooted from the familiar setting of the village or simply interested in meeting people with shared interests joined a wide variety of organizations in rapidly expanding urban areas.

The vast numbers of voluntary associations could be divided into two major types, the first of which was based on ethnicity. One common example of the ethnic voluntary associations that remain influential today is a mutual aid society. A mutual aid society essentially served as a social welcome wagon and social welfare system for individuals who arrived in town from the village. Membership in the second type of voluntary association was based on an individual's specific functional interest. Functional voluntary associations transcended ethnic divisions by bringing together individuals who shared a profession, such as nurses, or a social interest, such as playing soccer. Some of these societies were even based on an individual's perceived social standing in the colony.

The spread of voluntary associations during the colonial era played three roles in the rise of nationalist sentiment and African demands for independence from colonial rule. First, the voluntary associations served as meeting grounds where issues related to colonialism and independence could be discussed. Voluntary associations also provided the organizational and leadership training for those individuals who led their countries to independence. “Most of the early nationalist leaders were people who had benefited from the educational programs of the urban associations,” experience of politics and organization through their involvement in these secondary organization.” Most important, voluntary associations served as ready-made organizational structures for nationalist movements.

### **3.3.3 International Influences on the Rise of Nationalism**

The process of social change taking place in each of the colonies was also influenced by developments in the international environment. Four sets of international influences in particular contributed to the rise of African nationalism and African demands for independence from colonial rule.

The first one is Spread of Pan-Africanism. Inspired by the anti-colonial and antiracist activities of peoples of African descent living in North America, the West Indies, and Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth century’s, African leaders sought to promote a unified African front against colonial rule.

Fascist Italy’s 1935 invasion of Ethiopia marked a turning point. Foreign occupation of a country that served as a “proud symbol of African independence and black achievement” had a “resounding impact” on Africans and members of the African Diaspora.

The outbreak of two world wars in Europe served as a second international influence that contributed to the rise of African demands for independence from colonial rule. Each of the colonial powers maintained standing armies composed primarily of African recruits, several of which clashed during skirmishes on the African continent during World War I. During World War II, African conscripts played an increasing important combat role in the European theater, especially in the case of France. The most decisive impact of African soldiers fighting in Europe was the shattering of

colonially inspired images of whites as invincible and all powerful. Indeed, many African soldiers concluded that Africans were militarily superior to Europeans in terms of both courage and valor.

The decolonization of Asia constituted a third international trend with implications for the rise of African nationalism. Numerous Asian countries became independent during the 1940s, providing an important “demonstration effect” for African nationalist movements. For those seeking independence by peaceful means, the experience of India under the leadership of Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948) served as a tremendous inspiration. For those nationalist leaders who believed that armed struggle was the only recourse to the intransigence of the colonial powers, inspiration was drawn from the success of Asian liberation movements. African nationalist movements were particularly affected by the dramatic 1954 defeat of French military forces at Dien Bin Phu: a geographical name that became synonymous with the beginning of French withdrawal from Indochina and eventual independence for the former French colonies of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

A final international trend with important implications for the emergence of African demands for independence was the shift in the structure of the international system. The end of World War II left European colonial powers economically, politically, and militarily devastated. Their power had been eclipsed by the rise of the United States and the former Soviet Union as the unparalleled superpowers of the post-World War II era. As a result, the center of gravity for African nationalist’s intent on seeking independence for their respective colonies gradually shifted toward Moscow and Washington.

The Soviet Union in many respects enjoyed several advantages over the United States and the European colonial powers during the initial stages of the cold war. First, neither the Soviet Union nor its communist allies had ever been colonial powers in Africa. The history of the Soviet Union, at least from the vantage point of the 1950s and the 1960s, suggested that following the Soviet economic model could lead to rapid industrialization and socioeconomic and military aid to liberation movements, most notably those opposed to white minority rule in Southern Africa. This later activity in particular earned high marks among African leaders who, regardless of ideology,

shared the goal of eradicating all remaining forms of colonialism and apartheid on the African continent.

African nationalists were also drawn to the United States due to the vocal anti-colonial rhetoric of American policymakers. The United States especially captured the imagination of African nationalists in 1941, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt enunciated the principles associated with the Atlantic charter, the most important of which underscored strong U.S. support for the self-determination of African people's self-determination of African peoples from colonial rule. With the intensification of the cold war, however, the United States was increasingly perceived by African nationalists as too closely tied to the interests of the colonial powers. Indeed, when African demands for decolonization clashed with policies considered crucial to U.S. security interests in Europe, U.S. policymakers often sided with Europe at the expense of Africa.

#### **🔗 Self test exercises**

Write an essay on each of the following questions

1. How did the Atlantic Slave Trade started, maintained, and ended?
2. How and why European nations did colonized Africa?
3. What consequences and changes did colonialism brought in Africa?
4. What was the transition like from colonialism to independence in Africa?
5. What are legacies of the colonial period that Africa still has to deal with?

## **Unit Four**

### **The Post Independence Period**

#### **Introduction**

Dear student, welcome to the fourth unit of the module on African politics and international relations. Independence brought great joy to the people of each country that gained independence. There was great optimism that after decades of foreign rule, political freedom and independence would provide a voice for all citizens in the political process. Moreover, there was wide-spread belief that with independence, the new African governments would be able to use political and economic resources to provide their citizens with basic social and economic services: education, health care, housing, employment. The new nation-states of Africa, following the example of nation-

states in other regions of the world, developed special symbols to represent their unity and sovereignty.

Retrospectively speaking, however, what happened in Africa is just the opposite. Since colonialism, African states have frequently been hampered by instability, corruption, violence, and authoritarianism. Few of them have been able to sustain democratic governments on a permanent basis, and many have instead cycled through a series of coups, producing military dictatorships. Instability ensued in many African states owing to the politicization of ethnicity. In many countries, the military was perceived as being the only group that could effectively maintain order, and it ruled many nations in Africa during the 1970s and early 1980s. During the period from the early 1960s to the late 1980s, Africa had more than 70 coups and 13 presidential assassinations. Border and territorial disputes were also common, with the European-imposed borders of many nations being widely contested through armed conflicts.

In order to give you a systematic perspective on the post colonial evolution of the African continent we will address four important issues, namely: the post colonial African inheritance, the demise of democracy and the turn towards authoritarianism, military intervention and regime types in post colonial Africa. In the first section, the focus is on the political legacy of colonialism on the post colonial order. This will be followed by a discussion on the demise of democracy which attempts to address questions like why did most African countries turn towards authoritarianism in just a decade or so? The third section of this unit deals with the phenomenon of military intervention and the modalities of civil military relations in Africa. The last section of this unit is devoted to the discussion of regime types. We hope that, in this unit, you will have the opportunity to explore the different issues that shaped the African political landscape in the post colonial period in a comparative manner.

#### **4.1 The post-colonial African inheritance**

##### **Overview**

In 1960s most, African countries got independence from colonialism and become sovereign entities. The biggest job ahead of the new African states were bringing accelerated socio-economic development and creating a sense of nationhood out of the diverse people lumped together by the

colonial powers. In their bid to achieve socio-economic development and building a nation state out of the diverse groups artificially brought together by colonialism they were challenged by a number of barriers. These challenges have to do with the shared legacy of colonialism. This section is devoted to the discussion of the challenges commonly faced by the newly independent African states in their attempt to achieve the cherished goals of nation building and economic development.

#### **4.1.1 The post-colonial African inheritance**

The first generation of African leaders, who took office at the beginning of the 1950's, was immediately challenged by what can be termed as the great expectation- minimal capabilities paradox. The newly elected leaders had to contend with popular expectations that the fruits of independence, most notably higher wages and better living conditions, would be quickly and widely shared after the departure of the colonial governments. However, they had mostly not been adequately trained by the colonial government and had limited experience of operating a governmental system on a national scale. In almost every case African governments did not have the capability to satisfy public demands. A vitally important question was whether these new rulers would be able to adapt to their own purposes the structures of power established within the former colonial state.

At the heart of the crisis of statehood of the African state is the nature of the state apparatus inherited from colonialism. This has to do with the fact that the colonial state is an artificial entity whose raison d'être is the extraction of surplus from the colony. It was a very minimal state concerned with the maintenance of law and order and the collection of taxation. Central to the whole project of the colonial state was cost minimization. As a result of the colonial project not all the branches of government are equally developed. The executive branch, the extractive organs concerned with the collection of taxation and the coercive branch (the military) were well developed as this apparatus were very important for the maintenance of the colonial state. On the other hand, the state apparatus which is supposed to provide social services was underdeveloped. What this means is that, the colonial state has no developmental function. It is neither accountable to the populous nor administered in the interest of the colonized. At independence the new generation of African states

inherited such a perverted state apparatus which militated in many ways against the goals of socio-economic development and nation building.

Unfortunately, the new rulers did not also inherit the administrative capacity needed to work either these institutions or the new institutions (such as a large number of parastatal bodies) which they themselves created, although this was essential if they were to withstand the intense societal pressures to which they were subjected by universally enfranchised electorates. Trained and experienced manpower was in short supply, and in some cases the shortage was critical.

Owing to the economic legacy of colonialism, the post colonial African states were integrated in to the international economy as producers of primary commodities. In addition to being heavily dependent on the former colonizers for trade, investment, and even personnel to staff key governmental positions, African leaders were often constrained by export oriented mono-crop and mono-mineral economies, low levels of education among the general population, and perverse infrastructural development favoring maintenance of external links at the expense of national development and regional cooperation.

African leaders, anxious to end their dependence on primary produce, sought to diversify their economics, with industrialization as a favored strategy. Industrialization in Africa (as distinct from the West) did not have healthy social pluralistic effects through the creation of new interest groups. On the contrary, the prevailing pattern of social inequality was deepened and increased social conflict resulted. This conflict was expressed in ethnic or regional linguistic terms, though the real competition was over educational opportunity, jobs and government contracts, and the provision of roads, bridges and hospitals.

Initially, the main problems that confronted Africa's new state leaders were not those of economic development primarily, but much more urgently those of legitimacy. They had to establish their right to rule in culturally diverse societies which were rent by social cleavage and were characterized, as a result of the differential impact of colonialism and capitalism, by varying levels of political and economic development. The communal challenge took various forms, including acute ethnic rivalry (as in Rwanda and Burundi): disaffection on the part of ethnic minorities (such as the Kalenjin in

Kenya under Jomo Kenyatta's presidency); regional pressure for a federal form of government or even for secession (as exerted by the Eritreans in Ethiopia); and movements for self-determination by people divided by artificial and colonial-imposed boundaries (as with the Somalis in the Horn of Africa).

The governments to which power was being transferred could not, like the colonial governments, stand outside the societies which they ruled. The imminence of independence often excited demands on the part of particular communities' which lacked confidence in the impartiality of the new government, and led them to try to maximize their position, constitutionally or otherwise, within the emergent state. In Ghana, for instance, the NLM was founded with the backing of the *Asantehene* and the great majority of Ashanti chiefs, and it linked up with the NPP and other regionally based parties to demand a federal constitution. *Buganda*, the seat of another powerful traditional kingdom, posed an even greater threat to the integrity of Uganda, the state to which it was destined to belong. *Barotseland* in Northern Rhodesia provides a third example of a community with a strong traditional base seeking to secure a privileged constitutional status within the newly independent Zambian state.

While tradition bolstered regional demands in each of these cases, it is important to stress that factor other than the traditional, or in addition to traditional, lay behind the existence of sub-national loyalties. Ashanti, Buganda and Barotseland each sought not only to retain its separate customs and traditions, but also to secure access to political power and economic resources. Again, sub national loyalties might flourish without there being a centralized traditional unit upon which they could build, although, in general, the absence of strong sub national units facilitated (as in Tanganyika) the process of nation-building. The Ibo in Eastern Nigeria and the Kikuyu in Kenya both lacked a centralized authority, yet in 1967 the Ibo sought to secede from Nigeria and establish the new state of Biafra, while the Kikuyu not only constituted the spearhead of the nationalist movement but, under the presidency of Kenyatta (1964-78), came to dominate Kenyan politics to an extent which alienated the *Luo* and other ethnic groups.

African leaders, according to Peter J Schrader, resolved such paradox by way of creating a strong state which addresses the need for rapid socio-economic development, the creation of a sense of nation out of the diverse ethnic groups and the maintenance of political military order. This process

resulted in the authoritarian model state society relations known as *Bula Matari* (*he who rocks will break*). Six distinct patterns illustrate the ways in which the concentration of state power gradually unfolded throughout the African continent from the 1950's to 1970's.

The first and most immediately visible form of state concentration of power involved the *Africanisation of state institutions*: the replacement of departing colonial administration with African politicians and civil servants. African leaders also sought to strengthen state power by expanding the number of civil servants working in various bureaucracies of the executive branch. Such positions were highly popular due to the popular perception of the state as the most lucrative source of wage employment and privileges. From the states perspectives the doling out of ever increasing number of jobs was an important sources of political patronage intended to win public approval.

The creation and expansion of state-owned corporations known as parastatals underpinned the second dimension of the concentration of power of power. The process of bureaucratic expansion was further fueled by the nationalization of foreign corporations. One of the most common forms of parastatals was the marketing boards, a state agency that set the prices and maintained monopolistic control over buying and selling of primary products. The purpose generally, speaking, is obtaining power, but equally important is the economic gain one derives from the revenues of all these activities.

Third, many African governments concentrated power by undertaking presidential actions (the executive branch) designed to limit, and in some cases completely destroy, the ability of other actors to challenge the supremacy of presidential powers. African leaders sought to create highly centralized states in which the executive power reigned supreme. Institutional checks and balances were also dismantled via the marginalization and sometimes even the disbanding of the judiciary. The dismantling usually culminated in the outlawing of all opposition parties and the creation of single party systems subservient to the president.

Third, the fact that African leaders tend to concentrate power in presidential mansions has led to the cooptation and silencing of civil society. This process culminated in the disappearance of the independent press and civil society associations like trade unions, student unions, ethnic

associations, and etc. Fourth, leader's intent on dismantling institutional checks and balances and silencing outspoken elements of civil society depended on loyal military troops and police forces that are willing and able to enforce presidential directions. As a result, the creation and rapid expansion of a coercive apparatus that included various security forces served as a critical component of the concentration of state power.

A final trend associated with the concentration of state power was the creation of personal rule networks often referred to by the Weberian concept of neo-patrimonialism: a system of governance in which power ultimately vested in an individual leader as opposed to legally based institutions. The system is based on a series of concentric circles of patron-client relationships in which the leader at the center of the system personally selects senior government appointees, who in turn select appointees, and so on. The leader is exalted in this system and seeks to instill loyalty through the provision of economic and political patronage. The inherently personal nature of patron-client systems ensures that they often do not survive the death of the leader. However as long as the leader can maintain the political and economic resources provided through patronage network, he can at least ensure his continued domination of the political system.

## **4.2 The turn towards authoritarianism and the demise of democracy**

### **Overview**

Africa inherited liberal democracy in its British, French, or Belgian version from the processes of decolonization. It was only in the last decade of colonialism, when independence became a certainty that the imperialist powers gradually began to institute democratic reforms in what had hitherto been structures of exploitation, despotism, and degradation. According to Robert Fatton, the transition from colonial despotism to liberal democracy was advanced in a few years without any fundamental transformation in the economic, cultural, or bureaucratic domains. In addition, as Robert Fatton argued, African leaders never fully accepted the precepts of the European political model, few were enthusiastic about it, and most tolerated it as means to a different end. The African commitment to liberal democracy, therefore, was shaky, hesitant, and ultimately short-lived. In this section an attempt will be made to introduce you to the democratization process which was initiated in the immediate aftermath of colonialism. In doing so special attention will be made to the reason as to

why African governments immediately abandoned liberal democracy and reverted back to authoritarian rule.

#### **4.2.1 The turn towards authoritarianism and the demise of democracy**

Democratic and authoritarian regimes may be distinguished both in terms of their objectives as well as the means to achieve them. Authoritarian regimes decide what is good for individuals. The ruling elite impose their values on society irrespective of its members' wishes. Authoritarian refers to a form of government which insists on unqualified obedience, conformity and coercion. It is in essence negation of democracy. When a regime exercises authority regardless of popular consent and with the help of force, it can be called authoritarian. Authoritarianism is a belief in or practice of government 'from above'.

As indicated above, Africa came of age in the decade of the 1960s when broad nationalist coalitions waging anti-colonial struggles defeated European colonial rule. With few exceptions, notably in the settler colonies of Algeria, Kenya, Southern Rhodesia, South Africa as well as the Portuguese colonies, the process of decolonization was remarkably straightforward and devoid of major violence. For the most part, it was characterized by piecemeal reformism rather than radicalism on the part of nationalist groups, who resorted to letter writing campaigns, deputations to London, Paris, Lisbon, etc., protest marches and rallies, boycotts of certain European merchants and goods, civil disobedience, etc.). The response of the colonial state was equally remarkable for its gradualism, reflected in the ceding of political ground by allowing groups to organize into competing political parties, registering voters, staging multiple competitive elections to fill positions in local, municipal and national legislatures or, as in the case of francophone Africa, to elect representatives to the French National Assembly, followed by internal self-government and finally independence.

Although the process was relatively benevolent one, as in much of Anglophone Africa, the colonial powers accepted the inevitability or the legitimacy of self-determination. These evolutionary political processes eventually culminated in the transfer of power to nationalist parties and leaders that succeeded in capturing legislative majorities in winner-take-all (majoritarian) pre-independence elections and the subsequent raising of new national flags, one of palpable symbols of national sovereignty in post-colonial Africa.

The departing colonialists bestowed to the new African leaders freshly minted liberal democratic constitutions with the usual guarantees of civil and political rights such as freedom of the press, freedom of expression, freedom of association and the right to political participation through voting and the holding of political office. As well, they left behind Westminster-type parliamentary institutions for Anglophone countries and, for Francophone states, presidential systems. In both cases, emerging legislatures consisted of a governing party and opposition parties in considerably weakened positions especially under the more presidential model of francophone Africa. Despite the preference for centralized systems of governance, some measure of decentralization was also introduced into new constitutions primarily through local government provisions.

The democratic forms of governance that were inherited by African states at independence were not only of the minimalist variety, but they were remarkably short-lived. Within a decade or so African governments adopted single party rule. In some Africa countries the multi party system was legally abolished through legislation. Examples include, Ghana, Zambia, and Tanzania which become a *dejure* one party states. In others the multipart party system was abolished indirectly through coercion and electoral fraud. In this *defacto* one party states informal mechanisms like the regulation of the registration opposition party members, the fact that national parties could only compete in elections, the requirement to open offices in all divisions of the country, the cooptation of the political opposition to join the ruling party was used to discourage the existence of opposition parties. In both cases the ultimate effect is the same, the disappearance of multiparty politics and the institutionalization of single party rule. According to William Tordoff, in francophone Africa owing to the inherited centralizing traditions of the French, most of them quickly turned to one party rule. Most ruling parties in francophone Africa rested on broad based voluntary acceptance. However, coercion and electoral fraud was applied in several states (for example, in Cameroon, Chad, Gabon and Togo) where opposition did not voluntarily accept a one-party state. Competitive party politics survived longer in few Anglophone African countries like Botswana, Mauritius and the Gambia.

The political leaders of this various states gave contradictory reasons for establishing one party rule. It was argued that, on the one hand a single party was necessary to control regional and ethnic divisions and curb factionalism, and on the other the single party reflected the basic consensus of the

African society. There was not only a move away from political pluralism and the concentration of power in the hands of a single party, but also the personalization of that power. In the great majority of cases, the party leader became president and constitutionally vested with executive power and increasingly inclined to take decisions without the concurrence of his cabinet and only after taking consultation with the leading organs of the party. In other cases, the ruling party itself was marginalized in the face of the ever-growing power of the president.

The increased limitation on the role of interest groups represents another trend towards authoritarianism and the case of trade unions is illustrative in this regard. The social economic reasons for the desire to put an end to the trade union movement was the position of the state as the chief employer of labour and therefore the desire to control wage demands: the inflationary effect on the economy of conceding to wage demands: and the possible political challenge that would be presented by an organized union against the government strongly entrenched in the urban area. The tactics employed to control the trade union included giving unruly leaders of trade unions positive rewards, perhaps in the form of ministerial and ambassadorial post, as well as invoking negative sanctions such as imprisonment, exile or the ending of legally protected privileges, to cause a split in the trade union by creating a rival union organization friendly to the government and etc.

In some cases, in what is often called competitive single party regimes, periodic elections were held within the framework of one-party rule. However, they were not free and fair. They were used as a tool of legitimacy and symbolic approval of the government's policy. This was followed by the increasing disappearance of civil and political rights like the rights to association and the political space needed for the existence of a strong civil society, independent media and the like. As soon as politically feasible or practicable, they were dismantled and replaced by authoritarian alternatives. The emerging African version of authoritarianism took the peculiar form of neo-patrimonial rule, characterized by personalization of authority, institutionalized relations of loyalty and dependence or construction of patron-client networks, systematic concentration of political power in the hands of one individual, a stubborn refusal to delegate, let alone share power, the cultivation of a cult of personality and aristocratic effects in both lifestyles and physical appearance, preferably stomachs protruding from "too much eating", supplemented by appropriation of various honorific titles (praise

names), and self-serving representations of leaders as father figures who knew what was best for their extended national households, etc.

It is noteworthy that one ostensible reason why democracy was abandoned was its perceived inability to produce desperately needed developmental outcomes. In fact, the two were regarded as antithetical in the African context. The apparent nationalist disregard for democracy grew out of a rather peculiar understanding of democracy as disputatious or inherently conflictual rather than as a mechanism for mediating competing claims to institutions and resources. During a critical juncture when nation building was a priority goal and time was considered of the essence, especially given Africa's undesirable inheritance at independence, democracy was considered a luxury the continent could ill afford. Rather than allowing African leaders the latitude to cut through the chase or being permissive of timely responses to serious societal problems, democracy was bound to restrict them through “endless, time-consuming, and fruitless” debates. Moreover, given that African societies were riddled with ethnic divisions with the potential for real and grave conflict, it was argued, they needed to be governed with a firm and steady hand. According to nationalist formulation, democratic liberties would only inflame ethnic rivalries, stimulate ethnic sub-national loyalties, as had happened in several countries during the run up to independence, and pose a danger to nation-state building or national integration.

The authoritarian alternative proved appealing for another reason. By fostering national integration and maintaining domestic harmony, African states expected to be spared the ruinous financial and manpower expenses of trying to put out ethnic fires once they had been lit by democratic liberties. The savings could then be used to respond to pressing social needs. Furthermore, it was suggested that democracy was alien to, hence incompatible with, traditional African political culture in which the chiefs or councils of elders embodied the collective interest and decided for their people. While Africa's social pluralism and inherited development deficits make some of these arguments attractive, the latter, in particular, conveniently overlooked Africa's own rich democratic tradition of consensual problem-solving through many hours of discussion or meetings in village squares or in chief's compounds. Traditional African political systems were infused with democratic values. Standards of accountability were even stricter than in Western societies.

Even if we accept the proposition that Africa's social pluralism poses a serious threat to governance, the remedy, as suggested earlier, are more, rather than less, democracy because, as Ake rightly asserted, "democracy implies precisely the assumption of differences to be negotiated, to be conciliated, to be moved into phases of higher synthesis. If there social pluralism is a problem in Africa that is in fact an argument for a democratic form of governance". What is more, as Claude Ake argued, Africa's participative culture is incompatible with the authoritarian model.

### **4.3 Military intervention in African politics**

#### **Overview**

African militaries emerged from the shadows of obscurity during the 1950s to become one of the most important institutional actors in African politics and society. The primary means for African military personnel to achieve power and influence over their respective political systems was the military coup d'état: the sudden and illegal overthrow of an existing government by a portion of the state's armed forces. By the end of the 1960s military leaders had launched over twenty five successful coups, ushering in a period of militarization that soon left more than 50 percent of all African countries governed by military regimes. Even in cases where they led their troops back to the barracks after turning over power to elected civilian regimes, military leaders maintained and often enhanced their new-found levels of political influence. Once having enjoyed the fruits of power, military leaders, often called the men on horseback, were prone to return to power in later coups, leading foreign observers to characterize African militaries as the primary forces for change throughout the African continent. By the beginning of the 1990s, however, the emergence of pro-democracy movements and several successful transitions to democracy led to a rebirth of civilian regimes intent on permanently returning African militaries to their barracks. The primary purpose of this section is to examine the nature and evolution of military intervention in African politics and society.

#### **4.3.1 Trends in Military Coups D'états**

Scholars overlooked the role of the military in African politics and society during the initial decade (the 1950) of the contemporary independence era. The militaries inherited by newly elected African leaders were usually small and lacked sophisticated weapons, such as armored vehicles, combat aircraft, and guided missile systems. African militaries were therefore more symbols of sovereignty

and independence than independent actors capable of influencing their political systems. Moreover, most African militaries played little if any role in the largely peaceful decolonization process of the 1950s. Even after military leaders overthrew five civilian governments from 1958 to 1965, scholars still perceived military coup d'état as mere deviations from the expected consolidation of multiparty democracies.

An early suspicion that the so-called deviations were becoming the norm of African politics occurred in 1966, when military coups overthrew eight civilian regimes. According to a series of statistical studies conducted by Patrick J. Mc Gowan and Thomas H. Johnson, the period 1956-2001 witnessed 188 attempted military coups, of which 80 (43 percent) were successful. If one also includes reported military plots in which coup leaders were arrested before they were able to launch any sort of military action, the total number of attempted coups during this same period rises to 372, and the success /failure ratio changes to 24 percent and 76 percent respectively.

Most African countries have experienced at least one successful military coup, and several have experience two or more. The pervasiveness of military leaders as the principal agents of regime change is demonstrated by the unfolding of eighty-six successful military coups from 1951 to 2002. Only six African countries Botswana, Cape Verde, Eritrea, Mauritius, Namibia, and South Africa have never faced armed challenges

Most coups share several characteristics. First, military leaders have been able to intervene successfully in their political systems due to the weak nature of the African state in the immediate post independence era. African states increasingly incapable of responding to their citizens fell prey to military leaders professing a special ability to undertake political – military reforms and socioeconomic development.

African coups are also similar in the sense that they are usually carried out by members of African armies, as opposed to other branches of the armed services, such as the air force or the navy. The only exceptions to this general rule are the successful coups in Ghana in 1979 and 1981 that were led by Air Force Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawling and the unsuccessful military bid for power in Kenya in 1982 that was led by the Air Force.

A third similarity involves what can be termed coups of descending order. The first coup that occurs in a country is usually led by the most senior members of the military establishment, most notably generals, who command the respect of lower-ranking military officers. Once they assume control of the political system, however, their refusal to relinquish the perks of their new found political power can lead to complaining in the lower ranks. The lower-ranking officers often regard their commanders as pursuing a lifestyle as bad as, if not worse than their deposed civilian counterparts.

The contagion effect (demonstration effect) constitutes a fourth common characteristic of military coups. The underlying principle of this phenomenon is that once a coup occurs in one country, there exists a greater possibility of a coup taking place in a neighboring country.

#### **4.3.2 Role of the Military in Political Governance**

The range of military involvement in African politics and society is best characterized as a spectrum of civil-military relations, ranging from little if any military involvement in the civilian realm at one extreme end of the spectrum to complete military domination of the civilian realm at the other end of the spectrum. Drawing on the work of J. Gus Liebenow, one can distinguish between five specific models of civil-military relations

##### ***4.3.2.1 Civilian Supremacy Model***

At one extreme is the civilian supremacy model in which the military is firmly under the control of civilian politicians. This is the model to and promoted by the western industrialized countries. Botswana offers the most clear-cut example of the civilian supremacy model.

##### ***4.3.2.2 Watchdog Model***

A military coup in Mali in 1991 reflected the watchdog model. A group of military officers headed by lieutenant Colonel Amadou Toumani Toure (nick named A.T.T) took power after President Moussa Traore's brutal suppression of a pro-democracy movement led to over 100 deaths and 700 wounded. Toure's forces arrested president Traore, formed a national Reconciliation Council, and pledged a return to democracy within 1 year. During the next 12 months, the military government convened a national conference that debated the outlines of a new democratic political system,

conducted a national referendum on a new constitution, and oversaw the holding of legislative and presidential elections of 2002.

#### ***4.3.2.3 Balance Wheel Model***

Unlike the short-term and limited nature of military involvement under the watchdog model, military leaders under the balance wheel model proclaim that full decision-making authority is vested in the military. However, the military leaders have neither the interest nor the ability to staff individual ministries and government offices with military bureaucrats. As a result, the actual running of government ministries is left in the hands of civilian bureaucrats.

The military government of Liberia, led by Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe from 1980 to 1986, is an example of the balance wheel model. After seizing power through a military coup, Doe created a people's Redemption Council (PRC), which underscored the supreme authority of the new military government. As explained by Liebenow, Doe's PRC had no intentions of immediately returning to the barracks in the aftermath of the 1980 coup. On the other hand, they recognized that they lacked the talents to perform the broad spectrum of duties which Liberians had come to associate with the government. This was signaled early by the cooptation of a number of prominent Liberian civilians to undertake many of the responsibilities with respect to economic development, foreign affairs, health delivery, and other governmental functions.

#### ***4.3.2.4 Direct Rule Model***

The military officers who adhere to the direct rule model of civil-military relations assume that the overthrown civilian leaders, including the heads of individual bureaucracies, are "creatures of their own pasts" and therefore incapable of providing adequate leadership for the country. As a result, the new military leadership announces the establishments of direct rule, in which military officers assume responsibility for the day-to-day functioning of government, and assume responsibility for individual bureaucracies and government agencies.

The military government established in Nigeria in July 1966 by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon offers an interesting example of this model. Gowon favored portrayals of himself as the Abraham Lincoln of Nigeria, due to his successful management of the 1967-70 Nigerian civil wars that

preserved the federal union. At the end of the war, however, the vast majority of important administrative posts remained headed by military officers. The dramatic rise in state-controlled corruption, which resulted from the lucrative oil boom at the beginning of the 1970s, reinforced the desires of military officers to maintain control over the wheel of power. Despite early assurances to swiftly return Nigeria to democratic rule, the transition process took several years and Yakubu was overthrown by yet another military coup, led by Brigadier General Murtala Mohammed on July 29, 1975.

#### ***4.3.2.5 Social Transformation Model***

A final form of civil-military relations, known as the social transformation model, is similar to that of direct rule in that military officers take charge of individual bureaucracies and government agencies. However, this model represents an even greater level of military involvement due to the explicit intentions of the new military leaders to seek the complete transformation of their country's socioeconomic and political systems. The military leaders who adopt this model are often driven by an ideology that differs from that of the displaced civilian elite. As a result, the military coup becomes the vehicle for the radical transformation of society, according to the military's understanding of the new ideology. The emergence of a Marxist-inspired military regime in Ethiopia from 1974 to 1991 constitutes a clear-cut example of the social transformation model.

### **4. 3.3 Myths Concerning the Effectiveness of Military Governance**

Not surprisingly, African military leaders seek to justify their seizure of power and the institution of military rule. Most often these rationales are at best a misinterpretation of political and social realities and at worst a thinly disguised attempt at obtaining and maintaining control over the reins of power. Indeed, the common assumption of African military leaders is that, as opposed to their civilian counterparts, they have more effectively governed during the post independence. This based on a variety of myths that are strongly challenged by four decades of military governance. Drawing once again on the work of Liebenow, one can distinguish five sets of myths. And these are: Military is Best Prepared to Promote Development; Military Constitutes a Better Unifying Structure; Military is best able to maintain Stability; Military Rule is more efficient; Military Enjoys Greater Legitimacy

The debate over whether military or civilian governments have more successfully promoted development has been the subject of numerous statistical studies. One conclusion of these studies is that military-dominated regimes tend to increase military budgets and the size and technological capabilities of their respective militaries. The statistics also demonstrate that military regimes at best far no better, and usually slightly worse, than their civilian counterparts in ensuring expanding gross national products (GNPs), greater levels of domestic investment, and higher levels of exports. It is important to note, however, that 40 years of comparative evidence does not conclusively suggest the greater effectiveness of civilian regimes. As suggested by Robin Luckham, a specialist of the role of the military in African politics and society, perhaps only one general pattern exists, “So far, neither military nor civilian governments have been able to resolve the development crises facing African states.”

#### **4.4 Regimes in post-colonial Africa**

##### **Overview**

Political processes, the ways in which political rules, norms, methods and modes of interaction are established, maintained and changed, in Africa have been complex, heterogeneous, and frequently both perplexing and uncertain. Political process has evolved in an historical context of economic adversity and external dependence. Patterns of political conduct determine priorities, preoccupations and possibilities. In this section the major focus is the dynamics of politics: the procedures and mechanisms, by which state agencies and social groups cooperate, conflict, intertwine and consequently act. How have politics worked in these circumstances? What methods have citizens used to voice demands and increase government responsiveness? What rules have guided the political game, how have they operated and what have been their consequences? What political trends have emerged and what are their implications for understanding the content of policies and their consequences are some of the major questions that will be dealt in this section. To this effect, first a definition of the concept of regime and the basis of regime classification will be attempted followed by a discussion the different regime types that evolved in post colonial Africa.

##### **4.4.1 Regime evolution in post colonial Africa**

In ordinary usage, the concept of regime is very close related to the concept of government and state and people tend to use them interchangeably. In political science, however, these concepts are distinct. Government refers to the institutional process through which collective and usually binding decisions are made. A regime, on the other hand, is a broader term that encompasses not only the mechanisms of government and the institutions of the state, but also the structures and process through which these interact with the larger society. By regime we are referring to the relationship that exists between the different organs of government and the institutions of the state, the rules, procedures and norms that govern the whole political system. It refers to the rules of the political game and its concomitant institutions, to the ways in which society is linked to the apparatus of the state.

As we have mentioned in the foregone paragraphs, political process in Africa have been complex. Political procedures and patterns of change combine to draw a diverse picture of politics. In each of many ways, political processes have assumed definite shapes and possessed recognizable dynamics. It is this definite shape and recognizable dynamics that we would like to bring to your attention in the discussion below.

#### **4.4.2 Classifications of regimes**

The interest in classifying political systems stems the need to understand government and politics. As in most social sciences, the understanding politics is acquired largely through comparisons. The criteria for the classification of regime types have varied widely. In this section we use the criterion developed by Naomi Chazzan based on the dynamic interactions between rulers and ruled and the norms governing these exchanges.

According Naomi Chazzan, Regimes in Africa may vary according to seven main criteria: the structure of the relationship between the administrative, the political, the coercive, and the legal apparatus; the degree of elite cohesion; the extent of societal exclusion and /or inclusion; rules and modes of social-governmental interaction; Spheres of operation; longevity of institutional arrangements; and workability. On this basis, it is possible to identify six distinct kinds of regime constructions that have emerged in Africa since independence. The general thrust of African politics in post independence times has been in an authoritarian direction. Within this broad path, however,

no uniformity is evident. The examination of each of these regime types lays the foundation for a better understanding of political processes.

#### **4.4.2.1 Administrative-hegemonic Regimes**

Kenya, Zaire, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Zambia, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, and most other African countries at various junctures, fall into this category. In this type of regime the three key institutions are the executive, the bureaucracy, and the coercive apparatus (at times with a one-party dominant auxiliary organ subordinated to the presidency). Main policy decisions are centralized around the leader and his close advisors. Specific technical and professional decision-making is carried out in the bureaucracy (sometimes with foreign advice), and the military is generally controlled. The bureaucratic structures and the judiciary maintain a certain autonomy vis-à-vis each other. Political operations, however, are strictly guided by the executive. This type of bureaucratic-personal organization has encompassed both military and civilian governments.

The administrative hegemonic regimes, however exclusionary on the surface, nevertheless involve major actors in the decision-making process. Policymakers have assumed that to the extent to which key interest group (ethnic, regional, class, occupational) leaders are part of the policymaking process, they will be more likely to cooperate with government institutions and their regulations. In the Cameroon Republic, former President Ahmadou Ahidjo, despite his heavy-handed and secretive authoritarian tendencies, was careful to use his ministerial appointments as a means of balancing ethno regional, linguistic, religious, and economic interests. Deeply concerned to preserve national unity, this northern Muslim took steps to preserve equilibrium by appointing Paul Biya, Catholic from the south-central region, as prime minister, and to maintain a rough ethno regional balance in ministerial, bureaucratic, and parastatal appointments. Similarly, in Kenya, the late President Jomo Kenyatta consolidated power by incorporating leaders not only from his Kikuyu ethnic group but also from other ethno regional units. And although Kenyatta ruled largely through the bureaucracy, he allowed for a measured pluralism in the cabinet and high party organs.

The administrative-hegemonic regimes in Africa have therefore developed some type of ordered relationship with at least some key social interests. This phenomenon however, has been predicated, not only in Kenya and Cameroon but also in Cote d'Ivoire and Malawi until the beginning of the 1990s, on the concomitant nurturing of elite cohesion.

Strategies of social control have been avowedly elitist in orientation. Leaders have used state resources and state offices as a means of constructing a state managerial class with a common interest in strengthening the public apparatus. The conscious promotion of elite interests was visible in the selective training and recruitment of civil servants in Cote d'Ivoire, Malawi, and Kenya, as well as in the effort made to enable parliamentarians in Nigeria and Cameroon to maintain their status locally through the skewed allocation of resources. These regimes have therefore been marked by the relative solidity of their dominant class, even if instability has been apparent as a result of growing competition (especially in Nigeria and Kenya in the 1990s).

Certain rules of social-governmental exchange have flowed from these arrangements underlying relations with domestic and international interests. In Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Malawi, and Nigeria, leaders have retained strong notions of power concentration while making concessions to well-placed interests. On the domestic side, this organizing principle has involved the careful construction of networks of patrons and clients. In these countries, the government has attempted to impose some controls on domestic interests to enhance its revenue through the utilization of external bargaining techniques.

Conflicts have tended to be conducted primarily within the elite or among factions organized by members of the ruling circle. Bargaining, however, has its limits: it is carried out to preserve elite interests and rarely includes significant concessions to workers or small farmers. The administrative-hegemonic regimes, through some flexibility and responsiveness to predominant class and ethnic forces, have established a certain degree of stability.

#### **4.4.2.2. Pluralist Regimes**

The pluralist regime type on Africa had a far more shaky history prior to the 1990s. The category includes Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius, Senegal, and increasingly, many other countries in the 1990s. Experiments of this sort were first attempted in most countries at independence and have since been tried and failed in Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda. The relationship of public bodies to each other in this construct has been based on a notion of separation of powers, with multiparty political institutions and fairly vibrant representative structures. In these few countries an effort has been made not only to pursue interest-group involvement but also to allow for a fair amount of

autonomous nongovernmental activity. At least some notions of checks and balances have been retained. The sphere of political inclusion is broader in this arrangement and tends to be more clearly concerned with local issues.

Pluralist regimes in Africa have not succeeded in most instances in maintaining themselves for a reasonable period of time. Efforts at instituting political arrangements that incorporate large segments of the population have been repeatedly tried and, in most cases, failed. In Ghana, Uganda, and Nigeria these attempts have not altered the predominance of the administrative machinery. Moreover, leaders operating within these frameworks have faced problems of elite control, even if their social composition has been apparently broader. The workability of pluralist constructions, therefore, had proven itself only in relatively small and homogenous countries (Botswana, in systems that have essentially retained one-party dominance (Gambia) and/or in countries in which bureaucratic privilege has not been threatened by autonomous and well-organized social groups, especially at the intermediate level. Experimentations with variations on this kind of arrangement have however, resurfaced in 1990 and 1991 and are now discussed in detail in virtually every African country.

#### **4.4.2.3 Party-Mobilizing Regimes**

The party-mobilizing type of regime bears the imprint of some of the participatory elements of regimes in the pluralist category together with the monopolistic tendencies of administrative-hegemonic regimes. Within this category, it is possible to place Ghana under Nkrumah, Mali under Modibo Keita, Guinea under Sekou Toure, Zambia under Kenneth Kaunda, Algeria under Houari Boumedienne, Tanzania under Julius Nyerere, and Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe. In all these instances, regimes in this category reflect the organizational preferences of founding fathers with strong socialist predispositions.

The ordering of public institutions in these regimes has rested on a combination of strong one-party domination coupled with bureaucratic expansion firmly under the control of an executive president. Unlike administrative hegemonic regimes, the center of gravity in these regimes is an ideological party. In these and other cases, coercive devices have been used to consolidate party-state control. In Guinea and in Ghana during the First Republic, political opponents were jailed regularly and

supervisory legal structures subordinated to party interests. In this way, power concentration enhanced the position and the cohesion of dominant party elite. This group itself was closely tied, but it frequently was in conflict with powerful ethnic or economic interests beyond governmental control.

Strategies of social control in mobilizing regimes have relied heavily on national and party identification and affiliation. Although these regimes have shared a concern with mobilizing common people into politics, certain groups or factions were purposely excluded from the party's central organ and non-party-linked social groups, especially elite occupational categories, were undermined and even eliminated. Mobilization, therefore, was politically selective, if not ethnically or regionally partial.

The principles underlying this regime type highlight notions not only of unity but also of uniformity. For this reason, party-mobilizing regimes have placed a great deal of emphasis on ideology-usually socialist as a means of appealing to their populations and fostering support for monopolistic policies.

In these regimes the spheres of activity of government institutions were fairly all embracing. The public arena intruded into the daily lives of citizens and attempted to affect directly social organizations and institutions. Moreover, these regimes assumed well-defined economic roles, both as regulators and entrepreneurs. These regimes were less inclined to bargain openly with external and domestic interests, although the principles of socialist unity were guarded fairly systematically internationally.

These regimes have had a mixed history since independence. In some cases, especially where strong social (both primary and horizontal) organizations were present (Uganda, Ghana), it proved difficult to sustain a monopolistic ruling coalition. In Guinea, coercion was used as a substitute for acquiescence, and while Sekou Toure was alive this framework endured. With his death, however, his successors were unable to perpetuate the institutional arrangements that he had devised. Algeria underwent a process of bureaucratization. Tanzania in 1985 experienced a voluntary change in leadership as Julius Nyerere retired in favor of the then Prime Minister Ali Hassan Mwinyi.

The workability of mobilizing regimes has therefore been closely tied to the skills of a particular leader and to the absence of intermediary organizations rather than to the viability of such regimes' institutional arrangements. This construct has exhibited virtually all of the difficulties associated with the crisis of African governance at the close of the third decade of independence; overextended administrative structures, institutional dualism, societal detachment, inefficiency, and poor performance. Perhaps for this reason, too, this regime form has become virtually extinct in the 1990s in contrast to its prevalence in the early years of independence.

#### **4.4.2.4 Party-Centralist Regimes**

Party centralist regimes insisted on virtually absolute central control and direction and have been less tolerant of accommodation with local social forces or with most external actors. This category in the 1970s and 1980s included the Afro-Marxist states of Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Congo, and Benin.

The institutional arrangement in this kind of regime was the unitary (and usually vanguard) party apparatus above the administrative structures and in some countries (Ethiopia and Benin) the role of the military was also pronounced. Although the executive remained important, this pattern of institutionalization subordinated all other structures to the party mechanism. Ethiopia, for example, in 1984 became Africa's first formal communist state. In Angola, as in Mozambique and Ethiopia, the pattern of party-based organization relied most heavily on the support and control of the military.

The monopolistic party-rooted arrangements in this type of regime have encouraged a process of exclusion of social groups calling for local autonomy. The MPLA government in Angola was severely challenged for over a decade by Jonas Savimbi's UNITA movement. Ethiopia, too, has encountered resistance from major nationality groups and has been unable to avert demands for local autonomy. One major basis for the linkage of various social groups to government in this type of regime, therefore, is ideological.

The party centralist type of regime in theory rejects state-society relations constructed on a pluralist foundation, although some accommodations, of necessity, have been entertained. Patronage systems have existed in these settings but have not been, as in administrative regimes, the mainstay of political exchange. Elite cohesion derives, in this instance, from solidarity among an ideological

party vanguard, many of whom shared in long anti-colonial struggles. In these cases, as in Mozambique, a relatively small group held influence over public affairs.

The guiding principles of interaction were formulated in terms of adherence to the basic premises of the binding ideology of the party. As a rule, compromise and bargaining were seen as forms of surrender that go against the element of the regime's centralizing drive. These regimes consequently had to deal with violent rebellions, most often supported by inimical external forces. In Angola and Ethiopia, as in Mozambique's struggle against the South African-backed Mozambique National Resistance Movement (RENAMO), direct military confrontation between government and dissident movements was the norm for over a decade. The use of the army to quell social discontent has further heightened the military component of the centralized party structures. It is in these regimes that conflict often took on violent and generalized forms. In these cases, protracted war gave way to political solutions.

As reconciliation between conflicting interests was resisted, and as bargaining with international capital took place reluctantly, party-centralist regimes initially engaged in establishing alternate, state-owned institutions, especially in the economic sphere. Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Angola, as well as Benin and Congo, therefore sought in the 1980s to impose uniformity on public institutions and to squeeze the latitude allowed to social, cultural, religious, or economic associations that might threaten the hold of the central structures. The absence of a large group of indigenous entrepreneurs in these countries facilitated this task. Collective farms, party cells, or nationalized industries were given preference, at least initially, over other forms of social organization.

Until 1990 the persistence of party-centralist regimes was remarkably high in comparison with other forms. But if the party-centralist machinery was relatively stable, governability was not always enhanced during this period. Indeed, each of these countries has been noted for the volatility of its internal affairs, for civil wars, and for painfully poor economic performance combined with a perplexing mixture of regime durability and state fragility. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, this regime type is fast disappearing from the African landscape.

#### **4.4.2.5 Personal-Coercive Regimes**

Idi Amin's Uganda, Jean-Bedel Bokassa's Central African Republic, and Matthias Nguema's Equatorial Guinea provide the best examples of this type, although Liberia under Samuel Doe and

Mobutu's Zaire in the 1980s also fall into this category. In these cases, the entrenchment of the regime has been predicated on the connection between a strong leader and the coercive apparatus. All other structures, the bureaucracy, the political machinery and the court system have been subjugated to the whims of the leader backed by military force. Unlike the party centralist countries, where a ruling clique dominates, in dictatorial regimes the predominance of the leader has not allowed any firm pattern of regularized exchanges.

Personally based, coercive regime constructs have limited access to public institutions to those individuals or social groups loyal to the leader. Samuel Doe in Liberia, for example, systematically practiced a strategy of absolutist control, and in Uganda even Amin's followers were powerless in the face of the rapid changes in his personal likes and dislikes. The ruling clique in this situation is fundamentally variable and in-cohesive. Rules of political behaviour consequently tended to be haphazard. Under these conditions, resistance to the regime, and outright repression of these efforts, has been marked.

The involvement of the executive in other spheres of activity was also unpredictable, In Uganda, at first Amin interfered in activities of petty commerce and certain foreign holdings (the Asian and the British, most notably). Then he intruded into the domain of the judiciary; later he interfered with local institutions; and, in general, the areas of regime action changed with each change of mind. In Equatorial Guinea, similarly, idiosyncratic behavior became a substitute for any measured program of formal involvement in areas of economic and social activity. The underlying theme was not only one of personal variability but also of widespread exploitation and brutality. The rules of interaction in these cases were based on the threat of the use of force rather than on any visible principle of negotiation, reciprocity, or ideological preference.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, personal-coercive regimes, unless routinized through the creation of a group of loyal followers (as in the extremely patrimonial system established in Zaire), have not expanded in post-independence Africa. Consistent abuse of public institutions has evoked vocal and organized dissent and, frequently, the armed ouster of excessive leaders. This was the case with Acheampong in Ghana, Bokassa in the Central African Re-public, Amin in Uganda, and Samuel

Doe in Liberia, all of whom personalized the public arena to such an extent that they threatened its very existence.

The transient nature of dictatorial regimes does not mean that they do not endure anywhere for a considerable time or that elements of personalization and privatization of the public arena have not intruded in other countries as well. This pattern, however, has been unworkable and over the years has provided perhaps the single most important indicator of civil discontent and subsequent repression. Personal coercive rule, unlike other forms of authoritarian rule is perhaps the single most important indicator of civil discontent and subsequent repression. Personal-coercive rule, unlike other forms of authoritarian government, may be understood as a sign of the absence of any clear concept of institutionalization or of recognized norms of political behaviour.

#### **4.4.2.6 Populist Regimes**

A form of regime that emerged in the 1980s in Ghana under Jerry Rawlings, Libya under Qaddafi, Burkina Faso under Thomas Sankara, and perhaps Uganda under Museveni. They marked a departure from previous patterns in that they sought to reconstruct public institutions by rearranging their interrelationship with social groups and with each other. The cornerstone of the populist model, best exemplified by Ghana during the first phase (1982-1983) of the provisional National Defense council (PNDC), has been the subordination of the administrative apparatus to direct public scrutiny. In Ghana during the early 1980s senior civil servants and public employees were either dismissed or were monitored by people's defense committees or workers defense committees (later called committees for the Defense of the Revolution). Thus, although the civil service, certain public corporations, and the judiciary continued to function, their activities were circumscribed for a time by the establishment of an alternate set of institutions.

The effect of the reformulation of public organizations was twofold: to introduce a direct popular voice in policymaking: and to limit the independence of the extensive bureaucracy, not by politicization or personalization, but by pressure to adhere to certain declared antiestablishment norms. Because this arrangement led to an institutional dualism and to the flight of trained personnel, after 1983 the PNDC proceeded to establish some safeguards against undue interference in the professional and technical roles of the administrative apparatus, while at the same time

sustaining notions of public vigilance (thereby coming more to resemble administrative regime forms). Emphasis shifted to improving efficiency, to reshuffle the public sector, and to downplaying direct participation through a promise to re-examine and rebuild the political machinery.

An essential tenet of the populist regime form has been, therefore, a concept of social inclusion defined in non-elite terms. In the 1980s, there was a growing attempt to incorporate professionals and technocrats. Therefore, populist regimes questioned elite cohesion without evincing a capacity to entrench other social organizations at the political center. Indeed, rhetoric aside, prevailing patron-client networks and factional alliances persisted. Popular calls for greater accountability have been as vocal in these regimes as in many of their predecessors, as the ouster of Thomas Sankara in 1987 demonstrated. The principles underlying populist regimes have nevertheless differed from those guiding other types. Instead of highlighting either of accommodation, compromise, or nationalist ideological rules, the main concern of these regimes has been with attacking pockets of elite privilege.

The spheres of activity of the public arena in popular arrangements have been broadly defined. Although the key concern has been the regulation of state economic enterprise (and sometimes their dismantling), much activity has focused on marketing and distribution mechanisms as well. Legal, organizational, and administrative life has been closely controlled and autonomous political opportunities circumscribed.

The governments established along populist lines, as in the examples of Ghana and Burkina Faso, rapidly gave way to hegemonic-administrative forms. Durable political structures have not been put in place, and the long-term workability of these experiments has not been demonstrated. Without significant resources to redistribute, these regimes may prove to be transitory. It is not improbable that leaders of such governments may initiate regime changes to stay in power.

#### **4.4.3 Regime Types and Political Process**

Regimes and the political processes they reflect may be arranged along a continuum according to different degrees of structural autonomy and channels of political interchange. At one pole stand those regimes that have no clear organizing principles and hence possess highly unpredictable and conflictual relations with their constituent social groupings. At the other pole, it is possible to place those countries in which the practice of government and the management of conflict rest on some

shared notions of obligation and in which mechanisms for the operationalization of such transactions do exist (pluralist and various administrative-hegemonic forms). In between these two extremes lie those regimes that have operated on monopolistic principles and where social tensions are high (party-mobilizing and party-centralist kinds); those in which participatory exchanges exist, but structures are weak (Populist governments); and those regimes where competition is either pronounced or purposely circumscribed (administrative-competitive and patrimonial-administrative models). As time has progressed, the more administrative and pluralist modes have become more prevalent, achieving a degree of salience in the 1990s.

## **Unit Five**

### **Interpretations/Explanatory frameworks for political developments in Africa**

#### **Introduction**

Dear learner, in Political science an explanation of political behavior and political phenomena is organized around concepts, models, theories and perspectives. A perspective or an explanatory framework implies agreement on few premises and assumptions related to political development or phenomenon. A perspective implies consensus on what are important tendencies and process in political interaction and process. It also implies on the methodologies that should be used to study political phenomenon and the determination of which variables are key and central. The study of African politics and government is also organized around certain perspectives which are in existence in the contemporary independence era. This unit is devoted to the study of such explanatory frameworks for political developments in Africa.

The unit is organized around four important themes. The first section deals with modernization theory and its various offshoots which in turn is organized around four major themes; Predominance of Modernization Theory (1950s-early 1960s), rise of Modernization Revisionism (Late 1960s); Concern with Stability and the Politics of Order (Late 1960s-early 1970). In the second section we will discuss the Marxian and neo-Marxian framework. In this section topics to be discussed include, Dependency Theory and the Development of Underdevelopment (Late 1960s and early 1970s); Marxism and the Emergence of a Neo-Marxist School of Thought (Late 1970s-1980s); Marxism's Impact on the Development of Critical Thought (Early 1970S); Circulationist Revision of Dependency Theory (1970s). In the last two sections, you will be introduced to the relatively new perspectives on African politics and government. These are, the "reciprocal assimilation of elites" and the "rhizome state" (Jean Francois Bayart); the political instrumentalization of disorder (Patrick Chabal).

#### **5.1 Study of African in the Liberal Tradition**

##### **Overview**

The Study of African politics and society and society has been dominated by a liberal tradition that envisions the development of free-market democracies on the African continent similar to those

found in the Western democracies. In the 1950s liberal scholars assumed that African countries, as well as developing countries in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, would advance along the same path of political and economic development already traveled by their Western counterparts. In this section we will try to bring out the basic premises and weakness this tradition.

### **5.1.1 Modernization Theory**

Building on the disciplines of economics, psychology, sociology, and political science, modernization theory was promoted by “Africanists” as the key to Africa’s development. We hope that you have discussed the economic dimension of modernization theory in your Introduction to Development Theories and Practices. Our focus in this course will be on the political dimension of modernization theory.

The political dimension of modernization theory draws on classic theories of democratic pluralism in the field of political science. Scholars believed that the key to political development was a rapidly growing electorate both willing and able to participate in the growth and specialization of government agencies, as African leaders responded to legitimate demands of their respective populations. Modernization theory is the firm belief that the newly independent African countries were on a path leading to the creation of modern industrialized democracies.

One approach of modernization theory that became popular during the 1950s was structural-functionalism. As outlined in the landmark work, *Politics of the Developing Areas* (1960) edited by Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, the structural functionalist approach assumes that all political systems perform similar functions, despite the fact that these functions may be performed by different “structures.” The function of “interest articulation,” in which a political leader or official defined and acts on popular interests, for example, may be performed by an elected senator in the U.S. political system or by the *Ogaz*, a hereditary prince, in the Somali political system. Although the two systems in which the leaders operate differ significantly, both the senator and the *Ogaz* perform the same political function.

As demonstrated by the Almond and Coleman volume, structural functionalism and the modernization literature in general were based on several assumptions. For example, Almond and

Coleman assume that ethnic attachments hinder development, and industrialization is regarded as the ideal end of a modern economy. In the political realm the assumptions of modernization theory are especially clear. Those familiar with the U.S. political system have noted that Almond and Coleman's neat division of governmental functions into three separate categories (rule making, rule application, and rule adjudication) bears a strong resemblance to the U.S. Constitution's classic separation of powers between the three major branches of government. Indeed, the core assumption of the structural-functionalist approach is that all African political systems will eventually evolve into stable multiparty democracies, patterned after the United States and the other Western countries.

### **5.1.2 Rise of Modernization Revisionism**

The first major critiques of the modernization approach to African politics emerged from within the liberal tradition during the late 1960s. Rather than seeking to completely dismiss, critics sought to revise what they perceived as significant but rectifiable flaws within an otherwise sound approach. The body of scholarship produced by this generation of Africanists became known as modernization revisionism.

The first major revisionist critique calls into question the tendency of earlier scholars to portray the modernization process as a "zero-sum" game, in which "advance" toward certain levels of modernity in an African political and social system are inevitably accompanied by an equal "decline" in that system's traditional culture. Revisionist scholars argue instead that traditional institutions often adapt to and coexist with modern institutions. In the case of northern Nigeria, C.S. Whitaker Jr. demonstrates in the politics of *Tradition: Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria 1946-1966* (1970) how the creation and expansion of modern political institutions, such as the national parliament, cabinet system, and political parties, was accompanied by the strengthening of the political roles played by traditional Muslim leaders known as emirs. Far from modern institutions having simply driven out traditional ones, explains Whitaker, elements of the institutions of each type or origin coalesced to form a workable system of power and authority.

A second major revisionist critique disputes the assumption of earlier scholars that traditional attitudes and institutions are inherently irrational and therefore hinder the modernization process. Modernization revisionist's instead underscored the importance of building on traditional cultures and values to promote development in the newly independent African countries. According to

Whitaker's study of northern Nigeria, the importance of traditional values in the modernization process was clearly illustrated by the role of political parties in regional elections during the 1960s. "A principal function of any modern political party operating under a system of representative government on a foundation of mass suffrage is to mobilize the mass electorate for the exercise of choice at the ballot box," explains Whitaker in a summary of the modernization imperative of creating a multiparty political system. "A cardinal aspect of this function is communication with the electorate: the formulation and articulation of issues and interests which will stimulate the attention, sympathy, and support of as many of that electorate as possible. However, in sharp contrast to what the modernization theorists originally had predicted, the NPC party successfully performed the "mobilization" function of the political system by appealing to traditional values.

A third major revisionist critique questions the assumption that modernization constitutes a unilinear (one-way) process in which traditional characteristics such as ethnic affiliations ultimately would erode over time, replaced by more modern forms of affiliation (e.g.) professional or community-based organizations). Revisionist scholars argue instead that ethnicity and other forms of ordering traditional societies (such as clan and caste) often are revitalized and strengthened by the modernization process. In some instances, the modernization process even fostered the creation of an ethnic self-consciousness or group identity where none before had existed. For example, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Igbo ethnic group constituted a "classical segmented political system" in which approximately 200 separate Igbo villages and communities shared a common language, culture, and beliefs but lacked common governance or any sense of nationhood. By the late 1960s, however, the growth of Igbo nationalism contributed to the secession of the Igbo-inhabited southeastern province of Nigeria, an act that led to a civil war (1967-70) from which the Nigerian federal government emerged victorious.

Despite their willingness to criticize modernization theory, the modernization revisionists simply seek to revise the shortcomings of what is still considered to be an otherwise sound approach for understanding political and socioeconomic change in Africa. In fact, both modernization theorists and their revisionist counterparts share many optimistic assumptions about the development process. Among the most important of these assumptions are the desirability of a rapidly expanding electorate willing and able to take part in the political process, the mutually reinforcing nature of rising levels

of participation and the promotion of equality and stability in developing societies, a perception of protests and violence as the “exception” rather than the norm of politics, and the emergence of multiparty democratic political systems as the natural outcome of the modernization process.

### **5.1.3 Concern with Stability and the Politics of Order**

Several trends during the 1960s contributed to the rise of more pessimistic genre of scholarship that for the first time called into question the optimistic assumptions held by modernization theorists and revisionists. The most important of these trends was the dramatic rise in violence and instability in the newly independent nation-states of Africa. In addition to the spread of guerrilla insurgencies, secessionist movements, civil wars, and assassinations for political gain, African militaries increasingly were taking power away from civilian leaders in military coup d'état. This violent trend was a far cry from the peaceful, democratic transfers of power expected by modernization theorists and their revisionist counterparts.

The net result of these three trends was a shift in the modernization literature from the optimistic belief in political development to a more pessimistic expectation of political decay (conflict and chaos) in the newly independent African countries. In a landmark work that captured this shift and altered the debate in academic and political circles, Samuel P. Huntington in *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968) argues that rather than contributing to democracy and stability, the modernization process fosters political instability in the developing world. According to Huntington and his contemporaries, democracy is neither a natural nor a direct end result of modernization. Rather, countries attempting to modernize are faced with six major crises of development, which, if not solved, could lead to the downfall of regimes and the spread of political decay:

- Crisis of identity: Creating a common nationalist outlook among ethnically, linguistically, and religiously diverse peoples
- Crisis of legitimacy: Building a national consensus on the legitimate exercise of authority.
- Crisis of participation: Guiding rising public demands for inclusion in the political decision-making process
- Crisis of penetration: Creating an effective government presence throughout the territory
- Crisis of distribution: Balancing public demands for goods and services with the government's responsibility to provide public goods, such as economic growth

- Crisis of integration: Creating harmonious relationships among the society's many groups and interests competing for access to and control of the political decision-making process.

According to Huntington, the solution to these crises is institutionalization, the creation of strong government structures able to ensure political stability and order throughout society. "The most important political distinction among countries," explains Huntington, "concerns not their form of government but their degree of government." In sharp contrast to the optimistic impulse of modernization theorists and revisionists to favor rapidly expanding levels of popular political participation, Huntington and his contemporaries argue that the process of institutionalization had to be the top priority of African leader's.

## **5.2. Study of Africa in the Critical Tradition**

### **Overview**

Dear learner in the forgone sections we have discussed the modernization perspective in terms of its main premises and its evolution. In this second section of this unit the focus will be one of the alternative perspectives; on African politics and government: the Marxian and neo Marxian perspective. The study of African politics and society has been enriched by a Critical Tradition (dependency, Marxian and neo Marxian perspective) that questions the prevailing liberal model of political tradition. It emphasizes that the achievement of true development will occur only in the aftermath of revolutionary struggles and the creation of populist regimes throughout the African continent. This tradition represents an alternative to the modernization theory and its various offshoots in terms of understanding and explaining African politics and government. This section highlights the general evolution of the major themes and scholarly concerns of this tradition from 1960's to the present.

### **5.2.1 Dependency Theory and the Development of Underdevelopment**

A body of literature known as dependency theory became the first critical perspective to gain acceptance in the African scholarly community during the contemporary independence era. Dependency theorists were particularly concerned with understanding why, despite the optimistic projections of modernization theory, the regions of the southern hemisphere were at the center of these problems. Dependency theorists argued that external constraints, most notably the domination

of the developing countries by the industrialized powers of Western Europe and North America, were responsible for most economic and political misery in the southern hemisphere.

In *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (1972)*, Walter Rodney argues that, before the spread of international capitalism by the end of the sixteenth century, Africa was developing both politically and economically, as were most regions of the non-European world. Yet, as foreign encroachment by Europe, culminating in direct colonial rule, increasingly led to Africa's inclusion in the global capitalist system, all forms of independent development ceased to exist. Instead European domination led to *the development of underdevelopment*: the gradual impoverishment of the African continent as previous African development was stopped.

This thesis categorizes all countries as either metropolises (the centers of economic and political power) or satellites (those areas controlled and exploited by the metropolises). In the case of the French empire, France served as the metropolis and its colonies (e.g. Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa) constituted the satellites. According to the dependency theorists, the maintenance of this highly unequal international structure was made possible by African compradors (political and economic elites) who knowingly or not served as the cultural, economic, military, or political agents of the European colonialists. Most important, this relationship did not change once African countries achieved independence from European colonial rule beginning the 1950's but rather was reinforced by neo-colonial leaders who remained more interested in maintaining ties with foreign powers than contributing to the true development of their own countries. The early dependency theorists concluded that the exploitation of Africa was critical to the development of advanced industrial capitalism in Europe. In short, Rodney accepts the basic argument of traditional dependency theorists that colonialism led to the stagnation and underdevelopment of the African continent.

### **5.2.2 Circulationist Revision of Dependency Theory**

During the 1970s, a group of scholars called circulationists revised dependency theory and offered a more sophisticated analysis of the development of underdevelopment thesis. Immanuel Wallerstein has contributed greatly to the sophistication of dependency theory and is recognized as the leading scholar in the Circulationist tradition. Wallerstein's contribution to dependency theory is a more concise analysis of the possibility for development and social change in the regions of the southern

hemisphere. In keeping with the development of underdevelopment thesis, Wallerstein argues that true social change can only occur when the entire capitalist world economy has been overthrown. Any attempt at social change by one country in the current confines of the capitalist world economy, according to this analysis, is ultimately destined to fail. According to Wallerstein, meaningful development for Africa will only occur once the capitalist world economy has been overthrown by worldwide revolution and replaced by a world economy based on socialist principles.

Wallerstein's most important contribution to dependency theory is a more sophisticated understanding of the metropolis-satellite (core-periphery) model of the world economy originally proposed by Andre Gunder Frank. Wallerstein pointed out the existence of a third tier of semi-peripheral countries that are neither very powerful nor completely impoverished. These countries constitute rising regional powers that are economically and politically powerful in their immediate regions and aspire to someday join the core in its control of the capitalist world's system. For example, whereas the semi-peripheral power of Nigeria is perceived as being exploited by the core country of Great Britain (the former colonial power), it nonetheless exploits peripheral powers in the West African region, such as Benin, with which it has strong political and economic ties. Other African powers that have been called potentially influential semi-peripheral countries include Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal in West Africa; the Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo-Kinshasa) in Central Africa; and South Africa in Southern Africa.

Wallerstein argues that the existence of the semi-periphery is the primary reason the capitalist world economy has not yet been overthrown in favor of a socialist world economy. For a revolution to occur, the world system must become polarized between the few richest countries and the vast majority burdened by high levels of urban poverty, mass unemployment, and rising social unrest. The semi-periphery delays the process of polarization by undermining the creation of a unified front against the core. These countries instead perceive themselves as economically and politically better off than the peripheral countries and thus either intentionally or unintentionally serve as the agents of the core by seeking to strengthen their standing in an otherwise exploitative system.

### 5.2.3 Marxism's Impact on the Development of Critical Thought

Three elements of Marxist theory are important to understanding the evolution of the critical tradition. First, Marx argues that all societies can be divided into classes, which are bound together in a relationship of exploitation. In capitalist society, a dominant bourgeoisie (property-owning) class exploits the work of the proletariat (working) class. Marx was particularly concerned with the ability of a rising bourgeoisie to expropriate the property of the petty bourgeoisie in capitalist societies. This process results in a growing class of propertyless workers (the proletariat) who are forced to either accept poor jobs and unsafe working conditions or starve. In essence, workers become trapped in a miserable existence similar to slavery but this condition is not permanent, Marx claims, for it can be overcome through proletarian revolution.

Second, Marx argues that a revolutionary situation emerges when advances in technological, scientific and other forms of material development (the forces of production) outgrow an outmoded system of ownership of property among classes (the relations of production) such that the dominant class finds it increasingly difficult to maintain control over the rest of society through its traditional means. Because no civilized society ever forfeits its material level of development, the net result of the growing contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production is a heightened class struggle in which the ruling class is eventually overthrown. According to Marx, such revolutionary events are part of a general historical trend in which all societies are moving along the same path of development. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), for example, Marx suggests that all societies have to pass through ancient, feudal, and capitalist modes of production (the combination of the forces and the relations of production) on the path to achieving what he perceives as the inevitable and desirable final stage of revolutionary development; a socialist (communist) society in which the proletariat reigns supreme.

It is important to note, however, that Marx held a highly negative view of what he called Asiatic (non-Western) societies. Similar to the viewpoint adhered to by the modernization theorists; Marx suggests that non-western societies, including those in Africa, were “stagnant, backward, and led by barbarians and despots”. As a result, Marx concluded that the spread of colonialism was a brutal but necessary stage in their historical development; brutal in the sense that the colonial powers often adopted barbaric methods to defeat peoples unwilling to submit themselves to foreign rule, and

necessary in the sense that colonial rule facilitated the introduction of capitalism, the preliminary stage to socialism in to “backward” areas around the globe.

A group of scholars best called neo-Marxists drew on classical Marxism to criticize the dependency approach of the 1970 contributing to a rising debate that also questioned several aspects of the world systems approach of the circulationists. The work of Samir Amin, an Egyptian scholar, is recognized as serving as an intellectual bridge between the dependency, Circulationist and neo-Marxist traditions. In one of his most cited works, *Neo-Colonialism in West Africa* (1973), Amin demonstrates his intellectual attachment to the dependency and Circulationist approaches by arguing that the development of West Africa has been blocked by the regions incorporation into an inherently unequal capitalist world economy and that this state of affairs has been reinforced by neo-colonial West African leaders during the contemporary independence era.

However, Amin sets the ground for a series of neo-Marxist critiques by parting company with the dependency and circulationists approaches in two major areas. In the case of dependency theory, Amin suggests that one cannot assume that the extraction of surplus from the peripheral areas of the southern hemisphere was necessary for the development of the northern industrialized countries, because, he argues, development of individual countries and /or regions can occur independently. As Amin argues in one of his later books, *Delinking: Towards a polycentric World* (1990), African countries can pursue auto centric (self-reliant) development by attempting to withdraw in various degrees from the capitalist world economy. Simply put, Amin rejects the development of underdevelopment thesis in favor of a more nuanced view that accounts for a variety of developmental processes and outcomes.

Amin also departs from the Circulationist tradition by rejecting the notion that only one mode of production, the capitalist world economy, exclusively exists in the international system. The broad differences both between and within African economies suggests that it is far too simplistic to try and include them all in the broad category of the capitalist mode of production. The international system is instead composed of both capitalist and non-capitalist economies that coexist in geographical regions.

### **5.2.3 Marxism and the Emergence of a Neo-Marxist School of Thought**

Building on the scholarship of Amin and others, a neo-Marxist school of thought that emerged at the end of the 1970s contributed to the reformulation of critical thought in at least four areas. First, neo-Marxist scholars reject the development of underdevelopment thesis. Although certainly in agreement with their dependency and Circulationist colleagues that capitalism is inherently exploitative, neo-Marxist scholars nonetheless disagree that the worldwide expansion of capitalism has had a permanent negative effect on Africa. Similar to its portrayal in classical Marxism, the spread of capitalism to Africa is instead viewed as one developmental stage in an overall movement toward socialism.

Neo-Marxist scholars also recognize that individual African countries can achieve dependent development in the capitalist world system. Semi-peripheral countries have experienced rising levels of industrial output, mechanization of agriculture, and urbanization. It is the combination of these factors that, according to classical Marxism, promotes the emergence of an urban proletariat capable of leading class struggle and revolution in the pursuit of socialism.

The third contribution of neo-Marxist scholars to the evolution of the critical tradition is the application of class analysis to explain the historical evolution of African politics and society. Neo-Marxist scholars have underscored the necessity of moving beyond unwieldy notions of core, semi-peripheral, and peripheral countries in favor of analyzing cooperation and conflict among the variety of class groupings that compose individual African countries. This approach is most notable in the analysis of the evolution and impact of African ruling classes. As already noted, both the dependency theorists and the circulationists tend to dismiss the importance of African elites as independent actors, suggesting instead that they are always knowingly or unknowingly serving the interests of foreign powers. This results in a mechanistic understanding of political change that completely disregards the power actually wielded by African ruling classes.

The neo-Marxists scholars have sought to correct this shortcoming not only by classifying and analyzing various types of African ruling classes, ranging from the so-called bureaucratic bourgeoisie (civil service and government employees) to the commercial bourgeoisie (top executives

of major business enterprises), but also by examining the goals and impacts of other classes within African societies, the proletariat (urban-based, wage-earning, working class), and the rural peasantry. One of the most noted works in this genre is Irving Leonard Markovitz, *Power and Class in Africa: an Introduction to Change and Conflict in African Politics* (1977), which adopts the concept of class to analyze the historical evolution of African politics and society, including an extremely detailed discussion of the impact of colonialism on traditional African class structures. Markovitz is particularly concerned with the impact of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which he defines as the “combined ruling group consisting of the top political leaders and bureaucrats, the traditional rulers and their descendants, the leading members of the liberal professions, the rising business bourgeoisie, and top members of the military and police forces.

A final contribution of the neo-Marxist tradition was a growing emphasis on the role of the state, particularly in terms of its relationship to powerful international and domestic classes. According to the dependency theorists, the state serves the same function as a hinge on a door: Just as the hinge allows for the door to open so that individuals may enter into a room, the state facilitates the penetration and control of African societies by external powers. It is for precisely this reason that the dependency theorists often dismiss African elites as neo-colonial leaders who knowingly or unknowingly open the door to foreign interests to the disadvantage of their respective societies. The neo-Marxist scholars disagree sharply with the hinge conceptualization of the state.

An important debate in the neo-Marxist tradition during this period involved whether the African state merely reflects the interests of the dominant socioeconomic class of a particular African country (the orthodox Marxist interpretation) or whether the ruling class of the state itself can be independent of, and carry out policies counter to, that powerful domestic economic class. One of the most notable contributions to this debate was offered in 1978 by Richard L. Sklar, who argued that “class relations, at bottom, are determined by relations of power, not production. This brief quote highlights Sklar’s belief that the ruling classes of the African state must not be perceived as mere reflections of that society’s economic system, nor as mere puppets of its dominant economic class. Whereas in one case the dominant economic class of a society may control the actions of the ruling class of the state, the reverse may also be true depending on the power relationship between the two classes. In short, sklar argues that one can not automatically assume that one class or coalition of

class groupings will always dominate other internal or even international class groupings. One must instead examine the potentially different political realities of class relationships in individual case studies.

### **5.3 The state in Africa and the politics of the belly (Bayart)**

#### **Overview**

Such a book is Jean-Francois Bayart's *The State in Africa and the politics of the belly*. Through a brilliant mastery and an exhaustive analysis of existing resources on Africa, Bayart takes the reader on an enlightening journey that sheds an objective light on a continent called “dark” because of its presumed “primitive” nature and its seemingly perpetual dependence upon international “development aid” for its survival. The focus in this is to section, therefore, is to give you an insight about the most important premises of this most celebrated work on African politics and government. Topics to be discussed include; the notion of the rhizome state and the reciprocal assimilation states, *the long duree of Africa*, resources of extraversion, the historicity of the African state.

#### **5.3.1 The notion of “the long durée of Africa”**

The central theme of the book is its emphasis on what Bayart terms 'the historicity of the African state', by which he means that modern African politics can only be understood in relation to long-established traditions of government on the continent. The 'conventional' view of African politics, which Bayart regards as *the paradigm of the yoke*, sees African states as essentially artificial and external creations, derived from an imposed European colonialism. The all too evident problems of African government-corruption, instability, ineffectiveness can then conveniently be attributed to the absence of 'fit' between this imported model and the Africa's fragmented economies, artificial state boundaries, and indigenous social structures and values.

Bayart draws heavily on an alternative conception, derived from the school of French historians whose outstanding figure is Fernand Braudel. Braudel has been impressed with the continuities of particular human societies, and has seen the historian's task as identifying the patterns which distinguish the long march of peoples down the centuries. His emphasis on the long term *-la longue duree-* and strong concern to understand what has been called *politique par le bas-* politics from below has become the rallying point of his followers, and it is this insight that Bayart has now

sought to apply to Africa. The origin of *politique par le bas* lies in the attempt by the younger generation of political scientist to approach politics from a perspective that differed from the prevailing models of the time.

Rejecting entirely the externally imposed models of 'dependency' and 'modernization', drastically downplaying the influence of colonialism, he regards the African state as the authentic expression of a 'governmentality' (or set of attitudes towards power and politics) which are deeply rooted in African historical experience. Bayart makes use of Foucault's term, governmentality, which means the perceptions and methods of a government concerning how it organizes itself and society, and specifically its dealings in power politics with the latter. African states, in short, must be seen in their own terms, as the product of their own societies, and not merely as failed attempts to reproduce some model of government designed elsewhere.

Bayart's account of African politics constantly draws on a sharp observation of politics on the ground, of the kind that almost invariably fails to fit with the grander social science models of political behavior. He sees patterns of normality where others may see crisis and decay. Bayart's central hypothesis is the ordinariness of African politics and its persistence. He opposes what he describes as the dominant paradigm of the "yoke" -- the abnormal or foreign nature of African politics, weighed down by remoteness and the distortion of alien colonially-imposed statehood. All this is irrelevant to Bayart, because it merely reflects the attempt to apply to Africa ideas of government which are inappropriate to the history of the continent and the conceptions of governmentality which its people have devised.

### **5.3.2 “The politics of the belly” and “resources of extraversion”**

Bayart is a million miles away from those who look to the African past for an idealized picture of a continent uncorrupted by the materialism and exploitation of the West. There are no wise old men sitting under a tree, and talking until they agree. The Africa that he identifies is characterized above all by the poverty of its material resource base, and by the need of those who have political power to gain control over economic resources. Whether in the hands of those who espouse 'socialism' as a device to legitimate the monopolization of the economy by government, or those who like Houphouet Boigny or Kenyatta use their political role to further their private commercial

opportunities (and Bayart sees no difference between the two), power is centrally concerned with access to wealth.

This is the 'politics of the belly' which provides his subtitle; exemplified by the Cameroonian political cartoon of the tethered goat stating 'I graze therefore I am.' The focus on the satisfaction of immediate and personal interests and wishes via the apparatus of the state system is a defining feature of power-politics in Africa. This stems in part from the role played by intermediaries and indigenous bureaucrats, who operated within the colonial system, and in return for their service were allowed to gain concessions from their positions and power for their specific regions or ethnic-linguistic group.

It is a preoccupation that offers very little hope to World Bank 'privatization' projects, which promise merely to transfer resources from the formal control of the state, to the private portfolios of those who rule it; nor does it allow much scope for multiparty democratization schemes, which likewise call for some discrimination between public and private spheres which in Bayart's view is foreign to the African political tradition.

A further consequence of Africa's impoverished productive base, moreover, is that African rulers have long sought to compensate for the inadequacies of their domestic economies by mobilizing resources derived from their relationship with the outside world. This strategy, which Bayart refers to as '*extraversion*', in turn accounts for much of Africa's relationship with the outside world, and leads to many of the features of African political life which are (in his view) misleadingly characterized as dependence. Bayart argues that, 'Unequal entry into the international system has been for several centuries a major and dynamic mode of the historicity of African societies, not the magical suspension of it'. Though the inequality of the relationship is recognized, what interests Bayart is the use which African politicians make of it; the description of such politicians in externally derived terms, whether as nationalist heroes or as 'collaborators' with imperialism, is in his view entirely inappropriate. All of them are basically concerned to use external resources from armaments on the one hand, to famine relief on the other as a means of consolidating their own hold on power.

According to this, external orientation, especially in the ruling elites' access to resources, is merely the contemporary manifestation of a long history of extraversion, which dates to pre-colonial times. It arises less because of the weakness of African states *vis-à-vis* the external, and more because of the failure of internal consolidation in the face of factional strife -- and in turn means that states do not need to exploit domestic production in order to obtain sufficient resources to rule. Pre-colonial states managed their unequal relationship with external powers in such a way that they were able to derive sufficient resources to manage their interior populations. While few colonial and post-colonial territories map onto their predecessors in a geographical sense, Bayart identifies a lineage of governmentality throughout these periods.

### **5.3.2 The “reciprocal assimilation of elites” and “the rhizome state”**

Among the other concepts or phrases which he comes up with, the most useful and important is what he terms the 'reciprocal assimilation of elites'. By this he means the fusion of potentially competing elite social groups to form a single dominant national class, centered on the control of the state, which is certainly internally factionalized, but which does not divide into distinguishable social groupings. According to Bayart, the period in the immediate aftermath of development is characterized by the absence “*hegemonic bloc*” that dominates African politics. There are many competing social groups which attempted to assert their dominance. There are two ways of resolving the hegemonic crisis. The first one is *conservative modernization*, which involves a situation in which the old dominant social groups (traditional chiefs) inherited from the colonial period were able to politically and economically exclude the new social group. The second one is *social revolution*, a situation in which the new social groups were able to overthrow the older elite which had their origin in the colonial state formation. The third one is much more common in Africa, that is, the *reciprocal assimilation of elites*. This assimilation occurs in two levels: at the level of civil society and political society.

Any distinction between 'modern 'and 'traditional' elites is contradicted by the usefulness of local authority structures as a basis for competing for national power, and the readiness with which educated national politicians take up local titles and offices; the division between bureaucracy and bourgeoisie is blurred by the dependence of African businessmen on government favor, and the readiness of many politicians (or their wives) to go into business on their own account; nor is it

possible to separate 'national' from 'comprador' bourgeoisies, in economies so closely associated with external trade. Bayart described the social mechanisms, ranging from weddings and funerals through to freemasonries, through which this class is being consolidated, and also ascribes an unexpected significance to the single party as a form of elite assimilation.

Among the strongest elements of Bayart's account, therefore, is the way in which formal political systems and processes are intermingled with kinship, which he describes as an historic process of the fusion or "reciprocal assimilation" of "traditional" and "modern" elites. State and lineage are, he writes, compatible forms of organization. The state resembles a "rhizome" with its root developing up everywhere, connected organically underground, rather than a "tree" with a single trunk from which extend the different branches of government.

#### **5.3.4 Critical Appraisal**

There are nonetheless serious weaknesses in Bayart's approach to African politics, and the methodological assumptions which underlie it. One of these, as Michael Twaddle aptly pointed out is that, a book entitled *The State in Africa* actually has remarkably little to say about the state. At one level, this omission may be traced to Bayart's preoccupation with process rather than structure, the behavior of individuals rather than the role of institutions.

Institutions in Africa represent the realm of the imported, whereas behavior represents the realm of the indigenous; and in ignoring one, while emphasizing the other, Bayart indulges in a trickery which enables him to pick on the continuities in the African political record while passing over the enormous differences which have been made to Africa by the imposition on it of the modern post-colonial territorial state. The modern territorial state represents a new form of governance in Africa, and all the shifts by which African elites have sought to adapt it to their own preferred instruments of rule have not turned it into a familiar kind of African regime disguised behind the vocabulary of Weberian bureaucracy and Western developmentalism.

The Africa that emerges from Bayart's pages has no famines, no civil wars or refugees, no collapsing states, no increasing populations or environmental decay, and virtually no economic failures, debt crises, or structural adjustment programmes. This is a failure of analysis, and specifically, a failure

of the Braudelian approach. Intensely geared as it is to the idea of continuity, it is peculiarly ill-adapted to the analysis of change, and indeed may readily lead its adherents to overlook that any significant change is even taking place.

## **5.4 The Political Instrumentalization of Disorder (Patrick Chabal)**

### **Overview**

Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz have combined to produce a thought provoking analysis of the problem of development in Africa, a continent which they describe as in crisis. Chabal and Daloz have re-visited African politics and have proposed an analytical framework which they believe can help to explain African politics better than traditional theories. The book is structured around three main issues and related premises. First, they argue that sub-Saharan Africa has the problem of pervasive corruption and ineffective institutions that affects all sectors of the society. Second, the African condition can be explained in terms of a unique culture and 'mindset' that constrains its peoples to follow a developmental trajectory which is distinct from that of other countries that modernized first. Third, while African countries and institutions appear to be in a state of disorder and corruption, this situation is functional, and defines Africa's unique developmental path. This theoretical position defines a new theoretical paradigm for analyzing African politics. The authors call the new paradigm the *instrumentalization of disorder*. In the proceeding discussion we will examine each of these claims in turn.

### **5.4.1 Neo-patrimonialism**

In the immediate aftermath of colonialism, as we have discussed in the forgone sections, African rulers redesigned the political structures inherited at independence, reshaped their architecture and redefined the parameters guiding political action. These scholars began their discussion by retrospectively defining this process as the Africanization of politics. They opined that irrespective of the kind of colonial system put in place by the departing colonial powers, the Africanization of politics had similar systemic effects everywhere.

Africanisation of politics entailed the emergence of what Africanists call neo-patrimonialism, the central characteristic of which is the resort to personalized and vertical ties of solidarity as the backbone of the political system. In essence, the simplest way to describe what happened is what they called the overlapping of two apparently inharmonious political logics. One is the apparent

functioning of the western modern system – that is the party system, a parliament, elections, etc. – but the other is one which is much less visible and which essentially seems to follow what the authors called the “traditional methods of politics”. This entailed the overriding dominance of a system of politics that does bore little relation to that defined by the tenets of the constitutional order. In this system political accountability rests on the extent to which the patrons are able both to influence, but also to meet, the expectations of their followers, according to well-established norms of reciprocity. So the quest for political legitimacy in such systems requires the fulfillment of particularistic obligations that have nothing to do with the emergence formal system. So, for example, elections in western democracies, which are a measure of accountability, became one of the many instruments of factional mobilization. Political representation, therefore, was seen to occur when patrons met their obligations in respect of their clients, which of course is something that is not compatible with modern western democratic systems. These systems, according to Chabal and Daloz, exhibit three very strange characteristics:

#### **5.4.2 The Informalization of Politics**

The first trend, according to these scholars, is the apparent informalization of contemporary African politics. This is best explained by reference to the notion of identity and the relation between the individual and his or her community. Western political systems rest on the assumption that citizens are distinct, autonomous and self-referential individuals who cast their votes according to overtly political criteria. But the reality in Africa is different. The individual cannot be conceived outside of the community from which he or she comes, however geographically distant this may be. So, the political system operates according to criteria that embody this core communal dimension. The individual is less the self-conscious citizen than someone whose behavior accords to the multi-register and sometimes contradictory logics that guide his or her place within the community. These belong essentially to the realm of the informal, meaning here only that they are not encompassed within the legal and constitutional order, which is the official political norm in all African countries. It is simply informal in relation to what is described as a formal system of politics, just as we have informal economies, which is a term used to describe anything that happens which is not encompassed within the formal economy.

The manner in which power is understood and exercised helps to explain why politics in contemporary Africa diverges from that of the West. Briefly, the state in Africa is not much more than what they called a relatively blank shell. It is useful insofar as it permits control of the resources that it commands, but it is politically weak because it is neither institutionalized nor functionally differentiated from society. Similarly, there is no self-standing civil society in the sense in which it is understood in the West today. The reason for this is because vertical ties remain infinitely more significant than horizontal professional or functional links. The whole idea of civil society is that people come together on the basis of activities that are not organized purely on the basis of family or kin. Finally, political elites in Africa behave according to the norms of political legitimation and representation inherent in the neo-patrimonial system, which means that they use their official positions to fulfill their unofficial obligations to their clients and to meet demands on which their power and their standing as rulers rest.

#### **5.4.2 “Re-traditionalization” of Politics**

The second paradox, according to these scholars, is that much of what is happening in contemporary Africa seems to reinforce the notion that the continent is moving “backward”. Of course the main example of this is ethnicity. The expectations in the sixties and the seventies and even into the early eighties were that, with development, ethnicity would slowly disappear. What we see in Africa is the reverse.

This notion of re-traditionalization emphasizes the extent to which Africans function simultaneously on several different levels, from the most visibly modern to the most ostensibly traditional. What this points to is a paradox that many people have noticed, which is that there seems to be a combination in the way in which Africans can shift very quickly from one register to the next, from the very modern to the very traditional. African elites operate in a world in which they combine both, a world that is harmonious to the beliefs of their own people and one that is surprising external observers but not to them. There is one example which is fairly contentious, corruption. According to the authors, what is apparently illegal, for example smuggling, or even more, what is clearly illegal, such as the embezzlement of state funds, is often seen in Africa as legitimate. In other words, neo-patrimonial political accountability allows for actions which in the West would be seen as corrupt.

#### **4.5 The absence of development**

They argued that the very organization of African political systems is partly responsible for this state of affairs. Neo-patrimonialism rests on notions of legitimacy that favors the redistribution of resources from patrons to clients. But if the principal source of revenue is from the export of primary or agricultural products, if insufficient attention is devoted by government to the development of such exports, and if the world prices for these commodities tend all the time to decrease, then income falls. And in the absence of coherent policies to generate growth from other economic assets, resources overall diminish. External borrowing reduces such shortfalls in the immediate future, but the burden of debt soon cripples the economy.

The paradigm proposed by Chabal and Daloz explains development in Africa in terms of what they call the "instrumentalization of disorder". The basic claim is this: Africa's institutions appear to be in a state of 'disorder' because of apparently ineffective institutions and corruption. However, the state of disorder is functional (useful or practical) and is indicative of a uniquely African developmental path where everyone is a participant, and everyone has something to gain from corrupt practices. Corruption and disorder are therefore instrumentally profitable.

The central claim is that to understand the problem of African underdevelopment, we need to take a closer look at African culture and 'mentalities'. There is a "mindset" that is "shared by all layers of the population". They argue that when the psychological factors are taken into account, then it becomes clear that "Africa is not degenerating, nor is it 'blocked', but... it is forging ahead, following its own path, although assuredly at great variance with existing models of development." Africa will map out a unique developmental path which is consistent with a specific African psychology (mindset).

#### **4.6 Critical appraisal**

The argument that the scale of corruption in African societies is a typical has been contested by other observers. For instance Bayart, Ellis and Hibou argued that, it is not that the societies or the political systems of the sub-continent are more corrupt than others, as is often believed. But in Africa, the interaction between the practice of power, war, economic accumulation and illicit activities of

various types forms a particular political trajectory which can be fully appreciated only if it is addressed in historical depth.

A broader question is whether it is legitimate to talk of an African psychology independent of the lived conditions in Africa. Other researchers have advanced a different view, taking the relation between psychological attributes and societal development to be dialectical. Changes in societal arrangements have consequences for the psychological constitution of individuals and vice versa. The book assumes an African culture that is not only static but resistant to change.

If Africa is not developing along 'Western' lines, then what is its developmental trajectory? While the authors argue that Africa may have its own unique path to development which is different from that of the West, they have not clearly defined this alternative path.

## **Unit Six**

### **Political Change & Conflict: Forces & Patterns**

#### **Introduction**

It is an incontrovertible fact that after 1945 the majority of conflicts have been located in Africa and they have been internal or inter-state in character. In this regard Africa has been judged to be one of “the most warring regions on the planet’. Thus, this unit deals with the political change and conflict that characterize African politics for longtime. The form and pattern of political change and conflict and insurgent movements that challenges the post colonial states in Africa are the main issues that will be discussed in this unit

#### **6. 1 Forms and patterns of conflict in Africa**

##### **6.1.1 Political change & conflict in Africa up to the 80’s**

Change and conflict were present throughout the post independence period. Conflicts between antagonistic social groups, military takeovers, the suppression of opposition political parties and movements, the process of factional politics /factionalism in the state and ruling party apparatus were all defining aspects of the process of politics in the post independence period. Instability was never absent. At the same time, the African state as a set of institutions and the patterns of political interaction were relatively stable, especially in comparison to other underdeveloped areas of the world system such as Latin America and Asia in the same period. Regimes in Africa in the 60’s and 70 have never faced radical transformative insurgent movements and also were not marked by the politics of class antagonism.

Generally political conflict and changes in 60’s and 70’s was defined by a certain pattern. Political change was not abrupt. Political change was incremental and by and large peaceful. Even though attempted and successful military takeovers were to be quite common, military regimes that took over from civilian regimes almost never pursued policies and programs that radically diverged from their civilian predecessors. Political conflict was however a defining feature of the African political landscape. Both inter-state and intra-state conflicts were a feature of the African political scene in the period before the 80’s.

Several factors defined this pattern of inter-state and intra-state conflict in the period before the 80's. For instance, in the case of inter-state conflicts

- Territorial disputes arising from the illogical/irrational colonial territorial partitioning of Africa. For example, the Horn of Africa Somalia claims, Morocco claims on Mauritanian territory etc.
- Ideological/political disputes fueled by cold war rivalry
- Attempts to overthrow governments of neighboring countries. For example the Nkrumah regime tried to destabilize governments that belonged to the rival Monrovia-Brazzaville grouping.

When we come to **intra-state conflicts**, the following factors and processes provided conducive conditions;

- Conflicts fueled by aspirations for separation/secession on the part of particular ethnic and religious group. For example, the Horn. Of Africa.
- Insurgent movements sponsored by rival governments and often associated with the divisions of the cold war. For e.g. the apartheid regime of South Africa together with the USA, supported the RENAMO and the UNITA that were fighting against the FRELMO regime in Mozambique and the MPLA regime in Angola, who were allied with the socialist bloc. While the Angolan and Mozambican governments lent support to the ANC and SWAPO that were fighting for the liberation of South Africa and Namibia from Apartheid control respectively.

Generally, these factors more or less defined the patterns of inter-state and intra-state conflict in Africa up to the 80's. However, these were to change fundamentally and in radical ways in the 80s and 90s. But to understand the changing nature of political change and conflict in Africa beginning in the 80's the changing context has to be discussed or mentioned.

Many political scientists argue that the socio- economic crisis in Africa is a critical /independent variable to explain the changing nature of conflict and its impact in Africa at this point in time. The manifestations of the crisis include falling agricultural productivity and output, negligible industrialization and the absence /failure of economic diversification, falling primary commodity prices on the world market except for petroleum producers, declining investment flows, and overblown, parasitic state apparatus characterized by inefficiency and corruption. However, there is

an absence of consensus on the factors /processes that gave rise to the economic crisis in Africa. a very important aspect of the crisis that faced Africa at this point and which one could view as one of the consequences of the broader social-economic crisis has to do with the collapse of neo-patrimonial system (patron–client linkages ) that played an important role in lending stability and legitimacy to the post-colonial Africa regimes. However, due to the widening socio –economic crisis and its effects coupled with the drying up of the resources that these states could draw from the outside world (declining aid flows) plus disengagement of the major powers from Africa beginning in the late 80’s resulted in the material and financial resources that provided the basis for neo-patrimonial system to slowly disappear. This development over time weakened the legitimacy and support of regimes in power.

The social and economic crisis coupled with the disintegration of the neo-patrimonial system incrementally narrowed down the social base of regimes in power in Africa- regimes that invariably pursued socio-economic and administrative policies that favored urban social groups at the expense of the larger rural populations. The regimes of the 60’s and 70’ feared the urban social groups and saw them as a much more potent political force than the rural masses .But by the 80’s due to the economic crisis and also because of the SAPs (structural adjustment programs) imposed on these government by the IFIS (international financial institutions) these governments could no longer guarantee the same benefits and policies that had previously assured them the support of urban inhabitants. Policies of privatization, deregulation /removal of price controls, the end of subsidies, the end of free education, medical care etc alienated the middle class /petty bourgeoisie, the working class and the urban poor from regimes in power.

The first generation of leaders in the post-colonial African states enjoyed a certain amount of legitimacy and support. Because they had charisma (a quality which is difficult to quantify/measure) and had accumulated “political capital” based upon their record in the anti-colonial struggle. However, by the 80’s few of the first generation of leaders were still in power. These include Felix Houphouet Boigny in the ivory coast (who remained in power until 1993 and passed away peacefully through natural cases) and Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda in Malawi (who was in power from 1964 to 1994 when he was overthrown through democratic elections). The rest had been either overthrown in military coups, been replaced either peacefully or violently or passed away naturally. The regimes and leadership that followed the first generation of leadership did not enjoy the

advantages and legitimacy of their predecessors. The failure of these 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of leadership to either bring about socio-economic transformation or end authoritarian forms of rule, led to the progressive alienation of large sectors of the African from these regimes.

All the above factors which are inter-related and reinforced each other in their effects provided the context for the new patterns of political conflict in Africa in the 80's which were to profoundly affect the African state system and political landscape.

### **Types of conflicts**

According to Naomi chazzan et al five main patterns of domestic political conflict could be identified in the African context-elite, factional, communal, mass and popular conflicts. In line with this the authors developed the concept of "Deep politics" which refer to the process of political response, protest and conflict in Africa. The focus here was on the conceptualization of the responses to the exercise of power by regimes in power. The responses can vary from participation, collaboration, cooperation, cynicism, dissatisfaction, protest, rebellion and ultimately civil war.

**Elite conflicts** involve groups within the elite pursuing different interests. This mode /type of conflict is /was confined to the cities and upper echelons of government. The immediate issues of conflict concerned bureaucratic appointments, policy directions and government allocations. Broadly, the objective was to change or maintain government policies and programs, that is either to maintain or alter the uses of state power. The social groups directly affected or involved in Elite conflicts were civil servants, big business men, students and intellectual. The forms of organization associated with this type of conflict did not involve formal organization and very often involved shifting alliances. Tactics and strategies involved negotiations, wooing through gifts and arguments and compromises within the framework of the single party system. These conflicts were, low intensity, legal and non-violent and did not challenge the formal and informal limitations of the single party system. Regimes and governments often responded to these pressures either positively (through the manipulation of appointment and policy shifts) or negatively through the tactic of "political excommunication"

**Factional conflicts** are/were very similar to the above-mentioned type of conflict. This type of conflict/pressure politics was also rooted in the elite but with the difference that it involves other social groups. Demands associated with this model of conflict politics concerned access to the centre, increased participation and control of government apparatus in terms of policies and outlook. This particular type of conflict is often wider in scope and involves sections of the elite making appeals on the basis of class and ethnicity. Again, there is an attempt to reach out horizontally to unions and associations to broaden the base of support and intensity of pressure on regimes in power. The tactics and strategies are often very broad and can vary from ties and use of influence with individual decision makers, negotiations, tradeoffs all the way to applying direct pressure on regimes in power. Depending on the nature of the issues raised and government response to this type of conflict can escalate. If governments in power are responsive then this pressure can often be bought off/vented. If not, however then the section of the elite and their supporters voicing their demands, may graduate to using strikes, civil disobedience and tactics of non-cooperation to apply pressure. The very hold on power of incumbent regimes might be put into question. Government responses can run the whole gamut ranging from cooptation and token political changes all the way to violent crackdowns.

**Communal conflicts** according to the authors refer to conflicts where the basis of organization is the nation/nationality or ethnic group. This type of conflict questions not only the legitimacy of governments but even the very existence of the state. The belief/perception of being exploited, discriminated against, deprived or neglected on the part of particular groups (defined in terms of language, ethnicity, religion, regional origin) is a central dynamic in this type of conflict. These groups often demand from the centre/regime in power, either guarantees of group identity and survival, or a new basis for allocation of resources, or political administrative restructuring or even ultimately secession. Tactics can also vary. The “highest” form/level of communal conflict is usually civil war/insurgency with the ultimate objective defined as “secession”. The end result might vary with protracted military conflict the most likely outcome. In a few cases, conflict might be resolved with the defeat of the insurgents or the defeat of the regime by ethnic based insurgents. Governments might respond either through structural reforms (federal system and constitution), or use normative means (symbolic concessions to appease demands) and also political means such as granting representation in the centre.

**Popular conflicts** are social pressures which affect the powerless social groups who are the main actors/ subjects in this type of conflict. Popular conflicts undermine state power without changing it. A central condition for this particular category of social pressure or conflict is the weakness of the state. The central objective of the actors here is autonomy and protection from the state -“self encapsulation” is a central objective, aspect and end result of such conflicts. This pressure is often sporadic; here the authors refer to patterns of social engagement such as smuggling, growth and involvement in the informal economic sector, the incremental replacement of public functions and services by individuals and groups outside the state apparatus.

**Mass conflicts** as the authors use the term it refers to social revolutions/social revolutionary movements or pressures. However, in the African context, due to the under development of class distinctions, differentiation and consciousness such pressures and movements have been understandably rare. Mass conflicts or pressures involve conflicts (violent or peaceful) between contending classes with state power and the uses of state power being a central question .In fact, the Ethiopian revolution of 1974 is regarded not only by the authors but by most political scientists specializing on African politics as the only true example of “ social revolution” in Africa .

To make a generalization, elite and factional conflicts dominated the pattern of political conflict in Africa in the first two decades after independence. The two types of conflict very often did not put into question the incumbents hold on power and were often resolved to some extent successfully. While beginning in the 80’s and coinciding with the comprehensive crisis facing African regimes and economies, communal and popular conflicts have become much more common. This is especially the case, with regards to mass conflicts.

Overall, most observes of African politics are of the opinion that in the 80’s there occurred a radical transformation of the form and content of conflicts in Africa. Conflicts in Africa changed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Several new developments were identified as far as political conflicts especially violent political conflicts are concerned. These include

- parts of the continent previously free from violent political conflict were or still are affected by civil wars for example, west Africa and central Africa

- The other is related phenomena of the regionalization of conflict in Africa. For instance, the conflict in Liberia was to spread to Sierra Leone and ten years later affect guinea, the Ivory Coast etc. similar developments were also true for the conflicts in central Africa.
- Another pattern was the immense cost in human and material terms that these conflicts had on the societies and countries in question. often the very existence and viability of statehood was put into question.

A point that needs to be emphasized is that the state in Africa had become more vulnerable to violent challenges. It is not only the fact that the state and regimes in Africa had lost legitimacy and whatever social base or support they once possessed but also that they had become much more weaker due to the economic crisis facing these societies. The repressive and security capabilities of the state had atrophied over time therefore, the state and power at the center became easier and more tempting targets.

## **6.2 Violent Challenges to the Post-Colonial State: Insurgent Movements**

Beginning in the 80's insurgent movements acquired greater prominence as threats to regimes and even the state system in Africa. Earlier guerilla movements had challenged the colonial sate and settler colonial regimes in Africa, but insurgent movements, which fought against African governments, were quite rare. The few exceptions were the leftist puck (union des population's camerounaises) in the Cameroon's and the Eritrean guerilla movements that fought against the Ethiopian state. But in the 80s insurgents fighting against African regimes became more common with the intensification of the crisis facing Africa. By the 1990s guerilla movements had overthrown incumbent regimes in several African states and these movements had taken over power. Chad was the first example of insurgent movement assuming state power when hissed habre's FAN (forces Armesdunord) came to power in 1979 later NRA (national resistance army) seized power in Uganda in 1986.

Any attempt to distinguish between different types of insurgency runs the risk of imposing oversimplified categorizations on movements whose character is both changeable and mixed, and several of the case studies draw attention to the dangers of trying to fit them into particular boxes; but the level of variance has been great enough to call for at least some attempt at classification. Writing about the international relations of African insurgencies, clapham identify four broad groups.

The first, **liberation insurgencies**, set out to achieve independence from colonial or minority rule: Algeria, the Portuguese colonies of Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, and the settler states of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. These are anti-colonial nationalist movements which took an insurgent form, owing to the refusal of incumbent regimes to concede majority rule; as already noted, they enjoyed a special standing in African international relations.

A second group, **separatist insurgencies**, seeks to represent the aspirations and identities of particular ethnicities or regions within an existing state, either by seceding from that state altogether, or else by pressing for some special autonomous status. The classic examples of such insurgencies are in southern Sudan and Eritrea, though the Somali irredentist movements against Ethiopia and Kenya also qualify. The original Front de Liberation Nationale (Frolinat) resistance to the Tombalbaye government in Chad, and the Tigray people's liberation Front (TPLF) opposition to the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia, are further potential candidates. So, on a smaller scale, is the Casamance movement. Virtually all African insurgencies, however, draw to some degree on ethnic differentiation within the state concerned, even in cases like Uganda (and much more markedly Rwanda) where the movement makes no explicit claim on behalf of particular peoples or regions, and the boundaries of this group are necessarily fuzzy.

The third group, **reform insurgencies**, seek radical reform of the national government, and are most evidently represented by NRS in Uganda and the EPRDF (itself descended from the regional TPLF) in Ethiopia, with the Zairian ADFL as a further possible example. Generally, Africa has lacked insurgencies committed to the revolutionary ideologies found in East and South East Asia, as we as in Latin America, for reasons which can most plausibly be ascribed both to differing levels of 'development' (and most evidently class formation), and to differing forms of external domination and regional conflict, especially within the context of the Cold War. In cases such as Angola and Mozambique, there was indeed an explicit commitment to Marxism-Leninism which in turn shaped the post-independence government, but the central 'project' of the insurgency was nonetheless anti-colonial liberation rather than domestic revolution. In the Ethiopian and Ugandan cases, however, and also in Rwanda and Zaire, insurgency was at least ostensibly directed towards the creation of a new kind of state, in place of that which it sought to overthrow. Some elements of the reform agenda were also present in the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), both in reaction to the Khartoum

government's attempts to impose an Islamist regime, and because an explicitly separatist programme alienated external supporters. Several of the leaders of these movements were former student radicals, with a commitment to 'liberation' and a thorough grounding in the work of Mao Tse Tung, who found an increased freedom of action in post-Cold War Africa.

The fourth type, **warlord insurgencies**, arise in cases where the insurgency is directed towards a change of leadership which does not entail the creation of a state any different from that which it seeks to overthrow, and which may involve the creation of a personal territorial fiefdom separate from existing state structures and boundaries. 'Warlord' remains a controversial term in African political analysis, and some authors prefer not to use it; it has not only entered popular usage, however, but also denotes a significant phenomenon. Charles Taylor's would-be regime in Liberia, for example, scarcely differed from Samuel Doe's, while little separated Mahamed Faarah Aidid's SNA in Somalia from Ali Mahdi Mahamed's Somalia Salvation Alliance (SSA), or indeed the preceding regime of Mahamed Siyaad Barre. Though UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique could certainly be distinguished on ideological grounds from the governments which they opposed, their attempts to present themselves as capitalist (or, still more remarkably, liberal democratic) organizations owed more to their need to appeal to external backers than to any convictions of their own. These insurgencies have had the greatest difficulty in establishing effective regimes, even after the overthrow of their original opponents, and have readily resulted in state collapse. For such leaders, indeed, control of a state was desirable but not essential: leaders like Taylor or Aidid, or equally Savimbi, sought to take over the recognized national governments for their respective states, but could run their own quasi-governmental operations in the absence of fixed territories, formal governmental structures, or international recognition.

The differences between types of insurgency also bear on the critical differences between their outcomes. Some insurgencies have been organized effectively, and have proved capable of at least of taking over and operating existing state structures, and in some cases even of reconstructing states which had virtually collapsed. Others, lacking such organization, have been the instruments of state collapse themselves. Explaining the difference between state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgencies is thus a challenge which no comparative analysis can ignore.

## **Unit Seven**

### **Post 1990`S: Democratization and Political Liberalization**

#### **Introduction**

The unit is about the process of democratization and political liberalization in Africa. From the previous units we hope that you got the idea that most African countries were granted independence under a multiparty system, before long, military rule and one-party states typified African regimes. Some underwent crippling civil wars, from which a few are only beginning to emerge. But in the late 1980s and early 1990s after decades of static autocratic dominance, the region shifted sharply toward representative government due to the arrival of The Third Wave of democratization in the African shores. As a result between 1989 and 1994 forty one out of forty seven countries in sub-Saharan Africa underwent significant political reform, including, in many cases, the first competitive elections in a generation.

Dear students, this unit will therefore acquaint you with the various factors, forces and developments that led to the onset of this democratization wave throughout Africa. In doing so the unit will touch up on the competing explanatory frameworks and approaches employed by scholars in understanding the democratization process in Africa and elsewhere and the internal and external factors and challenges that caused the wide spread movement towards democracy in the continent. The unit will also discuss the pattern, strategy and model followed by African countries in their transition to democracy. Finally, the unit will deal on the outcome of this democratic transition by assessing the performance of African counties in maintaining and consolidating democratic rules and practices after their initial transition to democracy.

#### **7. The Background, Explanatory frameworks and Causal Factors**

##### **7.1.1 The third wave in Africa: Causal factors and explanatory frameworks**

As we have discussed in unit four, most African countries were granted independence under a multiparty system, but Soon after independence, almost all of the new governments ‘decayed’ into

authoritarianism. After 1989, however, Africa witnessed a sudden resurgence of democracy. The vast majority of African countries held multiparty elections, albeit of widely divergent quality.

There is little if any consensus on the specific factors—and their relative importance—that have facilitated the democratizations that began in many African countries in 1989. In order to identify and organize systematically the major competing explanations for success and failure in democratic transitions and consolidation, scholars generally identified two general sets of explanations or approaches- Structural Explanations and Contingent or Voluntaristic Approach.

### *7.1.1.1 Structural Explanations*

Structuralist approaches to democratization understood the emergence of democracy as a consequence of the transformation of class structure, the emergence of a bourgeoisie economic development, increasing urbanization, the prior development of democratic values and other socio-economic factors. For example the mainstream literature of the 1960s and 1970s espoused a modernization approach to democratization, emphasizing that democracy was more likely to emerge in countries with high(er) levels of socio-economic development. Some modernisation advocates argued that economic development was a necessary precondition to the establishment of a more democratic, participatory political order. This approach implies that it is only possible to build effective democracies by fulfilling a whole list of prerequisites, or so-called ‘social correlatives’, of democracy. This theory exaggerates the importance of structures and assumes that the behaviour of people is epiphenomenal and ultimately reducible to material or other conditions.

The Third Wave of democratization challenged this concept of ‘prerequisites’ for democracy. As many of the movements towards formal democracy took place in countries where such transformation would not have been expected based on low levels of economic development and other socio-economic indicators. Third Wave transitions also defied cultural arguments positing that democracy is incompatible with certain faiths and religious values. In response to the relative inability of structural approaches to explain Third Wave democratization processes, a new literature on democratic transition emerged in the 1980s adopting an agency or Voluntaristic/ process-oriented approach.

### ***7.1.1.2 Agency Contingent or Voluntaristic Approach***

Instead of focusing on the structural impediments to, or incentives for democracy, some have chosen to emphasize the ability of select actors to affect change. These agents include: rulers employing strategies designed to maintain the status quo or transform the political system; grassroots civil society organizations mobilized to confront (and ultimately dislodge) uncompromising incumbent regimes; members of the donor community determined to initiate or discourage regime change in an effort to respond to specific, often self-serving interests; and military personnel who often believe that they can do a better job of maintaining political order and promoting economic growth in divided societies than civilian leaders deriving their authority democratically.

The fundamental weakness of this approach is that its emphasis on contingent choice may lead to excessive voluntarism. By understating the role of structural incentives and constraints in its analysis, this literature tends to assume that actors are freewheeling agents independent of any political, economic, social and/or historical context. Yet consideration of such structural determinants is crucial in explaining individual preferences, relative bargaining power and how interests may change over time.

Since the 1990s, there has been an attempt to combine structural and agency-related factors to achieve a deeper and more balanced understanding of what drives democratic transition processes. In this regard Terry Lynn Karl makes a case for what she calls **structured contingency**, an approach "that seeks explicitly to relate structural constraints to the shaping of contingent choice." In her words: Even in the midst of tremendous uncertainty provoked by a regime transition, where constraints appear to be most relaxed and where a wide range of outcomes appears to be possible, the decisions made by various actors respond to and are conditioned by the types of socioeconomic structures and political institutions already present. Generally the structured contingency approach recognises the importance of various forms of interactions among the structures, elites and the ordinary citizens in all processes of democratic consolidation. However, we should approach these interactions with the realisation that 'human motives, as distinguished from natural forces, are still hidden from inspection. Hence, a proper description of the groundwork for democratic transition and of the quality of subsequent democracies must account for the complex interaction between agents and structures in confusing conditions

## **7.2. Modalities of Transition and Post Transition Performance**

### **7.2.1 Modalities of Transition**

In order to show the divergent paths followed by African states in their democratic transition Joseph, Richard A. identifies seven basic models of transition and their salient features. These included:

#### ***7.2.1.1 The National Conference***

The classic case in this category is the virtual civilian coup that took place in the West African republic of Benin over ten days in February 1990. It resulted in President Mathieu Karaoke's removal from effective control of public policy, the establishment of a transitional government, and the formulation of guidelines for multiparty elections. It was the first of many countries to use a National Conference as a political rite of passage in the transition from one-party or military rule to democracy. Between 1991 and 1993, Benin, the Central African Republic, Congo (Brazzaville), Madagascar, Mali, and Niger, all of which organized National Conferences, conducted peaceful elections that precipitated changes in political leadership. Political leaders in other countries, however, blocked meaningful democratic change. In Gabon, Guinea, and Togo, the political establishment permitted National Conferences to take place but quickly undermined them or diluted their outcomes in order to maintain its hold on power. In 1993, these three countries held highly controversial multiparty presidential elections, all won by incumbents.

Generally, the transition process through a national conference has demonstrated the following features. First, they represent the emergence of a new political order in the midst of the old, with the new assuming sovereign authority, insisting on the binding character of its decisions, and gradually turning its predecessor into an empty shell. Indeed-and this is especially true in French-speaking Africa-democratic movements that settle for anything less than a national conference are now being viewed as having blundered. "Who says democracy says national conference" has become the watchword of many of Africa's democratic activists.

A second notable feature is the way the national conferences aim to achieve comprehensive representation for groups and institutions of civil society. Scores of political parties and civic associations are represented, with participants usually numbering in the thousands. Because of the difficulty of reaching agreement on who should be included, the conference planning committees

often become arenas of contention, as in Niger and Zaire, with repeated postponements a common result. Leading exiles are often invited back, some after many years abroad, to assist in the political rebirth of the nation. Representatives of all sectors of these societies can finally discuss charges and countercharges that could not be aired under the old repressive systems, and thus gain some hope of putting poisonous acrimony behind them. Some conferences have even subjected high officials to public interrogation. In both Benin and Congo, the conferences concluded with national leaders acknowledging their failings. One leader, President Sassou-Nguesso of Congo, even assumed responsibility for his predecessors' errors. The several national conferences that began in mid-1991 will tell their people-often through televised sessions and other media-more than the most assiduous journalists in the United States could learn about their government's misdeeds by invoking the Freedom of Information Act.

The other feature that has characterized the national conferences, as well as the democratic movement generally is the leading role of religious organizations and church leaders. Roman Catholic prelates presided over the national conferences in both Benin and Congo, where Bishop Ernest Nkombo was also appointed to head the body charged with implementing the transition plan that the conference formulated. In several countries, including Madagascar and Zambia, church leaders have served as vital intermediaries between the regime and its opponents. When governments grow highly intransigent, as was once the case in Zaire and is now the case in Kenya, religious organizations have kept up the pressure with well-publicized sermons and pastoral letters. In this regard, the contemporary democratic movement is following the trail blazed during the antiapartheid struggle by redoubtable religious leaders like the Reverend Beyers Naude and Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The amazing successes of the national conferences have provoked reactions from leaders like Eyadema in Togo, Mobutu in Zaire, and Ratsiraka in Madagascar. After reluctantly agreeing to such conferences, these leaders have resisted opposition demands to accord them a sovereign status by employing a variety of tactics including the use of military force against the opposition. This final test of wills will decide whether the national conference movement continues to prevail, or whether more leaders will go down with their regimes (as in Mali) rather than accept merely ceremonial status. In any case, it is unlikely that these embattled leaders can stem the rising democratic tide.

### ***7.2.1.2 Government Change via Democratic Elections***

The early 1990s saw a wave of competitive multiparty elections in Africa. These contests can be described as "founding" elections in the sense that they marked for various countries a transition from an extended period of authoritarian rule to fledgling democratic government. By the middle of the 1990s, this wave had crested. Although founding elections continued to be conducted in African countries that were latecomers to the political-reform bandwagon, they took place less frequently than earlier in the decade. Bratton and van de Walle documented the nature of "early" founding elections in Africa. These events were widespread, with 54 elections occurring in 29 countries during a brief five-year period of transition from 1990 to 1994. More than half of these early founding elections—30 out of 54—reflected the will of the electorate. In as much as reputable election observers ruled them free and fair. Most importantly, in a momentous break with past patterns of leadership succession in Africa, these contests resulted in the peaceful ejection of sitting presidents in 11 countries (plus three more turnovers where incumbents declined to run). Since that time, multiparty elections have become commonplace in sub-Saharan Africa. By the end of 1997, only four countries in the region had failed to complete a competitive contest during the 1990s: Nigeria, Somalia, Swaziland, and Zaire. All others had held either first founding elections (40 cases) or regular competitive polls (5 cases). "Late" founding elections (i.e., those held *after* 1994) did not usually result in leadership alternation, however; more often than not, sitting presidents found ways to survive. As the 1990s progressed, leaders became skillful at accommodating the international norm for competitive elections, while at the same time learning to manipulate them to their own ends. In general, the later founding elections were held in Africa, the poorer the quality of their conduct and the lower the likelihood that incumbents would lose. In sum, the postcolonial generation of African political leaders proved unable to survive truly democratic elections.

### ***7.2.1.3 Co-opted Transitions***

An interesting variation on this model is the case of Senegal, where President Abdou Diouf made the bold move of inviting leaders of the major opposition parties to join his government. All but one accepted—including Abdoulaye Wade, leader of the Parti Democratique Senegalais (PDS), who was briefly detained after his party denounced the legislative elections of February 1988 as fraudulent. Paradoxically, Abdou Diouf has refurbished the democratic image of the country's political system

by broadening his government to include some of the opposition parties rather than following the more common method of democratizing the regime by subjecting it to more political competition.

#### ***7.2.1.4 Guided Democratization***

In such cases, represented most notably by Guinea and Nigeria, a military regime retains virtually complete control of the process, and the transitions are complex and deliberately prolonged. In October 1989, well ahead of the democratic upheavals in most other countries, President Lansana Conte of Guinea declared his intention to transfer power to a multiparty system. Since then, however, the process has lost credibility despite a referendum approving a new constitution and the February 1991 introduction of a transitional regime that includes civilian representation.

In the case of Nigeria, while there is considerable cynicism about President Ibrahim Babangida's unpredictable style of leadership, he has stayed in control of the transition process since seizing power from General Mohammed Buhari in an August 1985 palace coup. Despite periodic adjustments the Nigerian basic program of transition has followed the guidelines laid down in 1986 and in Guinea, the Conte government has decreed a five-year transition starting in 1991, after which elections will be permitted. Even then, as in Nigeria, it will be on a two-party basis (which could subsequently be expanded in Guinea to include more parties). Nigeria's president Babangida has accorded himself more than eight years in power based on a plan to bring a stable Third Republic into being as well as to restructure the economy.

#### ***7.2.1.5 Recalcitrance and Piecemeal Reforms***

The unswerving hardliners among the recalcitrants are found in such countries as Malawi, Kenya, and Sudan. In Malawi, no democratic breeze has been allowed to disturb the cloistered system of aging President Hastings Kamuzu Banda. President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya has made minor concessions to his domestic and external critics by releasing a few prominent detainees and instituting such reforms as the abolition of "queue voting" and the restoration of judicial tenure. President Moi has not budged, however, in his rejection of demands for multipartism or any other changes that would require the regime to relinquish its absolute control.

In Sudan, meanwhile, the military regime of Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Ahmed El Bashir, which does little to disguise its alliance with the fundamentalist National Islamic Front, refused to

open the door to meaningful negotiations with the Sudan People's Liberation Army or to permit the country's established political parties to operate.

Another regime that has shown considerable recalcitrance while granting piecemeal concessions is the government of Cameroon, where Paul Biya has lifted press restrictions, permitted opposition parties to operate, and granted amnesty to political prisoners. Nevertheless, the opposition is dissatisfied with these reforms and insists on a national conference that would supplant Biya and his party.

#### ***7.2.1.6 Armed Insurrections Culminating in Elections***

In several African countries, including South Africa, determined armed struggles have been waged. Among the salutary consequences of the worldwide democratic movement is the way it has facilitated the resolution of these conflicts through peaceful elections. The reduction of Cold War tension made possible the transfer of power to a democratically elected government in Namibia and its accession to independence in March 1990. Global detente also facilitated the unbanning of the African National Congress and its affiliated organizations by President de Klerk of South Africa, as well as the Estoril Accord on Angola that provides for October 1992 elections involving the former warring parties.

There are other countries in which democratization may provide the exit from armed conflict. The National Resistance Movement of Yoweri Museveni in Uganda, after overthrowing the despotic rule of Milton Obote in 1986, introduced a quasi-democratic system. Museveni has not yet permitted competitive multiparty elections, though he has introduced many ancillary features of a democratic system, such as freedom of the press, respect for human rights, and an ombudsman. In Rwanda, President Habyarimana has responded to an armed insurgency that began in late 1990 by agreeing to introduce a multiparty system and other reforms. In Ethiopia, a July 1991 meeting aimed at establishing a provisional government also approved a charter that includes the key liberal democratic freedoms of expression, assembly, belief, and association. Multiparty elections are promised in a few years. Similarly, concerted efforts were made in Liberia to end the armed insurgency of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and to resolve the contested national leadership through free elections. If African governments become replaceable via the ballot box or amenable to change by peaceful means, there should be a corresponding decline in the resort to armed struggle.

### ***7.2.1.7 Conditional Transitions***

The greatest fear of the democratic movement in many African countries is that the ruling regimes will find pretexts for cancelling or postponing the transition toward democracy. In most cases, popular pressure is so strong that the government dares not renege on concessions. The cases in which governments have been able to interrupt democratic transitions have usually featured overt threats to the regime that also imperil the democratic aspirations of the people. This option is clearly seen in countries like Algeria and Tunisia, with their strong Islamic fundamentalist movements.

In both countries, the government has moved to arrest members of these movements and has publicly reaffirmed its commitment to democratization, although fulfillment will likely depend on the electoral prospects of the fundamentalists. Several other countries, including Nigeria, have potentially significant fundamentalist movements that could challenge and destabilize transitional governments and their successors.

By their very nature, the democratic transitions in Africa involve variety and creativity. For example, In the former French colonies, the mode of transition was frequently a “sovereign national conference” and In other cases such as Zambia and Malawi, existing authoritarian governments were simply forced to allow free elections in which the ruling presidents and their parties lost power.

Moreover, the dynamics and outcomes of these transitions have been highly variable in some cases, a competitive election has led to an alternation of political leaders and the emergence of a fragile democratic regime; more often the transition has been flawed (with the incumbent stealing the election), blocked (with the incumbents and opposition deadlocked over the rules of the political game), or precluded (by widespread civil unrest). Generally, Since The Third Wave of democratisation reached the African shores in the late 1980s and early 1990s more than half of Africa's fifty-two governments responded to domestic and international pressures’ by holding competitive presidential or legislative elections. While the authoritarian governments in power managed to contain many of the newly animated democratic movements, in a number of other cases these reform movements did succeed in bringing about democratic transitions to new, *de jure* multiparty regimes. According to Bratton and van de Walle a successful democratic transition has occurred when “a regime has been installed on the basis of a competitive election, freely and fairly conducted within a matrix of civil liberties, with results accepted by all participants”. Consequently, it is not a criterion that there must be a regime-change, as long as it follows the above conditions it is considered to be democratic. Based on this carefully considered operational definition, sixteen

different African states experienced a democratic transition between 1991 and 1994. Dramatic though these transitions to multiparty democracy were, they represented only a first step toward the establishment of stable, consolidated democratic governments.

### **7.2.2 Post Transition Democratic Performance in Sub Saharan Africa**

When elections and their surrounding freedoms are institutionalized, it might be said that democracy is "consolidated," i.e., likely to endure. For the sixteen African states identified by Bratton and van de Walle, the post-transition record of democratic consolidation has been mixed. Of the sixteen, only three (Benin, Cape Verde, and Madagascar) undergo consolidation as defined by the minimal condition of the peaceful replacement of a post-transition party or president in power through electoral means. In nine cases (Central African Republic, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, South Africa, and Zambia) democratic experiments are ongoing and have not been disturbed by unconstitutional changes of power, but they have not yet been consolidated in the formal sense of having experienced regime alternation. Three other states (Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, and Niger) experienced military coups or civil war after their transitions, but subsequently continued to experiment with democracy after peace was restored. In all three, elections of reasonable fairness have followed the breakdown of democratic rule. One of the most spectacular failures has been Congo Republic. Following its democracy crushing civil war of 1997, the new government did not organize elections until 2002, and those were too deeply flawed to be considered free and fair. Only a limited number of countries that have undergone transitions to democracy have in fact succeeded in establishing consolidated and functioning democratic regimes. Instead, most of these countries in transition have come to occupy a precarious middle ground between outright authoritarianism and fully-fledged democracy. While a number of others have experienced (partial) reversals to authoritarianism. The initial expectations that most countries experiencing democratic transitions would move in a linear fashion towards consolidated, institutionalized democracies – what Francis Fukuyama enthusiastically describes as ‘the end of history’ – have not been met in Africa. These incipient democracies, which have been variously described as ‘illiberal’ (Zakaria, 1997), ‘delegative’ (O’Donnell, 1996) or, more generally, ‘hybrid’ regimes (Diamond, 2002), constitute ambiguous systems that combine rhetorical acceptance of liberal democracy, the existence of some formal democratic institutions and respect for a limited sphere of civil and political liberties with essentially illiberal or even authoritarian traits.

After almost two decades of political openings in Africa, Few African political systems have so far developed into institutionalized, consolidated democracies – where democratic institutions and rules have become ‘the only game in town’. Admittedly, attempts to classify the range of African regimes according to their levels of democratic development are fraught with problems of data, interpretation and short time series. Despite this and the huge variation in terms of democratic developments within the continent we provide two sets of classification of African countries based on their progress towards consolidation. In this regard Diamond (2001) classifies political regimes in Africa into five according to their democratic performance in 2001.

**Liberal democracies:** are those countries where the governments came to power in free multiparty elections, have gone on to hold regular polls at intervals as demanded by their constitutions. They are democracies that embody respect for civil and political liberties, the existence of relatively effective legislative and judicial institutions and tolerance for press criticism and dissenting opinions.

**Electoral democracies:** are democratic regimes that clearly meet minimal democratic standards (numbering nine), namely that legislative and chief of state offices are filled via popular choice under universal suffrage. However, civil and political liberties are not universally secure, political minorities as in Malawi and Namibia are sidelined or repressed. Last, the media is dominated by the ruling party or coalition in addition to the concentration of political power in the chief of state.

**Ambiguous democracies** -Following on the heels of liberal and electoral democracies this are democracies that potentially could graduate to electoral democracies, but elections are nominally competitive and seriously flawed by ethnic conflict, political intimidation, vote buying, and questionable ballot counts.

**Liberalized autocracy**-In these countries, leaders have learned how to manipulate the rules of the democratic game and to stage low-quality elections to their own advantage. Governance is very high handed with a lot of limits on independent press, civic organizations, and political parties. The chief of state is heavily personified that it amounts to one-man rule. A large group of African countries (twenty-one) are classified as Liberalized autocracies

**Unreformed autocracies**- These are governments that make no pretense at legitimizing themselves through competitive elections. In some cases, leaders come to power through hereditary, military coup or armed insurgency. In other cases sham elections are held in parts of the country that the government controls, but major segments of the electorate are excluded.

Recently (in 2007) based on a qualitative assessment of democratic developments within the continent scholars identified three broad ‘types’ of democratic trajectory in sub-Saharan Africa

**Consolidating democracies-** the expectation in the democratic literature in the early 1990s was that the transitions to democracy and regular elections over time would lead to qualitatively improved institutions and democratic processes; and that the new democratic institutions would increasingly enjoy local and international support. However, in sub-Saharan Africa, it is commonly observed that democracy has been consolidated in only a few countries, such as South Africa, Botswana and Mauritius. In a few other countries, changes in party leadership and political successions appear increasingly to be rule-based and routinized. This has provided a degree of political stability that also has positive effects on other aspects of governance, such as the investment climate and state capacity to deliver public services. Although this judgment may be contested, Ghana may be placed in the category of consolidating democracies.

**Democratic processes ‘stuck in transition’-** A large number of countries that democratized in the early 1990s have remained in a ‘grey zone’ as hybrid regimes rather than institutionalized democracies or authoritarian systems. Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda and many others are characterized by routinized electoral processes and formal democratic institutions. However, democratization has not led to the institutionalization of formal rules, and the uncertainty of rules is witnessed in particular before elections. Common among these hybrid regimes are poorly institutionalized and functioning party systems.

The case of Zambia is illustrative. Zambia experienced a change of leadership as a result of the founding elections in 1991. Since then, Zambia has held three multi-party electoral contests, therefore appearing to be ‘on track’ toward democratic consolidation. It seemed reasonable to assume that the first election under multi-party rule would be surrounded by controversy, while later elections would be less controversial as the voters, candidates and administrators gained experience with multi-party contests. However, after a brief period of euphoric optimism, by the mid-1990s Zambia’s democratization process had stagnated and maybe even reached a critical point in terms of continued stability. Institutional reforms have failed to produce influential ‘watchdogs’ and counter-forces against state malpractice and corruption. And while electoral democracy exists, pluralist constitutional democracy has not challenged the hegemony and increasingly more authoritarian

practices witnessed within the MMD government. Rather, the 1990s saw a growing concentration of power in the executive office.

**Political meltdown**-While the concept of hybrid regimes has received increasing attention in the literature on Africa's new democracies, a third trajectory of democratic development has so far been largely neglected. This category may be referred to as 'political meltdown' – a situation where the quality of political institutions erodes (rather than improves) over time. Political meltdown 'accumulates' when several key political institutions malfunction simultaneously. For different reasons, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Malawi may be placed in this category.

## Unit Eight

### International Relations of Africa

#### Introduction

In this unit the focus is African international relations. By international relations of Africa, we are concerned with two important issues; inter African relations and Africa in the world system. This unit is devoted the analysis of these two aspects of African international relations. While the first aspect is concerned with the relations that exist between African states, the second aspect is concerned with the place of Africa in the world system. Topics to be discussed include the context of foreign policy making; pan Africanism and the search for African unity; the move from OAU to AU; the role of regional economic groupings. The second aspect revolves around changes in the in the international system that have significantly influenced African politics and society. From the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century both the recognition of slavery as a legitimate commerce and its abolition in the 19<sup>th</sup> c has significantly affected African politics and society. Likewise, the occupation of the African continent through colonialism had a debilitating impact on African politics and government.

The major four international events have significantly influenced the global balance of power and the evolution of African politics and government during the contemporary independence era will also be discussed in this unit. Dear student, this unit is in no way an exhaustive account of the vast issues incorporated in the field of international relations of Africa. Our objective is to give you some of the recurring themes up on which you can build up and expand your frontiers of knowledge through reading and observation.

#### 8.1 Inter-African relations

Following independence most African states had closer ties, especially in the economic field, with outside states than they had with each other, and thus foreign powers exercised considerable leverage with in the continent. This applied especially to the former colonial powers since the colonizer was normally the new states trading partner. Progressive leaders of Africa like Nkrumah charged this relation as a form of neo-colonialism where the former colonial powers gave only formal political independence which is not accompanied by economic, cultural independence. They believed that a united Africa subject to a single government was the only effective way of terminating this relationship. The other half of African leaders however did not share this conviction.

Out of the diplomacy and exchanges of the post colonial African leaders was born the OAU owed much to the ideas of Nkrumah and his contemporaries, but fell of short of their vision. This section is devoted to the discussion of pan Africanism and the pursuit of African unity and the different regional and continental organization created to achieve this goal.

### **8.1.1 Pan-Africanism and the Search for African Unity**

Inspired by the anti-colonial activities of peoples of African descent living in North America and the West Indies during the nineteenth and twentieth century's, African nationalists sought to promote a unified African front against colonial rule. What subsequently became known as the pan-African ideal was most forcefully enunciated for the first time at the 1945 meeting of the Pan-African Congress held in Manchester, England. At the conference, participants adopted a declaration that affirmed the rights of all colonized peoples to be free from foreign imperialist control, whether political or economic and to elect their own governments, without restrictions from foreign powers. In a separate Declaration to the colonial Powers, participant's underscored that if the colonial powers were still determined to rule mankind by force, then Africans, as a last resort, may have to appeal to force in the effort to achieve freedom.

The pan-African ideal gained momentum as a result of the first wave of independence during the 1950s. In an opening address to the first gathering of independent African nations on African soil, held in 1958 in Accra, Ghana, President Kwame Nkrumah proclaimed, "Never before has it been possible for so representative a gathering of African Freedom Fighters to assemble in a free independent African state for the purpose of planning for a final assault upon imperialism and colonialism. According to Nkrumah, the realization of the pan-African ideal required a commitment between African leaders and their peoples to guide their countries through four stages: (1) "the attainment of freedom and independence," (2) "the consolidation of that independence and freedom," (3) "the creation of unity and community between the African states," and (4) "the economic and social reconstruction of Africa."

Despite overwhelming agreement among African leaders that pan Africanism constituted a worth foreign policy goal, sharp disagreement existed over the proper path to ensure such unity. One group of primarily francophone countries known as the Brazzaville Group (named after the capital of Congo Brazzaville) sought a minimalist approach: the coordination of national economies through

standard diplomatic practices. Little consideration was given to the possibility of creating continent-wide institutions. In sharp contrast, Nkrumah and other leaders, who belonged to what became known as the Casablanca Group (named after the Moroccan city), argued instead that the success of pan-Africanism required a political union of all independent African countries, patterned after the federal model of the United States. In speech after speech, Nkrumah promoted two key themes that became the hallmark of this international vision: “Africa must unite!” and “Seek ye first the political kingdom!”

The third group of African leaders, who belonged to what became known as the Monrovia Group (named after the capital of Liberia), rejected the idea of political union as both undesirable and unfeasible, primarily due to the assumption that African leaders would jealously guard their countries’ new-found independence. They nonetheless sought a greater degree of cooperation than that espoused by the Brazzaville Group. Led by Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister of Nigeria, the Monrovia Group called for the creation of a looser organization of African states. According to this vision, African countries would guard their independence but promote growing cooperation and the harmonization of policies in a variety of functional areas, most notably economic, scientific, educational, and social development. An important component of the Monrovia Group approach was a desire to create continent-wide institutions that would oversee and strengthen policy harmonization.

### **8.1.2 The OAU and the AU**

On May 25, 1963, thirty-one African heads of state largely embraced the Monrovia vision by launching the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the first pan African, intergovernmental organization of independent African countries based on African soil. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was chosen as the site for the OAU headquarters, and all major decisions and resolutions were formally discussed at the annual Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The Sovereign equality of all member states was an important guiding principle of the organization, which differed significantly from the Great Power domination of the United Nations, given the special power conferred on the five permanent members (Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States) of the UN Security Council.

Although the OAU's 39-year existence, which came to an end in 2002 with the launching of the African Union, has been correctly described as a "victory for pan-Africanism," both critics and sympathetic observers questioned the organization's ability to play an effective role in African politics and international relations. Despite the best of intentions, the OAU had failed to live up to the expectations of its original framers. The OAU's effectiveness can be assessed by exploring several elements of the OAU charter.

The most important theme of the OAU's charter was support for the inviolability of borders inherited from the colonial era. Due to the multi-ethnic nature of most African countries, African leaders were concerned that changing even one boundary would open a Pandora box for ethnically based secessionist groups. In the case of the Nigerian civil war the OAU not only refused to sanction aid to Biafra, but also came up with a resolution that supported the Nigerian federal government. As ethnic tensions and separatist movements intensified in the post-cold war period African leaders remained committed to maintaining borders inherited from the colonial era.

A second guiding principle of the OAU charter was noninterference in the internal affairs of member states. In the early years African leaders debated whether to allow military who allegedly overthrow civilian government to maintain their OAU seats. The debate was resolved in favor of whatever group controlled the reins of power. The OAU seemed to function as a club of presidents engaged in the tacit policy of not inquiring into each other's practices and hence the abuse of human rights by regimes of various persuasions was left unquestioned.

The peaceful settlement of all disputes via negotiation, mediation, conciliation, or arbitration constituted a third guiding principle of the OAU. Yet strict adherence to the first two principles support for territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs historically impeded the OAU's ability to mediate internal conflicts or conflicts between two or more-member states. In the case of the 1967-70 Nigerian civil war, almost reflexive support for the territorial integrity of Nigeria seriously called into doubt, at least from the view of the secessionist Igbos, the OAU's ability to serve as an impartial negotiator. For this reason, the OAU commission of Mediation, Arbitration, and Conciliation was "stillborn" and most African-initiated arbitration efforts were carried out ad hoc by African presidents. For example, Djiboutian President Hassan Gouled Aptidon used his country's stature as the headquarters for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to mediate

the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. According to I. William Zartman, a specialist of conflict resolution, such efforts led to success in only 33 percent of roughly twenty-four cases, and this success was often only temporary as warring parties returned to the battlefield.

The ability to dispatch peace-keeping or peace-making forces once a conflict has broken out is a critical aspect of conflict resolution. The OAU Founding Fathers tried to prepare for this eventuality by planning the creation of an African High Command, a multinational military force composed of military contingents from OAU member states. The African High Command never made it beyond the planning stage, however, leading once again to a variety of ad hoc measures. In 1981, the OAU sponsored the creation of a short-term, all-African military force designed to resolve an expanding civil war in Chad. Composed of approximately 4,800 troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo-Kinshasa), Nigeria, and Senegal, the OAU force “failed to achieve any concrete solution” due to financial, logistical, and political difficulties and within a few months was “forced to withdraw.”

Two developments nonetheless underscored the OAU’s desire to take a more proactive role in African conflicts in the post-cold war era. In 1993, the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted a resolution creating the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, a formal consultative process ideally designed to prevent the outbreak and further spread of conflicts on the African continent. The inspiration for this consultative process was a forward-thinking document, “Toward a Conference on Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation in Africa,” popularly called the Kampala document, which was the result of a 1991 conference convened by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The most important development, however, revolved around the possibility of creating a multinational African Defense Force, able to respond militarily to African crises. In May 1997, African leaders agreed that such a force should be comprised of existing military units of contributing OAU member states and that these units would be equipped with the aid of foreign powers, most notably the United States and France. The African Defense Force would remain under the operational command of the OAU. Unresolved issues included which countries should be eligible to contribute forces (e.g. should involvement be limited to democratic countries?) and what

type of decision-making body should be able to authorize when and where to intervene (e.g. should intervention be based on the consensus of all OAU member-states or should a smaller body of representative members be responsible?) Discussion concerning the African Defense Force nonetheless remained at an exploratory stage, and the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution remained largely untested.

A fourth guiding principle of the OAU charter was the unswerving opposition to colonialism and white minority rule. Principally concerned with the past existence of minority white-ruled regimes in Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, and the former Portuguese territories of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and Sao Tome and Principe, the OAU established a liberation Committee based in Dar es salaam, Tanzania, to aid liberation movements with both economic and military assistance. Although disagreements often arose over which tactics would best ensure transitions to majority-ruled governments (e.g. should one support dialogue with a white regime or fund a guerrilla insurgency?) every OAU member expressed public opposition to the continued existence of minority white-ruled regimes in southern Africa. The work of the Liberation Committee largely came to an end in 1994, with South Africa's transition to a multiracial, multiparty democracy.

The OAU entered the history books on July 8-10, 2002 as leaders from more than forty African countries met in Durban, South Africa, to launch the African Union, a pan-African organization designed to build on the successes of the OAU in the continuing search for African unity. Amara Essy, a distinguished statesman from Cote d'Ivoire, was chosen to serve as interim chairperson of the African Union's commission and Thabo Mbeki, president of South Africa, hosted the summit. Like its OAU predecessor, the African Union will hold an annual summit of heads of state and government, adopt official positions on a wide array of diplomatic topics affecting the African continent, and create a number of offices and institutions designed to strengthen African cooperation.

As concerns structure, the African Union will be led by a ten-member executive body the African Commission that will be served by a president, vice president, and eight additional commissioners who will be responsible for the following eight broad portfolios.

- Political affairs such as democratic elections and human rights

- Peace and Security, most notably efforts devoted to conflict resolution
- Economic Affairs, inclusive of promoting regional integration
- Infrastructure and Energy, such as the development of the transportation and telecommunications sectors.
- Social affairs, ranging from sports and migration to health issues and anti drug efforts.
- Human Resources, Science and Technology, such as education and new information technologies.
- Commerce and Industry, most notably efforts devoted to trade and investment.
- Rural Economy and Agriculture, inclusive of food security and protection of the environment.

Several guiding principles of the organization clearly indicate a new path in African regional cooperation that builds on both the successes and failures of the OAU. In sharp contrast to the OAU, the African Union has not enshrined in its founding charter the concept of the inviolability of frontiers inherited from the colonial era. Despite its commitment to the territorial integrity of African countries, the African Union maintains a great deal of flexibility in dealing with both ongoing and future conflicts by not including such a rigid and restrictive principle in its founding document. Especially noteworthy of is the African unions rejection of the OAU principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of member states. Member states have instead agreed that the African Union has the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of member states in cases of gross violations of human rights and genocide and war crimes. In addition, all member states commit themselves is to New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) designed to strengthen Africa's position in the global economy and attract greater levels of foreign aid and investment. Together these principles have reignited a sense of African optimism in the pursuit of the cherished goal of pan-Africanism.

### **8.1.3. Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration**

Inspired by the success of the European Union and encouraged by the UN sponsored Economic commission for Africa (ECA) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, African leaders have sought to create regional entities capable of promoting regional cooperation and integration. This vision of African international relations was best outlined by the OAU's publication in 1981 of a document, Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000, which propose the

establishment of an African Economic Community (AEC) that would be based on an African Common Market (ACM). The guiding logic of the Lagos plan of Action is that the creation of intergovernmental economic organizations in each of Africa's five major regions-North, East, West, Southern, and Central Africa-is the best means for ensuring the ultimate creation of a continent-wide AEC.

The flourishing of experiments in regional cooperation and integration throughout the contemporary independence era demonstrates the commitment of African leaders to the economic dimension of the pan-African ideal. By the end of the 1980s it was estimated that at least 160 intergovernmental economic groupings existed on the African continent, with thirty-two such organizations in West African alone. Among the most notable economic groupings in each of Africa's major regions are the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAs, 1975), The Union of the Arab Maghreb (UAM in North Africa, 1989), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS, 1983), and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Northeast Africa (IGAD 1986). These regional organizations are complemented by a few larger groupings, such as the *Lome Convention*, which promotes preferential trade links between the European Union and dozens of countries from Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific.

African leaders offer several rationales for seeking regional cooperation and integration. The simplest reason is the firm belief that there is strength in numbers. To compete effectively in an increasingly competitive international economic system, dominated by economic superpowers (e.g., the United States and china) and powerful regional economic entities (e.g. the European Union), African countries must band together and pool their resources. Second, African leaders want to promote self-sustaining economic development and particularly the industrialization of the African continent. Struggling with the reality that many of their countries are economically impoverished and lack the tools to create advanced industries. African leaders believe they can build on the strengths of their neighbors to forge integrated and self-sustaining regional economies.

Most important regional economic schemes are perceived as the best means of creating self-reliant development thereby reducing and eventually ridding the African continent of the of dependency inherited from the colonial era. For example, African leaders are rightfully concerned that national control over the evolution of their respective economics is constrained by Africa's trade dependency

on Europe, at the expense of intraregional trade links with African countries. For this reason the primary objective of early regional economic schemes was to promote intraregional trade with neighbors who theoretically share a set of development objectives, either due to special geographic features, historical ties or a shared religion, such as Islam in North Africa. By strengthening these ties with like-minded neighbors, a stronger African economic entity are expected to emerge that will be able to reduce foreign influence and strengthen Africa's collective ability to bargain with non African powers more equally.

Early optimism began to diminish in the aftermath of the launching of several regional integration efforts which included the creation of supranational authorities and formal economic unions designed to promote intraregional trade and investment. In the case of the East African Community (EAC), the 1976 decision of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda to create a common market with common services coordinated by a supranational governing body, collapsed less than 10 years later and was followed in 1978-79 by Tanzania's military intervention in Uganda to overthrow the dictatorial regime of Idi Amin. As explained by Olatunde Ojo, a specialist of regional cooperation and integration in Africa, several factors that contributed to the EAC's decline clarify why other similar efforts, from the 1960 to the 1980s, either failed or demonstrated minimal progress. This includes among other things the polarization of national development and the perception of unequal gain, the inadequacy of compensatory and corrective measures, ideological differences and the rise of economic nationalism.

Beginning in the 1980s the failure and stagnation of classic integration schemers prompted African leaders to undertake looser forms of regional economic cooperation in a variety of functionally specific areas, such as transportation infrastructure (e.g. regional rail links), energy (e.g. hydroelectric projects on common rivers) and telecommunications. The logic behind pursuing this form of regionalism is that it does not require the creation of supranational authorities, nor does it requires policymakers to sacrifice national control over the sensitive areas of foreign trade and investment. This looser form of economic cooperation is gathering strength in the post-cold war era. Particularly as democratically elected elites increasingly assume power and seek to promote cooperation with other democracies in their regions.

The 1992 transformation of the southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADC) is a good example of this growing trend in African regional relations. Originally conceived as a vehicle for reducing the economic dependence of the Frontline States on South Africa during the apartheid era, the transformed SADC now counts South Africa among its members and is seeking to enhance traditional cooperation in a variety of functional realms, most notably transportation. The new SADC stands self-confident at “the threshold of a new era.” according to several reports published by the African Development Bank in conjunction with the World Bank and the Development Bank of South Africa.

Several factors are essential to understanding the optimism surrounding SADC’s status as a potential model for economic cooperation in Africa. First the inclusion of a highly industrialized South Africa provided SADC with an engine for economic growth that had reinvigorated the entire region. The vast majority of SADC members share in the same British colonial heritage, thus facilitating technical matters like which language should serve as official language. The third factor is the decline of ideological differences between SADC members due to the end of the cold of the cold war.

## **8.2 African in World Politics**

### **Section Overview**

Several international events have influenced the evolution of African politics and society during the contemporary independence era. The extended global conflict of World War II (1935-45) heralded the decline of Europe as the most powerful region of the world and the emergence of African nationalist movement’s intent on achieving independence from colonial rule. The outbreak and intensification of the cold war (1947-89) transformed the newly independent African countries into proxy battlefields between the United States and the former Soviet Union, the unparalleled superpowers of the post-World War II era. African conflicts often having little, if anything, to do with the ideological concerns of communism or capitalism threatened to become East-West flashpoints in the face of growing U.S.-Soviet involvement. A third watershed event, the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, signified the end of the cold war. The ideologically based cold war between the United States and the former Soviet Union was replaced by a cold peace, in which the major northern industrialized democracies struggled for economic supremacy in the highly competitive economic environment of the 1990s. The security dimension of this cold peace became evident in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the World Trade center in New

York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. as the United States sought to enlist its African allies in a global war on terrorism. This section is developed to exploring the involvement of a host of international of actors in African politics and society from the cold war to the cold peace.

### **8.2.1 Role of Foreign Powers**

Many important policies affecting the future of African politics and society are decided in Paris, Washington, Berlin, and Tokyo, the capitals of the four Great Powers that remain heavily involved throughout Africa at the beginning of the twenty-first century. France maintains extensive political-military and economic relationships with African countries, most notably in francophone Africa, those former French and Belgian colonies where, French serves as an “official language of administration and education. The United States often became the most influential political-military actor in the non-francophone portions of the African continent during the cold war era and has increasingly sought to promote economic links in the post-cold war era. Japan and Germany emerged during the 1980s as extremely involved economic actors and have achieved the status of the second or third most important sources of economic aid or trade for individual African countries (often behind the leading roles of France and the United States).

Britain’s official interest in maintaining privileged ties in Africa dramatically reduced during the cold war. Britain’s noteworthy involvement ongoing involvement with its former African colonies takes place in the context of the common wealth of nations, a loose association of former British colonies who holds an annual meeting of heads of states. Other traditionally less powerful colonial powers such as Spain were never important diplomatic players due to lack of significant colonial holdings. Despite extensive involvement during the cold war, the former communist bloc countries have drastically reduced the political military and economic ties with the African continent.

A variety of middle powers plays varying roles on the African continent. Canada and the Nordic countries most notably Sweden, demonstrate a strong humanitarian interest, particularly concerning famine relief in the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa. During the height of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel pursued an aggressive policy that exchanged Israeli technical aid for diplomatic recognition of the state of Israel. Other Middle Eastern powers, such as Saudi Arabia, pursue religiously based policies regarding the predominantly Muslim states of North and Northeast Africa.

Iran in particular seeks to foster links with Islamist regimes and movements in the Sudan, Egypt, and Algeria. India and Brazil lead their regions in seeking to expand economic relations with the African continent.

### **8.2.2 Great Powers and Africa during the Cold War (1947-1989)**

During the cold war period Africa had become a competition ground between various who sought to enlist African leaders on the side of the United States or the Soviet Union in an emerging East-West rivalry for dominance. The policy makers of Charles de Gaulle's France, Mao Zedong's china, and Nikita Khrushchev's Soviet Union shared similar convictions as to Africa's importance in the emerging cold war environment of the 1950s. As a result, they were equally keen in the pursuit of African allies, contributing to Africa's emergence as an arena of Great Power competition. The nature of this competition during the cold war is nicely illustrated by the specific involvement of the United States and France in francophone Africa.

### **8.2.3. Complementary Interests among the Western powers**

American and French foreign policies were driven by different sets of motivating factors during the cold war. American policymakers were guided by the ideological interest of containing the former Soviet Union and its communist allies. A variety of presidential doctrines, beginning with the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and culminating in the Reagan Doctrine of the 1980s, declared Washington's right to intervene against communist advances throughout the world, including in francophone Africa. As a result, pro-West administrations, such as Senegal under President Abdou Diouf, were treated as potential American allies deserving of foreign aid, whereas Marxist administrations, such as Madagascar under Didier Reatsiraka, were isolated. American policymakers also sought special relationships with strategically important regional actors, such as Morocco in North Africa, Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa, and south Arica in Southern Africa, that offered special military access rights or maintained important U.S. technical facilities (e.g. telecommunications stations) deemed critical to containment policies in Africa.

French policymakers sought first and foremost to consolidate and promote the spread of the most notable aspects of French culture, including the French language and intellectual traditions. Also called the promotion of *la francophonie* (a greater French speaking community), this policy is best

represented by the Franco-African summit attended by the leaders of France and francophone Africa (see the accompanying box). Economic interests were perceived by French policymakers as both parallel and integral to the promotion of French culture, as witnessed by the organization of thirteen former French colonies and Equatorial Guinea in the Zone franc (the franc Zone). Created in 1974, the franc zone constitutes a supranational financial system in which France serves as a central bank and the common currency *communaute Financiee Africaine* (CFA) franc, is tied to the French franc and guaranteed by the French treasury. By wielding its fiscal policy to the franc zone, France sought to preserve monetary stability and French influence throughout francophone Africa.

As long as the United States and France were pursuing fundamentally different but complementary foreign policy interests, francophone Africa remained the beneficiary of a complementary cold war order in which U.S. French relations tended to be balanced, cooperative, and predictable. Regardless of whether France was led by the conservative partisans of Charles de Gaulle or the socialists of Francois Mitterrand, French policymakers predictably claimed that historical links and geographical proximity justified placing francophone Africa in France's sphere of influence. The implicit assumption of what serves as the French version of the Monroe Doctrine is that francophone Africa constituted France's *Domaine reserve* (natural preserve) or *chasse garde* (private hunting ground) and therefore remained "off limits" to other great powers, regardless of whether they were friends like the United States and the other northern industrialized democracies or enemies like the former Soviet Union and other "radical" powers.

During the cold war, this conception of francophone Africa was whole heartedly accepted and even encouraged by American policymakers. The White House in particular expected France and the other European allies to take the lead in their former colonial territories. As succinctly stated by George Ball, undersecretary of state in the Kennedy administration, the United States recognized Africa as a "special European responsibility", just as European nations were expected to recognize "our (U.S.) responsibility in Latin America. According to American policymakers, France emerged as the only European power with both the long-term political will and the requisite military force capable of thwarting communist powers from exploiting instability, prompting some analysts to refer to France as Washington's *de facto gendarme* (policeman) in Francophone Africa.

#### **8.2.4 Africa as a proxy Battlefield for East-West Conflict**

A second trend of the cold war era was the emergence of the African continent as a Battlefield for proxy wars, as both the Western and communist blocs became militarily involved in regional conflicts. In almost every case, regional conflict was exacerbated by one superpower's reaction to the other's involvement in a particular crisis situation. Soviet involvement, as well as its mere threat, was enough to capture the attention of Western, especially American, policymakers and often provoke an escalation of the conflict. Western intervention in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo-Kinshasa) during 1978 is an illustrative case.

On May 13, 1978, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Richard Moose awoke to a phone call informing him that, on the night before, the *Front de liberation Nationale du Congo* (FLNC, Front for the National liberation of the Congo) had mounted its second invasion of Congo-Kinshasa in little over a year. In just 4 days, the FLNC was able to capture the mining center of Kolwezi, the capital of Congo-Kinshasa's Shaba province, and the source of nearly 75 percent of the country's export earnings. With the safety of U.S. and European citizens at risk and the pro-West Mobutu Sese Seko facing a serious threat to his rule, the Carter administration received requests from the French and Belgian governments to take part in a joint military operation that would include military engagements with the FLNC. From the perspective of President Carter and his closest advisors, the Shaba Conflict quickly evolved into an international East-West crisis due to its origins in Marxist-ruled Angola and the possibility that the insurgents were being accompanied by Cuban advisors and troops. Not only were more than 20,000 Cuban troops stationed in Angola but the Soviets and the Cubans had decisively intervened on the side of Marxist Ethiopia in that country's 1977-78 war with Somalia-leaving behind nearly 15,000 Cuban troops and Soviet advisors.

#### **8.2.5 Contradictions in the Search for Allies**

The importance the Great Powers attached to cultivating African allies during the cold war often resulted in contradictory policies when the normative goal of promoting democracy clashed with the pursuit of strategic interests. In the case of France, one can argue that French policymakers sought to spread French culture with the same ideological fervor with which American policy makers sought to prevent the spread of communism. Consequently, when francophone countries renounced their

special relationship with France, as Guinea did in 1985 when it voted against the creation of a revised French community of states under the leadership of Paris, French revenge was swift: all aid to Guinea was abruptly cut off by an angry de Gaulle, But as long as these countries maintained strong support for *la francophonie* and close ties with France, even authoritarian leaders were unlikely to find themselves under heavy pressure from Paris to democratize. For example, when asked why France did not militarily intervene when David Dacko, the democratically elected president of the Central African Republic, was overthrown in a military coup d'état in 1966 *Jacques Foccart*, the architect of French foreign policy under De Gaulle, replied that the new leader, Jean-Bedel Bokassa, "after all was a very pro French military man."

Contradictions were also evident in Washington's policies toward Africa. Whenever the ideal of democracy clashed with the national security objective of containing communism, containment often prevailed at the expense of democracy. For this reason both Democratic and Republican administrations were willing to downplay the internal shortcomings of a variety of U.S. allies, such as Ethiopia's Haile Selassie, Somalia's Siad Barre, Congo-Kinshasa's Mobutu Sese seko, and a host of Afrikaner regimes in South Africa, in favor of their strong support for U.S. anticommunist policies. Even the Carter administration's human rights program, which questioned the wisdom of identifying the United States with inherently unstable dictatorships, was compromised by strategic exceptions. When the pursuit of human rights clashed with perceived national security interests, especially in countries of strategic importance, such as Iran, the Philippines, South Korea, and Congo-Kinshasa, national security interests prevailed.

### **8.2.6 Cold War to Cold Peace (1989-Present)**

The end of the cold war transformed the international order and set the stage for dramatic changes in Great Power involvement in Africa. The most notable immediate change was the then superpower, the Soviet Union, ceased to exist, and its successor state, the Russian Republic, was too preoccupied with the economic and political restructuring of its domestic system to play an extensive role on the African continent. Equally important, Germany and Japan had overcome the defeat of World War II to join the United States and France as the most influential Great Powers on the African continent. Overly optimistic expectations of Great Power cooperation in the pursuit of such normative goods as democracy promotion and socioeconomic development in the post cold war era were nonetheless

dampened by the emergence of a cold peace in which the northern industrialized democracies competed throughout the 1990s for markets and influence throughout the African continent. The security dimension of this cold peace emerged in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the world Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. as the United States sought to enlist the African continent in a global war on terrorism. The specific themes of this cold peace are once again best demonstrated by principally focusing on American and French involvement in francophone Africa.

### **8.2.7. Evolving Foreign Policy Interests**

The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the beginning of the end of the complementary cold war order between the United States and France in francophone Africa and its gradual replacement with a new competitive environment. In the case of France, policymakers were confronted by an intensifying economic crisis on the African continent that created rising pressures for change in the carefully crafted web of economic ties that bound the French economy to those of francophone Africa. With many of their clients on the verge of financial bankruptcy, French policymakers initially decided to undertake an economic bailout that entailed massive increases in foreign aid. French aid to francophone Africa increased from the already substantial level of 3.7 billion in 1980-82 to 8.2 billion in 1990-92 a nearly 120 percent increase during a 10 year period. Once it became clear that the short-term bailouts were insufficient and that projected aid levels were beyond France's fiscal capabilities. French policymakers took the extraordinary step in January 1994 of devaluing the CFA franc by 50 percent. The decision sent shockwaves throughout the CFA franc Zone, which had never before suffered devaluation; it clearly signaled that France's commitment to the cultural imperative of *la francophonie* no longer took precedence over the pursuit of economic self-interest in an increasingly competitive post-cold war world.

In the case of the United States, the end of the cold war initially fostered the decline of ideologically based policies in favor of the pursuit of trade and investment. In 1996, the Clinton Administration unveiled America's first formal trade policy for aggressively pursuing new markets throughout Africa, including in francophone Africa. The centerpiece of this economic strategy was congressional legislation, the Africa Growth and Opportunity act (AGOA), passed by both houses of Congress under the prodding of the Clinton white House during its second term in office and

subsequently embraced by the Bush administration. The Bush administration's response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, nonetheless demonstrated the durability of strategic interests in Great power involvement in Africa.

US foreign policy beginning with the Clinton administration has been accompanied by a seriously publicized speeches rejecting Washington's past support for democratization for Europe's past economic role in Africa in favor of a more aggressive approach towards greater American involvement in trade and investment. An outgrowth of this approach was the intensification of competition between the United States and other western European countries and this competition specially become pronounced in US- French relations most notably in lucrative petroleum, telecommunication and transport industries in Francophone Africa. In the eyes of French foreign policy makers the penetration of American and other western companies constituted an intrusion at best, and an aggression at worst in France's *chasse grade*.

### **8.2.8 Rhetoric versus Reality in Support for Democratization**

The end of the cold war raised expectations that the Western democracies could make democracy and human rights the cornerstones of a new democratic international order that would be consistently applied to all regions of the world, including in francophone Africa. Scholars, activists, and policymakers in both the United States and France increasingly coalesced around the concept of making political democratization a precondition for the improvement of economic and political relations with Paris and Washington. Democracy promotion, however, has never served as the principal foreign policy interest of the northern industrialized democracies. At best it has played a secondary role behind more self-interested foreign policy pursuits. As a result, although democracy promotion has emerged as a more salient foreign policy interest of the northern industrialized democracies at best it has played a secondary role behind more self-interested foreign policy pursuits. As a result, although democracy promotion has emerged as a more salient foreign policy issues during the post-cold war era, it nonetheless tends to be compromised when it conflicts with more central foreign policy interests of Paris and Washington.

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