

POS 214
Politics in Africa II

Ibadan Distance Learning Centre Series

POS 214 Politics in Africa II

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General Introduction and Course Objective

It has been said over and over that the history of the African continent is the history of crisis. Perhaps, for that reason alone, we need to study and comprehend the root, nature, character and pattern of the African crises. This crisis, it needs be emphasized, manifests itself in different forms: economic, political, social, cultural, administrative, financial and even psychological.

Consequently, the main general objective of this course is to understand the complexity of the political and related situations in Africa since legal independence was either won or accorded. This is because we firmly believe that as students of African politics and government, we need to understand the nature of the African predicament or Dilemma before we can make meaningful suggestions for halting the present drift. To be sure, we are not making recommendations at this level. Yet, we find it imperative to sensitize you to what is happening in your continent; to raise your consciousness, awareness and understanding of the workings of the government, politics, administration and economy of your continent, in such a way that you can be prepared to be part of the fundamental restructuring and re-orientation that are necessary and, I dare add, inevitable.

The main specific objectives are the following:

- a. To introduce you to post-independence politics and government of Africa.
- b. To show that to understand the African crisis or predicament, one needs to study the African past and present.
- c. To demonstrate the importance of both the domestic (endogenous) and non-domestic (exogenous) factors and variables to the pattern, nature and character of politics in the various countries in Africa.

This course is divided into fifteen separate lectures. You can now read on.

LECTURE ONE

General Profile, Features and Characteristics of Post-Independence African States

Introduction

This lecture intends to present the major features and characteristics of African states legal or political independence. It is, in a sense, a general overview of the continent. POS 214 should be taken as a continuation of POS 213. It deals with most of the salient aspects of politics in post-colonial Africa. The course introduces fresh students to applied politics in their continent. The course also attempts to capture African politics within an implicit comparative perspective.

Objectives

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

1. discuss the major features of African states;
2. discuss the attributes or characteristics they have in common; and
3. discuss the consequences of colonial and imperialist plunderage or exploitation of Africa.

Pre-Test

To aid your understanding of what you are about to read in this lecture, ponder over and answer the following questions:

1. What are the major characteristics of post colonial Africa?
2. What is meant by post-colonial Africa?
3. Are these characteristics common to all or only some of the African states?

4. Are such features as we are going to identify permanent or merely temporary?

CONTENT

The year 1960 is usually called “Africa’s Year” by students of African politics. This is not for nothing. That year or thereabout, several hitherto British and French “possessions” assumed sovereign status. As many of them that attained ‘independence’ entered into the glamorous “comity of nations”.

But the sovereignty or independence was and still is only legal or political. It does not connote economic or financial independence. Several years of colonial rule - as high as a hundred in states like Nigeria - and the manner “independence” was achieved in majority of these states have negative consequences on the African continent. Twenty-eight or so years after “sovereignty”, these states persist in fundamental problems and dilemma. I am sure you are aware that so-called new states suffer from certain inherent and apparently endemic problems. J. ‘Bayo Adekanye has identified six of such. These are:

- i. The dilemma of creating a political order *ab initio*, that is, *from the beginning*;
- ii. Lack of national integration;
- iii. Weakness of central leadership;
- iv. Demands of economic development;
- v. Crisis of legitimacy; and
- vi. Reign of terror.

At the same time, the following features and attributes are very salient. First, Africa was and still remains a potentially rich continent. Yet, it suffers from chronic economic underdevelopment. No wonder, amongst the thirty-one (31) least developed countries (LDCs) in the world, twenty-one (21) of them are in Africa. Part of the explanation for the phenomenon is that Africa is a monocultural mainly agricultural-continent. In fact, 30-40 percent of her GNP is derived from agriculture. Compare this figure, if you like, with 5-10 percent in developed, capitalist countries like the US, UK, France and others. The world average stands at 14 percent.

Second, Africa’s underdevelopment is mainly technological. This is an historical reality. While Africa lacks raw materials in machine and

electronics, the energy resources she possesses are exploited and processed mainly by foreign, multinational corporations.

Third, Africa was the continent with the longest colonial situation.

Fourth, Africa is confronted with teething problems of adaptation to a largely hostile international environment. African states are “weak states in a world characterized by power” to use the happy expression of M.R. Singer. Indeed, William Tordoff indicates that African states are generally poor, predominantly rural and over-dependent on the vagaries of the world market. He continues: “in the international context, the new states were no match, either diplomatically or militarily, for the developed states”.¹ Since these states – and others in the so-called “third world” – are politically weak and diplomatically fragile, *non-alignment* was coined as a diplomatic comportment of developing countries. The objective was to peacefully co-exist with the two principal world ideological camps.

Fifth, one of the most visible characteristics of Africa, twenty-nine years after legal independence, is the high profile of France. The elements of this phenomenon include the following:

- i. French military presence with more than 10,000 men distributed through the continent from Dakar to Djibouti.
- ii. Economic presence through the mechanism of the franc zone (The *franc* is the French money).
- iii. French cultural presence reinforced from 1986 through the *Franco-phonie* – which regroups all French-speaking countries on the planet.
- iv. French political presence vis the Franco-African summits, held annually, and attended by almost all African countries. Notable exceptions have been Algeria and Cameroun.

Sixth and perhaps most importantly, Africa stands, like never before, at the threshold of re-colonization not only by ex-imperial powers but also by capitalist financial clubs like the World Bank, IMF, etc. To be sure, you know that Africa’s debt trap is becoming more and more serious and pernicious. The Nigerian example suffices here. While she cannot yet verify her public debt of about 18,453 billion US dollars, she has gone ahead to reschedule them. This involves interest payments of some 3,958 billion dollars – almost 40 percent of Federal Military Government’s budget for 1987. Simultaneously, this “Giant of Africa” took another 700 million US dollars loan from the Paris Club. Plus a world bank loan of 5

billion dollars in the pipeline since the 1987 financial year. What this means is that our generation and that of our children would merely be paying debts incurred by civilian and military leaders who regard official thievery and corruption as more normal for government business than public probity and accountability.

Seventh, 'mixed economy' has been the vogue since independence. This has been raised to the level of religion. Yet, Fredrick Hayek points out in his book *The Road to Serfdom* that a mixed country economy produces mixed results; that it lacks the proven benefits of capitalism or socialism.

Eighth, political instability is a recurring phenomenon. If we define political instability merely as the existence of endemic crises in the socio-economic system, virtually all African states qualify to be called "politically stable". Uganda is one of the most afflicted. For a long time regarded as the 'Pearl of Africa' whose products of ginger and coffee marked her out as the pride of East Africa, Uganda has not known much political tranquility. She has passed through high-handed, authoritarian, blood-thirsty and ethnically-biased leaders like Milton Obote, Idi Amin Dada. She has also known puppet rulers such as Yusuf Lule and Godfrey Binaisa. She thoroughly exemplifies a continent of constant turbulence and violent eruptions.

Ninth, whereas several of the states started off, at independence, as multiparty or two-party systems; today, most of them are either monoparty or militarist states. In other words, the pluralism of yesterday – which recognized some form of opposition and competing centres of thought – has been replaced, today, by centralization of power and authority. In fact, several types of one-party system are to be found: they vary from party-dominant through bureaucracy-dominant type to one viciously controlled by Mr. President and his innermost circle of advisers and collaborators.

Tenth, flowing from the above point is that power has become or is becoming personalized in the hands of Mr. President. As you shall see later, the leader also personifies power. There is, however, a debate in the literature concerning whether a single individual – even with his unconditional clan of supporters – can single-handedly take critical national decisions. Of course, such 'national decisions' do not mean much to a leader who regards his state as his own personal estate.

Eleventh, one thing that ought to bother even the most cursory observer or student of African politics is the culture of easy-to-rise and easy-to-fall governments. Of course, you can easily point to durable governments – particularly on one-party states: Omar Bongo's Gabon; Eyadema's Togo; and even the seeming smooth continuity achieved in Senegal (Sedar Senghor to Abdou Diouf) and Cameroun (Ahamadu Ahidjo to Paul Biya), etc. Of course, you would be right. But, as we will later show, this question of political stability and instability goes beyond durability or otherwise of governmental teams. Even in the example above, there are so many struggles for power, prestige and privilege that Mr. President changes his cabinet as often as he wishes. Governance becomes a function of the whims and caprices of the leader.

Twelfth, military interventions have tended to become more of a rule than an aberration. But, then, it seems that some states, after surviving attempts of military officers to unseat their leaders, have escaped this sceptre if coups, counter-coups, palace coups and intrigues, etc. to paraphrase the late South Africa scholar, Ruth First, "coups that promise much and change little in Africa has become the norm". In the 1960s and 1970s, Benin Republic was notorious for frequent and frivolous military interventions.

Thirteenth, because of colonial disruption and distortion, there is much arithmetic of ethnicity. Ethnic, religious and such conflicts are perennial in several states. These states are nation-states; as will show later they are in search of a new identity; they are said to be creating nations. However, the modalities and instruments used in some states without regard to the sensibilities and feelings of some so-called lesser or 'minority' groups give one the feeling that in some parts of Africa, national integration as a project was abandoned long ago.

Fourteenth, except for few states which claim to profess no ideology at all – I doubt if this is even possible – there is, in Africa, the profession of some form of socialism. There are, you can be sure, various shades and colours of socialism and Marxism – 'scientific', 'african', 'humanist', etc. There are also countries like the Ivory Coast that offer no apology to anyone for its capitalist-intensive socio-economic system. This suggests that Africa is a complex category or phenomenon – she is mediated by various forms of influences, beliefs, philosophies, currents, ideologies, etc. This is what we propose to study, theme by theme, in this course.

Summary

Africa's major features, characteristics or attributes after independence have been identified in economic, technological, political, diplomatic and even cultural terms.

Things to do

Read more about post-colonial African states in the following text:

1. Claude Ake, *Social Science as Imperialism*.
2. _____, *A Political Economy of Africa*.
3. Tordoff, William, *Government and Politics in Africa*.
4. Yolamu Barongo (ed.), *Political Science in Africa: A Critical Review*.

Post-Test

1. List and briefly discuss the major features and defining, characteristics of post-independence Africa.
2. Which of them do you consider the most salient or important?

Reference

William Tordoff, *Government and Politics in Africa* (Macmillan, 1984).

LECTURE TWO

The Colonial Legacy

Introduction

We have just highlighted the major traits African states have in common. Of course, there are differences. In the first place, as William Tordoff dictates, there are at once intra-state and inter-state disparities in terms of riches and poverty. Colonialism has left different types of effects on African states. Yet, we can conveniently, and correctly too, talk about the 'Colonial Legacy' in the continent. This is what this lecture is all about.

Objectives

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

1. discuss the term 'colonial legacy';
2. discuss the elements of colonial legacy; and
3. explain the major consequences of this legacy on African States.

Pre-Test

To help you understand this lecture, try to answer the following questions:

1. What do we mean by the term 'colonial legacy'?
2. What are the elements of this legacy?
3. Which of these elements is (are) the most important or salient?
4. What are the major consequences or effects of this legacy on African states?

CONTENT

Meaning of the Colonial Legacy

Colonial legacy meant the compact set of institutions and structures, attitudes and behavioural patterns which the departing European colonialists bequeathed to Africa at legal independence. Today, where such institutions and structures are no longer as visible as in the past, dominant attitudes of African leaders and national bourgeoisie is colonial oriented.

Such leaders perpetuate the dominant values, ethos and creed left behind by the imperialists. This is what we mean by the colonial legacy. Its elements or constituents are many.

Elements of the Colonial Legacy

There are at least five major elements of the colonial legacy in Africa.

The first is political. Part of this is the compact set of Constitutions, political party systems, organizations of government – Legislature, Executive – particularly the type (Parliamentary, Presidential, semi-presidential) – Judiciary, etc. In fact, at nominal independence, African leaders were made to believe that the colonial political and other infrastructures were universal and that they constituted both a necessary and a sufficient condition for the ‘development’ of the ‘underdeveloped’ states. Thus, several African states showed a readiness to work the political system according to the value assumptions – what we call ideology of the imperialists.

Perhaps what is disturbing is not so much the total adoption of the political structures as the use to which their underlying values were put. Put differently, the structures bequeathed were one thing; the experiences of the colonized Africans were another.

Colonial political rule was a violent one. The colonizers were specialists in the use of coercion, force and manipulation to subdue the people. Latter were not allowed to ‘create a summit for themselves’, rather, as Frantz Fanon puts it, “it is the summit that tolerates the people”. Of course, this is the reality both before and after legal independence. What we see all over Africa today, with only minor exceptions, is the use of state apparatuses to suppress, incarcerate if not kill political opponents. We are virtually re-living the brutality and bestiality of the colonial period.

The second element of the colonial legacy is the administrative structure. To all intents and purposes, African leaders – those J.P. Netti refers to as “inheritance elite” – were led into thinking that administration was a neutral technique of development, that it was value-free and, to that extent, applicable all over the world. In Lecture 12, you will see that this is not totally true. The colonial administrative model is the model of a particular people – in this case European. It is also the model of a particular culture – again, European. To copy such a model with little or no consideration for the cultural identity and originality of Africa is to seek to impose a cultural model on another – African-cultural model. Problems cannot but arise: the demands of public office in the European administrative model seem to coincide with the demands of the society. In Africa, the reverse seems to be the case: whereas public officeholders are required by law, for instance, not to steal, the requirements of the society condone and support stealing of public money. Public money is seen to belong to everybody and therefore to nobody in particular. Lecture Thirteen will expatiate more on this point.

The third element of the colonial legacy is military – military institution and military values. What is interesting here is that military values made military institution an *apolitical* organization. That is, one that is, like the Civil Service, above partisan or party politics. However, shortly after independence was conferred or won, - see Lecture Eleven – the military lost its political virginity and started to overtly or openly intervene in politics almost everywhere. Again, as already alluded to, since colonial rule was essentially a military, authoritarian rule; military regimes in Africa have tended to be dictatorial and authoritarian. They often behave like armies of occupation. The people are often treated like a conquered race. As an institution, Africa military depends, sometimes up to 95-96 percent, on the ex-metropole and other capitalist countries for its armaments and equipments. This is serious limitation on the maneuverability of those states in the political and diplomatic scenes.

There is yet another legacy – cultural – particularly linguistic. Everywhere, the ex-colonizer or neo-colonizer’s language is spoken. Without the vehicle of English, French, Portuguese or Spanish, African states cannot, in any way, communicate with one another. The search for *lingua franca*, particularly in Nigeria, has been considered futile by some and unnecessary, by others. At any rate, except in East Africa where Swahili is spoken by a more or less preponderant majority, African

continues to be, linguistically speaking, *a dependent entity*. Of course, you can argue that the logic of international relations demand some kind of common language(s) amongst the people of the world. Certainly, yet, linguistic or cultural colonialism is perhaps second only to economic colonization in its negative effects.

The fifth and last element of the colonial legacy we are examining is the economic. Most critical students of African politics regard this element as the most important. William Tordoff is a representative of this view. For him,

... at independence, the political leaders of the new African states inherited dependent economies that were still bound to the former colonial powers by established patterns of trade and by their membership of European currently blocs notably the franc zone and the sterling area.¹

It should be added that the economic legacy is such that African's dependent economy is made the more dependent as the years go by. This is because those capitalist states and institutions – USA, UK, West Germany, France, Japan, etc. and IMF, World Bank, EEC, etc. – that were, in varying proportions responsible, initially, for Africa's economic dilemma are today the ones Africa is forced to turn to for solutions to deep and serious economic crises. Too naturally, these states and institutions continue to propose economic and financial recommendations which are too general to be meaningful. It is doubtful if someone who benefits from a bad policy would, left to himself, discard that policy.

Let me now tell you the effects or sum total of the elements of the colonial legacy discussed above. First, the aggregate of these elements is what Dennis Austin calls "The African Condition" or what another scholar terms "The African Predicaments". The African condition is one of irritating dependency on the capitalist West. It is also a multilateral weakness in the comity of nations, the playing of, at best, second fiddle in international politics. In all its ramifications, Africa is the most oppressed, most exploited, most demoralized, most brutalized and most dependent continent. Africa is a victim of neo-colonialism *per excellence*. Dennis Austin puts this point well in his *Africa Repartitioned*. For him, the 'African Condition' "implies inability to cope with an international economy that is indifferent to poverty... The global strategies of (the)

superpowers give full meanings to the concept of neo-colonialism”.²

Nothing we have said so far should be taken to mean that African states were or still are mere passive receivers of the colonial legacy. Nor would it be correct to say that African leaders at independence were not aware of the implications of that compact legacy. None of these two positions would be true. What is closer to the truth is that, in several states, African leaders were entangled in a dilemma trap. On the one hand, there were leaders who saw nothing wrong in the colonial legacy and were therefore ready to carry on like that. On the other, there were those who were critical of the legacy and were ready, if possible, to do away with it. These two groups tend to overlap. This phenomenon is well captured in what J.P. Nettl calls the “dissociation – continuity syndrome”. This paradox consists of the “the need for continuity with the past on the one hand coupled with the desire for maximum dissociation from it on the other”.³

There have, of course, been attempts, sometimes genuine, oftentimes half-hearted, by African leaders to look beyond the colonial legacy by making a rupture with the political, economic, military structures and values of the international capitalist system. Lecture Three takes a look at some aspects of this trend.

We cannot avoid concluding here that the net-effect of the colonial legacy is to make the post-colonial African state very weak and dependent. Jackson and Rosberg argue in their article “Why Africa’s weak states Persist; The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood” that African states exist largely as a result of the benevolence of the international community. They exist only legally, to the extent that, by international law, they are states. Otherwise, in terms of empirical or concrete functions of a state, properly so-called, they hardly qualify to be “states”. They are what another scholar calls “proto-states”.

Summary

In this lecture, we have:

1. Defined colonial legacy as the entire structural and behavioural values the departing colonizers left behind.
2. Identified the different constituents of the legacy as follows: political, administrative, military, cultural and economic.
3. Noted the negative effects of the legacy: weakness of Africa states and their leaders; dilemma of rupture and/or maintenance of the legacy.

Things to do

Read the following texts:

1. The Colonial legacy refers to
 - a. Structures, institutions and values of pre-colonial Africa
 - b. Structures, institutions and values of post-colonial Africa left for pre-colonial Africa.
 - c. Structures, institutions and values Africa bequeathed to Europe.
 - d. Structures, institutions and values left for post-colonial Africa by the ex-colonizers.
 - e. None of the above
2. How many elements of the colonial legacy can you list?
3. Name them and write short notes on each of them.
4. What do you understand by 'the African Predicament' or "The African Condition"?
5. Which of the elements of the colonial legacy, in your own view, best explains the African conditions?

References

- Dennis Austin, *Africa Repartitioned*.
- J.P. Nettl, (1967). *Political Mobilization: A Sociological Analysis of Methods and Concepts* London: Faber and Faber.
- Tordoff, *op. cit.*, p. 47-8.

LECTURE THREE

Approaches to the Study of Post-Independence African Politics

Introduction

This lecture takes a look at the various approaches that can be used and have, in fact, been used to study post-independence African politics. In other words, we are going to discuss those frameworks which can be used to interpret and explain political phenomena on the African continent. Such approaches or frameworks make political data meaningful. They also permit us, by using certain theoretical constructs, to understand the observable political patterns and behaviours on the continent. Such approaches are collectively called paradigms.

Objectives

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

1. explain the meaning of 'paradigm';
2. discuss the major paradigms to the study of Post-Independence African Politics; and
3. discuss the 'paradigms' that is most adequate or scientific and comprehensive to Interpret Africa's neo-colonial and dependent status.

Pre-Test

Let's now pause to pose and answer the following questions:

1. What do we mean by "paradigm"?
2. Name or list some of the major paradigms or approaches that you can think of?

3. Which one (s) of them would you consider as the most adequate or “scientific” and comprehensive to interpret Africa’s neo-colonial and dependent status?

CONTENT

Defining Paradigms

Perhaps the most authoritative and most famous definition of paradigms is supplied by Thomas Kuhn in this book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1962). According to him, paradigms are ‘universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners’. This means that certain paradigms or frameworks are dominant at some time, but may not be preponderant at some other time. Other competing paradigms take their place as long as the users of those paradigms see them as the most suitable and appropriate to study salient and critical political phenomena. As Chalmers Johnson has summarized, paradigms “define what scientific facts are and structure the work of normal science for a particular discipline at a particular time”.

Different Paradigms or Approaches

To analyze any given socio-political system on the continent, we can make use of the following:

- a. Neo-Liberal paradigms of political analysis.
- b. The Neo-Marxist and the Political Economy Approach.
- c. The ‘authentic’ African Approach.

a. Neo-Liberal Paradigm

Several analytic frameworks can be subsumed under this paradigm. We shall treat only some of them here:

- i. Perhaps the oldest of these frameworks is the institutional approach. In fact for a long time, political scientists were using this approach in their researches and publications. This approach underlines the primacy or importance of political institutions like the Parliament, Executive, Judiciary, Presidential or Cabinet systems of government etc, in understanding the political process

in Africa. It would appear today that this approach is not very useful. What 'africanists'-that is those scholars who study Africa-do is to lay emphasis more on the political leadership than on political institutions. This approach is particularly fashionable for one-party states and the militarist states-and as you know, most African states fall into either of these two categories.

As we shall see later, the political leadership approach postulates the personalization and personification of power and authority by the leader. Given the mysticism and aura with which political leadership is tinged and surrounded, the state, if not also the society, may be regarded as political leadership *written large*. In short, you can study politics via Mr. President or Mr. Prime Minister or Mr. Head of state as the case may be.

- ii. We also have, within the neo-Liberal paradigm, the Parsonian Requisites Approach. Talcott Parsons, a notable sociological theorist of value systems, has developed what we know as LIGA and AGIL models. These models deal with pattern maintenance, integrative function, goal attainment and adaptive function of structures, norms and behaviour (S-N-B) of a given society or the political society. For Parsons, once individuals imbibe societal values properly, they easily show commitments "to pursue and support certain directions or types of action for the collectivity as a system...."

Of course, the emphasis of this approach is the maintenance of the equilibrium of the political society and the wider society. Perturbations in the system are quickly or frontally attacked by the state's arsenal of violence, force and coercion. Any criticism is perceived as 'subversive' and against 'national security' while the critics are dubbed 'radicals', 'extremists, spoilers of social relations' etc. Again: while the 'inheritance elite' has interests in maintaining a *homoestatis* (equilibrium) or rather the *status quo* as carried over from the colonial era, the 'non-inheritance elite'-who constitutes the majority-wants an end to a socio-economic formation that perpetuates internal misery and external dependence and underdevelopment.

iii. Capability and Goal Analysis

Given the high degree of Africa's dependency and underdevelopment, this approach is equally apt in apprehending and comprehending post-

independence African politics. The capability analytic framework has as its focus the various elements that add up to give capacity or ability to perform or not to perform to a political system. Such elements include extractive, processual, productive and regulative capacities. A political system can therefore be studied on the basis of the foregoing.

Goal analysis, on the other hand, goes beyond capability analytic framework. It concerns itself with means-ends relations. The issue is the extent to which the state or political system can use its capability to achieve its goal. What the goals or objectives of the state are, are fixed by the political leadership. However, it is difficult to differentiate between *declared* goals and *achieved or realized* goals. To what extent, for instance, has the DFRRI (Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure) in Nigeria achieved its declared goals? This approach is also interested in the gap between *self-perception and self-reality*. Writing on this approach, Charles W. Anderson *et al.* in their book *Issues of Political Development* assert that this approach helps us to unravel that “many political systems that claims to be socialist... as a point of fact devote a smaller proportion of their national budgets to welfare schemes and control a smaller percentage of the system’s modes of production than many political systems which deny their socialist orientation”.

b. The Neo-Marxist and the Political Economy Approach

This approach explains the structural nature of imperialism and Africa’s neo-colonial political, economic, social and cultural order. Indeed, to understand African politics, it would appear necessary to understand the relationship between African states and Euro-American capitalist countries. The Marxist political economy approach is therefore indispensable since it locates politics in its proper historical environment, namely, the structure and character of the colonial and neo-colonial economy and its alignment with international capitalism. I suggest that to understand this paradigm better, you should go over your POS 213 Lecture notes again.

Now, this paradigm shows that because of what Johan Galtung calls ‘Structural Imperialism’, Africa’s ‘inheritance elite’ is closer to international neo-colonial capitalist countries, agencies and agents than their own countrymen. The approach also suggests that there is a symbiotic relationship between the foreign ruling class and its national,

African counterpart. We can also call it an alliance. But this alliance is detrimental to the masses of this continent. The material condition of the masses is further worsened by the fact that this alliance is a stable one.

According to S. Langdon and M. Godfrey, this is due to the fundamentally compatible interests of local and foreign capitals.

It is this objective situation that leads some scholars to regard African's middle class as a mere intermediary – or a *comprador* (go-between or transmission belt) for private, essentially foreign, capital. Some scholars would even say that by this role, African leaders and African states lack autonomy of action. Immanuel Wallerstein is an example of such scholars. Hear him:

In peripheral areas of the world economy, the primary contradiction is not between two groups within a stable structure... The primary contradiction is between the interests organized and located in the core countries and their local allies on the one hand the majority of the population on the other.

But then, this view raises some important questions: Can't the ruling class in Africa be something other than mere 'transmission line' between international capital and national/local population? Can't it contribute to transforming the nation in some ways? Is it, as it were, condemned to playing the devil's advocate (that is, working mainly in the interest of the ex-metropole)? In short, it is wholly correct to say like one scholar, Nicola Swainson, that "the ruling class of the post-colonial state is the metropolitan bourgeoisie, represented by its agents, the multinational corporations and international aid agencies"?

Certainly, it is an exaggeration to say that the economic dependence of African states on international capital determines and explains all activities in these countries. What then is the position that is closer to reality? It is provided by scholars who adopt an approach anchored on what the French scholar, Nicos Poulantzas, calls "Internal and external causation". Ironically, Swainson seems to subscribe to this approach. According to her, to adequately capture Africa's condition or Post-independence predicament, we need "to examine the internal dynamics of (the States') social formations in conjunction with their location in the world capitalist system". Thus, though most African states have

incorporated certain peculiar features of contemporary imperialism, “the concrete political and economic forms prevalent in post-colonial African states are shaped and conditioned by factors internal to those societies”

What this ‘internal-external causation’ thesis boils down to is that, at some levels, particularly political, the indigenous bourgeoisie or the ruling class is able to use the state apparatus to inaugurate ‘economic nationalism’ (indigenization in Nigeria and Zaire in 1972 and 1973 respectively). This is generally done, even without much success, to support ‘national’ capital against foreign competitors. However, as Marxist and Neo-Marxist political economists have argued, any attempt by a national ruling class to internationalize its production capacities will involve extensive links with foreign capital.

c. **The ‘Authentic’ African Approach**

Perhaps, the scholar who has done much to give coherence to this approach is the eminent Nigerian political scientist, the late professor B.J. Dudley. According to him in his 1982 book *Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics*, this approach consists of demonstration effect between values that are “socially conditioned” and political behaviour. This approach seeks to decolonize the conceptual biases of the ‘functionalists’ the ‘developmentalists’, the ‘modernizers’ and other scholars of the mainstream or Traditional Western (American) social sciences. The principal contradiction between African politics is best studied via the contradiction between Africa’s community or ‘moral order’ and the inherited legal-economic order. Now, the values of the first order are different from those of the second. The legal-economic order represents, for Dudley, a matter of unequal and exploitative relationships. But this pattern is not compatible with the moral basis of the community. In fact, the moral order is a “fountain of imperative injunctions for its members”. Victims of the unjust and unequal economic order are expected to be catered for by those who “have”. The demands of the moral order are such that those who own or possess have to consider a lot of socio-cultural arenas: they have to cater not only for the members of their own nuclear family, but also for the extended family system. Often, in order to satisfy the numerous exigencies of the ‘moral order’ the civil servant tends to regard the public treasury as an extension of his private purse. In a sense, therefore, the moral order encourages corruption while the legal-economic order frowns at it.

Summary

In this lecture, we discussed the following main points:

1. Paradigms or dominant theoretical frameworks are approaches that allow us to meaningfully interpret and analyze political phenomena.
2. Some paradigms are deemed more useful than the others depending, at any point in time, on the agreement among the practitioners of the profession.
3. The major or dominant approaches to the study of post independent African states are (a) Neo-Liberal; (b) Neo-Marxist and the Political Economy and (c) 'Authentic' African approach.

Things to do

Read the following materials:

1. Claude Ake, *Social Science as Imperialism*.
2. _____ *A Political Economy of Africa*.
3. Tolamu Barongo (ed.), *Political Science in Africa. A Critical Review*
4. B.J. Dudley, *Introduction of Nigerian Government and Politics* (Macmillan, 1982) particularly chapter 1.

Post-Test

1. Paradigms are:
 - a. Models or theoretical constructs for the study of phenomena.
 - b. Practitioners of a discipline.
 - c. More common in Africa than in Europe
 - d. None of the above.
2. What are the major paradigms or approaches to the study of post-independence African politics?
3. Which of these paradigms can lead scholars to study political behaviours and patterns merely as they are?
4. Which of the approaches do you find most suitable for the study of African politics.
5. In Africa, there is divergence between the inherited.....

and the traditional..... (fill in
the correct answers).

Reference

I. Wallerstein (1973) "Class and Class Conflict in Contemporary
Africa", *Canadian Review of African Studies*.

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LECTURE FOUR

Nature of African Independence

Introduction

This lecture is, in a profound sense, an off-shoot of the colonial legacy discussed in the second lecture. Our aim here is to unmask the true nature and character of African independence. There is a correlation or link between how states got their independence and their post-independence ideology, and vice-versa.

The different types and variations are discussed.

Objectives

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

1. discuss how the African States got their independence;
2. discuss the correlation between how states got their independence and their post-independence ideology; and
3. discuss different ways of attaining legal sovereignty.

Pre-Test

For purpose of easy comprehension by you, attempt to answer the following question:

1. How did African states get their independence?
2. Are there differences in how legal sovereignty was attained?
3. What link, if any, exists between how independence is obtained and post-colonial ideology?
4. Are states which fought wars of independence more revolutionary than states which won theirs at conference tables?

CONTENT

Nature of African independence

Were we to be writing in French, we would have put independence in the plural. It certainly makes much sense that way, even if it appears and sounds odd in English.

Be that as it may, the central theme of post-Second “World War” discussions in Africa was anti-colonialism and national self-determination. Too naturally, however, the respective metropolises refused to accept the idea of decolonization. The popular notion-widespread in most of ex-British colonial empire – that only the British willingly accepted the letter and spirit of colonial disengagement is a mere propaganda. What ought to be said is that the proverbial “wind of change” blowing over the colonized continents from the late 1940s forced imperialists to create a new framework of relationship between themselves and the subjugated Africans (e.g. France in Indo-china (1956) and in almost all French-speaking African states beginning with the *Loi-Cadre* in 1956 etc.).

There were two major modalities or means of decolonization. In other words, there were two principal patterns of independence-winning. The first was nationalist agitations and conference negotiations. The second was through or as a result of violent wars of independence.

Majority of African states - particularly French and English-speaking ones with only few exceptions - realized their legal independence without any serious crisis and progressively. At the same time, they had an important support: metropolitan public opinion that had just witnessed a devastating world war and Nazism was in support of ‘freedom for all peoples of the world’. But this so-called ‘peaceful transition’ had its own price.

First, African leaders who were present at the December 1958 conference in Accra, Ghana had preached a “non-violent revolution”. This implied a submission, almost totally and without much questioning, to whatever conditions the unwilling departing colonialists gave. The most important condition was the retention of some form of control over the affairs of these ex-colonies by their former colonizers. The French and the British instituted, respectively, the French Community and the Commonwealth. Second, virtually all the states in this category adopted the political and administrative structures bequeathed by the ex-metropole. There were, of course, variations here and there as we will shortly see.

There were also modifications, sometimes major but often minor, in the inherited structures.

In general, therefore, the attitude of majority of African leaders was one of achieving political independence at any price. One example is sufficient to illustrate this attitude. At the Tanganyika March 1961 conference prelude to independence on December 28, 1961, there was no false note, no minority report. Everybody signed the accord indicating his country's willingness to become, at independence, a member of the Commonwealth. Naturally, Britain accepted the neo-colonial status of that country which later took on the name Tanzania.

Few African states belonged to the second group - the one that had engaged imperialists in protracted guerilla and liberation warfares. Mass liberation movements were found mainly in ex-Portuguese colonies such as Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, etc. Algeria was about the only exception in the French-speaking territories. The questions that readily come to mind are the following: Why were reactions to Portuguese colonial rule totally violent and revolutionary? Why was Algeria an exception to the rule in Francophone Africa?

To answer these questions, let's first talk in general terms. Highly violent and extremely oppressive colonial rule gave rise, too naturally, to equally violent and often revolutionary reactions. Thus, while leaders in Francophone and Anglophone Africa could afford the luxury of a more or less smooth transfer of sovereignty to 'inheritance elite', guerilla commander were faced with a totally different situation. The Portuguese were simply in no mood to hands off its territories in Southern Africa. There is a psychological problem here: you may well know that, with Spain, Portugal is the most backward and most Underdeveloped Countries in Western Europe-I suspect even in the whole of Europe. She constitutes the 'third world' of the 'First world'. Little wonder then, that country saw her colonialism as a life-time opportunity not only to exploit other peoples but also demonstrate to her more affluent neighbours that she was not, after all, the *damned of the earth*.

In the case of Algeria, France saw her not only as a part of Europe, but more importantly as a mere elongation or prolongation of France. Her immense natural resources, particularly oil, made French colonial policy of assimilation more brutal in that country. But then, the question of national pride and prestige on both sides ought not to be overlooked. Algerian leaders of the war of independence period (1952-61) and even

beyond saw themselves as neither French nor Catholic. They clamoured for recognition as Arabo-berber and Moslem. To date, Algeria is one of the few ex-French colonies-that have consistently refused to attend French neo-Colonial summits: The *Franco-African Summits* inaugurated in 1973 and the *francophonie* formed in 1986.

As is to be expected, the leaderships of these revolutionary states-often called “guerillas-in-government”-were and still remain committed to the Marxist political and economic ideology. Virtually, all the leaders of revolutionary or Marxist regimes in ex-Portuguese Africa were and are ex-guerilla Commanders. The same is true of Zimbabwe. In fact, Bernado Vieira, Guinea-Bissau’s ex-Prime Minister, toppled by the coup d’etat of 14 November 1980 was the leader of a revolutionary party, the PAIGC, which was in power not only in his own country but also in Cape Verde. One can multiply examples. By now, I am sure names of revolutionary leaders like Late Agostino Neto (Angola), Late Samora Machel (Mozambique), Amilcar Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) etc are at your fingertips.

Such revolutionary states and leaders created mass liberation movements that were far from being merely “nationalist movements”, the type in most of French and British Africa. Their movements were at once ideological and vanguardist-that is a group of people armed with ‘correct theory’ mobilizing the mass of the people to achieve a popular or common end. The movements were used to create political awareness in the people, to organize armed resistance against colonizers, particularly at the grassroots and in the countryside. Revolutionary leaders refused to compromise with colonialism, though at independence, the logic and demands of the world capitalist economic system have made their revolution vacillate between coldness’ and ‘lukewarmness’.

To end this discussion, let me make some important observations. First, there were states that got their independence through ‘non-violent revolution’ and later adopted radical, Marxist ideology. Some scholars call such states ‘marginal Marxist-Leninist’ states. Examples are Benin, Congo-Brazzaville and Somalia. Tanzania of Julius Nyerere does not belong to this group nor does Sekou Toure’s Guineas even though the latter had embraced ‘Marxism-Leninism’ by 1967. Lecture fifteen will discuss in greater details this phenomenon. Let’s simply say here, that because of the heavy ‘africanness’ of his socialism, Nyerere is seen, for instance by Crawford Young, as ‘populist socialist’. Toure is even more difficult to classify. Some see him as a “reluctant revolutionary” who had

to so become after his courageous “No” to Charles de Gaulle’s French community idea in 1958. His veering; to the West for friends, ‘aid’, development models’ etc towards the end of his reign (1984) further makes classification more difficult.

Second, I have been talking of ‘peaceful decolonization’. This notion needs some clarification. I use this term *only* in relative sense. Colonialism, imperialism and colonial rule-all these things signify oppression, brutality, repression and coercion. By definition, therefore, colonial rule cannot, and in Africa, was not ‘peaceful’. Nor could the termination of its unjust and exploitative network be ‘peaceful’. It would be a contradiction in terms to say so.

Summary

We have examined the nature of independence in Africa and have seen the following:

1. That when we talk of nature of African independence, we are interested in how independence was won.
2. That majority of ex-British and ex-French possessions got their independence through non-violent means. The only exception is Algeria.
3. That virtually all Portuguese colonies won their independence after long periods of revolutionary and guerilla warfares. There is no exception to this rule.
4. That there is a link between how independence was acquired and post-independence ideological postures
5. That there are minor exceptions to this point
6. States like Benin, Congo etc, becoming ‘Marxist-Leninist’ after ‘peacefully’ acquiring their independence in the 1960s.

Things to do

For more detailed reading of the nature independence in African states, look up:

1. Dennis Austin, (1957) *West Africa and the Commonwealth* London: Penguin Books.
2. O. Awolowo, Awo, (1960). *The Autobiography of Chief O. Awolowo* Cambridge: London.

3. G.L. Cowan, (1968). *The Dilemmas of African Independence* N. York: Cowan and Coy.
4. Thomas Hodgkin and Ruth Schachter, (1960). *French-speaking West Africa in Transition*. N. York: Carnegie Foundation.
5. Kwame Nkrumah, (1957). *The Autobiography of K. Nkrumah* Edinburg: Nelson.

Post-Test

1. How did African states get their independence?
2. Which way or manner do you regard as the most common?
3. Is there any link between how independence was won and post-independence state ideology?
4. Which of the following set(s) of states got its (their) independence through revolutionary means?
 - a. Nigeria, Ghana and Benin
 - b. Congo, Zaire and Kenya
 - c. Nigeria, Guinea, Angola and Lesotho
 - d. Guinea-Bissau, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique
 - e. None of the above.

LECTURE FIVE

The Post-Colonial State in Africa

Introduction

This lecture examines the various theories of the Post-colonial State in Africa. By the latter term, we mean the state that came out from the state. We do this mainly to emphasize the critical importance of the State in Africa; perhaps we can even say that once we understand the nature, character and purpose of the state, we understand Africa's social, political and economic processes.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to discuss the term 'post-colonial state', how it is different from colonial state and whether the state is an economic or political category.

Pre-Test

As usual, let's start by asking ourselves some important questions to which you should supply answers even if only tentatively.

1. What do you understand by the term 'post-colonial state'?
2. How is it different from the colonial state?
3. Is that state only an economic category or is it also political?
4. Indeed, can the post-colonial state be defined in ethnic or communal terms?

CONTENT

There are basically two sets of theories of the African post-colonial state. The first which recognizes the constraints of the international capitalist and neo-colonial environment emphasizes the dependent and weak status of the African state. The second, while not necessarily denying the position of the first set, underlines the internal constraints to statehood. In fact, major theorists of this so-called 'liberal perspectives' see violence as the major defining characteristic of the post-colonial state. However, let me say straight away that the two sets of theories are not really antagonistic. One element that binds them together is that the state is central in seeking to understand political problems and other forms of the African crisis.

Now, let's examine the first set of theories – those inspired by Marxist political economy. One of the earliest of such theories is developed by Hamza Alavi. It is called the theory of the 'overdeveloped state'. It states that the state apparatuses of the under-developed or peripheral countries inherited from their ex-metropole are overdeveloped in relation to the post-colonial society. This is so, the theory goes on, in order for the state to subordinate domestic classes and mediate between indigenous and foreign interests. Now, since state power is class power, those who direct the affairs of the state in Africa use the state to advance the interests of foreign capital since these interests coincide with their own. This foreign capital is best represented by multi or trans-national corporations (MNCs or TNCs). (You should be able to name some of them in your own country). Some scholars say that since virtually in all African states, the MNCs continue to have more powers, it does not make much sense to give analytical importance to the African-state. Indeed, Robin Murray has argued that the logic of the internationalization of capital – through, we have said, the TNCs – is the decreasing independence of national economies and increasing autonomy of the TNCs in these countries.

It is this reality of the African post-colonial state that makes some scholars to characterize the state as weak and subservient to foreign interests. Some would go ahead to say that the ruling class in Africa is the foreign bourgeoisie. Let's examine two views on this. First, Mvon Freyhold in his 1977 essay "The Post-Colonial State and its Tanzanian version" says that:

the actual dynamic of economic and social development (in the post-colonial state) is determined by the metropolitan bourgeoisie, irrespective of the form in which it intervenes.

Second, Colin Leys, writing on “The Overdeveloped Post-Colonial State: A Re-evaluation” in 1976, asserts that:

at all events, in post-colonial states in Africa, there can be little doubt that the dominant class force is still the foreign bourgeoisie.

Yet, some other scholars would insist that the weakness of the African state does not condemn it to total dependence or subservience. They argue that in the same way African masses – the dominated classes – cannot always be silenced by the ruling class, the latter is not merely an errand boy of international finance monopoly. What this means is that both domestically and internationally, there is a reciprocal relationship between dependency and autonomy. Let’s listen to Zaki Ergas on this issue. For him, the state is:

A dominating organization controlled with varying degrees of efficacy by a ruling group which competes for power and compliance, for sovereignty, with other political, economic and social organizations both internally and externally. It is a partly autonomous, partly dependent structure of control.

The picture that comes out from the foregoing is one of a post-colonial state that is complex. It is, in one breath, overdeveloped and in another it is under-developed. Again, while it is autonomous, it is also dependent. On the issue of the African ‘underdeveloped state’, Colin Leys has written that the term refers to “(those) self-perpetuating processes, (those) self – reproducing structures and to their results”. He is referring to those external, imperialist structures that keep a stranglehold on African states. Of course, this is the international dimension of the post-colonial state.

We are equally, if not more, interested in the internal relationships of the post-colonial state that is in terms of how the state mediates between

the ruling class and the dominated social forces. Thus, while John Lonsdale is correct in his 1981 book *The State and Social Process in Africa* to refer to the African state as a functional category – coordinator, mediator, broker, regulator, orchestrator – such terms are meaningful, in my own estimation, only to the extent that such functions are performed mainly to stabilize an oppressive, iniquitous, unequal and unjust system. The victims are, evidently, the mass-majority. I believe that the naked misery noticeable independence amply demonstrates the use to which the state has been put. It is in this sense that Nicos Poulantzas talks in his 1973 seminal work, *Political Power and Social Classes*, of the idea of the state as “an objective social relation”-between labourers/workers (those who produce) and capitalists/leaders (those who consume).

It is undoubtedly saying the obvious that to maintain the status quo as it is, the different factions of the ruling class – military, political, economic/business, bureaucratic etc – have to use certain modalities. Now, because the state itself is not autonomous of the leading social forces-the ruling class – it intervenes directly or is used to intervene on behalf of the latter. This is what the Nigerian political economist, Claude Ake, refers to in his 1985 edited work *Political Economy of Nigeria* as the phenomenon of “non-autonomization of the post-colonial state”. The most important modality of intervention is the state apparatuses of force, coercion and violence. In fact, the average African has contact with the state mainly at the level of violence – in terms of tax extortion, clampdown on peaceful demonstration, brutalization of imagined and ‘enemies’ etc.

Today, the post-colonial state has almost become coercion and violence *writ* large. In fact, if the colonial state was, in the words of B.J. Berman and J.M. Lonsdale “coercive and cooptative” and also “the controlling and legitimate authority in maintaining the pattern of class domination and sub-ordination”, its post-colonial counterpart is no less so. The aim, of course, is to ensure the overall reproduction of the same socio-economic system. This explains to you why Ziemann and Lenzendorfer regard the post-colonial state -- also known as the peripheral state-as an economic and political reproduction institution. Altogether, the state uses violence in all its multifaceted dimensions to allow the resolution of both latent and manifest class struggles in favour of the ruling class. The more the policies of the state are contested as unpopular, the more it affirms: its rule through more banal and regular

resort to force and violence. Thus, the post-colonial state exists on crises but, paradoxically, to attain some 'democratic' ideals. Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonbere put the 'democratic argument' as follows,

The bourgeois state ... thrives on crises; it requires them in order to demonstrate the fact that it is 'democratic', and that it permits alternative methods of expressing dissatisfaction provided this is done within the dictates of the law.

Assuring the maintenance of the unequal socio-economic system also means using the state as "a resource in itself". It is used to allocate and distribute scarce resources; it is hardly used to produce same. It is this objective reality which explains why there is so much cut-throat competition amongst the political elites for political power, state patronage as well as decision-making structures. Recall what we said in Lecture One about political instability. This is one of its most important sources. But such rat-race as exists for political power is for personnel, and not general interest. On this issue, Terisa Turner is very clear;

... in these circumstances, politics is a form of business through which actors seek influence in the state, not in order to make and apply general rules, but in order to secure advantages.

The second set of theories on the post-colonial state in Africa, we have said, also emphasizes the violent character of that state. But it is not because the state is a crude instrument of the ruling class. Rather, the state inherited its violent character from the colonial situation. In short, if the post-colonial African states have immense power and terror vis-à-vis the citizens, it is not gratuitous; it is not something we can't explain. Indeed, in several respects, the colonial state was violent. First, it violently terminated existing forms of governance in pre-colonial Africa. Such discontinuity in Africa's social formation denied African states the advantages of pre-colonial traditions of governance. In a profound sense, therefore, the Africa state is an imposed power. Second, colonial rule itself was a violent rule *par excellence*. Since the colonized people never controlled any agency of coercion – Police, Army, Civil Servant, Prisons,

etc. – violence assumed more alarming proportions. The post-colonial state is simply a continuation of the former by similar modalities. Thus, we can argue, like P.P. Ekeh, that “the modern African states, weaned out of colonial rule, were launched on violence and subversion” and that “just as decolonization justified violence and subversion, so in independent Africa, governments are cast aside in coups d’etat in violence and subversion”.

These theorists also say that this initial violence echoes all over the society in such a manner that an integral part of statehood is the phenomenon of institutionalized violence. Given the plurality of ethnic and communal and management of societal crisis for the state. Yet, again as P.P. Ekeh asserts, this is a central function of the state. The ‘typical’ African President or Prime Minister or by whatever designation he is known subscribes more to the definition of politics as consensus rather than conflict. Any societal force or sub-national group that does as much as even ‘constructively criticize’ or suggest alternative policy, options becomes, by that singular act, subversive. It merits the full heat of the state’s coercive machinery. It is the same violence tradition that has permitted the perversion of the traditional role of the military. The functions of the latter are, today, diametrically opposed to those performed by its homologues in the developed politics. This is also part of the African crisis.

Summary

1. For Marxists or Neo-Marxists, the African post-colonial state is over-developed and underdeveloped; it is dependent and autonomous.
2. State power is class power; it is also an objective relation.
3. At the domestic level, ruling class has to use violence to ‘domesticate’ the ever turbulent dominated forces.
4. Theorists who define the post-colonial African states mainly in terms of violence argue that this is not so much the result of dependency or underdevelopment as the origins of the colonial state-formed out of violence and subversion.
5. Violence is used to terrorize the masses, but it also used to privatize the people’s collective pecuniary interests.

Things to do

Read the following materials:

1. Claude Ake (ed.), *Political Economy of Nigeria* (Macmillan, 1985).
2. Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere, *The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic 1979-1984* (Zed Books, London, 1985).
3. John Lonsdale "The State and Social Processes in Africa: A Historiographical Survey". *Africa Studies Review*, vol. xxiv, 2 and 3, June – Sept., 1981.
4. Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes*.

Post-Test

1. Define, in its simplest terms, the post-colonial state in Africa.
2. State the two dominant views on the post-colonial state.
3. The post-colonial state is
 - a. weak, dependent and subservient
 - b. strong, independent, powerful and unyielding
 - c. also the colonial state
 - d. None of the above
4. Which of the following is correct?
 - a. the foreign bourgeoisie is the ruling class in Africa
 - b. the indigenous African bourgeoisie is the real ruling class. Give reason(s) for your choice.
5. The post-colonial state is
 - a. partly autonomous, partly dependent
 - b. totally autonomous, partly dependent
 - c. totally autonomous and independent
 - d. None of the above
6. "The post-colonial state is an economic and political reproduction institution". Discuss.
7. Why do governments of Africa use their apparatuses of violence, force and coercion against the ruled or dominated classes?

Reference

Toyin Falola and Julius Ihonvbere, (1985). *The Rise and Fall of Nigeria's Second Republic 1979-1984*. London: Zed Books, p. 240.

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LECTURE SIX

Class Formation in Africa

Introduction

This lecture examines an extremely important theme in any informed (or scholarly) discussion on post-independence Africa politics, namely, class formation and classes. Do classes really exist in Africa? What factors account for class formation? At what levels does class formation occur? By looking at some concrete case studies, we hope to show that there are classes and that the preponderant capitalist or neo-capitalist mode of production produced both a capitalist class and a non-capitalist class. We will also see that to understand class formation in the continent, we must view society in a dynamic sense; we cannot understand this phenomenon by looking at society from a mechanical or static perspective.

Objectives

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

1. discuss post – independence African politics;
2. explain if classes exist in Africa;
3. explain the factors that account for class formation; and
4. discuss the levels at which class formation occur.

Pre-Test

Perhaps from your own personal reading and observation, you can answer the following questions:

1. Do classes exist in Africa?
2. If no, why do you think so?

3. If yes, what is your reason for saying so? What are the factors which account, in your own eyes, for class formation or existence of social classes?
4. At what levels – political – ideological, social, economic – do classes exist?

CONTENT

For some years after political independence, several African leaders were consistently expressing the opinion that, unlike the European and American societies, the African society is classless. They were also eager to point to the so-called African traditional or communal society where elders sit under the tree and openly take decisions on issues affecting everybody. They also insisted, except for a few of them like Kwame Nkrumah and Sekou Toure, that since everybody was his “brother’s keeper”, there was hardly any division, in pre-colonial times, as it is now, along vertical lines. But this view-point is not correct. It, in fact, is a misreading of the dynamics of those ex-pre-colonial societies which were at colonialism, colonial states and now neo – or post – colonial. What we are saying here is that it is hypocritical to imply that African societies underwent colonialism without being transformed. It is equally wrong to say that social structures and processes were not affected by the colonial situation with its dominant mode of production – namely capitalism.

Several studies on class formation in Africa show clearly that there are classes. Nkenna Nzimiro argues, for instance, that where capitalism exists, it undermines the social structure of the traditional society leading to the emergence of a new class structure. This suggests that classes existed prior to capitalism and its highest manifestation, imperialism. In his 1974 study of the “political consciousness among the Ibadan poor”, Gavin Williams writes that “colonial capitalism has transformed significant social relationships into commodity relationships”. It has thereby differentiated the colonized society along new lines, so that the people’s life chances are determined by their access to and exclusion from resources introduced by the colonial political economy”. What this amounts to is that colonialism merely propped up new means of production and new ways of property and wealth accumulation. Those who effectively possess capital and means of production are the capitalist – they are the inheritance elite’ of first hours of independence. Of course,

there were and still are those who do not possess capital of any sort – they are wage-earners, labourers, farmers, the *proletariat* and the *peasantry*.

It may appear odd to you that we are discussing ‘class formation’ without even attempting to define what we mean by ‘class’. I don’t think it is reasonable to discuss class or classes without looking at Karl Marx and Marxists’ definition or conceptualization of it. For Marx, individuals form a class only to the extent that they are engaged in a common struggle with another class. In other words, a social category becomes a class only in so far as it is in property authority and power relations with another social category or other social categories. As we said earlier, there is intense dynamism in such relations. Rossana Rossanda was saying the same thing in her 1970 essay “Class and Party” when she wrote that “it (is) impossible to define a coherent class position without taking into account the total organization of capital as a total system of social relations”.

Let us now look more closely at this ‘total system of social relations’, first, the production system. Colonialism had an enduring impact on the continents’ production system. According to the Nigerian political scientist Okwudibia Nnoli, colonialism virtually replaced “the subsistence economy of the pre-colonial societies with a capitalist one motivated and dominated by foreign private capital and responding to and serving the needs of this external capital rather than the needs of the local population”.² But, then, foreign capital, to exploit indigenous resources, needs the collaboration of those local elements who benefit from such exploitation. Those who so collaborate - we call them *compradors* or middlemen - become “commission agents” or “squandering capitalists”. They make a lot of money since their principals also make a lot of capital. Ultimately, it is those - the majority - who are not in this class who suffer the consequences and bear the grunt of an exploited, squandered and milked economy. And herein lies an important origin of class formation: it is the same capitalist socio-economic formation that produces the bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the peasantry (see above).

Second, since we talk of dynamism, the capitalists - or what some scholars call ‘national bourgeoisie’ - do not, for different reasons, leave things as they are. Seeing the inequality of the system and the periodic or occasional perturbations of the system by the non-capitalist and their spokesman – particularly radical university teachers, journalists, lawyers, etc. - the capitalists or ruling class come up with a programme they call economic nationalism or economic indigenization. In Nigeria, the

Enterprises Promotion Decree (No. 4) of 1972 was meant to transfer the ownership, wholesale in some cases and partially in others of the commanding heights of the country's economy into the hands of Nigerians. Zaire Republic also sought, beginning from November 30, 1973, to indigenize (as against nationalize) her economy. As you can expect, there is usually much feature about the ability of such programmes to build 'an egalitarian, just and equal society'. It is always said that economic indigenization is in the interest of the people. Government is put up by the indigenous capitalist class as the sum total of the public or common good.

But when the policy is implemented, what do we observe? We simply see a so-called development strategy developing nothing except, perhaps, the private purses and bank accounts of the leading – and sometimes also marginal – members of the ruling class. The people experience 'development' only on the pages of national development plans, economic indigenization blueprints and budgetary proposals. Writing on the Zairian experience in 1980, Michael G. Schatzberg indicates, in his essay, "The State and the Economy. The Radicalization of the Revolution in Mobutu's Zaire", that Zairinization of the economy was, purely and simply, to the benefit of the political and commercial bourgeoisie. After the radicalization phase from December 1974 to late 1975 as well as the stabilization phase ending September 1976, there was complete handing over of economic resources to their former foreign owners. At the end of the day, observes Schatzberg,

the ills of Zairanization were not curbed, in some cases they were exacerbated. The politico-commercial bourgeoisie was not brought to heel; it was further encouraged in its conversion of public office into opportunities for private gain.³

Furthermore,

(zairinization) reinforced the position of the (politico-commercial) class in Zairian society, further disrupted the commercial network already in serious trouble from the effects of the Zairinization and continued the erosion of the credibility of the Mobutiste Zairian state.⁴

What this means is that while public goals are enunciated by the ruling class, personal reward-system is what everybody sees. In Kenya, while low and middle-level firms had been 'nationalized' by or around 1977, 1978 was fixed as the deadline for the Kenyanization of "larger and more intricate" firms. Even if this was largely achieved, it was at a great social and political cost: while the appropriation of the surplus value helped, in no small way, to consolidate the power of the indigenous capitalist-class, it was always said to be in the interest of "the people of Kenya". In fact, Colin Leys has indicated that by the colonial period, an indigenous capitalist class had already emerged – particularly after the reforms of the 50s. This class was not only concentrated in the largest ethnic group – Kikuyu – it was also found in the economic and political centre of the country. The same class also had strong representation in the state. Let me allow Leys to continue:

*the indigenous bourgeoisie was exceptionally well placed to convert its natural dominance in the nationalist movement into a position of strategic control over the post-colonial political re-alignments needed for the next phase of accumulation. By mid-1966 – 2½ years after independence – these realignments had been completed and the framework of an effective "power bloc" under the hegemony of the Kikuyu bourgeoisie was clearly established.*⁵

The verdict on "economic nationalism" or 'indigenization' is fairly simple: they are hardly successful. They merely accelerated the 'retrenchment' of the post-colonial state into the hands of private, foreign and indigenous capital. In plain language, the gap between the opulent and the rugged, the rich and the poor becomes widened rather than narrowed by such enterprises. Writing on the Nigerian experience, the Nigerian Marxist economist, 'Bade Onimode, passes the following judgment:

*indigenization has been a petty-bourgeois compromise between patriotism and puppetism, which has, at best, strengthened the economic base of the petty bourgeoisie without seriously challenging the neo-colonial under-development of the country.*⁶

Third, the capitalist class with immense economic and commercial/business interests also seeks political power. Indeed, what you find in most of these countries is the cycling and re-cycling of the same compact set of elites from the military, the political party(ies), the Civil Service, the conservative intelligentsia, the Chiefly Estates, the aristocracy of labour, business-commercial – ‘industrial’ interests, etc. Of course, you should know that those who have political power use it to acquire enormous economic, financial and allied interests. While at independence and up to about mid-1975 political power chased economic power, today it seems that there is the reverse process: economic power seeks political power. This latter process is more invidious and devilish: the people are mere onlookers. They watch in awe and helplessness as the same astute and private-regarding leaders of business, commerce, etc. whose collusion with military political and bureaucratic leaders has in part, brought untold misery to the peoples of Africa, are invited to write constitutions, development plans and budgets for these countries. No wonder, all over the continent you find only capitalist manifestoes – the IMF and the World Bank have virtually re-colonized the continent!

Fourth, by its own specialism or specialization in those branches of the economy – like trading, buying and selling or what I call ‘backwarding and forwarding’ – which bring in quick or immediate profits, the indigenous capitalist class merely prolongs the misery of the people. Activities such as distribution and services do not bring the national bourgeoisie into conflict with foreign capital. The addition of their activities and the logic of the neo-capitalist mode of production is the stifling of the full and authentic expansion of available productive forces. The natural historical process of development is also thwarted.

Thus, at all levels – social, political and ideological, and economic – we find an expression of social classes. In Africa, as elsewhere, there are complex interactions amongst the different classes as well as their fractions. But while the so-called mixed-economy ideology (see Lecture One) does nothing but ensure maintenance of the status quo – ‘in the interest of the people’ – the indigenous capitalist class in Africa reinforces its class position and domination over other classes. There is, for instance, the development of what Leys calls ‘bourgeois culture’ which consists, *inter alia*, of foreign taste in food, clothing, leisure, etc. and schooling of bourgeois children abroad. There is also the conscious effort at developing adjutant, auxiliary layers at once subordinate ‘to and in the

service of the ruling class: lawyers, accountants, academics, journalists. Similarly, there is the progressive development of bourgeois class consciousness via series of struggles with other classes and fractions'.⁷ What Leys says about Kenya is certainly true of other African states.

It should therefore not surprise you if I say that Africa's ruling class – of course, there are isolated exceptions which you yourself may be able to name – lacks what K. Mannheim calls a "Utopia". By this he means "a set of ideas to inspire the transformation of the existing order and the liberation of human capacities". Certainly, majority of African leaders do not dream dreams, let alone *great* dreams about the future of their states!

Summary

1. Unlike what several African leaders say, there are classes in Africa to the extent that there is a class that has monopoly of property, authority and power and other classes that are no more than onlooker.
2. Class can be defined in relation to property, authority and power. Classes have their own dynamism and have their being only within a total system of social relations.
3. Africa's incorporation into the capitalist mode of production has differentiated or divided her into new social structures and classes.
4. The indigenous capitalist class has sought to underplay the anger and frustration of the people by inaugurating economic 'indigenization' or 'nationalism' in the interest of the people.
5. Such policies end up merely increasing the riches of the rich and the poverty of the poor.

Things to do

Read these books:

1. D.P. Gha (ed.) *Economic Independence in Africa* (Nairobi, 1973).
2. Richard Harris, *The Political Economy of Africa* (N. York, 1975).
3. Goran Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Under-development and Uncaptured Peasantry* (London, Heinemann, 1980).
4. Williams Tordoff, *Government and Politics in Africa*.

Post-Test

1. What do you understand by the term 'class'?
2. Do classes exist in Africa?
3. In what ways did colonialism contribute to class formation in Africa?
4. What do you understand by the following terms –
 - i. Indigenous capitalist class
 - ii. Proletariat
 - iii. Peasantry
5. By the "total system of social relations", we mean
 - i. Political elements of social relations.
 - ii. Social elements of interaction
 - iii. Economic elements of interaction
 - iv. Ideological elements of interaction
 - v. All the above
6. Rather than reduce inequality amongst classes, so-called economic nationalism widens it. Comment.
7. Name the different fractions and fractions of ruling class in your country – the ones you can think of.

References

- 'Bade Onimode "Imperialism and Nigerian Development" in O. Nnoli (ed), *op. cit.*, p. 91.
- Colin Leys (1978). "Capital Accumulation, Class Formation and Dependency – The Significance of the Kenyan Class" *The Socialist Register*. p. 250.
- Colin Leys, *op. cit.*
Ibid, 257.
- Michael G. Schatzberg, (1980). "The State and the Economy". "The Radicalization of the Revolution in Mobutu's Zaire" *Canadian Review of African Studies*, vol. 14, No. 2, p. 256.
- N. Nnoli (ed.), (1981). *Path to Nigerian Development*. Dakar: Codesria. p. 97.
- R. Rossanda (1970). "Class and Party", *The Socialist Register*. p. 229.

LECTURE SEVEN

The Issue of National Integration and Nation-Building: The One-Party Syndrome

Introduction

It is often said that whereas in developed countries, nations were formed before the state, in Africa and in virtually all ex-colonies, state structures are in search of creating nations out of multi-lingual and multi-ethnic societies. This lecture examines the important issue of national integration and nation-builder as well as the main instrument for achieving this in most African States - the mono or one-party structure.

Objectives

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

1. discuss the terms 'national integration' and 'nation – building'; and
2. discuss the instruments necessary for realizing 'national integration' and 'nation – building'.

Pre-Test

To facilitate your comprehension of what follows, attempt the following questions:

1. What do you understand by the terms 'national integration' and 'nation-building'?
2. Why do you think African states need to build nations?
3. What kind(s) of problems are they facing?
4. What are the instruments of realizing this?
5. Which of these instruments do you consider the most important?

CONTENT

National Integration and Nation-Building

The question of national integration and nation-building arises as a result of the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual nature of most African “artificial” states. In fact, in several of the states and even within each state, potentials of disintegration are daunting enough. According to a view,

in the great majority of states, there was no shared culture, such as a homogenous and universal education would have provided and the typical state was characterized by ethnic pluralism, linguistic diversity, the strength of communal ties and loyalties and educational system which hitherto had benefited only a minority of the population.¹

Some have even argued that alien, that is, colonial, rule was the only cohesive factor in most of the states, and that once colonial rule formally terminated, the different sub-nationalities were left at one another’s throat. This concern of the political leadership was therefore to knit together the various peoples of and in their states.

Three principal instruments of nation-integration are often proposed. These are:

- i. Strong and personalized power
- ii. The party, preferably one
- iii. Public administration (Lecture 12 discusses this last instrument).

Instruments of National Integration and Nation-Building

It is strongly believed in several African states that national unity can be built around a single personality, the Head of State or President or whatever the title. Some salient characteristics of this instrument need to be examined. First, there is the phenomenon of personalization of power which, simply put, means that political authority is concentrated in the hands of a single person. Closely tied to this is a related phenomenon: personification of power, whereby there is the myth of the holder of power incarnating, in the eyes of the people, power. In a sense, he who say the ‘president’ says ‘power’, and vice versa.

How does one explain this thesis or notion of personalization of power? The reasons are not far-fetched. Consider the following arguments:

- a. The so-called “Negro-African” tradition which recognizes the chief not only as the political authority *par excellence*, but also as the expression of the social group. It is also said that the chief incarnates his group and also represents its interests.
- b. The chief or president is given so much power because of the necessity of national construction which entails integrating people *a priori* (that is seemingly) irreconcilable.
- c. The struggle against underdevelopment requires, it is said, the “guide of the nation” (see below) having enough powers to impose his decision. It is also contended that a regime that observes a strict separation of powers cannot engineer innovative politics given the abundance of heterogeneous forces.

Also forming part of personalized power is what one call *personalized government*. The most extreme category here is that of mystification of the leader. Do you remember Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah? He was called *Osagyefo* (the Saviour) of the “Fountain of honour”. Virtually all the leaders of one-party states enjoy considerable personal prestige: Sekou Toure (Conakry Guinea), Sedar Senghor (Senegal), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Felix Houphouet-Boigny (Ivory Coast), etc. were all regarded as “father of the nation”. The president is even reputed to take all decisions. He enjoys some kind of ‘patriarchal’ power – he is reputed to know everything; see everything and be responsible for everything. Only those governmental policies he does not personally supervise.

You can now understand why leaders who enjoy so much power and prestige refuse opposition parties. The argument is that, opposition constitutes a stumbling block towards the achievement of the highest ideal, namely, national integration. But this argument is not very convincing. This is because, even within the one-party structure, there is much internal strife and conflict. We give only two examples: the Senegalese crisis, mainly of clan origin, between President Senghor and his Prime Minister Mamadou Dia. This was shortly after the abortive December 1962 *coup d’etat*. There is also the ethnic-oriented struggle for power between, on the one hand, Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya (Luo ethnic group) and, on the other, Kenyatta (Kikuyu group) in Kenya. In

general, there are all sorts of conflict within the monoparty structure: political, ideological and generational.

It won't be an exaggeration to say that the violent nature of the struggle for power and influence between Mr. President and his closest collaborators testifies to the weakness of the phenomenon of "personalized government". This means that the idea of "creating" national unity around a single person is not realistic. It is, at any rate, an imperfect tool for national integration. The President himself faces a serious dilemma. He has to choose between being a moderate or weak leader who exercises not the totality of powers and doing exactly the opposite. In the first case, the state runs the risk of falling into anarchy. While in the second, the president may become dictatorial and authoritarian. In either case, the choice is not an easy one. The one-party state is there and then mooted to check the excesses of Mr. President.

The One-Party State

That majority of African states are either one-party or military-one-party-dominated since the late 1960s does not mean that this has always been so. In fact, at legal independence, most of these states worked on the basis of multipartyism. In Senegal, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, a dominant party controlled government under the surveillance of opposition parties. In other places – for example Gabon – multipartyism led to the creation of coalition governments. President M'Ba's Gabonese Democratic Block (BDG) gave ministerial posts to leaders of the opposition movement – the Gabonese Democratic and Social Union (UDSG). In Anglophone Africa, multipartyism was also the rule, though Tanganyika (later Tanzania) with the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) and Liberia (True Whig Party) were exceptions. In Uganda and Sierra-Leone, the parties were many and much divided. Multipartyism, which was later discarded, was a means of proving that Africa was, in a sense, politically matured.

However, one by one, more often by constitutional reforms, single parties became the order of the day: In Central African Republic (CAR), there was the Movement for the Social Evolution of Black Africa (MESAN). In Congo Brazaville, the Congolese Labour Party (PCT) held and still holds way, while the 'Democratic Part' was dominant in the Ivory Coast and Guinea. Some of these parties were swept away by the military, others are still in place.

Why, you may ask, is monopolyism is much in vogue? Many reasons are advanced by its protagonists. We examine only those relating to our theme of reflection – national integration and nation-building. First, monopolies are seen as effective agents of rapid economic development. Central planning is said to be possible. The Soviet Russian example is always cited as a case in point.

Second, parliamentary democracy is rejected on the grounds that opposition tactics tend to erode the efficacy of the state. In the same vein, it is argued that a single party would not only encourage but also foster national integration to the extent that centrifugal forces would all be represented in the party. In this way, it is reasoned that ethnic differences would be minimized, if not eradicated.

Viewed in this way, what are the major functions of the party as they relate to nation-building? There are two broad categories of functions, namely political-ideological and mobilizational.

The first set of functions entails the education, direction and supervision of the people. It is this that leads the monopoly to proclaim itself as the party of the masses. By centralizing power in the party and not in constitutional organs like the Legislature and Executive, the party merely seeks to give the ‘masses’ the ‘correct’ political and ideological orientation. Within this context, Guinea’s Sekou Toure’s declaration on the monopoly is very revealing:

behind the state, there is something higher which is the party. If the party does not function well, the Guinean state will not function well, either, since it would be deprived of an adequate means of mass direction.

The second major function assigned to the single party is that of mobilization of the masses towards the attainment of the goals of the party and, consequently, the state. Of course, the modalities of arriving at nation-building are determined by the party.

Summary

Our discussion in this lecture has brought out the following points:

1. National integration and nation-building refer to processes of forging unity or oneness amongst disparate peoples in a state.
2. The major instruments of these ideals of independence are (a) strong and personalized power of Mr. President and (b) the one-party structure.
3. Since the President is said to represent and, in fact, incarnate his group, he is regarded as the ultimate political authority, a symbol of national unity.
4. The need for national integration justified concentration of power in the hands of the President.
5. To avoid arbitrary use of power, the monoparty structure is proposed. This structure is also meant to avoid waste of national energy. Opposition parties are therefore a luxury.

Things to do

Read the following texts:

1. Claude Ake, *A Theory of Political Integration*, (Illinois, Dorsey, 1967).
2. D.E. Ashford, *The Elusiveness of Power: The African Single-Party States* (Ithaca Cornell Univ. Press, 1965).
3. G.M. Carter (ed.), *African One-Party States* (Ithaca, 1962).
4. W.A. Lewis, *Politics in West Africa* (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1965).
5. Aristide, R. Zolberg, *Creating Political Order: The One-Party States of West Africa* (Chicago, Rand McNally, 1966).

Post-Test

1. Define the following terms: National integration and nation-building
2. An African state needs national integration because
 - a. there is already national cohesion and integration;
 - b. the single party is extremely weak;

- c. the monoparty structure is extremely powerful;
 - d. there are too many disparate ethnic political and religious groups fighting for supremacy and hegemony;
 - e. None of the above
3. List the major instruments of nation-building and national integration.
4. Are the arguments for one-party states convincing?
5. The major functions of the one-party state are
- a. economic and social
 - b. cultural and economic
 - c. political and social
 - d. political-ideological and mobilizational
 - e. None of the above.

LECTURE EIGHT

Dictatorship and Authoritarianism in Africa

Introduction

Following closely on the heels of one-party states in the continent, is the tendency towards authoritarianism and dictatorship on the part of political leaders and their cabals. We define dictatorship and related concepts; look at general defining characteristics of dictatorial and authoritarian regimes before examining the specific African example. Indeed, it is alarming that almost all over Africa, as we shall see, there is not only a “shrinking political arena”, there is also a receding power arena. In their place, we find only a violent arena – a product of consequence or ‘dictatorial rule’.

Objectives

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

1. discuss the terms authoritarianism and dictatorship on the part of political leaders in Africa; and
2. discuss the synonyms, main features and defining characteristics of authoritarianism and dictatorship.

Pre-Test

1. What do you understand by dictatorship and authoritarianism?
2. What are their synonyms?
3. What are their main features and defining characteristics?
4. Do you really believe there is authoritarian or dictatorship in Africa?
5. How can you identify or locate its emanation or manifestation?
6. Do you think there is dictatorship in *your own* country?

CONTENT

In its simplest term, by dictatorship is meant the unrestricted domination of the state by an individual, a cabal (clique) or a small group of individual. We need to fairly expantiate on this definition. We can, for instance, borrow from Franz Neumann and distinguish three types of dictatorship. First, there is what he called “simple dictatorship”. This involves an absolute control of the traditional mechanism or instruments of state power by the ruler. He uses no other extra-state modalities. Second, we have “caesaristic dictatorship” which signifies that the leader, to be able to win and consolidate power, needs the support of the broad masses of the people. He needs such a wide support to be able to carry out some form of social and economic reforms. Lastly, there is what Neumann called “totalitarian dictatorship” which uses not only state apparatuses of coercion, but also double up these with a unique or parallel power apparatus exclusively controlled by a governing party or the leader’s “social movement”. So you can see that dictatorship is a complex notion; the more it develops in any system, the more complicated it becomes, and, of course, the more ruthless, desperate and panicky it also becomes.

Totalitarianism is a concept or notion that encompasses dictatorship and authoritarianism. Of course, it is more awesome and terrible than them. Whereas the last two concepts deal mainly with the state, totalitarianism tends to collapse the state and society into one. The definition supplied by Otto Stammer is very clear. I quote him:

... we can speak of totalitarian rule only where a centralistically oriented mass movement, led by a militant political minority in an authoritarian manner, relying on the monopoly of power, and with the aid of dictatorship ruled state, builds an apparatus of power which bears upon all parts of the society.¹

Scholars use concepts like tyranny, despotism, autocracy, caesarism, totalitarianism as synonyms of concepts – they are also processes – under review in this lecture.

What are their general defining characteristics and features? For an answer, we again turn to Stammer who has identified five main features. First, arbitrariness in the exercise of power as seen in non-division of

power; concentration of political power in the hands of a dictator; suppression of legitimately-created political and social associations; use of manipulated and manipulable ruling apparatus to develop a monopoly of power. Second, illegal use or exercise of political power as seen in the abolition of suspension of all written laws guiding exercise of power. Third, civil liberties or fundamental human rights are either eliminated or severely curtailed. When periodically conceded, they are defined and operated according to the whims and caprices of the dictator. Fourth, a generally aggressive and impulsive form of decision-making – which the leader sees as either leading to “ideological messianism” or one capable of ruthlessly, disciplining the society (particularly the non-conformists variously described as “radicals” or “extremists”). Recall your earlier lectures. Fifth, the dictatorship regime is identified through its use of despotic methods of political and social control. Virtually all legitimate aspirations in the society are outlawed for security reasons: the regime is a regime of “law and order, peace and tranquility”.

We can also define dictatorship and authoritarianism in class terms; after all, state power is purely and simply class power. According to this view, dictatorship is not so much the concentration of power in individual hands as in a class – that is, the concentration of political, if not economic, power in the hands of the privileged groups.

From the above, there is a sense in which one can argue that a dictatorial state is the antithesis of democracy; in other words, it signifies the degeneration or weakness of democracy. In saying this, let me clarify a point: the fact that one form of dictatorship or the other exists – see below – does not suggest that all constitutional provisions are overturned in favour of arbitrariness. Far from that, in fact, there is almost always a limit on arbitrariness to the extent that the broader the foundations of its power, the greater the possibility of dictatorship’s continuous exercise of power.

Dictatorial regimes certainly use a battery of instruments or modalities to maintain its mode of rule. Such instruments include force, threats, oppression, terror, and persecution. Others are intimidation, deception, corruption, social rewards etc. while these modalities are being put into use in different combinations, there is, simultaneously, massive propaganda to make people support a regime that legitimacy.

The question that one should ask at this juncture is if all these features – or even some of them – define any regime in Africa. It is not a ‘no’ or ‘yes’ answer. Rather, we need, for a start, to take a critical look at

authoritarian or dictatorial typologies, the one(s) into which several African states fit into; we'll then look at the defining characteristics of African states.

Historically and contemporarily, most authoritarian regimes in Africa have emerged to forestall meaningful and popular social reforms clamoured for by not only the masses and workers, but sometimes also by the middle class. As already stated, crises, forerunner of rebellion and revolution, are rapidly nipped in the bud in the name of "law and order". Scholars generally regard such states as "restorative" states. They are also counter-revolutionary. But scholars also believe that even when you have "revolutionary dictatorship"-particularly radical, Marxist or socialist – there are some problems: both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary dictatorships permit a break with a state's political evolution. Their legality in exercising political power is also suspect since their intentions are not always their pursued goals; not to talk of achieved goals.

Certainly several African states qualify to be called "counter-revolutionary" dictatorships. Indeed, the emergence of "strongman" regimes was pointed out soon after independence by some observant Africanists. You can recall here what you learned in preceding lectures about the phenomena of personalized and personified power. It is often argued that states that are late starters in industrialization need a more or less long period of authoritarian government. Indeed, almost all over Africa – the exceptions are, indeed, few – we have one party-system supported by the military and the state bureaucracy; military dictatorships; monarchical and autocratic states – such regime typologies facilitate authoritarian measures. Whatever may be the benevolence of one-party state; whatever may be the enlightened self-interest of the military or the monarchy in Africa – both scholars and states-men agree that there is authoritarian and autocratic rule in the continent.

Let's now examine some considered opinions. First, there is the rationale or explanation of dictatorship. In his 1963 essay, "Progress and the One-Party State", Donald Rotchild writes as follows: "Parliamentary democracy is rejected by many Africans bent upon a rapid transformation of their economy because it is seen as diverting popular energies away from the task of national reconstruction".² on this issue, the former Tanzanian president, Julius Nyerere has this to say;

...the two-party system is an over-sophisticated pastime which we in Africa cannot afford to indulge in; our time is too short and there is too much serious work to be done. The fundamental need for a sound infrastructure, capital investment in agriculture and industry and the growth of saving clashes with the mass desire to consume... Governments must act in an unpopular manner.³

Second, Chief Obafemi Awolowo talks about ‘government by dictatorship’. For him, this type of government “is maintained only by the use of force and by various acts of repression and oppression against those who disagree with or are critical of the dictator”. The late Senegalese scholar, Cheikh Anta Diop, writing on the single-party states asserts that when this structure dominates the entire political life of the nation all the national life-and orients to its own pleasure without taking into account the aspirations of the people, it can have very serious consequences. And Diop adds,

there is the danger that we will create petty, ephemeral dictatorships that will be dominated by foreign capital in a very insidious fashion.⁵

There is yet another type of dictatorship – constitutional. This type exists in form of emergency powers. Thus, there is constitutional dictatorship when martial law or a state of siege is proclaimed such that the executive – by whatever named called – can restrict civil liberties. Ironically, liberties are limited in order to protect or maintain what dictators call peace and tranquility – which, as you know, breeds inequality, injustice and oppression. According to Stammer, “the restoration of constitutional conditions, which is the objective of emergency legislation, often signifies the hardening of a socio – economic status and may encourage revolutionary forces within a country to intensify their attacks upon the existing political and social order”.⁶

Now, while there is a debate on the origin of “strong man” regimes in Africa – either as products or relics of the colonial era or inevitable types of transition to constitutional governments – there is hardly any debate on major features of dictatorial regimes in Africa. Some of them ought to retain our attention here. First, by the use of combination of instruments

earlier mentioned, the legitimacy of regimes becomes problematic. But since violence has been perfected into an art, the people are reduced into passive obedience-givers. Yet, any state that lives on passive obedience is anything but alive. Because of its distance from the ruled, dictators take such obedience as a testimony of the regime's acceptance by the people. Again, as we have said, while civil rights may exist *de jure*, they do not exist *de facto*; such rights "are constantly imperiled by the regime's claim to total control of the formation of political will and the conduct of social life".⁷ Africa's one-party and militarist states excel in the above characteristics.

Second, radical societal organizations are either abolished or subsumed under the state's arsenal of apparatuses. For instance, in virtually all the mono-party states, no mass organizations – students', youths, labour, women etc. – exists outside of the single party. Similarly, in militarist states, there are at least two traditions. First, in militarist states, which also have a single party, the above practice holds. Examples include Togo, Benin, and Mali etc. Second, in 'purely' militarist states like Nigeria, there are a systematic verbal and practical aggression against radical forces and organizations. Indeed, in modern dictatorships – in Africa and else where – it has been rightly said that an important instrument of control is the compulsion to join state organization. No system of rewards exists outside the state. There is only system of punishment and reprisal.

Third, the decision-making process is excessively private and privatized. You don't even know who and who constitute the inner causes of the cabinet. Advisors are quite obscure. Decisions are even hardly publicized. They are often left to the whims and caprices of the dictator or autocrat. While some for of secrecy may be necessary in foreign affairs, national security and defense issues, they are uncalled for in political and economic affairs. In fact, such secrecy disallows the people from appreciating the magnitude of economic problems facing the state. Latter continues to be secretive, non-deliberative and non-consultative.

Fourth, the dictator or autocrat hardly differentiates between the private and the public realms. The state is the autocrat and the autocrat is the state. Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, Omar Bongo of Gabon, Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo etc fit into category.

Fifth, African leadership is, in several respects, the *de facto* rule of one person who is often very eccentric. Yet, there is always a cabal, the

so-called advisor circle. However, the more autocratic and dictatorial the system becomes the more deaf to reason and the more impervious to logic and rationality the leader becomes. One of the tragedies of post-independence Africa is that we have virtually allowed in each state, only one man or, at best, a handful of individuals to ruin our states and consequently give a bad name to Africa. I think of 'Leaders' like Sekou Toure, Idi Amin Dada, Marcias Nguema, Jean-Bedel Bokassa – to mention a few.

Sixth, almost all African states are today on the verge of authoritarian rule. No thanks to the IMF and the World Bank, there is decreasing emphasis on social rights and public welfare services (health, education, water, electricity, etc). Resentment of the people is visited by guns and bayonets. In short, there is increased emphasis on militarization. This has been for instance, the trend in Nigeria since mid-1986.

What all the above amounts to therefore, is that in virtually all Africa, irrespective of regime typology, there is the use of violence to get to power and to maintain power. There is, indeed, an African crisis central to which is the prominence of violence. As regimes grow more dictatorial, there is a 'shrinking province of power'. P.P. Ekeh has put this Phenomenon in clear perspective:

...the basis of rulership in Africa has turned out to be violence, as power recedes from the political agenda of the nation-state...the critical issue in African politics is the management of violence, not of power.

Summary

1. Dictatorship refers to the rule of one person or a clique or a cabal
2. Its synonyms are authoritarianism, totalitarianism, tyranny, despotism, autocracy etc
3. Its defining features include arbitrary exercise of power; illegal use of political power; curtailment of civil liberties etc
4. African states are mainly counter-revolutionary states which seek to suppress societal forces.
5. There is dictatorship in Africa to the extent that leaders single-handedly take decisions; use force on their populations: de-emphasize welfare policies and social rights etc.

Things to do

Read the following materials:

1. Franz L. Neumann, *The Democratic and the Authoritarian state: Essays in political and Legal Theory*, edited by H. Marcuse
2. Otto Stammer, "Dictatorship" in *International Encyclopaedias of the Social sciences*, vol. 4, 1968, p. 161-168.
3. Onesimo Silveira, *African South of the sahara: Party system and Ideologies of Socialism*, 1976.

Post-Test

1. What do you understand by these terms or concepts: dictatorship and authoritarianism?
2. What other terms can you use in place of these two concepts?
3. What features or traits do you think define authoritarianism or dictatorship?
4. In Africa, how can you say that a state is authoritarianism?
5. Do you think late starters in industrialization – the 'new' states of Africa-really need authoritarian ruler?

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Otto Stammer, (1968). "Dictatorship" in *International Encyclopaedias of the Social sciences*, vol. 4, p. 165

Quoted in Paul E. Sigmund Jr. (ed.) *The Ideologies of the Developing Nations*, (Praeger, N. York, 1963). P. 223-8; 181

Stammer, *op cit*

LECTURE NINE

Government in African Politics

Introduction

We have seen that political independence in Africa was marked by the transfer of political authority to Africans. The election of the government, particularly the President or Prime Minister is a significant event within the creation of the new 'legitimate' African authority.

Our examination of one-party regimes shows that the tendency of such regimes is to create a "new class" of "palace favourites" who control access to the chief executive of the state as well as control government policy. Concentration and centralization of power and authority thus fosters the emergence and development of a "palace regime". Emphasis of such a regime tends to be on the role of the President. Latter becomes the center or nucleus of a new loyalty and national unity.

We examine, in this lecture, the role of government or rather the executive in African politics. The emphasis is on Mr. President.

Objectives

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

1. discuss the reasons that make the executive to dominate Government in African politics;
2. explain the types of executive that operate in Africa;
3. expantiate on the most central and dominant figures in government in African politics; and
4. discuss the functions and types of powers Mr. President possesses.

Pre-Test

As usual, try to focus your mind on this topic by pondering over the following questions:

1. Why does the Executive dominate Government in African politics?
2. Does Africa have one or more types of Executive?
3. Who is (or are) the most central and dominant figures in government?
4. What functions do such personalities perform?
5. What types of power does Mr. President possess?

CONTENT

It is perhaps a common knowledge today that at nominal independence the need for “efficient” or “strong government” and a “united nation” led several African leaders to favour a constitutional arrangement of a dominant Executive. Put differently, the option that was generally accepted was the one that put the mandate and power of the President – head and shoulder-above the supervisory functions of the Legislature. Those who study African politics – Africanists, as they are called–often say that the continent’s social anthropology and political sociology–that is, the demands and logic of Africa’s history and culture–make this phenomenon inevitable.

Therefore, as already hinted, in studying African government, the focus shall be on the Executive. This is so for several reasons. First, the Executive is generally taken as the highest magistracy of the state. Thus, the Legislature and the Judiciary are in a subordinate position. Second, executive tasks in the social and economic spheres have increased tremendously while, at the same time, it is an active participant in the initiation of legislations. Third, in contemporary Africa, the Executive is very much the center of a network of institutions of the state while the men who hold executive office appear to be the central and dominant figures of the society. Fourth, there is simultaneous decline in the prerogatives and powers of the legislature.

Let us now identify four basic types of Executive, namely:

- a. Monocephalous (‘one-head’) Executive Presidency;
- b. Bicephalous (‘dual’) Executive Parliamentary system;

- c. Monarchical Executives; and
- d. Military Executives.

Our focus here is on the first typology viz: *monocephalous executive presidency*.

A definition of *neo-presidentialism* within this perspective is relevant to our discussion. According to the scholar who, it seems, coined the term the French jurist Jean Buchmann, the term neo-presidentialism purports to represent the position, in Africa, where the decline of parliamentarianism is accompanied by the consolidation of executive power. This tends to be hierarchical and personalized with one (or a dominant) party at its base. The salient features of this system include the movement towards hierarchical structure of power in which the Head of state plays a dominant role particularly in a *monocephalous* system; the head of state is head of government as well as head of the single party. At the same time, Mr. President exercises extensive legislative powers. In fact, most of the bills for legislative discussions emanate from his office and the Civil Bureaucracy.

The roles of the President are many and diverse. First, as earlier noted, he is the “father” of the nation. Second, he is head of state. Third, he is the pillar on whom the operation or otherwise of the constitutional system rests. Fourth, he is considered the source of legitimate authority. In the same vein, there are qualifications any presidential candidate must possess. There are general ones concerning citizenship, stability of mind, satisfaction of electoral regulations etc. There are also special requirements. For instance, the Rwandan Constitution, in its section 54, put the maximum age of the presidential candidate at 60. He should also be a male as well as a councilor. In Mauritania and Tunisia, the president must be a muslim. His tenure of office was limited to 7 years in Gabon, Madagascar and pre-military Guinea. While it was 4 years in Rwanda, Senegal and Second Republic of Nigeria, it was 6 years in the United Arab Republic (UAR).

We should also talk about the types of power wielded by Mr. President. There are basically two: normal and extra-ordinary powers. Concerning ‘normal’ power, there are three elements. One, in relation to the government, the president has policy-making power, administrative power, power of appointment, and dismissal etc. Two, in relation to the Legislature, he has legislative initiative: he assents to bills and

promulgates same. In the same vein, he addresses the Parliament, dissolves the National Assembly and can also use the mechanism of referendum. Third, vis-à-vis the Judiciary, the President has the power of appointment to judicial posts; he can ask for judicial opinion on some questions and can grant pardon.

In relation to extraordinary power, the President can declare a state of emergency, in most countries, under certain limitations. In fact, two categories of provisions are in vogue in Africa to deal with emergency situations. The first, common in Anglophone Africa, simply states the President may, at any time, by Proclamation published in the official gazette, declare that a state of public emergency exists, or that a situation exists which may lead to a state of public emergency, if it is allowed to continue.

The other variety, common in Francophone Africa, is more specific. The provision is informed by the corresponding section 16 of the 1958 French constitution. This provision is in the constitution of virtually all French-speaking African states. Here is a sample from section 19 of the Ivory Coast constitution of November 3, 1960:

when the institutions of the Republic, the independence of the nation, the integrity of its territory, or the fulfillment of its international commitments are threatened by a grave and immediate danger, the President of the Republic shall, after mandatory consultation with the President of the National Assembly, take exceptional measures required by these circumstances. He shall inform the Nation of while matter in a (national broadcast). The National Assembly shall meet forthwith.

You can compare the above provision with section 265, sub-sections 1-6 of Nigeria's 1979 Presidential Constitution.

From what we have discussed above, it is no over-statement to say that the near-personalization of power by the President gives constitutional legitimacy to the strong executive presidential system. This kind of constitutional and governmental arrangement does not augur well for succession in political leadership. It hardly facilitates the passing of the 'political baton'. But its effects are more than that. The executive is

permitted by administrative manipulation, to muzzle the Legislature and the Judiciary. These last two institutions lose all powers, however, minimal, that the Constitution assigns to them.

The phenomenon of a strong executive presidential power permits the incumbent president to use the Legislature and the Judiciary as pawns in the chessboard of national politics. In fact, these two institutions are used as centers for distribution of offices and positions. The state is used as a large network of clientelist practices; the president is the controller *par excellence* of the spoils system. In short, the president uses the state as a machine for distributing rewards to party militants, loyalists and faithfuls. By the same token, the state machinery is used to punish opposition members (where there is two or multipartyism) or party decampers.

As we have said earlier, in strong, executive presidential systems, where political loyalty is, by and large, given to a single personality, the whole question of succession poses serious problems: it is visited by constitutional and political crises. Of course in some states, such as Senegal (Senghor to Adbou Diouf in January 1981); Cameroun (Ahmadu Ahidjo to Paul Biya in November 1982) and Tanzania (Nyerere to Nwinyi in 1986), succession has been smooth. In several others, however, military officers with a bagful of grievances against civil political leaders have come in as “corrective” regimes or “arbitrators-supervisors”. This phenomenon is, no doubt, interesting. Lecture Eleven takes care of the military.

Summary

Our discussion in this lecture has brought out the following points:

1. The Executive dominates Government in African politics because the Constitution gives it tremendous powers.
2. There are at least four types of Executive, viz monocephalous executive presidency, bicephalous executive parliamentary; monarchial executives and military executives.
3. Our emphasis, which is on the monocephalous executive presidency, shows that the president in this type of executive enjoys near-monopoly of power over the two other arms of government.
4. The President is the most central figure in government.
5. Mr. President possesses both normal and extra-ordinary powers.

Things to do

Read the following documents:

1. H.L. Bretton, *Power and Politics in Africa*, (Aldine Coy, Illinois, 1973).
2. Mazwell Owusu, *Uses and Abuses of Political Power: A case of Ghana* (Chicago University Press, 1970).
3. B.H. Sellassie, *The Executive in African Governments* (London, 1974)

Post-Test

1. What do you understand by the term 'Executive' in government?
2. Why does it dominate government?
3. List the types of executive you know.
4. Neo-presidentialism is the
 - a. Consolidation of executive power in the executive head
 - b. Consolidation of executive power in the Legislature
 - c. Consolidation of executive power in the Judiciary
 - d. Consolidation of executive power in the Party.
 - e. None of the above.
5. What powers have Mr. President?

LECTURE TEN

Succession Crises: Political Instability and Personalist Rule in Africa

Introduction

We have already seen in Lecture Seven that single-party states which in theory, celebrate the supremacy of the party over both the state and individual leaders become, in the long run, more or less personal properties of such leaders. Sometimes it is the leader and his extremely limited circle of aides who wield executive power. Other members of the party as well as major groups outside the party are viewed as dangerous elements that must, at best, be avoided. The leader clings on to power. How does one account for this phenomenon? What is the nature of succession crises in Africa? Is political instability a contributory factor, or a consequence, of such crises? What are the ends of a personalist rule? These and related questions concern us in this lecture.

Objectives

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

1. discuss the nature of succession crises in Africa;
2. discuss the factors that necessitated succession crises in Africa;
3. explain the effect of political instability as a result succession crises in Africa; and
4. discuss the term 'personalist rule'.

Pre-Test

As usual, provide answers to the following questions:

1. What do you understand by succession crises?
2. What factors, in your view, account for them?
3. What is political instability?
4. What is meant by a personalist rule?
5. What is the sum-total of all the above?

CONTENT

Scholars who study African politics are generally agreed that the ethics of pre-colonial Africa, present in post-independence Africa, give a conception of leadership roles essentially in personal and authoritarian terms. Professor B.J. Dudley represents such scholar. In his seminal work in 1973, he states that:

this personalization of leadership, not infrequently tinged with mystical undertones, has been reflected in the father-figure images which the political leadership tended to carve out for themselves or were invested by the electorate.¹

Now, because of the considerable power, prestige and myth surrounding the leader, opposing groups tend to contest the powers and aura of the leader or the leadership structure. Consequently, questions sometimes fundamental ones are posed. Sometimes, they do more than that: they organize themselves politically, ideologically and even militarily to put an end to the twin evil – as they see it – of personalization and personification of power. At other times, such opposition groups criticize, by the use of arms, the incumbent leadership only with a view to merely replacing the latter. The East African country of Uganda, we have seen in Lecture One, is a tragic example of this phenomenon.

Let me say clearly that the issue of succession crises is found in virtually all the states—irrespective of party and ideological typology. While most of the examples we are using here are drawn from monoparty states, let it not be said that militarist or multiparty states escape the scepter of succession crises. For the former, of course, the cycle of coups,

counter-coups, palace coups etc. testifies to succession uneasiness. Specifically on the military, a commentator has written as follows:

army has its own factions, its leanings, its radicals and moderates, its hardline and softline. In reality, unity of façade rests on little more than the fragility and precariousness of the equilibrium between clans with changing strengths. Sacks, dismissals, plots, kidnappings, arrests, purges, eliminations etc. testify to the intensity of the confrontations among factions of praetorians.

Succession crises, in a sense, testify to the absence of legitimacy or perhaps they are destined at avoiding a legitimacy vacuum. I explain. It is perhaps because some social forces or groups see a leadership as illegitimate, as not deriving from the people that they contest it. But such contestation may become violent. Thus by trying to put a 'more legitimate' government in power, such groups end up compounding the problem of legitimacy: no contending group to state power perceives its opponents as legitimate—or simply acceptable. Such crises tend to be seen as a harbinger or forerunner of political instability. But is this view correct? Or is political instability not the consequence of the succession crises and struggles?

Perhaps the first bother here is: how does one define political stability and instability? Is political instability explained simply in terms of the absence of crises and conflicts or even frequent changes of governmental personnel? Or is it a function of keeping faith with what B.J. Dudley calls 'the constitutive and regulative rules of the political game'? This eminent Nigerian political scientist has also viewed political stability as the absence of persistent systemic crises. But he also reasons that political instability may be a precursor of political stability to the extent that political actors painstaking learn from the errors of omission and commission of their predecessors and adopt a more positive posture vis-à-vis the community of rules and regulations governing political game in the society. The gap here, I think, is that the definitions and/or explanations are not premised on the material conditions and property and power relations in the state. Again, some scholars believe that the term 'praetorianism' better captures the character and nature of African states.

Praetorianism has been defined by J. Bayo Adekunle (Adekanye) as an unstable regime of coups cliques, and conspiracies tempered by political dictatorship.²

You well know that it is not in all cases that succession crises amongst civilian politicians lead to military take-over. You only need to look at majority of the one-party states particularly the ex-French possessions—here, the military, like the police, the judiciary etc, are merely a handmaiden of the single party machine. Or, perhaps more correctly, they approximate to manipulable variables in the hands of the “Supreme Guide”, the “invisible” or the “Father of the nation”. In short, the security organs of the state are used as instruments of coercion by *The Leader* to intimidate and harass imagined or real opposition elements. In such socio-economic formations, the leadership structure, with the leader at the apex, becomes something close to a *self-recruiting oligarchy*.

One of the main features of single party personalist states is that political questions become prominent—overriding critical economic questions. Latter tend to receive little more than a nodding attention. Even those political questions that are posed revolve, strictly speaking, around the person of the leader and the issue of succession to him.

In the Ivory Coast, for instance—as in Habib Bourguiba’s Tunisia till late 1987—Felix Houphouët-Boigny bestrides the narrow Ivoirian political world like a colossus, flushing out “too ambitious and impatient” subordinates at will. A recent commentator put the succession issues in the Ivorian polity in the following words:

*the individual who succeeds Felix Houphouët-Boigny, a man who has dominated Ivory Coast politics for the past forty years has a hard act to follow. He must wear the shoes of a figure whom the party has elevated into a giant.*³

Quite naturally, *Le Vieux* (the old man)—as he is known—has become the distributive machine of the clientelist state over which he presides. His powers though limited constitutionally are wide practically. For instance, in spite of the multiple candidature formula introduced into legislative elections since 1980—577 candidates running for the 175 seats in National Assembly—it is still the “Supreme Guide” who screens and rejects those candidates who do not possess ‘the moral qualities expected of a government’. Similarly, there is intensive electoral maneuvering and

manipulation. Behind the façade (or smokescreen) of ballot boxes and electoral laws are crafty and scheming politicians directing their whole attention to the “farmer of Yamoussoukro”—that is Houphouët-Boigny—on whom the entire system revolves.

It should therefore not surprise you that with the above environment and circumstances, the question of successor to Boigny have been raised to the level of the national question. The President himself compounds the problem by his vagueness on the issue. His utterances are, at best, ambiguous. In 1983, he said, in London, that “our Vice-President will be chosen from within the party”. On some other occasions he talks about his deputy that would be ‘designated’ or ‘chosen’ or ‘elected’. He was even quoted once as saying that there would be no successor-individual but a successor-team. Now, by not resolving this succession issue, Mr. President has, perhaps unconsciously, created a crisis situation. There is a slow but sure process of withering away of Boigny’s close political and bureaucratic structure. Today, in the Ivory Coast we have multiple clans, cliques and groups all seeking a privileged niche or place in the political power structure. That country has virtually become a large, political talking shop: the favorite theme is the political rat-race which specifically centers on which politician are still in the succession race which ones have fallen from grace to grass. Indeed, Claude Ake is correct in saying that ‘politics virtually underdevelops Africa. It purely and simply saps its much-needed politico-economic energy’.

When we turn to Siaka Stevens’ Sierra-Leone, we find in that ex-president a superb theatrical political actor. Throughout his 17-year rule (1968-85), he not only used the sole party to harass his ‘opponents’ within and outside the party structure, he had also, at the time of handover, become a political institution. According to a view, under Siaka Stevens,

there (was) a sort of institutionalized individualism, carefully controlled from the top, seeking to match ambitions and personal allegiances to government stability.⁴

What the Sierra-Leonean experience instructs mostly is that even when succession appears peaceful, the political landscape, not to talk of the economic terrain, may not be stable or quite. The state is too much of a buoyant pie to be missed by any ambitious political aspirant. Whereas, Stevens single-handedly put forward his own successor-like S. Senghor in

Senegal in January 1981 and Ahidjo Cameroun in November 1982—he did so in an authoritarian manner. He thereby caused the frustration and anger of some of his closest aides who did not hide their resentment for ‘office politician’, General Joseph Momoh. You can understand why the latter has much crisis on his hand including, at least, one *attempted coup d’etat*. Interesting enough, those politicians who had earlier stepped down for General Momoh “in the interest of peace” were also implicated in the civil-military uprising. I have my mind here on the two vice-presidents: Sorie Ibrahim Koroma and Francis Minah.

Furthermore, it is instructive that sloganeering has become part of the strategy to affirm one-man rule. In Togo, not only has the security question received more attention than before since 1985, but also slogans such as Togolese people wanting ‘peace, stability and security’, ‘there is no ideology in economy’ etc are much in vogue. In the same vein, possible successors or vocal opposition leaders are either temporarily incapacitated or totally eliminated. Former Togolese vice-president Idrissou Antoine Meatchi met the latter fate. Arrested in early 1984, he was officially declared dead after “heart attack” in March 1984. However, non-governmental sources indicate that Meatchi died as a result of lack of food and water for a long period.

What does the entire above amount to? First, after several years of monopoly and military rule in most of African countries, we begin to witness the accentuation of what Nelson Kasfir calls “shrinking political arena”. Fewer personalities now participate *effectively* in the decision-making process. Second, there is growing authoritarianism—as we saw in lecture eight—and an awesome suppression of possible successors. Where succession is organized, it is often guided and guarded such that successors are little more than a continuation or extension of their predecessors. Ordered or guided: succession which changes little or nothing in the dominant political and ethical values has become the order of the day—that is, where succession is allowed at all. In other places, Africa continues to live with sit-tight leaders who have long passed their peak—they virtually become more repressive, dictatorial and personalist as they grow older and realize the transient nature of power.

A last word: given the character, nature and purpose of the post-colonial African state, we should perhaps qualify the notion of personalist rule since it is doubtful if the leader’s closest collaborators—formal and informal and recruited from different factions of the ruling class—are mere

pawns in the chessboard of the Presidents political game, we sanction Augustus Adebayo's observation that;

*rational decision-making is never a one-man affair. In normal day-to-day experience and practice in any organization, ultimate decisions can seldom be attributed to a single individual.*⁵

Except, of course, that the African political landscape knows more of irrational than rational decision-making process!

Summary

1. Succession crises are the result or consequence of sit-tight leadership. Rulers sit tight partly because of the myth of indispensability built around them.
2. Such crises reflect lack or loss of legitimacy on the part of incumbent leaders.
3. Succession crises are inevitable in a socio-economic system where political power is the root of all 'the good things of life'.
4. Political instability is tied to succession crises. The latter has both economic (material) and political dimensions.
5. The more a leader stays in power the better he is able to consolidate a personalist rule and to play his aides one against the other.

Things to do

Go through relevant portions of these texts:

1. J.E. Hakes, *Weak Parliaments and Military Coups in Africa: A Study in Regime Instability* (Sage, London, 1973)
2. B. Harrel-Bond, *Ghana's Troubled Transition to Civilian Government*, (Hanover, 1979)
3. N.T. Le Vine, *Leadership in Africa: Post-Independence Generational Conflicts in Upper Volta, Senegal, Niger, Dahomey, CAR*, (Stanford, 1979)
4. M.F. Lofchie (ed) *The State of the Nations*.

Post-Test

1. What do you understand by the term 'succession crises'?
2. Name the main factors responsible for this phenomenon?
3. How would you define political stability?
4. Does it make any sense to talk of personalist rule in Africa?
5. In contemporary Africa, which of the following combinations do we have in governmental behaviour:
 - a. A shrinking economic arena with a widening political arena
 - b. A shrinking political arena with a widening economic arena
 - c. A shrinking political arena with a restricted economic arena
 - d. None of the above.

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LECTURE ELEVEN

The Military in African Politics

Introduction

Military intervention in African politics, military rule, military performance or non performance; the whole process of military disengagement from politics etc—these themes have remained stimulating and interesting topics in African politics since the 1960s. In spite of their recurrence or persistence, there are no “general purposes” reasons why the military intervene. So what we will do here is to present the different hypotheses of military intervention. But we will do more than that. We will also examine what the military do once in power. Two considerations are important here: nation-building and economic development. Our presentation is largely introductory since you will still study the military in subsequent courses, at superior levels.

Objectives

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

1. discuss military intervention in African politics, military rule, military performance and non-performance;
2. discuss the reasons for military intervention in African politics; and
3. discuss the part played by the military rulers in nation-building and economic development.

Pre-Test

I believe that from your own readings before now, you should be able to answer these questions:

1. Why do the military intervene in African politics?
2. What, in fact, do you understand by the notion 'military regime'?
3. Is it true that the military has been more successful in nation-building than their civilian counterparts?
4. In Africa, how does the economic balance sheet of the military look like?

CONTENT

The ritual of military intervention in African politics has become so commonplace today that no serious student of post-independence African politics can afford to ignore the phenomenon. Beginning either with the Sudanese coup d'état of 17 November 1958 – led by General Abdou – or the coup in Togo, Dahomey (now Benin) or Congo Brazaville in 1963, military officers continue to see themselves as a better alternative to the bunch of inept and corrupt civil politicians. Today, in spite of the fact that, except for some isolated cases – for instance – Captain Thomas Sankara's Burkina Faso (August 1983 – October 1987) – Africa's military have hardly changed the socio-political and economic landscape of the continent for the better, some commentators still believe military's self-imposed saviour-image.

It is possible to approach this contemporary issue from three different perspectives. The first has to do with what a military regime is. One may like to know, for example, if a regime is military simply because the Head of state is a military officer. In Niger Republic, there was a period of time during the late General Seyni Kountche's rule (April 1974-October 1987) when was the only military members of government. Does this make that military regime non-military? There is controversy on this issue. Others may look at the nature and character of a regime–military or civilian–and argue that depending on the constant use of force, coercion–in short, instruments of state violence–a "civilian" regime may, in fact, be more "military" than a supposedly 'military' one. Again, this issue is controversial. For our purposes here, we can simply adopt the definition given in 1972 by two French scholars–T. Yannopoulous and D. Martin–to

the intent that a military regime is, simply put, “a regime that comes out from a military coup d’etat”.

The second perspective here relates to the “whys” of military rule. Why do the “khaki boys” intervene overtly in politics to displace the “men-in-khaftan”? As we already hinted, we’ll examine some general hypothetical explanations; details of which you can get in books and journal articles that are numerous on the subject.

One, there is the neo-institutional interpretation which sees military intervention as the consequence of institutional crises: failure of imported or migrated political institutions to deliver the proverbial “goods”; political intolerance amongst the political elites and the political parties mediocre political leadership as well as corruption of the leader. It is reasoned, within this framework, that the overall consequence of all these factors or phenomena is the intervention of the military. Scholars who argue this view point say it is either the military or total systematic chaos.

Two, there is hypothesis of military coup inspired by altruistic—that is, non-selfish—considerations. This hypothesis is mainly found in the works of scholars who, in the early 1970s, postulated what is known as the “modernizing soldier thesis”. Briefly put, this thesis—whose proponents formed a veritable ‘school of thought’—states that the military institution is the most modernized, most industrialized, and the most westernized sector of the economy in the “third world” and that military officers who intervene in politics do so purely to pass on the western technology of the military organization to the wider society. You can see that the modernizing soldier hypothesis sees officer politicians as veritable agents of development and modernization. They are said to intervene mainly, if not only, to do this.

Three, there is the hypothesis of coup d’etat occurring as a result of the generalized politicization of societal forces and socio-political institutions. Within this context, coup is seen as a short-circuit; it is the ultimate in political conflicts which are resolvable only through the use of force.

Four, there is the group or corporate interest argument. This argument concerns military—regarding factors. The army is said to intervene to halt deterioration of its status and to improve its material and organizational conditions. For instance, M.F. Lofchie in his 1972 article “The Uganda Coup: Class Action by the Military” indicates that the Uganda coup of

January 1971—masterminded by Idi Amin Dada—was a pre-emptive measure to threats by the Obote government to cut military pay, power and privilege. This group approach also says that once frustration enters the ranks-and-file of the military, there is the danger of organized revolt or disobedience against civilian bosses. Experience has also shown that there can equally be organized violence against military bosses too. Once this trend persists what do we find? We find force becoming institutionalized as a method of resolving succession issues. Soon, the whole country is caught up in a cycle of *praetorianism*, that is, the *sceptre of recurring military intervention*.

Five, we have the class interest hypothesis in which the Army is seen as a faction of the national bourgeoisie or ruling class whose ultimate aim is the defence of the privileges of the minority/few against the legitimate yearnings and aspirations of the dominated mass majority. Thus, rather than serve the so-called general interest of the people, coup leaders serve only the interest of the leading factions of the indigenous ruling clique: military, political, bureaucratic (administrative), business/commercial/mercantile/industrial interests; intelligentsia, aristocracy of the media, labour etc. But since the military cannot come out to say their coup is only meant to protect their own interests and those of their allies, they use the name of the people. In Africa, it can indeed be said that the people have often been used as a sociological fraud.

Six, there is the hypothesis of a progressive or radical military putsch. This hypothesis presents military leaders as efficacious, honest, patriotic, nationalistic, uncorrupted, if not incorruptible. They are also seen as rigorous and disciplined administrators. The coup undertaken by such military politicians is said to legitimate aspirations of the most 'wretched of the earth'.

Seven, we have the international complicity hypothesis which rationalizes coup d'état as a new technique in the neo-colonial offensive of the ex-metropolises to regain the grounds they lost at the wake of legal or political independence.

Before we go on to the last section of this lecture, let me ask you to do a piece of assignment. Look up to the debate between a British scholar, Morris Janowitz and his American counterpart, Samuel Huntington. While the former thinks that military organizations characteristics explain coup d'état, the latter argues that "military explanations do not explain military intervention".

Third and lastly, one may be interested in the question: military rule, what for? For our purposes here, how well has the military fared in addressing the important issues of nation-building and economic development? Let me say that we can answer these questions only tentatively; you would certainly return to them in your second year. Also, we draw considerably from the Nigerian experience, (1966-1979) and (1983-present day).

On the question of nation-building, there is little to suggest that the military have done better than their civilian counterparts. Let's briefly look at the administrative structures of a typical military regime; latter's conceptualization of politics and politicking and also its modes of organization (*modus vivendi*) and modes of operation (*modus operandi*) as they relate to nation-building. We may begin from the premise that since the principal function of a military administrative system is more *directorial*, if not directorial, than participatory, we may not advance much in our understanding of the real function of military regimes by assigning nation-building roles to their administrative structures.

Similarly, not only is power concentrated in the military council—by whatever name this is known—but the military see themselves as the only one sufficiently capable of stemming a dangerous slide to national catastrophe and disintegration. Again, whereas nation-building entails a careful husbandry of opposing views and elements, the utilizations of military modalities to solve a nation's problems does not tolerate any opposition. Indeed, military politicians do not brook any organized or promotional groups which appear to the military to be using methods and strategies reminiscent of those of the defunct political parties and discredited civil politicians. For the military, it appears that this "new" orientation is the only one capable of halting the negative effects of the partisan, ethnic and parochial leadership of the civilian era. However, the expected "new" society remains largely at the level of rhetorics: the people hardly make definite inputs into the policy-making process. Consequently, national integration does not advance much: it is little more than integration of the political elites drawn from different ethnic or sub-national groupings.

On the economic front, one of the things that can be said about majority of the military regimes in Africa is that whereas the use of violence vis-à-vis the people has been perfected into an art, military rule has not been perfected in the interests of poor majority. For example, in

Nigeria, the astronomical increase in oil revenues beginning from the early 1970s was not spent for positive, popular and meaningful development. Rather, we have the following: (i) High-level economic waste in misplanning, mismanagement and misappropriation of public funds. By the time the military was handing over power to civilians in 1979 in Nigeria, we knew where most of the oil monies went: they went into private purses—several officer politicians left the army to retire into large-scale farming or shipping or both. (ii) The economy continues to be left in the hands of a broad based and “progressive” private sector. This is an euphemism for foreign capitalist interests. With the current privatization and commercialization policies, the Nigerian economy would be further retrenched into the hands of foreign, private capital and its Nigerian counterpart. This is a phenomenon observable in most parts of Africa. (iii) Chronic neglects of the agricultural sector of the economy even with noisy launchings of several agricultural operations – Operation Feed the Nation in Nigeria, Operation Feed Yourself in Ghana—meant to accelerate food production. In Nigeria, between 1975/76 and 1977/78 the soil under million to 11.05 million hectares had a decline of 41.3 per cent. The result, in form of food insecurity, was to become noticeable soon afterwards: food import bill rose from ₦353.7 million (1975/76) to over ₦1,000 million (1977/78). This trend has not been arrested. Today, under yet another military regime, Nigeria imports major consumer food items. In a study on African military regimes in 1985, Gus Liebenow indicates that out of eight African States that can be said to have satisfactory agricultural productions, only one, Congo Brazaville, is ruled by the Military!

In spite of the facts and figures above, some scholars still argue that military politicians are better managers of the economy than the civilians. This is not true. Again, if we look at the Nigerian example, we find that the oil boom era was a missed opportunity to direct and orientate Nigeria's economy towards self-reliance. According to a careful analyst, in Nigeria;

*the military has been unable to effect structural changes in the economy. In the life of the various military administrations, the influence of imports has been dominant in the economy. The most tragic failing of the military has... been its inability to establish an enduring base for the domestic economy...*¹

A similar picture can be found in most of African states.

Finally, when we talk about the military, we need to specify, in different countries or socio-economic formations, which military we are talking about. We ought not to talk of the African military as if all of them are conservative, self-centred, or defenders of the unjust *status quo*. At any rate, note that the ideological orientations of military regimes suggest the way policies are thought out and in whose interests – majority or minority – those policies are made.

Summary

From our discussions have emerged the following points:

1. A military regime may be defined as a regime resulting from a successful mutiny – or coup d'état.
2. The military intervene for different reasons in different countries. This explains why the hypotheses are many.
3. Military balance sheet in terms of nation-building and economic development does not show African military as capable of succeeding where their civilian counterparts have failed.
4. We ought to be able to differentiate between conservative and radical military regimes. While the one tends to maintain the *status quo*, the other seeks changes and transformations beneficial to the mass majority.

Things to do

The literature here is very extensive. What is here is merely a guide:

1. Anton Bebler, *Military Rule in Africa: Dahomey, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Mali* (Praeger, N. York, 1974).
2. Robin Luckham, *The Nigerian Military* (London, 1971).
3. Olatunde Odetola, *Military Regimes and Development: A Comparative Analysis in African Societies*, 1982.
4. Oye Oyediran (ed.). *Nigerian Government and Politics under Military Rule, 1966-79* (Macmillan, 1979).

Post-Test

1. A military regime, in its simplest sense, is
 - a. also a civilian regime
 - b. the colonial regime
 - c. the post colonial regime
 - d. a regime that results from a military coup d'état
 - e. None of the above
2. List and briefly discuss the reasons behind military incursion into African politics.
3. Which of these reasons do you find most convincing and why?
4. Has the military been better nation-builders in your country?
5. Write a short note on the economic balance sheet of a military regime in an African country.

Reference

See, Lawson Omokhodion "Kobo in, Naira Out' *Newswatch* (Lagos) January 20, 1986, p. 54 for a similar view, also see, O. Odetola, *Military Regimes and Development*.

LECTURE TWELVE

African Public Administration

Introduction

What this lecture seeks to do is to present the general features and nature of public administration in Africa and show its colonial origin. Administration is one area where the colonial legacy is very much visible. We will also look at the public sector enterprises and the problems encountered in using them as effective agents of national economic development.

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to explain the colonial origin of public administration in Nigeria.

Pre-Test

1. Is African Public Administration really 'African' or merely ex-metropole's administration in Africa?
2. Are values of administration universal or culture-bound?
3. Has administration helped in the development of African or has it merely been an agent of pattern-maintenance?
4. What is meant by the 'decolonization' of African Public Administration?
5. How useful are the public sector enterprises in economic development?

CONTENT

Several students of Public Administration have argued that African Administration is, by and large, an off-spring of the Colonial Administration. The latter, as you should know, was characterized by certain basic notions – command, domination, maintenance of law and order – borne out of the will of the colonialists to perpetuate the dependence of Africans. Now, at independence, African leaders were made to believe that administration was value-free and that its values and norms were universally applicable. But this is hardly correct: the legal and administrative models of Europe were also a cultural model. To copy them with little or no revision in the light of the cultural identity of Africa is to invite problems. And, indeed, problems there were and there are.

There are dislocations at political independence because the principles of the ‘legal-rational’ or bureaucratic-organizational model of the ex-metropole were not in consonance or agreement with the socio-cultural values of neo-traditional Africa. For instance, in the ex-metropole, the principles or elements of this model are; continuity, legality, impersonality, hierarchical conformation, accountability, achievement, specialization, record-keeping, etc. in the African model, emphasis is rather placed on the following: living and vibrant human relations, interpersonal and information communications, attachment to certain socio-cultural aspects of existence which cannot easily be quantified in monetary terms, etc.

The demands of the inherited models are different from those of the neo-traditional African society. We shall see in the next lecture how these differences negatively affect comportment of African public officers.

To some extent one can argue that it is this ‘dislocated’ or ‘disjointed’ Administration that is partly responsible for Africa’s underdevelopment. Put differently, if the passage from the “Administration of Independence” to the “Administration of Development” has not become a reality yet in terms of socio-economic development, it is partly because the indispensable attitudinal changes necessary to make Administration “productive” has not yet taken place. Similarly, while a purely bureaucratic pattern of organization may serve the needs of a relatively stable society, the conditions prevailing in countries in need of rapid transition dictate a developmental model or organization.

The mass transfer of institutional and legal models of the ex-metropole has given rise to the theory of “Administrative Mimicry” or Imitation. This theory was very popular in the first decade (1960-70) of legal independence. Generally speaking, the advent of representative government and “africanization” of the Civil Service are regarded as the terminal phase of institutional transfer. This however gave rise to a new set of problems for effective decolonization is not simply the dismantling of the colonial administrative structure. It goes beyond that. It means also the creation of new institutions and the adoption of a new ethos, norms and values. On this issue, M.J. Balogun’s view is valid:

the high ideals of Parliamentary democracy and administrative rationality cannot easily be accommodated by a social order in which tribes and tongues differ radically, in which there are various definitions of morality, and in which the ideas of truth, justice and fair-play depend on who is affected by those ideas and the affected persons relationship with the holder of the ideas. These are dilemmas of institutional transfer and they play a significant part in ushering in the post-independence complications.

The questions that we ought to seek answers to at this juncture are:

1. Why the mass transfer of institutions or what P.P. Ekeh calls “migrated structures”?
2. What has Africa been doing about its “disjointed” administration since political independence? and
3. What is the role of Administration in a developing continent like Africa?

First, the question of ‘macro mimicry’. Several factors were responsible for this development. One, the nature of independence favoured the continuity of ex-metropole’s capitalistic developmental values. Development was perceived only through the agency of western models. Two, there was the horror of vacuum. Tied to this was the conspicuous absence of a solution of exchange, that is, there was hardly any other alternative. Thus, Africa’s Administration is not a result of socio-cultural and economic evolution peculiar to the black continent. There is, therefore, a gap between “modern”, written administration and

the public it serves; between, in shortly, informal, bureaucratic administration and “traditional” African civilizations founded on personalization of rapports or relationships.

Happily, however, there have been attempts to decolonize Africa’s Administration. In fact, there are continuing attempts at resolving the dilemma of a dislocated Administration. The reform attempts are mainly a function of social pressures and demands. In fact, it can be said that African Administration, like Administration elsewhere, is subjected to constant demands from wide range of interests. Social problems therefore demand internal reforms in the bureaucratic methods of operations. In French-speaking Africa, the question of administrative reforms has mainly been handled by French and Belgian jurists and “experts”. In Nigeria, there have been series of Commissions – Adebo, Udoji, Phillips, etc. – on administrative reforms.

However, it appears that the central issues in administration, especially those touching on efficiency and productivity, ethics and values, administrative organization, public service incentives and morale have not been properly tackled. Let me put the same point differently: if, since 1960, there has been a gradual evolution resulting in the abandon of macro mimicry (for micro-mimicry) with each country attempting to ‘indigenize’ administration with peculiar techniques and procedures, the results have not been very tangible or substantial. In short, whereas there is some form of improvement in institutional arrangements, little amelioration is recorded in administrative efficiency and effectiveness vis-à-vis the public.

On the third question raised above, the primary role of Administration as an agent of development has been emphasized since the 1960s. The United Nations Organization (UNO) believes that a newly-independent country must create a highly efficacious administration as an important element of its general policy of development. Similarly, a competent and specialized Administration is said to be a *sine qua non* (necessity) for a ‘sure future’ for ‘new’ states.

Now, the roles assigned to Administration, like elsewhere in developing countries, are many. First, it is considered the pivot of the national economy since it husbands – at least in theory – scarce materials, economic and human resources for optimal utilization. Second, Administration is expected to control, complete and complement private initiatives in economic development programmes. Third, it is geared

towards playing a political developmental role. Rather unrealistically, the colonial notion of an apolitical Civil Service was accepted. But experience has shown that whatever may be the nature of the political system – military, one-party, two or multi-partyism, monarchy, etc. – there is, everywhere, the rise of the state bureaucracy and state civil servants. Fourth, Administration is assigned the role of modifying economic, political and social structures. Some have called this function a ‘veritable revolution’. Finally, it is called upon to modify the comportment of the population – by making them active, against passive, participants in governance.

It was the totality of the above functions or roles of Administration that influenced the ‘Development Administration Movement’ in the USA in the 1960s. This notion refers to an administration that does more than pattern-maintenance: it refers to an administration that innovates. Generally, the most visible modality for development is the parastatals and corporations. Goran Hyden has rightly pointed out that the public enterprise has become a common phenomenon in all African countries irrespective of political regime and irrespective of ideology. In fact, since independence, virtually all African states have experienced a massive expansion or growth in their public sector. In Nigeria, the oil boom era plus the creation of more and more states accounted for this phenomenon. In the Ivory Coast, by mid-70s, the state was said to be controlling more than 50 percent of capital in no fewer than 29 state enterprises.

But, then, almost everywhere – the exceptions are, very few, perhaps the ‘scientific socialist’ countries – state corporations are used as sources of private cash capital accumulation. As early as 1965, it was discovered in Guinea and Ghana that “only two of fifteen state manufacturing undertakings were making a profit”.² Of course, we can multiply examples. This explains why, beginning with the Sudan, there is a ‘denationalization movement’ in several states: this entails the gradual, though sure, elimination of commercialization/privatization of inefficient public enterprise. Corruption is rife in that sector. We will explore that theme shortly.

In conclusion, given the central role of senior civil servants in administration’s developmental role, emphasis should not really be on structures, but rather on the socio-economic system and the men who work the system. The demands of this system and those of the neo-traditional society ought also to rhyme one with the other.

Summary

In this lecture, we have seen the following:

1. That Africa's Administration is a colonial relic.
2. That Administrative values are culture bound and not really Universal.
3. That African Public Administration has been more of a pattern-maintainer than an innovator.
4. That there have been some attempts at decolonizing Administration.
5. That whereas the public sector enterprises are important, they have not always exhibited their developmental potentials.

Things to do

Consult the following texts:

1. L. Adamolekun, *Public Administration, A Nigerian and Comparative Perspective* (Longman, N. York, 1983).
2. A. Adebayo, *Principles and Practice of Public Administration in Nigeria*.
3. A.L. Adu. *Civil Service in Commonwealth Africa* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1969).
4. M.J. Balogun, *Public Administration in Nigeria: A Developmental Approach* (Macmillan, Nigeria, 1983).

Post-Test

1. Africa's Public Administration is
 - a. a pre-colonial relic
 - b. a colonial heritage
 - c. a post-colonial inheritance
 - d. the best thing that has ever happened to Africa
 - e. None of the above
2. Administrative values
 - a. are not culture-bound
 - b. are universally applicable

- c. are what we find in Civil Service General Orders (G.O)
 - d. are culture-bound and therefore not universally applicable
 - e. None of the above
3. There was a total acceptance of the ex-colonizer's Administrative institutions and values because
- a. African leaders were naïve
 - b. European colonialists were sympathetic to our leaders
 - c. The peoples of Africa preferred the white man's structures and values
 - d. There was fear of vacuum
 - e. None of the above
4. What do you understand by the movement away from 'macro mimicry' to 'micro mimicry'?
5. The balance-sheet of Africa's Public Administration and State Enterprises is that
- a. they have accelerated economic, political and social development
 - b. they have been excellent mechanisms of innovation
 - c. they have helped to improve the living conditions of the mass-majority
 - d. they have aided pattern-maintenance or the status quo
 - e. None of the above.

References

- M.J. Balogun, *Public Administration in Nigeria*, p. 84.
- W. Tordoff, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

LECTURE THIRTEEN

Administrative or Bureaucratic Corruption in Africa

Introduction

We have already raised the issue, in the preceding lecture, of the private use to which political and bureaucratic leaders put the public sector or state enterprises. This lecture unit now elaborates on this phenomenon. We will first of all define what we mean by 'corruption' and 'bureaucratic corruption'. We will go ahead to look at its manifestation in some African countries. It will also be necessary to see the consequences of official corruptions on the material condition of the peoples of Africa.

Objectives

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

1. define corruption; and
2. explain bureaucratic corruption as it applies.

Pre-Test

Before we go on, why don't you attempt to answer the following questions?

1. What do you understand by the term "corruption"?
2. Do you think that corruption is limited only to administration or is it a general phenomenon afflicting also the military, the political class, business, etc.
3. What things or elements would you, as a student of African politics, regard as "corruption"?

4. What do you consider as the cause(s) of corruption?
5. What are the consequences of public sector corruption?

CONTENT

Perhaps the first issue to raise here is that of the treatment of corruption as if it is only an affair exclusive to Public Administration – or more specifically, the Civil Service. Yet, the way we have framed the topic of this lecture suggests this bias. Similarly, if you read what some scholars have written on this topic, you would also find this bias present. For instance, bureaucratic corruption is sometimes said to have more negative consequences than political corruption. Of course, this is not necessarily true. In fact, some other scholars would suggest that senior public servants are no more than accomplices, even though happy ones, of political or military leaders. In short, public sector corruption is not limited to only the Civil or Public Service.

However, the continued emphasis on bureaucratic or administrative corruption is understandable on at least two scores. First, the historic mission which African Civil Service is expected to play in developing and industrializing the continent calls for the removal of all impediments in the way. Second, it appears that doctrine informing the Civil Service – that of neutrality, impartiality and anonymity – requires of the Service distancing itself from politics and – given the nature of African politics – corruption. But added to this is the fact that, whatever may be the integrity, devotion and loyalty of top public officials, there is a universal phenomenon which Gunnar Myrdal calls ‘folklore of corruption’. For him, this is “a prevailing attitude that the majority of government officials are corrupt”. Some scholars would even say Africa’s case goes beyond ‘folklore’; that whereas in the early 1960s, corruption was called the ‘infantile sickness of African independence’, it has now become, twenty-nine years or so after independence, a ‘chronic malady’.

It is perhaps this tendency to regard ‘corruption’ as mainly ‘bureaucratic corruption’ that led M.E. Lofchie to see corruption as meaning “lack of integrity” as well as absence of “administrative honesty” on the part of several public servants. According to Lofchie, corruption becomes visible in bribe-taking and protection of certain opportunist bureaucratic or administrative interests. H. Sarassoro made a similar observation when he wrote in 1980 that corruption consists

*essentially for a civil servant... to receive from individual material advantages to which he was entitled only as a result of his functions, in the manner in which he has exercised them, or, on the contrary, has not exercised them.*¹

Several scholars believe that J.S. Nye's definition is the most rigorous and most comprehensive. When you read books and articles on corruption you are likely to come across him. So let me quote it for you here. For Nye, bureaucratic corruption amounts to "... behaviour which deviates from the normal duties of a public role because of private – regarding influence. This includes such behaviour as bribery (use of reward to pervert judgment of a person in a position of trust); nepotism (bestowed of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationships rather than merit) and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private-regarding uses). It is possible that some would find this definition too rigid or excessively comprehensive for the African situation.

The sum-total of the above-quoted elements or characteristics is the installation of what Stanislaw Andreski calls *Kleptocracy* – or 'government by corruption'. Some may even say this is too sweeping. Yet, in my own estimation, the history of several African states is in a sense, the history of 'government by corruption'.

However, I believe that few students of African politics and administration would quarrel with the following definition, namely, that corruption by public officials refers to an unauthorized privatization of public resources or derogation from or negative of the collective pecuniary (financial) interests of a given people. This definition has at least one weakness: it talks only about financial misappropriation or embezzlement while glossing over inefficiency, delay and 'redtapism' in administration. Yet, this definition is useful.

When the African talks about corruption he excludes certain practices which the European or American would emphasize. For instance, the giving or gifts or dashes to a public official before or after an official assignment is seen as normal within this framework – one of traditional and 'neo-traditional' or modern African society. There is, however, discrimination within this perspective, depending on whether the clientele is a "stranger" or a familiar face. It is said that amongst the Akan people of Ghana, 'begging' is a widespread traditional practice with the 'strange'

client begging the bureaucrat for more favourable or lenient 'charges'. Corruption results, as we have seen, if the individual successfully sways the public official from following laid-down regulations, rules and procedures. In a sense, therefore, the Euro-American Africanist and his African counterpart have a more or less similar definition of corrupt behaviours.

The motivation for bureaucratic and allied corruption can be sought in the socio-cultural environment within which administration is embedded. Robert Price indicates, for instance, that Ghana's contemporary socio-economic formation and socio-cultural system not only create a receptive environment for corruption, they also, in many cases, virtually demand corruption from its public servants.³ In varying degrees, this phenomenon is a general one; it is common to all African states. In the latter, the state is the easiest and best means of accumulating cash capital. Writing on bureaucratic corruption in the new states of Africa, Ladipo Adamolekun, a Nigerian scholar, observes that:

in the new states where the concept of public interest is more vaguely defined, where the institutional processes expected to enforce honest behaviour are still being evolved, bureaucratic corruption assumes frightening proportions.

There is, however, an important external dimension to this phenomenon. Gunnar Myrdal, for instance, points out the importance of the corrupting influences of Western businessmen who refuse, for private, self-enriching reasons, to adhere to the stricter administrative and financial practices they follow at home. Of course, these western businessmen find ready accomplices in Africa's civil and military leadership as well as in the Senior Civil Service. You can also recall what we said about this issue in Lecture three – under the 'authentic' African paradigms of analysis. Recall, specifically, the non-convergence between the logic and demands of the inherited legal-economic order and Africa's moral order.

Now, let me go on to give examples of bureaucratic and/or political corruption. In Nigeria analysts have generally agreed that there is something close to a 'culture of state robbery'. This culture seemed to have been nurtured by the era of the oil boom. State robbery is perhaps

most noticeable in the award of contracts and the import license syndrome. Senior civil servants, particularly those who negotiate contracts, are the worst offenders. Indeed, the secretive nature of the contract system and the manner the contracts are entered into and negotiated by a few senior bureaucrats give room for abuses and corruption. The view is, in fact, often expressed that when contracts involve millions of naira, they are oftentimes heavily weighted against the country. Nigeria has virtually been taken over – or, rather, contracted over – by contractors of various shades, opinions and nationalities. The oil boom era of the 1970s and early 1980s produced those Nigerians called ‘emergency contractors’.

Following from the above is the point that Nigeria is severely plundered and milked by what Terisa Turner calls a ‘triangular collusion of civil-military leadership; bureaucratic elite and foreign (mainly private) capitalist interests’. Since virtually all the leading factions of the ruling class are in the plunder of the country, none of them face the wrath of the law. When they do, the exercise is purely symbolic and cosmetic: they merely serve to placate an aggrieved populace. Soon, those ‘leaders’ are let off the hook. The experience of Nigeria’s second republican political (and bureaucratic) leaders is a vivid example of this phenomenon.

The financial and economic impropriety of Nigeria’s bureaucratic, political and military leaders has damaging results. The picture is ugly and unwholesome: the ₦2.8 billion scandal in the NNPC under General Muhammadu Buhari, the country’s 5th military head of state (1984-85); the French SGS (Societe Generale de Surveillance) connection in the ₦6.2 billion rip-off by the JMB; the ₦21 million swindle in the form of foreign exchange racketeering; the ₦16 billion looted and siphoned out of the country during the Second Republic. However, large these sums (and many others) may be, they are, in all probability, little more than the tip of an iceberg. Certainly, the foregoing revelations belie the existence of the Corrupt Practice Investigation Bureau (1975) (This was abolished in 1979 for ‘inefficiency’!). They also belie the creation of the code of conduct for Public Officers provided for by Section 158 of Nigeria’s 1979 Constitution.

You can legitimately ask what became of the so-called ‘Mass Purge’ of the Nigerian Civil Services by Generals Mohammed and Obasanjo. Well, that exercise failed partly because it was thought the problem was more with the operators than the inherent disabilities of the socio-

economic formation (system). The same failure was witnessed under Prime Minister Dr. Busia of Ghana in the early 1970s. His regime dismissed some 568 civil servants for alleged disloyalty. In fact, the findings of the investigation of bureaucratic corruption in Ghana between 1971 and 1975 are very interesting in that they show corruption's systemic nature. The commission wrote with religious overtones:

the devout have vanished from the land.

There is not an honest man left. All are greedy for profit and chase after bribes... Corruption is endemic throughout the whole society; practically every sector of public life where the possibility exists is affected.

You can imagine the negative effects of bureaucratic (and other types of) corruption on the society. First, few individuals privatize what belongs to all. Second, the mass-majority becomes poorer and poorer while the minority grows more and more opulent and affluent. Three, economic and financial impropriety gives 'money' character to politics; only those who have the means get elected into political offices. Financial and economic power reinforces, and becomes inseparable from political power, etc.

Summary

In this lecture unit, we have made the following points:

1. Corruption is not limited to the Civil Service though given the latter's importance to Africa's development efforts; administrative corruption is the most emphasized.
2. Bureaucratic corruption is defined both in its financial and moral senses.
3. There are both internal and external dimensions to bureaucratic corruption.
4. Africa's political, military and bureaucratic leaders hardly face the wrath of law for impropriety. There are more sacred cows than scapegoats.
5. The negative effects of bureaucratic corruption are mainly seen in the material deprivation of the mass-majority.

Things to do

Read the following materials:

1. Adamolekun, L., *Public Administration*, chp. 14 “Public Administration and Society”.
2. Robert M. Price, *Society and Bureaucracy in Contemporary Ghana* (Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1975) chp. V, “The Bureaucrat-client Relationship” pp. 108-139; and chp. Vi “The Social Basis of Administrative Corruption” pp. 140-165.

Post-Test

1. What do you understand by the term ‘corruption’?
2. How would you define bureaucratic corruption?
3. Would you say it is only civil servants or bureaucrats who are corrupt? If no, why not?
4. What factors do you think cause ‘bureaucratic’ and other forms of corruption?
5. The net-effect of corruption in African states is that
 - a. the mass-majority become richer and better off materially
 - b. the minority become poorer and worse off materially
 - c. both the majority and the minority become richer and better off materially
 - d. both the majority and the minority become poorer and worse off materially
 - e. the mass majority become poorer and worse off materially.

References

- H. Sarassoro, (1980). *La Corruption des Fonctionnaires en Afrique*, Paris : Economica, p. 2.
- J.S. Nye, (1967). “Corruption and Political Development; A Cost-Benefit Analysis” *American Political Science*, vol. LXI.
- R.M. Price, *Society and Bureaucratic in Contemporary Ghana*, pp. 108-165.

LECTURE FOURTEEN

The Quest for Larger Entities in Africa

Introduction

This lecture presents a more or less balanced and objective assessment of international organizations in Africa. We examine the *raison d'être* for the existence of such organizations. We will also not overlook the end such institutions serve. For the purposes of brevity and clarity, we will limit our discussion to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU).

Objective

At the end of this lecture, you should be able to discuss extensively the benefits and failures of the African Union.

Pre-Test

To facilitate an easy grasp of this lecture unit, try to answer the following questions:

1. Why do African states seek larger entities?
2. Specifically, what are the objectives of the OAU?
3. What are the achievements of the OAU?
4. What do you consider as the failure of the OAU?
5. What can be done to make the Pan-African body more efficient, more effective and more relevant to Africa's needs?
6. What are the problems and prospects of the new AU?

CONTENT

One of the main reasons why there was so much “noise” about the creation of regional and continental organizations in Africa was perhaps the desire of several post-independence African leaders to put into effect the much-vaunted principle of an “indivisible” Africa. African heads of state and leaders of government wanted a common front through which they would present to the world, Africa’s views on international issues; defend Africa’s interests; in short, speak with ‘one voice’ in the international fora. It was this burning desire on the part of Africa’s first generation of leaders that Ali Mazrui, a Kenyan and one of Africa’s foremost political scientists, puts as follows:

just as the notion of self-government is central to African political thought, the concept of Pax-Africana is in turn, central to the ambition of self-government in the continent.¹

Since political independence, this idea of a united Africa has always been put forward even when there was so much division between and among states and between and among regions. I think African leaders had to keep on reminding themselves of this idea because of the general fear of factionalism or division ever present in the political attitudes and behaviour of several African political leaders.

Whatever may be the degree of unity amongst the fifty-one (51) current member-states of the OAU, regional or continental organizations are seen by African leaders as products of the success achieved in intra-state and interstate integration. This process of integration is seen both in the economic East African Community (EAC), and political (AU) spheres. Such organizations are generally given two major assignments: (i) The harmonization of economic policy for the purpose of beneficial trading relations and ‘rapid’ development (ii) The use of economic association as a vehicle for achieving purposeful or meaningful collaboration in other spheres or relations.

As we have said earlier, our focus is on the AU. I am sure you are familiar with the history of the establishment of the AU in the Ethiopian capital on 23 May 1963. So I won’t waste time on this. However, certain important points are worth noting. First, what we now have as the AU is simply a compromise institution. It came into being; you can recall, after

long, and, sometimes, violent debate amongst three blocs: Casablanca, Monrovia and Brazaville. Each of these blocs regrouped, respectively, 'radicals', 'conservatives' and 'moderates'. Moderation eventually won the day. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the foremost spokesman of the radical group, had it rough on several occasions with the conservative camp, whose leading members were Nigeria and Liberia. Second, and flowing from the first, is the implication this compromise, *ab initio*, as had for the continental body: issues are only discussed, they are hardly resolved. Compromises do not permit the organization to move forward as well as it should.

Be that as it may, the AU has, according to its Charter, five key objectives, namely;

1. Promotion of the unity and solidarity of African states;
2. Coordination and intensification of their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa;
3. Defense of their sovereignty, territorial and independence;
4. Eradication of all forms of colonialism from African and
5. Promotion of international cooperation, having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Let us put these points in different words. The rationale for the AU was to provide a framework for effective cooperation among African peoples to help Africans tackle more meaningfully their problems and achieve results otherwise unattainable in our mutilated continent. Thus the AU was intended to bring Africans closer. According to Raph Uwechue, the AU was not meant to reinforce artificial walls erected by colonialism.² Rather, it was meant to bring them down – or perhaps transcend them.

Moreover after calling on all member-states to harmonize and coordinate their general policies towards certain specific ends (political, diplomatic, economic, educational, cultural, scientific, technical, defense and security cooperation), the member-states affirmed "solemnly" (via the Charter) their adherence to certain principles. These include (a) The sovereign equality of all member-states; (b) Non-interference in the internal affairs of states; (c) Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence; (d) Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration, etc.

It would therefore be correct to say that the AU was supposed to be a viable framework through which Africa's interests could be aggregated and articulated. It was intended to be a counterpart of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Organization of American States (OAS). It was also meant to be a meaningful mouth-piece and worthy representative of Africa.

However, the AU has been a victim of a number of problems which have retarded its growth as well as impaired its performance. The first problem is that of finance. Several states are chronic debtors of the AU. For example, during the 1984/85 financial year, only five AU member-states paid, while ten partially paid up. By 1985, at least 35 of the 51 members were yet to pay their 1983/84 dues. The second problem is specifically that of lack of unity amongst member-states. There are intense internal wranglings, deep-seated suspicion and mutual distrust. Third, the organization experiences structural problems. It seems these problems are due more to the phenomenon of compromise earlier mentioned than to anything else. It is often said, and rightly too, that organizations founded on compromise are often victims of internal contradictions. Also, there is what Raph Uwechue calls "contrapuntal (that is competing) paramountcy". That is to say different groups of states have their peculiar problems. For example, the Frontline states have specific problems different from that of the Arabs, etc. Fifth, the AU, again to borrow from Uwechue is the moribund (dying) victim of an out-dated charter. All the foregoing elements put together make the AU an essentially weak organization.

This is not, however, to deny the merits of the organization. First, the existence of its commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration has, to a large extent, succeeded in providing what some regard as a "*modus vivendi* (working arrangements) for avoiding the settlement of ... disputes by force". Second, it is an important pan-African lobby group in international fora. Third, its mere continued existence in spite of serious internal political and ideological divisions and also external imperialist manipulations is itself a glowing testimony to AU's resilience or strength.

Yet, the truth is that the AU is primarily a political body; it is, only secondarily an economic association. In fact, as far as the economic issue is concerned, the AU is a late-starter. Recalls, that the "Lagos Plan of Action" for increased intra-African trade came out only in 1980, while the "Harare Declaration" for African agricultural development was made only

in 1984. Not much has been achieved since these plan and declarations were made.

What is observable all over Africa is the absence of effective cooperation amongst the African peoples via their leaders. Neither on the political nor on the economic fronts do we have concerted efforts at ending Africa's woes; Western Sahara, Chad, the liberation struggle in South Africa, etc. (political), deteriorating national economies, scourge of drought, ravages of famine, etc. (economic).

The future, twenty-five years or so after, may not be too bleak but it hardly inspires much confidence and optimism. Much seems to depend on the political will of Africa's leaders; for instance: what aspects of their sovereignty are states ready to surrender to the AU as a necessary price to be paid to make the AU a viable instrument for the continent's political and economic integration? More importantly, how willing are these leaders to repudiate bad debts owed so-called creditor nations? Lest one loses sight of it, one should emphasize the impact of an hostile environment – neo-colonialism in all its ramifications – on Africa's unity and her efforts towards economic and independence and self-reliance.

A Word on the Transformation of OAU into the African Union (AU)

“On the edge of this new century, in an age of unprecedented wealth it is unacceptable that Africa drifts further from the rest of the world, unseen in its misery and ignored in its pain.

The greatest nations of the world, in alliance with their African neighbors must begin the journey that leads to the ultimate common destination of a more equitable world” - Commission for African Declaration, Spring 2005.

A Preview

In the beginning there was the OAU – organization of African Unity, which was given birth to precisely in May, 1963, and there was unity! The modicum of enthusiasm injected into the post-colonial aspiration of African leaders to have a united front, at least to further decolonize other parts of the ‘dark continent’ and show to the white rulers that talent has no colour, made OAU a bride that could not be rejected by African leaders.

The original idea was Nkrumah's. If the Gold coast (later Ghana) leader had had his way, there would have been a United States of Africa!

as Cameron Duodu would graphically describe it, "There would be an African common market, without restrictions, there would be no customs duties and tariffs over goods sent from one African country to another. We would all become citizens of African, not citizens of different countries in African and there would be no visas, and no residence permits"¹.

This was not to be the case since many read another meaning to Nkrumah's vision. He wanted to be 'president of Africa,' many had insinuated.

The Transformation of OAU into AU

Thirty nine years later, African leaders, save for the likes of Moammar Ghaddafi of Libya, who were not part of the former arrangement, at the instance of the same Ghaddafi, opted for a more development-driven and more ambitious African Union. The extent, to which the now three-year old Union will make a difference other than in name, is still a premature thing to say.

AU and Its Problems

The bigger the head, the bigger the headache. The African Union, not unlike its predecessor – OAU, is faced with a number of problems, which have proved difficult to be tamed:

1. Scourge of conflicts that ravage Africa, even in the face of huge resources spent to curb it.
2. Weak and globally disadvantaged economic situation which, according to Professor Adebayo Adedeji, is being compounded due to lack of 'shared political vision'.
3. Lip service to democratic rule by heads of governments and states. This undermines governance in certain countries of African.
4. Lack of international support, particularly from the donor countries who see African as no longer being pampered as a result of end of

cold war era². However, the United States and EU have promised to help fund the AU's proposed African Standby Force when it comes into force.

Prospects in AU

The AU, in its Constitutive Act, adopted at Lome, 11 July 2002 knew *ab initio* that a mountain of challenges are ahead and was ready to face it. The African leaders had “determined to take up the multi-faceted challenges that confront our continent and peoples in the light of the social, economic and political changes taking place in the world”³.

AU is on the path of progress because,

1. It is no longer a “dictator’s club”, which the OAU used to be;
2. Its New Partnership for African’s Development, NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism, are both good steps in right direction;
3. It enjoys the support of western international organizations which have promised to be of help;
4. The Africa Standby Force, when it comes into being, will help curb conflict, enforce peace and make the continent a better one.

The Formation of the AU is based on the principle that states came together as a result of a “vision” because the “reality” demands it⁴. It is an integration borne out of ‘self-interest’ or parochial tendencies of states. Doses of realism and idealism explain for instance, the establishment of the African Standby Force. Power play and horse-trading are elements of both idealist and realist sides of the story.

Conclusion

A Word on International Governance: In order for Africa to avoid bleak prospects in the 21st century, it may be given the space and opportunity to strengthen their economies and to develop their social infrastructure. For this to happen there was to be much more favorable international environment, starting with the democratization of international relations and institutions so that Africa can have an active role in decision making. Suffice it to say that, in order to widen their policy options in the future and to strengthen their bargaining power, African countries have to strive for a more democratic global system.

Among the biggest dilemma for African countries is whether they should open themselves up to the globalization process or take a more cautious approach to avoid risks. The challenge is whether African countries can take advantage of the liberalization process, which to a large extent is being pushed on them externally while at the same time avoiding or minimizing the disruptive consequences on their societies and economies. In fact, the emergence of the African Union (AU) brings with it the prospects that are vulnerable to its problems. However, if AU leaders put more actions to their words, conflicts, hunger, poverty, and underdevelopment will soon be made history in Africa. In the words of Moammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, on how the AU would survive with or without Western Aid:

those who want to assist us, we welcome. Those who want to impose conditions on us, we don't want them

Summary

The following points have emerged from our discussion

1. African states seek larger entities so as to present to the world the image of 'one, indivisible' Africa.
2. The AU has amongst its objectives the promotion of the unity and solidarity of African states the defense of their sovereignty and territorial integrity, etc. (check the others).
3. The AU has, to an extent, made states live peacefully one with the other; it has represented Africa in international fora, etc.
4. The AU has been more of a political than an economic organization.
5. Africa's leaders need to demonstrate more political will to surmount the perennial problems of AU.
6. The emergence of the AU brings prospects that are vulnerable to its problems.

Things to do

Consult the following:

1. Tunde Adeniran, *Introduction of International Relations*, 1984.
2. Ali A. Mazrui, *Towards a Pax Africana* (London, 1967).
3. J.H. Polhemus, "OAU membership and the changing African international system". *Nigerian Journal of International Studies*, vol. 1, No. 1, July 1975, pp. 41-55.

Post-Test

1. Why do African states seek larger, more embracing entities?
 - a. To foster neo-colonialism.
 - b. To further divide African leaders and people alike.
 - c. To cause disaffection amongst the rank and file of the departing colonialists.
 - d. To portray Africa as one, united and indivisible.
 - e. None of the above.
2. List the objectives of the AU
3. What do you consider as the AU's remarkable achievements since 1963?
4. If AU has been little more than a resolution-passing organization, it is because of
 - a. Imperialism and neo-colonialism
 - b. African leaders' nonchallance or lack of interest in a powerful continental organization.
 - c. Non-cooperation of Africa's masses and workers.
 - d. Africa is too big.
 - e. None of the above
5. How can the AU overcome its weaknesses?
6. What are the problems and prospects of the AU?

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Raph Uwechue "Editorial" Congenital Defect" *Africa* (London), No. 159, November 1984, p. 11.

See Cameron Auodu "Give Unity a Chance", *News Africa* July 29, 2002, pp. 20-21.

See Nelson Mandela's Trafalgar's Square Speech titled: "Make Poverty History" *Development* First Quarter 2005 p. 24.

The Constitutive Acts of the African Union as documented in the AAPS Newsletter, September-December, 2002 pp. 13-17.

LECTURE FIFTEEN

African Political Thoughts

Introduction

We now come to the last in our series of lectures on Post-Independence African politics. We are concerned here with some kind of emotional or emotive topic; The denial of an 'African' political thought by some Euro-American scholars. Of course, the theme here goes beyond emotion. It is a question of the reality of African political thought as well as those ideologies considered apt at resolving the 'African Predicaments' earlier mentioned.

Objectives

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

1. discuss Africa Political thought; and
2. the major political ideologies in Africa.

Pre-Test

Now, for your purposes here, answer the following questions:

1. What do you understand by the term political thought?
2. Does Africa have a political thought?
3. Is African Political Thought meant to emancipate Africans from mental servitude or is it merely academic?
4. What are the major political ideologies extant in Africa?
5. Which one(s) do you consider the most popular?

CONTENT

African Political Thought

Before I begin this exposition, let me alert you about one thing; you need a lot of concentration and clear mind to read this lecture. You may in fact, have to read it twice or thrice before fully grasping the contents. This is because of the abstract nature of political theory or philosophy or thought. So you are warned!

Now, let's start. The subject-matter of political thought is the systematic study of the basic values or principles which underline the organization of civil society. In this sense, we can say that such African leaders like Awolowo, Azikiwe, Senghor, Nyerere, Toure and Nkrumah had/have systematized theories of politics. We must, however, immediately qualify this assertion. When we say 'theory' here, we mean 'normative' not 'empirical'. Now, most African political leaders are men engaged more in the specificity of particular and peculiar problems as well as situations. Consequently, these leaders often approach politics pragmatically. They also, by the same token, express their views on politics not in form of a systematic theory, but Piecemeal, separated by time and space. Yet, I insist, these leaders' thought ought to be studied, for at least two reasons.

First, political beliefs and ideas which men express and defend underline conditions and inform the whole setting of the political and social life of a community. They also determine the way in which particular problems or issues are faced; they equally condition what is seen as a problem and how it is seen. This explains why we find different societies approaching the same political problem from such fundamentally different premises that the problems do not appear anymore to be the same (Try to reflect on the differences between developed and developing countries).

Second, political and social values are important because they move men to act and this is precisely because men believe in them. It is therefore necessary not only to know what men believe but also why they believe.

Having established the utility of political thought, an important question surfaces; is there an African political thought? To adequately and meaningfully answer this question, it may be necessary to discuss the concept 'African' or 'Africanness'. Some Euro-American scholars are

wont to argue that Africa is more or less a geographical expression. In fact, some analysts go to the ridiculous extent of saying that given the many socio-cultural and physical diversities within the continent, Africans have nothing in common other than the name Africa! Similarly, there are those who believe that the concept of 'Africanness' is a fiction; a mere creation of colonialism. Ali Mazrui is one of such scholars. According to him, "it took colonialism to inform Africans that they were Africans".¹ In short, the argument here is that there is no genuine African social and political thought except as a reaction to political and cultural forces from outside the 'black' continent.

Let me state here clearly that 'Africanness' has both a physical and a socio-political dimension. You will no doubt know that the African society is a system of mutually benefiting reciprocities – a kind of brotherhood or kinship ideology. It is a society that can be defined as "one for all and all for one". There is therefore an original and autonomous africanness or African milieu (context or environment). It is within this milieu that social thought is being acted out.

Now, let us return to our earlier question: Does it make sense to speak of an African political thought? There are two basic ways of approaching this fundamental issue. The first is to simply reply critics and say, 'Yes an African political thought exists'. Put differently, we may argue that wherever there are political problems and activities and people concern themselves with the problems, then there is thought. Or that, where there are political problems begging for solutions, thoughts precede action. Since political problems and activities are ubiquitous (that is present everywhere), so will be political thoughts.

The second way of looking at the question on one hand is to raise doubts about the existence of African political thought. You don't, of course, deny it absolutely but merely as implying that such thoughts are, in fact, neither endogenous nor autochthonous to Africa. This second view is the more common statement of the problem. What is more, this has long been the stock-in-trade or academic pastime of several Euro-American scholars. Their main argument is that the main tenets of African political thought are of European origin. Let's look at an example of this.

In his book *"The Origins of Modern African Thought"*, Robert July wrote with a lot of cynicism as follows "it requires no great prodigy of visions to note that the nations of (Africa) in their mid 20th century have been and are being profoundly shaped by western ideas and institutions".

The major fault of such views is that concepts like nationalism and their 'processing' into activities are regarded by Europeans as basically negative. This is because; they are nationalism only as a reaction to a specific situation, namely colonial or neo-colonial domination. Of course, concepts like nationalism, independence, etc. represent more than a mere reaction to an exploitative relationship. They also represent an expression of values and beliefs firmly rooted in indigenous African social system.

Let me plead for a correct reading of what I am saying here. I do not deny that western modes of expression, if not the ideas themselves, have influence on African political thought. No serious student of African Politics would make such a denial. However, the important point to emphasize is that, influence has not been uncritically assimilated. Indeed, in a very significant sense, western concepts like nationalism, democracy, etc. can be seen as vehicles for the expression of beliefs and values independently held by Africans. And at any rate, I don't think you would say that the vehicle begets the passenger!

Consequently, in view of the Euro-American biases and my own African biases, it is my submission that African political thought exists independent of European political thought. It then goes without saying that it would be wrong, intellectually, philosophically, socially and even morally for anyone to treat the idea of African political thought in the mainstream of Euro-American political thought – as if the former is little more than a mere derivative of the latter.

African Political Ideologies

For our purposes here, we shall simply present, schematically, the principal political ideologies of an/or in African states. But before I do that, let me make some observations. First, virtually all African leaders claim to hold to one ideology or the other. In fact, even the most conservative of them see themselves as 'socialist'. Second, and flowing from the first, is the attraction of some form of radicalism, but, then, because of 'africanness', they tend to see their 'socialism' as 'african socialism'. Third, even those African states that have embraced scientific socialism – or Marxist-Leninist ideology – still talk, in sense, about the uniqueness of the 'african' and the 'african milieu'. But, as we shall presently see, there are different brands of Marxism or what some scholars call 'African Marxism'.

Today, it appears that even with the 'shrinking ideological arena' we have in Africa – that is, more and more states now claim to be more pragmatic than ideological – three main groups of states are extant:

- i. Capitalist states or so-called 'mixed-economy' states. Nigeria is a prototype of this group.
- ii. African socialist states; Tanzania, as we have seen, is taken to be a 'populist socialist' state.
- iii. African Marxist or Marxist-Leninist states

These states can be further broken down into five minus the first group. In line with the first section above, Onigu Otite has defined African socialism as an ideology, a doctrine, a movement, or a technique for mobilizing people. Furthermore, African socialism is seen as an affirmation of traditional African values, anchored, as it were, on African culture and elements of society.

Now, let's schematically present the five ideological categories

- i. 'African Marxism': This term is not very neat. However its major proponents – Sekou Toure of Guinea and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana – emphasized the need for the control of the means of production. Guinea had, in 1967, adopted Marxism-Leninism as state ideology.
- ii. 'Socialist Humanism', whose major 'apostle' is Sedar Senghor, lays emphasis on culture. In fact, both the political and the economic questions are subordinated to culture. This ideological orientation is said to be 'open, flexible and non-doctrinaire'.
- iii. 'Humanist Philosophy' if the 'ideology' is discussed here, it is because it stresses the central position of man in all human activities. Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia is its major protagonist.
- iv. 'Socialist Welfare state' perhaps best exemplified by the situation in Tanzania. Certainly Tanzania is not a Marxist state. Nyerere has talked about the need for Africans not to be bemused about Marx's 'new theology'. But the current situation in that country needs a lot of study. What is almost certain is that its 'populist socialism' underlines the need to combine public and private ownership of the means of production for greater productivity in the economic sphere.
- v. Marxist-Leninist Ideology: Perhaps this is the most nebulous and

controversial of the ideologies. Very often, it is difficult to know whether states who adopt this ideology are only so in theory and not in practice. This is another way of saying that there is enormous variation in terms of leadership's ideological commitment and also in terms of the context of the leadership operation and possibilities of socio-economic transformation. Several scholars of Marxism-Leninism seem to agree that Marxist-Leninist states should excel in economic performance. This cannot yet be said to be an attribute of Africa's Marxist-Leninist states. In fact, partly because of slow economic growth rate which hardly assures meaningful redistribution of resources to wage earners and small holders, those states are no more than 'marginal' Marxist-Leninist states. Examples generally cited are Benin, Congo, Madagascar and Somalia. In general terms, Marxist-Leninist states in Africa face great dangers. The greatest, according to Munslow, is that "the state might well be able to transform the revolution before the revolution could transform the state".

Summary

1. There is political thought everywhere men (and women) think about societal problems and seek solutions.
2. There is African Political Thought to the extent that Africans do.
3. African political thought is autonomous of European political thought, even if it borrows vehicles of expression of such thoughts.
4. There are various political ideologies in Africa and it is fashionable for African leaders to claim a socialist orientation.
5. There are different types of 'socialism' from African Marxism' through 'Socialism humanism'.

Things to do

For detailed discussion of some of the points raised above, read the following materials:

1. J.K. Nyerere, *Ujamaa Essays in Socialism* (Dar-es-Salaam, O.U.P., 1968).
2. Onigu Otite (ed.) *Theme in African Social and Political Thought*

(4th Dimension Publishers, Enugu, 1978).

3. William Tordoff, *Government and Politics in Africa*.
4. P. Wiles (ed.), *The New Communist Third World* (London: Croomhelm, 1982).

Post-Test

1. Define political thought.
2. Is there an African political thought or political thought merely exists in Africa?
3. What is the purpose or objective of African political thought?
4. Name the major political ideologies that African states claim.
5. Which one(s) do you consider the most popular or common?

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Model Answers to Questions

Lecture One

1. You can simply refer to your notes.
2. This is a matter of preference or opinion. But of course your argument(s) must be convincing or persuasive.

Lecture Two

1. d.
2. Again, refer to your notes here. Your own personal reading should also help.
3. As in 2.
4. By 'the African Predicament' or 'the African condition' is meant the totality of the constraints of the colonial legacy on African Social, economic, political and cultural development. It is an expression of the continent's weakness, dependency and underdevelopment.
5. Again, your opinion (perhaps economic non-independence).

Lecture Three

1. (a)
2. Again, refer to your notes
3. The neo-liberal paradigm
4. Your views and opinions must, as usual, be backed up by convincing argumentations (The neo-marxist and the political economy approach).
5. In Africa, there is divergence between the inherited *legal-economic order* and the traditional African moral order.

Lecture Four

1. Independence was achieved in two major ways:
 - (a) constitutional or non-violent and
 - (b) violent or revolutionary means
2. Constitutional/non-violent
3. Yes: states that won their independence on conference tables – or

through negotiations – tended to accept hook, line and sinker the totality of the colonial heritage. On the other hand, states that had to fight bitter wars of independence were inclined to set up revolutionary regimes that fundamentally questioned the colonial heritage.

4. d

Lecture Five

1. The post-colonial states in Africa are those states came into being after decolonization. It is about the most important colonial structure bequeathed to Africa.
2. The first view says the African post-colonial state is overdeveloped, underdeveloped, weak and dependent – in short, that there is too much external constraint inhibiting its good performance. The other view underlines the internal constraints to statehood and sees the violent nature of the post-colonial state as its major defining characteristic.
3. Your choice must be well argued.
4. (a)
5. and (6) are essay questions that require reading some of the materials indicated under ‘things to do’ – that is, in addition to your lecture notes.

Lecture Six

1. Class can be defined as that social category that has relations of property, authority and power with other social categories extant in the political and wider society.
2. Yes: Let’s have your case or argument
3. (i) Colonialism incorporated Africa into the capitalist mode of production as well as the totality of international social relations.
(ii) This mode of production threw up social category that owns means of production and facilities of distribution and another social category that owns nothing.
(iii) Africa’s neo-traditional social structure became glaringly

differentiated into new social structures and classes at colonial rule and, of course, after the latter.

- 4 (i) Indigenous capitalist class: the social category that serves as an intermediary between foreign capital and indigenous market. It is class that in Africa owns the facilities of distribution and collaborates with foreign capital to exploit the resources and markets of Africa.
 - (ii) The Proletariat refers to the working class people while
 - (iii) The Peasantry refers to the landless or small land-holding rural or peri-urban farmers, petty artisans, etc. Both (ii) and (iii) constitute the bulk of Africans. In fact, majority fall into the third category – the most miserable, wretched and rugged folks in the continent.
5. (e)
 6. Write a short essay on this using your lecture notes and any of the indicated materials you can lay your hands on.
 7. This is a sample:
 - (i) Military, bureaucratic, political, intelligentsia, business, commercial, economic, industrial *faction* of the ruling class.
 - (ii) We talk of *factions* when a faction lacks cohesion or coherence: for instance, you can call the Babangida military administration a fraction of the military faction of the ruling class.

Lecture Seven

1. By national integration is meant the knitting together, by the use of various modalities or mechanism, of the different ethnic, regional, religious, linguistic and other groups in a nation-state. Nation-building is the name given to this process; it is a conscious attempt at eliminating forces of dissent, division and conflict while painstakingly cultivating those forces and elements that unite and bind the people together.
2. (d)
3. (i) Strong and personalized power of Mr. President

- (ii) The one-party structure
- (iii) Public Administration
- 4. Your arguments need to be informed by facts here
- 5. (d)

Lecture Eight

1. By dictatorship or authoritarianism we mean the undiluted and unrestricted domination of the state by an individual, clique or a small group of individuals.
2. Autocracy, despotism, tyranny, totalitarianism, etc.
3. Look up your lecture notes and list them
4. A regime in Africa is authoritarian to the extent that the following elements are present:
 - (i) Violence vis-à-vis the people is perfected into an art
 - (ii) Abolition or incapacitation of radical or (even merely) mass organizations like labour, students', professional groups, women's, etc.
 - (iii) Excessive privatization of the decision-making structures and processes, etc.
5. Your own opinion and argument(s) are needed

Lecture Nine

1. By the 'Executive' in government we mean that arm of government that is intensely involved in both decision-making and decision-implementation.
2. The executive dominates the governmental structure to the extent that the constitution gives it tremendous powers.
3. Look up your lecture notes
4. (a)
5. Mr. President has both normal (routine) and extra-ordinary (emergency) powers

Lecture Ten

1. By succession crises we mean those systematic governmental and social problems posed, and often unresolved, in the process of assuring stable and patterned changes in leadership.
2. (a) Current rulers simply sit-tight
(b) So-called aura of indispensability built around African leaders.
(c) lack of legitimacy as perceived by opposition movements either within or outside current leadership structure.
(d) the socio-economic system in such that winning political power is the beginning of 'life more abundant'.
3. Look up your lecture note. You can differentiate between *governmental instability* (changes in personnel) and *political instability* (no change in the social class that has ruled since legal independence).
4. Yes: argue it!
5. (c)

Lecture Eleven

1. (d)
2. Refer to Lecture Notes
3. Your own arguments here. Note, however, that whereas there are always immediate and remote reasons for any coup d'état, this phenomenon itself can be explained mainly in terms of struggles for power amongst the different fractions of the military faction of the ruling class. It can also be seen as a conscious attempt by a faction of the ruling class (the military) to ensure that the popular classes do not take over state power.
4. and 5. Refer to Lecture notes and some of the materials suggested for reading.

Lecture Twelve

1. (b)
2. (d)

3. (d)
4. It is a movement which underlines are decolonization of African Public administration – both in terms of structures and behavioural values.
5. (d)

Lecture Thirteen

1. By corruption we mean the spoliation or degeneration of all that is invaluable or enviable, good, beautiful and proper in the eyes of a society's moral and social norms, ethos and values.
2. Bureaucratic corruption refers to both the privatization of the collective financial interests of the general public by some leading civil servants and the destruction of those moral values that a society expects from those who control the machinery of the state (Look up your lecture notes to flesh up this definition).
3. Your own opinion and arguments.
4. Look up at both the internal and external causes of or dimensions to bureaucratic corruption.
5. (e)

Lecture Fourteen

1. (d)
2. Look them up in your Lecture notes – even though I expect you to virtually know them off-head by now!
3. Your opinions and arguments: But more political than economic-oriented.
4. (a) and (b)
5. (a) There must be a coherent ideology
 (b) There must be an overriding political will and commitment on the part of the leaders
 (c) There must be a commitment to forge a south-centric economic and political organization, etc.

Lecture Fifteen

1. By political thought we mean the systematic study of the basic values or principles which underline the organization of civil society.
2. There is certainly an African political thought to the extent that African men and women think about the besetting problems of their societies and seek solutions to them.
3. The purpose or objective of African political thought is not only to establish its autonomous status vis-à-vis Euro-American political thought but to use such thoughts and deep reflections to tackle the contemporary African condition or predicament. The ultimate aim therefore is the construction of a humane, if not popular, African society – or, at the least, that is what it is supposed to seek to achieve.
4. Look up your Lecture Notes.
5. Your opinion and arguments are required here.