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**UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA UNDER NEO-COLONIALISM AND STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION BASED ON THE JUCHE IDEA.**

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**Introduction**

Colonial rule in Africa created and maintained dependent social and economic structures. African nationalist struggles for political independence uprooted European colonial rule in Africa. The end of colonial rule in Africa ushered in a new era of neo-colonial dependency. Infrastructure which was constructed during colonial rule was intended to facilitate neo-colonialism for effective control of the market situation and guaranteed exclusive access to untapped resources and outlets.

The problem of development which the new African independent states had to tackle were compounded by the fact that underdevelopment was a complex of structures in the socio-economic and political arena. Underdevelopment has not been original or traditional in Africa. Contemporary underdevelopment in Africa is in large part the historical product of past and continuing economic and political relations between the African countries and the developed colonizing countries. When the metropolitan expands to incorporate previously isolated regions in Africa into the worldwide system, previous development of these regions are choked off or channeled into directions which are not self perpetuating for development.

The needs of imperialism are met through power structures which maintain stability in

the former colonies. The political systems in some countries of Africa have been reduced to an aggregate of dominant class which acts as agent of transmitting the global dynamics of international capital and division of labour to African states. Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania, pointed to the problem of neo-colonialism which quickly became obvious to new African governments which tried to act on economic matters in the interests of African national development, and for the betterment of African masses. Such governments discovered that independent governments inherited the power to make laws, to direct the civil service, have relations with foreign governments, and so on, but that African governments did not inherit effective power over economic development in Africa due to problems of neo-colonialism.

### **Neo-colonialism in Africa**

National political independence and formation of nation-states did not cut off the domineering links between countries of Africa and the former colonizing countries. It was a change of form from a direct to an indirect politico-economic domination. Thus political independence also opened the door for foreign exploitation. Trade was one of the major hinges of contact between domestic and the international economic system. Imperial policies oriented to Africa have been manipulative to the ruling elites who have become prone to various external contacts and who view falsely their interests being compatible with those of the dominant classes in Western capitalist countries. Such contacts are reflected through development models and the international exchange system in which African countries have been powerless in the capitalist world market.

The above situation further reveals that some African countries neither have the economic nor the political muscle to determine and control their economic and political destiny. Given the low level of economic development of most African countries, importation of foreign capital has been a means to create technologically modern economies. Yet science and technology are monopolized by the developed world and countries of Africa have to pay dearly for them. This dependence has, implied that economic progress in African countries is largely dependent on outside factors. The African countries are forced to various concessions in terms of importation of science and technology, a fact that makes the controlling point being enjoyed by the capitalist countries of Europe and United States.

Developed capitalist nations do not allow free flow of technology and capital to Africa because of their vested neo-colonial interests in Africa. The need for countries of Africa to develop has also made African countries submit to the wishes and designs of the developed capitalist countries and thus driven Africa to further dependency. African countries have become partners in production while concentration of wealth flows to the capitalist countries. Science and technology are exported to Africa as an integral package of private investment and the link between activities undertaken by private foreign capital and the socio economic orientation of interests of capitalist countries. It is the question whether any African government within the structural limits of dependent capitalism could enforce the measures necessary to reverse this tendency, since its very existence is founded on the class alliance between the dependent national bourgeoisie and the international bourgeoisie of capitalist nations.

### **Impact of capitalist foreign Aid in Africa**

Foreign Aid is an aspect through which external economic and political interests of the developed capitalist nations influence policy formulations in Africa. Seen as the transfer of resources from foreign governments or foreign institutions and international organizations dominated by the developed capitalist countries, foreign aid can be in the form of finance, personnel, capital goods, or food, "Aid" has never been an unconditional transfer of resources. Conditions attached to foreign aid are dearly and directly intended to serve the interests of governments providing foreign aid which may be used to buy goods and services from its provider.

Foreign aid is usually given to countries whose internal political arrangement, foreign policy alignment, treatment of foreign private investment, debt servicing record, export policies and so on are considered desirable, or at least acceptable by the countries or institutions providing foreign aid, and which do not appear to threaten their interests. Such requirements have always influenced the structure and political direction in Africa. Refusal to accept these conditions means the African country will not get foreign aid.

Trade relations reveal that the trade treaties became bondages which tie the African countries to trade with those countries with which they signed the treaties. This limitation is a kind of pressure and influence which keep the political structures and processes on dependent levels under the system of international division of labour. This

is today characterized by the raw material capital goods exchange pattern in the trade flows between Africa and the developed world. This has further led to the formulation of policies that emphasize raw material production and increase in the agricultural field. On the other hand, this has also led Africa not only to remain with predominantly agricultural economies but for some mono-or single-commodity producers. What is seen is that these ties give much influential power for external factors to dictate policies of African nations because of the bondage.

Neo-colonial manifestations are also advanced through the almost universal technical assistance phenomenon. Technical assistance personnel have often got access and influence to vital national matters likes budgeting, economic planning, public works, communications, social welfare, educational systems, defence and other branches depending on a country's allocations. For instance, neo-colonial pattern of political system have tended to return to former colonial structures because of the behavior and outlook of some government officials who still embrace the colonial values, attitudes and framework and thus have trust in former colonizers.

This kind of infiltration, has been taking place in some countries in the military, police, parastatals, universities and in other key government ministries. Once they secure influence they also influence political decision procedures to fit the wishes of whichever external force they represent. Hence some governments in Africa have come to realize the power of the "invisible government" which represents the imperial interests, largely foreign, whose primary concern is to control and make these governments loose responsible political control and self-determination. But on the other hand, the political and economic weakness of some Africa countries has not been able to counter the considerably greater leverage the external force has over political life in Africa. The economic centrality, the strong fiscal capability, access to skills and information and the relative freedom from any powerful countervailing interest which the external phenomena have does give them advantages in their dealings with financial heavily burdened governments in Africa. This makes a big difference between the positions of African countries and developed nations vis-à-vis the transnational institutions that cater for the interests of governments and the dominant classes of developed capitalist countries.

## **Trans-National Corporations Influence Processes in Africa.**

The influence of economic and political processes that affect specific economic opportunities for foreign investments and capital accumulation form a target for external control. This can extend to training programmes and technical missions which are meant to promote efficiency and ties with middle levels of the bureaucracy and research institutes which can later act as custodians of external interests. The aim of imperial state building is to provide a variety of access points to shape policy priorities and agendas in order to avoid having to act from outside.

Trans-National Corporations (TNCs) do big business as they have much influence in Africa. The monopoly of technology and scientific skills that the TNCs command give them much advantage over African governments. They have a large size, relative financial autonomy, long term horizon and offer military might and political muscle of their powerful states. Thus they do have a strong position of bargaining vis-à-vis African governments. This is often shown through the management practices which TNCs display when management service agreements have been made.

As soon as TNCs have won the confidence of African governments through their officials, they influence decision making on how economic or productive activities should be done in the interests of TNCs and their supporting governments. Even when there has been nationalizations as in Tanzania in 1967 and after, TNCs can still achieve influence through the neo-colonial structures and agreements and treaties. For example the National Development Corporation (NDC) in Tanzania, acquired majority shares in ownership in foreign-owned companies, on behalf of Tanzania government. One of these was the Tanzania Fertilizer Factory in which a West Germany firm, Kloeckner held 40% shares and had a management contract. When it was thought necessary that a jetty be built for transporting the raw materials for the factory, it was NDC which exerted all the pressure necessary for the jetty to be built while it was likely that Kloeckner would be the net beneficiary of the whole project rather than Tanzania's economy.

What was important was to retain control of the means of production as to ensure the supply of important raw materials, expanding markets and good profits through influence of economic, political and planning processes. Transnational corporations like to do business under neo-colonial situations where they command an upper hand and

influence and later control. Again this situation is not always got in vacuo but also shows the dubious behavior of TNCs which can even use such means as corruption and bribery to achieve their greedy ends. Yet in the end it is those who get corrupted and bribed that betray their own people.

Management agreements may require the host governments to guarantee political security and security against producers of goods services demands for high wages, strikes and other forms of class struggle. This aspect has been instrumental in some government passing laws declaring strikes illegal in the name of encouraging economic development while hosting transnational corporations. This political action bears a dictate of external needs and influence. Economic security and political stability, so claimed, have not helped host African economies because practice shows that the surplus and profits and resource drain flow to the metropole and thus the passed laws are mere lubricants for further advance of imperialist interests under a neo-colonial system. Indeed there is every reason to believe that neo-colonialism can and do in major ways affect the directions and destinations of political process in Africa due to reliance on foreign finance which can very much affect the pattern of investments of the recipient countries. External forces have their ideas about their type of investments that should be made in Africa which also direct the kind of pressure over the structures and where to invest; the mode of utilizing economic surplus and profits which, as a result, influence and guide economic activities and political processes in the 'national economy'.

### **African countries need progressive ideology to guide their struggles against Neo-colonialism**

Countries of Africa need progressive ideology to guide their struggles against neo-colonialism in order to achieve genuine economic liberation. Lack of progressive ideology is the root of crisis of Africa under neo-colonialism. Omimode, B. (1988) Wrote in 'The Political Economy of Africa Crisis' p. 303. "The greatest danger that has threatened Africa is the absence of progressive ideology. Countries of Africa have no conscious sense of political struggle to overcome neo-colonialism." The Great leader of Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) Kim IL Sung wrote in 'Let us step socialist construction under the banner of the Juche idea' (1983) pp. 14-15. "Juche idea

is a man-centred philosophy which reflected the Korean peoples consciousness and cultural value” Kim IL Sung creatively developed the Juche idea as an ideology which guided successfully the anti-Japanese fascist imperialist domination and exploitation of DPRK in 1940s and the anti-United States imperialist aggression of DPRK in 1950s. The anti-imperialist struggles in DPRK have made North Korea achieve genuine independence and real sovereignty. DPRK is independent in economy, politics, culture and military against US military threats and economic sanctions.

African countries need people-centred ideology to guide the struggle against neo-colonialism. In order to understand the relevance of Juche idea in African philosophy in the struggle for development and progress we need to understand the essence of the Juche Idea Kim IL Sung made public his work entitled ‘On the Juche idea’ (1979). p. 41 “The Juche philosophy on its essence and substance is that the masters of revolution and construction are the masses of people and they are also the motive force of revolution and construction. The revolutionary struggles and construction work are undertakings for the good of the masses and must be carried by the masses themselves as the masters. That is what fundamental change means and implies and what social transformation calls for. The people of Africa are the masters of the struggle for genuine independence and real sovereignty in each African country and the decisive factor of victory in this struggle is the country itself.

The adoption and adaption of Juche idea in African philosophy should be understood by Africans to mean adopting a development path of self reliance in Africa. Kim Jong IL made public his work entitled ‘Giving Priority to ideological work is essential for accomplishing socialism’. (1995) p. 1 “To develop the liberation movement, it is imperative for us to awaken the popular masses ideologically and rouse them to struggle for liberation.

A progressive African ideology should be created to reflect the wishes, hopes and aspirations of African ordinary masses. Africans have to carry thorough political education in organizing political organizations or movements for successful struggles. But some Africa ruling elites who have neo-colonial mentality and foreign support would argue against organizing and mobilizing people in political education. Pro-neo-colonial ruling elites, would think that political education would mean indoctrinating people to

support their enemy progressive Africans. The reactionary pro-neo-colonial African elites might have received colonial or neo-colonial education which prevented them from getting correct political consciousness and awareness. They would not support the struggle against neo-colonialism because they are not capable to appreciate the power of the united African masses against neo-colonialism. That is why it is correct to say that Africa's post-colonial crisis is due to lack of progressive ideological consciousness among some Africans particularly the greedy ruling elites.

The struggle for liberation in countries of Africa can not succeed without a progressive African ideology. Kim IL Sung wrote in 'Historical Experience of Building Workers Party of Korea' (1986) p. 1 "In order to lay the masses foundation for the liberation movement it is necessary to awaken the masses and organize them. Although the people are the masters of the revolution and construction they need to be awakened and organized in order to play their role as dependable political base in the struggle for genuine independence and real sovereignty.

There is hope for Africa to adopt and adapt the Juche idea principles to enrich an African philosophy. Juche idea is a way forward for Africa. Juche idea does not contradict African traditional cultural values and beliefs. The similarity between African traditional philosophy and the Juche idea is found in the common beliefs about man and his role and position in the world. Thus the Juche idea principle of man-centered philosophy to revolution and construction is appropriate to enrich the African traditional philosophy of man-centred philosophy. In African systems of governance, people themselves are responsible for developing their own country for transforming it from what it is to what they desire it to be.

Juche idea should be supported by intensified adult education. President Kim IL Sung wrote in his work in 1982 'Adult Education in Korea' p. 3 "Adult education is the education of working people who are engaged in socialist construction. It is of great significance in consolidating and developing a revolutionary world outlook and continually raising the level of general knowledge and technical and cultural standards".

According to president Kim IL Sung (ibid. p. 4) "Man is the master of everything and decides everything. In order to succeed in the fulfillment of tasks in the building of a new society it is important first to make people more powerful. According to Juche idea



principles what is most important is making man a powerful being in a way worthy of the master of the world that is to get people to have progressive thought and cultural and technical attainments.

Progressive people in Africa must rise up and fight against flunkeyism and dogmatism. Patriotic progressive leaders of Africa should go to the masses of people, live with them, listen to them and learn from them. Patriotic progressive people of Africa must awaken national and patriotic consciousness as masters of their own countries and decide the destiny of their own countries.

The commanding heights of the national economy should signify the power of the people so they should not be owned and controlled by neo-colonial investors. The commanding heights of the economy are the basis of a country's genuine independence and real sovereignty. These are national patriotic, pride and self-reliance pillars of the economy. Privatization of commanding heights of the economy and social assets in countries of Africa is contrary to the wishes of the popular masses in African countries.

Dependent African capitalist middle class in some countries of Africa are beneficiaries of IMF and World Bank supported projects or those projects which are supported by Western Europe and US under neo-colonialism. Dependant African capitalist middle class and ruling elites who search for personal wealth and glorification should be made aware that neo-colonialism is the real enemy of development of countries of Africa. They should know that neo-colonialism is responsible for Africa's wretchedness and backwardness.

The greatest challenge on the Juche idea in Africa is to adopt it in the African situation so that Africans concerned can understand its relevance to the solution of Africa's poverty and predicament. Juche idea should enrich the African philosophy and create Africa ideology which reflects African reality derived from the historical experience of Africa as correctly discussed by Rodney. W. (1972) 'How Europe Underdeveloped Africa,' Countries of Africa should have a common goal of struggling to achieve genuine independence and real sovereignty by overcoming and do away with neo-colonial domination, oppression and exploitation. Despite of the fact that all countries of Africa have achieved political independence and they have African governments, yet underdevelopment has persisted and deepened because of neo-colonialism which is

detrimental to development of Africa.

Development in countries of Africa has to serve the interests of people of Africa. Development for the people can only be achieved under conditions of genuine independence and real sovereignty of African states. People of Africa should learn that underdevelopment has persisted and deepened in Africa because of neo-colonialism

The New Economic Order is based on private sector development and liberalized free market economy have roots in capitalism. In the capitalist economic practices of neo-colonialism with laissez faire free market conditions there is continued underdevelopment in countries of Africa. Even in countries in which some growth has been recorded and applauded but there has been no development to overcome poverty in the Africa's toiling cultivators and workers. Under neo-colonialism Africans have no say to direct the way forward for Africa. The Africa bourgeois middle class leaders who are brain washed with neo-colonial mentality are likely to follow without critical thinking foreign ideas and policies dictated by capitalist donor countries and IMF and the World Bank in order to qualify to be given foreign aid and foreign investments.

## **Conclusion**

The hope for Africa to develop and prosper in social and economic sectors depend on the success in the struggles for liberation which should be guided by an African ideology. Application of science and technology are pre-requisites for social and economic development in Africa. Industrialization is essential for economic progress to realize the application of science and technology in the sectors of production. Self reliance and co-operation among countries of Africa is indispensable to freedom and development in Africa. All these pre-requisites for development in Africa culminate to the need of waging struggle by progressive and patriotic nationalists in order to achieve genuine development in Africa.