UNIT 2 COLONIAL LEGACIES

Structure

2.1 INTRODUCTION: THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Spanning 7.680 km north to south and 7.200 km from east to west, Africa is the second largest continent of the world with a total surface area, including several surrounding islands of 30,313,000 square kilometres. It has a rich mosaic of diverse countries and peoples. Africa as the second largest continent of the world comprises 54 sovereign states. The size of the states are also varied, the smallest in area being the state of Comoro with just 2000 square kilometres of land area to the continental giant of the state of Sudan with over 2,506 of square kilometres. Africa's vast expanse of 11,677,240 square miles stretches from the Mediterranean in the North to the meeting point of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans in the South. Africa's peoples are as diverse as the terrain they inhabit. The Black and the Arabs living on the continent with the sprinkling of Asians and Whites speak more than 800 languages and belong to equal number ofdiverse ethnic groupings. Whereas the Seychelles have a population of less than 1,00,000 Seychellois are of mixed African, South Asian and European descent Nigeria leads the continent with over 110 million citizens divided among nearly 250 ethnic groups. Over the years the people of Africa have embraced many religious belief systems including all the major religions. While urbanisation has taken place in s limited scale, the continent's more than 70 per cent people live in rural areas and live on agriculture and other related activities. Economically, a tiny island of Seychelles boasts of highest GDP per capita of US $6,993. Torn by civil wars and droughts Ethiopia's per capita GNP was only US $97 in the year 2001. The political demography of African mosaic is also as diverse as its multiplicity of culture, ethnicity, language and religion. Espousing major political ideologies of the present times, African leaders have frequently adopted and experimented capitalism, Marxism, socialism and Islamic revivalism as the bases for creating a wide variety of political regimes, including monarchies, military dictatorship, Islamic republics and liberal democracies. In spite of bountiful natural resources and mineral reserves, a continent-wide economic crisis during the 1980s severely threatened the economic sovereignty of the African states. The initial symptom of this crisis, which manifested during the second half of the 1970s as extremely vulnerable economic growth, was followed by steep economic decline during the 1980s. A simple yet disturbing indicator—per capita income—captured the economic dilemma confronted by African policy makers. From 1975 to 1979, per capita income for the African continent registered less than one per cent annual growth rate. During the decade of the 1980s, this meagre growth rate worsened into a 3.2 per cent annual decline in per capita income. African leaders had expanded the scope of state power without increasing the state's capacity to use that power to create wealth. African leaders failed to muster the resources to maintain the African state's unparalleled control of the economic and political systems. The growing indebtedness of the African continent further compounded the problem. From 1980 to 1989, Africa's debt burden nearly tripled—from $55 billion to $160 billion. Indeed, nearly every economic indicator compiled by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund suggested an emerging economic crisis of epic proportions.

The crisis of the African state was also demonstrated by the growing inability of the state to provide a wide variety of social amenities, expected by civil society and normally taken for granted in the industrialised democracies, like effective transportation and telecommunications networks, access to electricity and clean water, education and training in a public school system. Decline in public services was often due to cuts in government social spending, in favour of increases in government military spending for the police and other coercive apparatus. As if it was not all, AIDS further compounded the situation.

2.2 COLONISING AFRICA

2.2.1 Slave Trade

European colonisation of African continent was followed by early European contact through missionaries, traders and explorers. The Scramble for Africa resulted in the creation of formal European empires and spheres of interest throughout Africa. In October 1884, the European colonial powers met in a conference in Berlin, which formally ended in 1885. The Berlin Conference was designed to dampen escalating imperial conflicts in Africa by officially demarcating the boundaries of European penetration into Africa over a period of roughly 450 years. Portuguese were the initial explorers in Africa and the overriding economic objectives of Portuguese explorers were to have an edge over the Arab traders. The other goals of the initial European explorers in Africa included the spread of Christianity and the enhancement of the political and military strength. Towards the end of 15th Century one of the most devastating aspects of the predominantly Euro-centric world was the perception of slavery as a legitimate and necessary tool of political-military and economic expansion. The trans-Atlantic slave trade was "the greatest tragedy in human history" because of its extent and its duration. This tragedy wrenched tens of millions of Africans from their villages to be transported to the Americas and the Caribbean. However, racism against blacks existed well before the slave trade. When, for example, the Portuguese began navigating the African coasts, the Pope authorised them to take Africans as slaves, In this way, slavery and racism became intertwined in the West. Slave trafficking also would not have lasted as long as it did without an ideology of moral justification and legal structures. The ideology of intellectual superiority, the cultural denigration of black people and of Africa rationalised the sale of human being as merchandise. The slave trade—and apartheid — has now disappeared. But the racism that underpinned it is still wreaking havoc. The trans-Atlantic slave trade, which is widely known as European slave trade, co-existed with Islamic slave trade. In both the trade, Africans were the casualties though the duration of the European slave trade and Islamic slave trade varied significantly. The Islamic slave trade last at least 750 years longer than its European counterparts and was responsible for the forced displacement of nearly 14 million Africans. On the other hand, the European slave trade, which lasted roughly for 450 years managed to transport much larger number of slaves. The European slave trade surpassed the Islamic one in terms of geographical scope and sheer numbers during the 17th Century, and it increasingly dominated Islamic slave trade as the European powers expanded their political, military and economic control over Arab and African countries alike during the 19th Century. The overall impact of the slave trade put Africa in a weak position, opened up new vistas for European penetration in the hinterland and forced them to submit to the colonial system.

With the enlightenment of the 18th Century came attempts to discontinue slave trade. It was inspired by knowledge from the 16th Century on unprecedented crimes against (Red) Indians and black an3 the idea of defending the rights of these people and o humanity as a whole. The enlightenment was also a revolt against European domination of the world. A notable turning point in rising European global influence was Great Britain's decision in 1807 to make the slave trade illegal for British citizens. By the end of the 19th Century, the majority of the world's nations considered slave trade as illegal. However, with the end of slave trade began enslavement of a different kind, which was more devastating. Slave trade uprooted millions of Africans but the "Scramble for Africa" ushered Africa's decimation, subjugation of traditional kingdoms, ruin of local production system and enslaved the entire psyche of African continent. Europe simply chose another colonial system. Instead of displacing people, they simply set up their production system in Africa.

Great Britain's active opposition to the slave trade was not primarily driven by an enlightened vision of humankind that believed the West's domination of non-white peoples outside of Europe, to be repugnant. The economic imperatives associated with the rise and spread of the industrial revolution had made it more profitable for Great Britain and the other European powers to engage in legitimate trade with the African continent, as opposed to the illegitimate trade in human beings. The transformation that took place from the end of 18th Century to the end of the 19th Century entailed the gradual replacement of the slave trade with the purchase of primary products grown on African plantations. Indigenous to the region, the palm tree and the peanut served as critical sources of oil that lubricated the machines of Europe's industrial revolution and served as the base of a variety of European manufactured products, such as soup, candles, and butter. Cotton was another important primary product whose production expanded in leaps and bounds to satisfy the textile mills of Europe. European manufacturers also perceived the African continent as the market for sales of manufactured goods. Simply put, the European industrialist thought: "Why destroy African markets by exporting slave to plantations in the Western Hemisphere when we can better profit horn trade with Africans who work their plantations in closer proximity to Europe?"

The shift to legitimate commerce through the 19th Century was accompanied by the arrival of steadily rising numbers of official and non-official Europeans in Africa. The official Europeans were government civil servants who transformed early slave ports into administrative enclaves. In many cases these enclaves, more importantly the Cape of Good Hope, changed hands as European powers rose and declined in influence. The enclaves primarily served as strategic-diplomatic outposts. The activities of local European officials ranged from the management of trade relations and coordination of naval visits to dealing with the unexpected problems confronted by their citizens. In most cases, the enclave was the centrepiece of an emerging informal empire: political-military and economic domination without the formal occupation and control usually associated with the establishment of centralised government over a given territory.

The most important pressures for further European expansion were found among the non-official Europeans. In the economic realm, private traders and entrepreneurs interested in gaining greater profits relentlessly pressurised their home governments to extend the political-military reach of the enclaves into the interior. The European traders were especially interested in cutting out the Africa traders who controlled European access to the sources of lucrative trade beyond the coastal regions. Demands for political-military expansion were also supported by the numerous missionary societies, such as the London Missionary Society, that established them on the African continent. Renowned for establishing missionary outposts initially they were beyond the political-military reach of their respective governments. Missionaries demanding government protection during periods of civil unrest not surprisingly received a sympathetic hearing both at home and in the imperial enclaves.

2.2.2 Colonisation

The physical occupation of the African continent by the colonial powers was often met with political and even armed resistance from African kingdoms and ethnic groups. In the case of the Asante Empire, the troops first clashed with the British colonial army in 1823. In fact, they fought a series of battles (1826,1874, and 1896)that delayed the final subjugation of the Asante to British colonial rule until 1900. Three factors nonetheless ensured that armed resistance by the Asante and other ethnic groups opposed to European colonialism would ultimately be unsuccessful. First, the European colonial powers, regardless of their conflicts on the European continent, were united in their conquest of the African continent. Second, the European armies enjoyed technological superiority. The gating gun, the precursor to present-day machine guns, was used to devastating effect against numerically superior African armies. Finally, the Europeans were able to exploit regional rivalries as part of a conscious policy of divide-and-conquer. In short, European subjugation of a particular African kingdom was often advanced by seeking the short-term aid of that kingdom's traditional African competitor.

Except for the unique cases of Ethiopia and Liberia (a country settled by repatriated African slaves from Americas) the scramble for Africa resulted in the imposition of foreign colonial rule. By the beginning of the First World War, the African continent found itself divided into seven colonial empires varying in size, shape, arid geographical distribution. France and Britain maintained the most extensive colonial empires. The British empire in particular was constructed along a north-south axis as part of an unrealised British dream to construct a Cape-Cairo railroad network linking South Africa with Egypt, and also included significant holdings in West Africa, most notably Nigeria and Ghana. Belgium and Portugal led the second-tier empires that were relatively smaller than that of the French and the British. Belgium and Portugal were restricted to two neighbouring regions—Central Africa for Belgium and Southern Afsica for Portugal. Portugal also ruled Guinea-Bissau in

West Africa and the island territories of Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe. Germany was stripped of its geographically widespread colonies following her defeat in the First World Wac In an experiment at the launching of the League of Nations, the forerunner to the United Nations, each German colony was temporarily transferred to another colonial power as a mandate territory pending transition to self-rule. In the case of Italy, its defeat in the Second World War ensured the loss of colonial holdings in Libya and Eritrea. The previously fascist Italian government was nonetheless "rewarded" for its final role in contributing to an Allied'victory in the Second World War with permission to oversee an UN-mandated trusteeship of (Italian) Somaliland during the 1950s. Spain maintained the smallest of the European empires, including control over the Moroccan coastal territories of Ceuta and Melilla (Spanish Sahara).

2.2.3 Patterns of Colonisation

British colonialism took on two specific forms. In those territories such as South Africa and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), in which a significant white population had permanently settled and was administering the domestic affairs of the colonies, British policy-makers envisaged granting some form of independent status to the state within the British Commonwealth of Nations, following the models of Australia and New Zealand. Throughout the remainder of Africa, British colonialism was based on the concept of indirect rule'. This concept was popularised by Lord Lugard, perhaps the most renowned of British colonial administrators, who ultimately conceived of British colonialism as leading to independence under black majority ruled governments. Building upon the assumption that it was neither possible nor desirable to transform Africans into English citizens, British colonial administrators sought to rule indirectly through existing traditional leaders. As a result, British colonial administrators not only kept in place, but also in many cases strengthened a myriad of traditional forms of leadership within their colonies.

French colonialism was based on a highly centralised form of direct rule in which each colony was divided according to administrative sub-divisions. French officials directly administered at the highest levels, and Africans considered loyal to France were appointed to administer at the lower levels. The French model of colonialism was the most far-reaching in that it was based on a policy of assimilation. According to this concept, all African subjects could theoretically achieve the status offull-fledged French citizens if they fully embraced French culture, and in so doing fulfilled a variety of requirements, including achieving fluency in the French language, converting to Christianity, obtaining at least a high school education, and becoming a properly owner. Several Africans, such as Leopold Sedar Senghor, tlie first president of Senegal after independence, fully embraced this policy to achieve the status of *evolue* (literally, an evolved or civilised person) and lead prestigious political careers both prior to and after independence of their countries from French coloninl rule. In reality, the policy of assimilation was at best limited to a very small portion of the African elite who often found themselves caught between two worlds, one African and one French, in which their French compatriots would never truly accept them as equal citizens.

The Belgian and Portuguese colonial models were similar to the French in their desire to create a class of *evolues* (*assimilados* in Portuguese) that had adopted the major cultural traditions of Belgium and Portugal respectively. Unlike their French counterparts, neither the Belgian *evolues* nor the Portuguese *assimilados* were ever likely to wield political power, whether in the form of political inclusion (as in an expanded French Republic) or ultimate independence (as envisioned under the British model). The Belgians deemed their approach "Scientific colonialism" in an effort to put the best public face on what in reality was an extremely despotic form of governance designed to promote Belgian economic interest. The Portuguese were less concerned with such rationales, particularly after the 1928 emergence of a military dictatorship headed by Antonia de Oliveira Salazar. Similar to tlie British encouragement to white settlers, the Salazar dictatorship supported the migration of Po tuguese settler communities capable of administering the colonies on a permanent basis.

2.3 COLONIAL LEGACIES (POLITICAL)

2.3.1 Introduction of Nation-State System to Africa

In terms of world history the period of direct colonial rule was relatively short in duration (1884-1961); however, for the vast majority of African nations it had a far-reaching impact on the domestic and international politics. The most far-reaching political impact ofcolonialism was the imposition of the European nation-state system onto the extremely rich and varied African political systems that existed during the pre-slave trade and pre-colonial independence era. The origins of the nation-state system lie in the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War (1618-48) in Europe. The Treaty marked the beginning of the nation-state system. When this system was grafted onto Africa, sovereignty remained in the hands of the occupying colonial powers. The application of this system to Africa therefore entailed the sub-division of the entire continent into separate colonies with clearly defined boundaries and centralised political authorities. With any rare exceptions, the boundaries of these colonial political units became the basis for the contemporary political map of Africa. The imposition of the European nation-state system created a series of artificial states that, unlike their counterparts in Europe, did not evolve gradually according to the wishes of local African peoples. European authorities constructed them with little concern for local socio-economic or political-military conditions. Indeed, a favourite account of Africanists is the image of two European leaders resolving a colonial territorial dispute by standing over a map and drawingn new line witl1 a ruler. As a result, the artificially created colonial territories bore little resemblance to the classic definition of a nation-state--one people or ethnic group (the nation) ruled by a legitimate centralised authority (the state).

2.3.2 Creation of Divided Loyalties

The primary long-ten11 problem associated with the division of one people among many states is the potential emergence of irredentism: the political desire of nationalists to reunite their separated peoples in one unified nation-state: In the case of Somalia, for example, irredentism emerged as the cornerstone of a Somali nationalist movement during the 1950s, which called for a redrawing of inherited colonial boundaries in the Horn of Africa. Symbolised by the five-pointed state emblazoned on the national flag of the Republic of Somalia, this irredentist quest envisioned the re-unification of all five Somali territories within one pan-Somali state: The Republic of Somalia already included two of the territories (British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland), and therefore sought the "return" of Ethiopia's Ogaden region, the Somali poi-tion of Djibouti, and the Northern Frontier District of Kenya. Somali leaders of the irredentist movement opted to seek reunification by force of arms. As a result, Somali leaders funded guerrilla insurgencies in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya during the 1960s, which led to the further deterioration of relations between the Republic of Somalia and its neighbours. The Republic of Somalia and Ethiopia also fought a war (1977-78) over the Ogaden region, which became internationalised due to the super-power involvement. Regardless of whether one is sympathetic to past Somali demands to redraw the inherited colonial boundaries of the Horn of Africa, or ultimately accepts the extreme methods of military force employed there, there is no doubt that the roots of these conflicts are at least partially the result of illogically drawn European colonial boundaries.

2.4 COLONIAL LEGACIES (SOCIAL)

2.4.1 Collapse of Traditional Authority

The social impact of colonialism was the dismantling of the traditional checks-and-balances that regulated political system during the pre-colonial-independence era. Whereas traditional leaders answered to the political norms and customs of their individual societies and/or ethnic groups during the pre-colonial-independence era, the creation of the colonial state meant that the ultimate source of power became the European administrator. In most cases, the European administrator would appoint only those Africans as traditional rulers who pledged unswerving allegiance to the colonial power. Even under the British model of indirect rule, highly popular traditional rulers who were kept in power by British colonial administrators often saw their traditional power base deteriorate. Tensions frequently surfaced when the demands of British colonialism ran counter to the interests of the local population, and the local rulers had to choose between siding with his people and risking removal from office and siding with the colonial authorities and maintaining favour with the Europeans at the cost of his people. In many cases, even authoritarian African leaders could count on remaining in power as long as they served the interests of the European colonial power. This model remained operative even after political independence of African countries.

2.4.2 Creation of Centralised Authoritarian System

With the repudiation of tribal authority, an authoritarian legacy that permeated all aspects of socio-political life was fostered. In a normally functioning democracy, tlie relationship between the nation and the state is based on legitimacy. The primary objectives of the colonial nation-state, however, were to achieve and maintain European domination. A coercive apparatus of political and military forces was therefore created in every colony with the intention of ensuring local compliance with colonial rules and regulations. Success was achieved through a conscious policy of divide-and-rule. Drawing upon the multiethnic and sometimes multiracial nature of their empires, the European powers would station troops from other ethnic or racial groups within a given colony. Colonial administrators sought to avoid the stationing of troops within their colony of origin, and certainly avoided the stationing of these troops among their ethnic group of birth. The British were renowned for deploying troops from South Asia and stationing them in their African colonies. The cornerstone of this practice was the expectation that troops with little or no ethnic attachment to the subjugated population would have few reservations about taking military action against that population. The same divide-and-rule logic was employed when creating local police forces. The coercive nature of colonial police and military forces contributed to the creation of an authoritarian environment that carried over into the contemporary independence era. The first generation of African elites, who were trained within this colonial system and who led their countries to independence beginning in the late 1950s, tended to create single-part political systems that banned political dissent. This authoritarian trend was matched by an explosion of military coup *d'etat* in the 1960s that replaced civilian regimes with a variety of military forms of governance.

2.4.3 Marginalisation of Women

The effect of colonialism was more detrimental to women than to men. In general, the role and status of women deteriorated in the colonial period and continued to decline following independence. In pre-colonial Africa women often had effective control of econo~nic resources. As their ethnic groups were incorporated into a cash economy, they were disadvantaged in money or land and they lost their traditional rights. One of the two things happened—they were either excluded from areas of production in which they had previously been involved and relegated to the "domestic" sphere, or the productive ectivities in which they continued to engage were altered and devalued in a new context.

2.5 COLONIAL LEGACIES (ECONOMIC)

2.5.1 Liquidation of the Regional Economies

The period of direct colonial rule also permanently altered the domestic and international economic relations of the African continent. In the aftermath of the imposition of direct colonial rule, colorial administrators oversaw the destruction of regional economic ties through the transformation of individual colonies into closed economic systems. Colonial administrators sought to ensure that all economic interaction within a given empire toolc place exclusively between the European colonial power and its individual colonies. In the case of German colony of Togoland, for example, German colonial administrators strove to eliminate cross-border trade with the neighbouring British colony of the Gold Coast (Ghana) and the neighbouring French colonies of Dahomey (Benin) and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), and instead fostered strong exclusive economic ties with Germany. An important element of the closed economic model was the government's granting of trade monopolies to chartered companies that often assumed complete responsibility for overseeing the socio-economic and political-military transformation of the colony, at least until a "proper" state structure could be developed by colonial administrators. The most important impact of these closed trading systems was that all regional trade, except that which took place within respective empires, was virtually destroyed—as illustrated by the decline of the trans-Saharan trade network. Regional trade that once crisscrossed the Sahara 'desert was gradually replaced, during the last quarter of the 19th Century by externally oriented economies' shipping of products from the interior to the coastal regions, for eventual transhipment to Europe and other outposts of the global European empires. As a result, the once vibrant outposts of the Sahara desert, such as the famous city of Timbuktu, which were built upon regional trade and economic development, entered aperiod of severe socio-economic decline.

2.5.2 Fostering Export-Oriented, Mono-Crop/Mono-Mineral Economies

The second economic impact of European exploitation of Africa was the transformation of individual colonies into export-oriented economies that, in the extreme, produced one primary product desired by the European colonial power. These so-called mono-crop or mono-mineral economies were designed Io serve as convenient and cheap sources of raw materials for European industry. Once developed, the colonies were also expected to serve as markets for the sale of manufactured goods produced in Europe and other regions of the widely scattered European empires. The promotion of these non no-crop or mono-mineral colonial economies during the colonial era was not without high costs for the local African populations, and significantly hindered the long-term economic development of the African continent. Two trends in particular demonstrate that the peanut economy nurtured under French colonialism constituted at best a mixed blessing for Senegal's socio-economic development. First, an economy geared toward the production of a primary product is vulnerable to the unreliability of international prices paid for that product. The economic history of the second half of the 20th Century clearly demonstrates that the prices for primary product fluctuate dramatically, and in general have gradually declined relative to the costs of manufactured products. A second important point revolves around the negative relationship between the promotion of primary productions and food production. Specifically, the creation of mono-crop and mono-mineral colonial economies were directly associated with a dramatic decline in the production of traditional foodstuffs. This agricultural shortcoming carried over into the contemporary independence era as levels of food production declined relative to the needs of the growing population, contributing to malnutrition and chronic famine conditions in various regions of Africa. One troubling consequence of this trend is that Africa was the only region of the world that suffered from a per capita decline in food production continuously.

2.5.3 Asymmetrical Infrastructural Development

A third economic impact of colonialism was the perverse development of infrastructure, such as railroads and telecommunications, critical to economic development. An analysis of the railroads sector offers some telling insights. The colonial railroads were designed to haul primary products to the coast for eventual export to Europe and other geographical regions of the European enipires. The export-oriented nature of these railroads is significant for two reasons. First, the design of these transportation systems inevitably hindered regional development. In the case of West Africa, for example, a series of railroads designed with little consideration of its impact on regional development simply links the interior with the coastal regions. Dreams of linlcing these railroads, even if the financial resources were available, are unlikely to be realised in the near future primarily due to the fact that each railway line was often built using a different rail gauge.

The export-oriented railroad system also fostered the growth of other perverse forms of infrastructural development. For example, the primary reason why Bamako became the capital of Mali was its strategic location at the end of Dakar-Bamako railway line. Indeed, the importance of the railroad as one of the cornerstones of the colonial economy ensured that roads, telephone links, and smaller towns and cities would eventually be built along the maid railway line. The asymmetrical infrastructural demands of the colonial economy contributed to the uneven development of the African colonies, prompting some colonial observers to speak of the creation of dual economies: the first revolving around a European-induced cash economy and the second revolving around African subsistence farming. The inherent inequality between these various sectors posed significant challenges to leaders of the independence era who were intent on promoting broadly-shared economic development.

2.5.4 Monopolistic Economic Control

The last but not the least economic impact of colonialism was an authoritarian legacy that permeated all aspects of economic life. The most nefarious side of this legacy was the institution of forced labour to ensure that sufficient number of farmers and worlters were available to meet the needs of the colonial economy, such as tending plantation crops, working at the mines, and constructing roads and rail-roads. Britain abolished forced labour in its colonies in 1923, but retained another less intrusive—yet nonetheless authoritarian—element of the colonial economy: marketing boards. This colonial economic institution, adopted in varying forms by all colonial powers maintained monopolistic control over the buying and selling of primary products in each colony. Each year the board would determine a set price to be paid to farmers for a specific amount of a product. Lacking alternatives, the farmers had no choice but to sell their goods through the colonial marketing boards. The most apparent injustice of this economic relationship was the marketing board practice of purchasing products at prices well below that of the international market. In turn the marketing boards would then sell the product at a handsome profit for the colonial authority. Although the most coercive elements of the colonial economy, such as forced labour were eventually abolished, the coercive role of the state in the economic arena carried over into the post-independence era. During the first three decades of this era, the majority of African policy makers oversaw the strengthening of state involvelnent in the economy. An important element of state economic involvelnent was the creation and rapid expansion of government owned or government controlled corporations (known as 'parastatals') in all sectors of the economy, especially telecommunications, energy, and transportation. Corruption and inefficient nature of these corporations contributed in the 1980s to what is now commonly referred to as the "crisis of the African state"; the increasing inability of the independent successors of the colonial state to respond to the day-to-day needs of African populations.

2.6 SUMMARY

The scramble for Africa brought in several different colonial powers to rule Africa. Though the colonial rule, in the truest sense of the term, was for a brief period, the informal colonisation process of Africa goes back to the days of slave trade. As there were several imperial powers, the colonial legacies also varied depending on the area of their rule. That is why generalisations regarding colonial legacies would be little difficult. I-Iowever, one can infer that economies of the African states were largely developed in tune with the needs of the respective imperial powers. Primary products, whether cash crops such as cocoa and coffee or minerals such as copper and bauxite, were exported to European markets in unfinished and unrefined form. In return, the African countries imported manufactured goods from the mother country. Colonisation of Africa provided an easy access to the richly endowed raw materials and natural resources for the industries of the imperial powers with cheap labour available at the local level. Furthermore, the continent of Africa provided a vast market for the finished products of the imperial industries. As a result the post-independent African economics remained volatile to the inflationary pressures of the European domestic econolnies. The economic linkages with mother imperial economies were so entrenched that political independence did not herald in economic independence of Africa. The post-independent African economies slipped into the web of "Neo-colonialism". The level of industrialisation was low in colonial Africa. The level of research and development was non-existent, Independence generated heightened expectations on the African state. The political leaders of the newly emerging independent African state inherited dependent economies that were still entangled with the former colonial powers by internationally established patterns of trade and by membership of European currency blocs. Rising demands on the African state and the failure of the political leadership to deliver goods and services to the large segment of the African people created hindrances in the process of nation building. The military coups and attempts to overthrow civilian regime and the present economic crisis are, if not solely, the contribution of the colonial legacies.

2.7 EXERCISES

1) Describe the process ofcolonisation of Africa.

2) What were the political and social effects of colonialism in Africa?

3) Direct colonial rule altered the domestic and international economic relations of the African continent. Explain.