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Africa's Encounter with the Arabs and the West: A Retrospection

Oluwatobi O. Aje, Tomilola Adeoye-Phillips and Sheriff F. Folarin

Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Corresponding Author:

Oluwatobi O. Aje

Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract: For a number of reasons, states have come in contact with one another, both regionally and globally. The African encounters with both the West and Arab world in particular can be traced to the slave trade era. Both encounters ended up in certain fundamental trajectories (positive and negative) that continue to underlie Africa's existence and international development. The western encounter for example, ended up in the scramble for African countries and eventual colonization and artificial creation of boundaries and states. Using library research method, the paper presents its argument in a historical and explanatory perspective as it seeks to provide a critical analogy of these encounters and how it has brought about development or underdevelopment for the continent, with a view of identifying adequate (realist) measures that can be adopted by the continent to maximize relationship with the outside world. This has also informed the recommendations and conclusion that follows.

INTRODUCTION

If the words of Marx (1958) that “society does not consist of individuals but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand,” are anything to go by then it can be proposed that the inevitability of relations among social beings cannot be overemphasized. In the struggle for survival, man enters into definite form of social relations and interactions. The history of man as such can be described as the history of social existence and of social interactions. Human life is thus characterized by social relations of interactions and independence. The fundamental basis of these indispensable interactions is born out of the fact that no individual exists as an island on its own and as such they interact and relate with other individuals.

This social relation is inevitable also among states seeking to preserve their territorial survival. Thus, no state can exist in isolation of other states, and given the unequal distribution of resources in the global arena, states continually interact and relate with each other in order to guarantee advancement for their distinct political system. Arowolo (2008) argues that “all nations, irrespective of power, geopolitics and economic status have to embrace the need for and the importance of inter-relatedness on the basis of mutual benefit”. The implication of the above further stresses the cosmopolitan nature of the international system with states for several reasons, regionally or globally, notwithstanding their locations, coming in contact with one another. Mutual resource exchange, the share of technological knowhow among others constitutes some tangible reasons for inter-state or inter-regional contacts.

The states in Africa have also come in contact with the outside world in various stages of their development. The level of development of the African states is largely credited to the encounter with the outside world. Of specific interest to this research however is Africa's encounter with the Arabs and the West (Europe and North America). To this end, the African encounters would be traced historically to their initial contacts and the various phases of these encounters with a view of identifying the benefits and tragedies that characterized such encounters. The work is divided into six parts and structured thus, following the introduction, the theoretical framework is put in proper perspective. The third recounts Africa's encounter with Arab and Western world. The fourth investigates the obstacles and similarities between both encounters while the last section recommends and concludes the study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The choice of theory for this work is the realist theory. We engage the realist theory because of its enduring applicability to interstate, and inter-region analysis. The realist approach is one of the oldest perspectives in the field of international relations. The approach which emerged alongside with the formation of state based international system sought to provide mechanism for state protection and sustenance. Kegley (2007) argues that as a political theory, its intellectual roots can be traced to the writings of Thucydides, Kautilaya and Nicocolo Machiavelli. However, considering the modern configuration of the realist perspective, Afinotan and Ojajorotu posits that "the realist approach as an outstanding contribution to the theoretical approaches to international politics, made its appearance in 1948 after the second world war, in professor Hans Morgenthau's 'politics among nations' a classical foundation for contemporary realism" (Afinotan and Ojajorotu, 2014). The realist argued that the international system by its very nature is anarchical and this is inevitable due to the non-existence of a sovereign body to regulate and control the activities of states in relation to one another in the international system (Kegley, 2007). Realism assumes that interest is crucial in the relations of states and in order to actualize and fulfill these interests' states are compelled to acquire power. In other words, the "main sign post that helps political realism find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power" (Morgenthau, 1985). The conflict of interest and struggle for power makes competition inevitable in state relation. International politics is consequently conceived of as relations that are essentially embodied in the "struggle for power". Morgenthau argues that "whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim" (Morgenthau, 1985).

Afinotan and Ojajorotu (2014) reason that, the logic of the realist perspective stems, from "man's innate desire to amass power and use it for the acquisition of fundamental value which he considers indispensable for his peace and happiness". The realist believes that human, are perpetually preoccupied with their own well-being in their competitive relations with other and do not want to be taken advantage of by anyone and this translate into the behaviours of states that strive to have the edge over others in the international system (Jackson *et al.*, 2019). Consequently, as states relate and interact among themselves, the goal remains the perpetual means of securing and amassing power in order to protect and consolidate distinct interest which spans across various spheres. The desire and aspiration for power, therefore is a "distinguishing element of international politics, as of all politics, international politics is of necessity power politics" (Morgenthau, 1985). In the international system, Afinotan and Ojajorotu (2014) argues that "power is relative" as a result, state continually employ various means to amass power in relation to other states. State may conceive and define their goals in terms of economic, sociocultural, or religious spheres, they may engage non-political means, they may apply "technical cooperation" they may employ force or negotiation and they may abstain from relating with a particular state in a bid of actualising distinct goal and interest "but whenever, they strive to realize their goal by means of international politics, they do so by striving for power" (Morgenthau, 1985). Therefore, every action which a nation takes across national boundaries should be understood in terms of interest which is only actualized in the pursuant of power. Trade relations, socio-cultural relations, and imperialistic moves, transnational movement of resources and factors of production among state should therefore be examined in this light.

The expansionist motive of the Arabs in the 17th and 18th centuries and of the West which brought them in contact with other regions of the globe can also be holistically understood using the realist approach to international relations among members of the international community. Hence, as a framework for unlocking the riddles of international politics and as a reliable guide for providing a logical and reasonable insights into Africa's encounter with Arab and the West, the Realist approach is adopted, since, it is a case of relation across national boundaries. Finally, the realist model of political motives and manifestation cannot be ignored in today's political complex.

Arab contact with Africa: The contacts between the Arab world and Africa are deeply rooted in the womb of history, as there had existed one form of relationship or the other between the two worlds, links and relationships between these two worlds are ancient beyond calculation

(Jalloh, 1984). Akinsanya (2010), opines that the “relationship between the various city states and empires in the Middle East and their counterparts in Africa are ancient beyond reckonings.” He further reveals that “the collapse of the Roman Empire and its aftermath diminished these connections and destroyed most of the historical records of them”. The destruction of the long rooted historical facts of connections have evolved a general historical framework by various scholars that seeks to explain and link the origin of relationship between Arab and Africa with the spread of Islam into the African continent. Thus, Afro-Arab relations as gathered, so many writings that focus on Islam with little attention to pre-Islamic epoch. However, research has revealed that contacts between the two worlds existed long before the birth of Islam and as such it predates Islam. Long before the birth of Islam there were migrants who journeyed from the Arab world to Africa largely because of the proximity that existed between the two worlds and in part due to the climatic conditions and political conflicts in their homelands. “Group of Arabs thus filtered down and across the red sea and settled on the East African Coast, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan” were the earliest contact points between Arabians and Africans (Akinsanya 2010). Furthermore, evidence of contacts between the two worlds also came to limelight when the Axumites occupying present-day Eritrea and Tigre ruled over the territory of Yemen for more than seventy years, while Ethiopia by the 2nd and 3rd centuries BC, had developed extensive trade relationship with Persian Empire. Records of the Axumites that built a cathedral at Sana to rival the Kaaba in Mecca, reveals the inexorable cultural, political and economic nexus that had developed overtime between the Arabian and the occupants of the Horn of Africa.

The existing relationship received vitality with the advent of Christianity. Christianity spread with the aim of gaining convert from all over and as such, the evangelical trend got to Yemen which was well resisted by the Bedouins, and gained a warm environment among the “settled agriculturalist” in Yemen which made it possible for the formation of a small Christian community founded in Niagran in 4th century before Islam. This evangelical trend also penetrated into Egypt and Nubia which paved the way for the creation of the Egyptian church and in Nubia, Christianity endured as the prevailing religion until much later. Christian’s activities were also recorded to have also touched upon the “Maghreb in the 2nd century via. imperial Rome” As a result, a cultural-religious linkage and contact was established between the two worlds (Akinsanya, 2010).

In 570 AD which was recorded as the year in which (Muhammed) the prophet and bringer of Islamic truth incarnated on earth, the Axumites had confrontations with Mecca and counter confrontations were also recorded.

With the maturing of the prophet came Islam whose primordial contacts in Africa was in Ethiopia, the Prophet Muhammad admonished his devotees to take harbour in Ethiopia in “order to escape persecution from the pagans in Mecca” (Akinsanya, 2010; Jalloh, 1984). These devotees were granted a peaceful entrance and were greeted with blissful hospitality by the then sovereign of Ethiopia. Upon the death of the Emperor, “Muhammed called for a special prayer the first and only one of its kind in Islam” (Akinsanya, 2010). Mazrui reveals that in the seventh century, the Arabs in the name of Islam captured some parts of Africa with this development, the Arab conquest in Africa “initiated two processes: Arabization (through language) and Islamization (through religion). Although, the Egyptians were not originally Arabs, the Islamization took place after the Arab conquest of the territories and led to a reconfiguration in the religious garment of the Egyptians. The ‘Arabization’ of the people began gradually through intermarriage facilitated by the upward lineage system of the Arabs which ensures that the offspring ascends to the more privileged race of the parent. Thus, few years after Muhammed passed on, the Arab had conquered most of the Middle Eastern territories and by “the eleventh century the Arabization of the Maghreb had considerably advanced. Then a general push began Southwards from Egypt, Libya and the Maghreb” (Jalloh, 1984).

However, the advancement of Arab influence in the Savannah regions of Africa was painstaking. Great efforts were made at frustrating the penetration of the Arab It was repelled by the “Mossi and the Bambara and for a long time also by the Fulanis and the Hausa. It was only in the nineteenth century that Islam made rapid advances, under Alhaji Umar in western Sudan, Othman Dan Fodio in northern Nigeria, and the Mahdi Mohammed Ahmad in the Sudan” (Jalloh, 1984). In East African coast, Islam arrived in the 7th century, Islam was imposed over the indigenous settler’s and by the 10th century various Islamic communities had materialized in the Eastern Coast of Africa (Akinsanya, 2010; Jalloh, 1984). Despite the arrival and influence of the Portuguese in the 16th and 17th century, Islam retained its dominance. However, the free flow of the Portuguese was halted when the Oman Arab took over the terrain of Eastern Africa. With this, there was a mass inflow of Arabians into the domain of Eastern Africa. By the 19th century Islam had spread into the interior of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and the Congo, not only did “Arab and Swahili traders settle in the trading posts in the interior and inter marry with the local (African) women, the Muslims communities in Kitato and Safie (Kenya), Tabora and Ujiji (Tanzania) were also reinforced by Asian Muslims coming from the coast”. With this development, much of East Africa got transformed into Islamic empire and “sphere of influence” with the centre in Zanzibar (Akinsanya, 2010).

Hence, the Arabs enjoyed thorough influence over the terrain of Africa and the economic and trade spheres in Africa were largely dominated by the them. By the Trans Saharan Trade and its Slave Trade component, the Arabs were also culprit in the trading of slaves in Africa until they were overran by the European forces which made the Arab World loosen its grip on the continent. However in spite of the change in administration and domination the Arab left a legacy in Africa. Through the linkage of culture, religious and economic institutions and practices the Arab world encounter with Africa have assumed an eternal cloak binding both worlds together. Arabic language and Islam have become indelibly engraved in the Africa system that “a people who were not originally Arabs have come to see themselves more and more as Arabs” and with time, “there were far more Arabs outside Arabia than within”.

The linkages between the two worlds were tautened again with the decolonization of African states. Direct invasion and conquest of the people was no longer possible only formal relations and workings had to remain has most entities had become sovereign state recognised by other members of the international community. Pertinent to note, another turning point Afro-Arab relation was the formation of the Arab league of nations. By the establishment of this league, some Africa states became integrated into the league of Arab nations and this created a stronger bond between Africa and Arab as there now emerged the Arab-African states. There was a strong alliance between the Arab World and Africa with the formation of the Arab League. The newly-formed alliance of Arab states was in the words of Davidson (1985) the “Arab League joined by newly independent Arab-speaking and Muslim countries in Africa, including Libya, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and also by non-Arab but Muslim Somalia”. And during the early years of independence, the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967 ensued creating dissension among the independent states of Africa. As some countries in Africa like Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria were now regarded as Arab nations. The dissension revolved around either to support Israel or support the Arab World, in the early stages, the most African states were rather silent in the reactions to the issue but subsequently the issue became interwoven with Western imperialism and as such “a dramatic step in African support for the Arab cause was taken at the OAU summit in Addis Ababa in June 1971. A call was made for Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories of Egypt, Syria and Jordan as an essential precondition for a settlement” (Jalloh, 1984). Thus, the cause of the Arab world also became the African cause (Davidson, 1985).

Legum (1976) while explaining the development of the Afro-Arab relations asserts that, “Afro-Arab relations ripen when African states broke their diplomatic links with Israel in 1973. For the Arab cause but the simultaneous rise in oil prices came as a severe setback to most African economies”. The effect of the rise in oil

price deepened the interactions between the two world, in January 1974, the Organisation of African Union (OAU) committee of seven met in Cairo with Arab-oil producing countries to seek helpful methods to combat the deleterious effects caused by the oil embargo (Legum 1976). The Arab came up with palliatives measures to assist Africa, a promise of \$200 million and other forms of aids were promised. But as noted by Legum, their subsequent behaviour revealed that their promise was bait and that they are were waiting for Africa to define what they the “Arabs” are paying for. And “in 1 year, the Arabs in many subtle ways pressed for answers”.

Relationship between Africa and Arab has transformed and evolved with the major trends in the international system and in the light of globalization, the socio-economic and political interactions between the two worlds have become sophisticated. Legum (1976) observes the pattern of relationship between the two worlds in the 1970’s, he reveals that in 1974 Tanzania and Syria established a Joint Ministerial link that was to facilitate interactions between the two states. Tanzania also held series of talks with the United Arab Emirates and with Iraq with the goal of promoting economic and political relations between the states. Mali also reached an agreement with Saudi Arabia to promote socio-economic, political and religious cooperation between each other and also in 1975 a Guinea-Arab company was announced while Angola and Mozambique were each promised \$1million from the Arab Fund. Mazrui opines that the relationship between Arab and Africa has always been “asymmetrical with the middle east usually the giver, and the black Africa usually the receiver. Throughout the history of their involvement in Black Africa, the Arabs have been conquerors and liberators, both traders in slaves and purveyors of new ideas”. This suggests that the Arab also have a stake in the economic terrain of African, the telecommunication sector, the tourist industries among others are some of the major interest area of the Arab. Although, some of the Arab countries are enmeshed in the struggle for development the United Arab Emirates have taken a lead initiative in investing in Africa. Afshin (2015) noted that “Investments by UAE state-owned entities in sea port infrastructure (DP World) and telecommunications (Etisalat) have supported the continent’s connectivity both internally and with the world” UAE-based companies have financed and participated heavily in growing number of African markets. Fly emirates, Arab contractors.

Africa and the West: The history of Africa’s encounter with the West predates the and formal interaction of colonialism. For the purpose of providing a concise retrospection of the encounter of Africa and the West, the paper traces the linkages of the two worlds to the era of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade into the modern formal and informal interactions that exist between the world.

The entrance of Europeans to the West Coast of Africa marked the beginning of a new circle in the formation of Africa slave trade. The Atlantic slave trade emerged as the main preoccupation of European nations in Africa in the beginning of eighteenth century. Portugal played active role in the orchestration of slave trade in Africa. They were the first to gain entrance into the African soil as far back as 1415's (George, 2002). Portuguese slavery activities in the Congo and Angola were well packed as it was perpetrated freely and away from rivalry among the contending European powers. The traditional rulers were wooed into selling of slave to the European powers. The Portuguese war of conquest was a supplementary tactic to increase the number of slaves that are to be distributed to the various destinations.

The trade slave took a new dimension when with the discovery of New World by Columbus, there was huge demand of slaves and this led to the intensification of slave trade. This was inevitable rising from the invasion of the "Anglo-Saxons into Americans, the establishments of tobacco, sugar and cotton plantations as well as the establishment of gold, diamond and silver mines there was a phenomenal demand for labour which indigenous red Indian population could not effectively satisfy". Hence, companies were institutionalized to coordinate the entire activity of slave trade. The Portuguese, the French, Germans, Swedes, Spaniards and the British were all culprits in the trade in slave during this period. Okpeh noted that throughout the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, slaves were shipped out from Africa and this constituted a major trading article in the Euro-African relations. The British initiated several excuses for invading communities for slaves. Hence according to Rodney, "to discuss trade between Africans and Europeans ...before colonial rule is virtually to discuss slave trade". In all, it is pertinent to note that Africans became enslaved in three different ways: first, offenders sold by the head of the community as penalty; secondly, domestic slaves resold; and thirdly, prisoners of war.

The slave trade vanished with the end of mercantilism and with the advent of industrial revolution (Amin 1981). The industrial revolution in Europe which led to a gradual de-emphasis on slave trade brought about dramatic change in the socio-political configuration of Europe. The industrial revolution led to a modernization of the processing of raw material and of producing goods consequently, raw materials became consumed at an accelerated pace and this necessitated the huge demand for raw materials and the demand for slaves became oblivion. The greed for quick turn over and astronomical profit meant intensifying the expansion and possibilities for industrial growth beyond the European continent. The imperial powers recognised that by taking control of the Africa territories, they could meet these demands by

getting cheap raw materials and labour from Africa and by extension, ensure industrial success and overall economic success. Thus Iweriebor (2011) summarized that colonialism:

Developed in the 19th century following the collapse of the profitability of the slave trade, its abolition and suppression, as well as the expansion of the European capitalist industrialization., including the demand for assured sources of raw materials, the search for guaranteed markets and profitable investments outlets spurred the European scramble and the partition and eventual conquest of Africa.

However, not all of the European nations had such imperial ambitions for Africa; it was well contested and aspired among the ranks of the continental powers of Germany, Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Belgium (Davidson, 1985; Iweriebor, 2011; Palmberg, 1983). Britain and France were nonetheless at the vanguard of imperialism, they were cut in the struggle for domination, and the means to this end was found in colonialism. More so, the political struggle for dominance among the European powers made external control of colonies a fine enterprise for acquiring dominance in the European political competition. There were colonial conquests and counter conquests and this made the competition and struggle for colonies became so fierce that war was threatened between the imperialist powers" (Iweriebor, 2011; Palmberg, 1983). The attempt to quell the rising tension made the German councillor Otto Von Bismarck to convey a diplomatic conference of colonial powers in the late 19th century. This led to the scramble and eventual partitioning of Africa among the imperial powers, between the periods of (1884-1885) in Berlin. Hence the Berlin Act emerged and stipulated the procedures for the annexation of Africa and relation between the imperial powers in Africa. The principle of notification of other power of a territorial annexation, freedom of trade in the Congo Basin, freedom of navigation on the Niger and Congo rivers were some of the major articles drafted in the Berlin Act (Iweriebor, 2011). Palmberg noted that, the Berlin conference merely acknowledged earlier colonial conquest as the actual division had begun before the Berlin Conference. France invaded Algeria as far back as 1830, invaded Tunisia in 1883 and conquered Senegal in 1860's. Britain on the other hand, made the Gold coast a colony in 1874 and invaded Egypt in 1882 and also took over South Africa after the British-French war in 1793-1804 (Palmberg, 1983).

The entrance of the imperial powers first received a warm welcoming from the people of Africa who were well accustomed to receiving strangers but as the kernel of colonialism became evident the colonial conquest mission was challenged and resistance to colonial invasion manifested among the people of Africa who used

several means to resist the invaders. Although, large resistance emerged against the colonial powers, from the Ashanti by Elhad, to Omar in Senegal by AlamySamoriToure in Guinea, Abd el Kader in Algeria and in Rhodesia where resistance was orchestrated by Shona and the Ndebele, in Morocco, the peasant revolted against France and Spain but however the people gave in and colonialism triumphed. It was only Emperor Menelik II in Ethiopia that succeeded in stopping the Italian invasion of 1896. Hence, by the beginning of the 20th century with the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia the whole of Africa was divided and under the control of the imperial powers (Davidson, 1985; Palmberg, 1983). Eighty percent of Africa territories was controlled by the three most industrialized European states (Germany, Britain and France). Colonialism in West Africa was dominated largely by France and Britain, France created the "Afrique Occidentale Francaise" which was the Federation of French West Africa with a Centre in Dakar Senegal (Khadiagala and Lyons, 2001). Britain administrated her colony distinctly without federating the colonies.

The colonialist ensured the cultivation of exports corps across the colonies and various form of taxation, hut tax, head tax among others were instituted as part of the measures to generate income for the colonialist and thus, in a subtle way created compulsory forced labour. Palmberg argues that the "proletarianization of the Africans was brought about in two main ways; either the land was taken to force the Africans to offer themselves as cheap labour" or the imposition of taxes to ensure that they offer themselves as labour as a means of generating income to pay such taxes. As reported by a colonialist newspaper, *The East African Standard* in 1913; "we regard taxation as the only possible method to force the natives to leave their reserves to look for work only this way will living costs be raised for the native and in this way supply and price of labour depend" (cited in Palmberg, 1983). It was in this way that the mining economy in South Africa, the Plantation and mining industry in Rhodesia and many other parts of Africa gathered the necessary labour. In summary, the colonial mission and administration created poverty and dependency syndrome was injected into the economic stream of the continent. Through the production of cash crop, the colonized territories were linked to the global market which amounted to gain for Africa but in the words of Davidson (1985) "it was a gain with several big handicaps". The mono-economic culture of most Africa states developed during these periods Senegal with its groundnut, Ghana with Cocoa, Tanzania with coffee and Mozambique with cotton all became dependent on the exportation of these goods to the advanced capitalist world (Palmberg, 1983).

The end of the second World War opened a new circle in the colonialist and colonized relationship and few

years afterwards the independence for most African state manifested. Although, the United States of America played significant roles in the struggle for independence of the African states, this role was inevitable due to the fact that "formal colonial rule was an impediment to the rational development of a global economy under America leadership" (Falola, 2002). Thus, with the end of colonialism, the question was how to continue the exploitation of the third world as cheaply and as easily as possible" (Palmberg, 1983). The answer to this question was found in what scholars identify as "neo-colonialism". Nkrumah (1965) gave a succinct description of the concept of neo-colonialism, according to him:

Faced with the militant people of the ex-colonial territories in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, imperialism simply switches tactics. Without a qualm it dispenses with its flags, and even with certain of its more hated expatriate officials. This means, so it claims, that it is 'giving' independence to its former subjects, to be followed by 'aid' for their development under cover of such phrases, however, it devises innumerable ways to accomplish objectives formerly achieved by naked colonialism. It is this sum total of these modern attempts to perpetuate colonialism while at the same time talking about 'freedom' which has come to be known as neo-colonialism (Palmberg, 1983).

Scholars have situated the contemporary relationship between Africa and the West within the compass of neo-colonialism, the various handouts giving to Africa states in form of aids, the growing activities of the multinational cooperation's and the proliferation of foreign direct investments have been used to concretize the arguments of the neo-colonialist persuasion. The argument centres on the fact that the African states merely were giving "flag" or political independence with the economic domain tightly knotted to the apron string of the advanced capitalist societies. The distortion of Africa's cultural tradition and their eclipse by alien cultural values sculpted an important part of Africa's encounter and "the survival of these values after the formal granting of independence smoothed the way to Africa's transition from a state of colonial to neo-colonial dependency" (Daniel, 1981). Although, Akanegbu (2014) argues that Multinational cooperation's are benevolent organisation to the economic life of the Africa states, the fact remains that the socio, political and economic institutions and practices are greatly dependent on the western world.

Similitude in the Encounters with the Arabs and the West: From the records bore by history, Africa's encounter and relationship with both Arab and the West are characterised with certain similar factors and conditions. It therefore, becomes pivotal to dwell an analogy of Africa's encounters with Arab and the Western world.

The first similarity between Africa's encounter with Arab and the West is that, both were ushered by conquest and invasion. The Arab Invaded and conquered African territories from West, North and Eastern Africa and this was also true with the encounter with the West. The invasion and conquest of Africa by the West also ravaged the West, East and Northern Africa.

Another notable similarity between the two experiences is the fact that both encounters distorted the identity of Africa and left behind a mixed identity in the form of Arab Africans, Anglophone Africans, Lusophone Africans and francophone Africans.

Again the West and Arab engaged in trading Africans for slaves at different points in time. The Spanish, Portuguese along with their western counterpart saw trade slaves as an adventurous enterprise and participated heavily in trade slave in Africa. Also the Arab stimulated by various reasons also participated in the trade slave and according to Palmberg (1983), the Arabs started slave trading in East Africa in the 1830's. This reveals that both indulged in the transportation and exportation of Africa's resources in one way or the other. The imperial power and the Arab transported both human and non-human resources belonging to Africa without returns to the development of the continent. Flowing from this, it is arguable that both encounters have impeded the development of African states through invasion, conquest and exploitation of human and non-human resources. Palmberg reveals that "over 10 million Africans were sold out as slaves...although, they were more as some died in the Atlantic. Africa lost about 20-30 million human beings during the slave trade" (Palmberg, 1983). These were people that would have added up to the labour force available to the African continent in the struggle for development. Therefore there is a tiny resemblance in Africa's encounter with Arab and the Western World.

Obstacles presented from the encounters: Africa's relationship with the outside world has informed some obstacles that threaten the possibilities of development for the African states. Farah *et al.* (2011) posit that Africa is confronted with so many challenges which are consequent of African's encounter with the outside world particularly with the West. These challenges are in respect to "colonial legacy; foreign aid; Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)" among others. They argue that "colonization distorted and retarded the pace and tempo of cultural growth and the trend of civilisation in Africa". This has been one of the major challenges of Africa's encounter with the outside world. The invasion of Africa by the Arab world created the identity of the Arab African's who predominately speak the Arabic language. As Jalloh (1984) observes, Arabic has penetrated greatly into African languages, "most notably Swahili, which is the official language in the United Republic of Tanzania and

is widely spoken in Kenya, Uganda and in parts of Zaire and Mozambique..." he further reveals that "about 20 per cent of the basic vocabulary of Swahili comes from Arabic...Other languages heavily influenced by Arabic are Hausa and Fulani" (Jalloh, 1984). On the other hand, the French policy of assimilation also, produced a similar effect with some states in Africa adopting the French language as the official and national language and even prefers to associate under the identity of "francophone African states". The British conquest in Africa also laid down the English Language for a greater part of African states. Mazrui contends that European language attained political legitimacy in Africa more completely than any other colonized continents (the Asian countries like India Indonesia and Vietnam). Hence, Africa is divided and categorized by the external language they have acquitted and retained the Arab, Anglophone and Francophone and Lusophone African states.

Furthermore, through the vortex of western civilization, the indigenous culture of Africa is threatened with the possibilities of gradual extinction. The replacement of institution and values with that orchestrated and sold out by the Western world is stifling the possibility of cultural sustainability in Africa. As captured by Farah *et al.* (2011) "the effectiveness of colonization in changing the sphere of life in African societies is not hard to establish. Its political effects include western civilization being submerged and with the dismantling of indigenous institutions and cultures by instilling foreign rule" (Farah *et al.*, 2011).

Nowhere else is the challenges more conspicuous than in the economic sphere. Although, the encounter with the western world integrated the Africa economy to the global economy, however, the process of this integration is questionable. Africa was integrated as unequal partners, as "a complimentary economy" to serve primarily the advanced capitalist economy (Palmberg, 1983). The effects of a compulsory agriculture that was channelled towards the production of primary products and cash crops turned Africa states to a producer of primary goods. Consequently, in the words of Farah *et al.* (2011) "Africa concentrated on producing more of what was needed less and produced less of what was needed most. Africa was perpetually turned to the production of raw materials, a situation that caused unequal exchange in -- and balance of -- trade". As Davidson (1985) reveals, locally produced cotton constituted 80% of Uganda's export in 1929, 79% of Cocoa constituted exports for Ghana. While crude oil has been the major commodity for generating wealth in Nigeria and Angola, and despite this, as noted in the Africa prosperity report (2016), "oil heavy economies Angola, Nigeria, Congo and Sudan are noted for their large prosperity deficits". This process as led to a perpetual dependency syndrome that litters the economic sphere of Africa states.

Another challenges that confronts Africa is the question of foreign aid, proliferation of multinational organisation and the increase involvement of the International monetary fund. These three key elements have been argued by Marxist scholars to be interconnected and serves as effective mechanism that further the dependency of Africa states. It has been argued that the donor handout giving by the donor countries and agencies are traps to sell out the ideology and retain the dominance and influence of the donors. Palmberg observes that the French development aid to Africa returns to France via the franc zone; and that a growing channel of aid is handed over to Africa through the IMF and the World Bank. He posits that these institutions are however “created to promote United States policies” and thus help maintain the influence of the Western world in Africa. The Arab world also seeks dominance and relevance in Africa through the various aid packages. The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa that was established on the 30th of march 1975, with the sole objective of facilitating and promoting African development, through long and short term loan and also by encouraging Arab investment in Africa and where necessary with the help of the Western expertize, the Special Arab Fund for Africa and the Arab African Bank are all indicative of this fact.

CONCLUSION

It is recognizable that in all of the encounters with the outside world, Africa has been used as a source of wealth; the transfer of human and non-human resources from the continent has served the purpose of developing other Metropolis outside the Africa continent. Africa has been used as a source for amassing and acquiring influence, economic prosperity and power in the global arena both by the Arab and the Western world. The invasion, conquest, colonialism and neo-colonial relations can all be described as well devised schemas for domination and amassing wealth and satisfying specific ‘interest’. While commenting on Afro-Arab relations, Sammy KumBuo argues that “the cosmetic of Arab policies towards black Africa are likely to be revealed in the not too distant future”. The outside world wields all various measures to achieve “their interest” while Africa has only been responding to the actions of both the Arab and the West. The presence of the identities of the west and Arab in Africa reveals that the two worlds will always have a stake in Africa and consequently wield a level of influence on the continent since Africa is tied to the apron strings of both religious and language identity of the West and Arab.

Development has become a tough nut to crack for African states as they are greatly incapacitated by the aids, capital flight by multinational cooperation’s from

both the Arab and the Western world. The lack of technological transfer and the fading narrative of the Africa culture are some of the cogent challenges facing the continent which are consequent of the encounter with the Arab and the West. As a derivative therefore, Onimode (1988) argues that “fundamentally, the African crisis is one of underdevelopment, the central problematic of the African continent and the third world generally” he contends further that the escalation and realities of the “contradictions of underdevelopment are visible in food crisis, deplorable mass poverty, decimating disease, pervasive illiteracy, technological backwardness, prostrate external dependence and mounting foreign debts” Hence, the colonial system and the inherited problematic of Africa’s encounters serves predominately as a negative point of reference for the African concert of nations (Young, 1995).

However, the era of been ‘used’ and improvised by the West and Arab had long gone, contemporary realities shows that African states offer themselves willing as tools to be used while not recognising the importance of the arguments of the realist that all states continually seeks to acquire and sustain power. Furthermore, in the international system, technology has become a means to amassing power as technology transform the entire activities of the state from, military, to economic, and socio-political spheres, the super powers today wield this technological advancement as a weapon for maintain dominance, influence and relevance in global politics. But African states on the contrary, are yet to appreciate the importance of technological revolution and they are also yet to present a comprehensive definition of their interest as such they are merely positioned as tools to fulfilling the interest of others and responding to actions of other state. It can be argued that it is not the doing of the West that long after colonialism, Africa cannot develop her technological sector to produce both primary and secondary goods. Neither is it the doing of the West that Africa continually seeks for one form of aid or another. Rather it can be regarded as internal problem sustained by African states themselves.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consequently, therefore, while appreciating the inevitable fact that Africa was used as a source of wealth and as an element to acquire influence and power through various legacies, the fact should also be stated that Africa temporarily offers the possibilities of been used. In view of these reoccurring mishaps on the continent this paper suggests that. African states must first holistically understand the dynamics surrounding international politics and reconcile with the fact that no state is naturally, so, kind that it places other state interest above its own interest. The failure to engage in profitable

technological transfer which is now a means of acquiring power in the international system is also part of the dysfunctions in Africa where scientific and technological advancement culture is very low. The importance of technology has not been fully appreciated by African states and as such they are perpetually at the mercy of the advanced technological capitalist states.

Hence, rather than clamouring for technology transfer, Africa states should develop the receptive capacity that can accommodate such transfer of technology. Lessons should be drawn from the fact that technology does not fall from above, it is a product of effective research and development, the European states developed their research and the got better in terms of technology. The fundamental question for Africa is: how can we develop what we have to its fullest value and reduce external dependency? In answering this question, African states must develop the 'receptive capacity' that can make a systemic transfer of technology possible. The education system that can drive the possibilities for this must be revived to offer it best and the government must be willing to spend heavily on research and development. This will create the enable environment and conditions that can enable a feasible, sustainable and systematic transfer of technology. In other words the capacity would have been developed such that a discovered technology can be learnt, improved upon and owned by the states in Africa and consequently shrink endless importations of irrational products (chocolates, refined oil among others) and end unreasonable dependency. And all these cannot be achieved where there are short-sighted leaders that cannot see further than to enrich their personal accounts but where there are pragmatic leadership and leadership must also not be conceived of in narrow terms of top-down approach but a bottom-up approach must be engaged (i.e., beginning from the family).

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