Africa’s Social-Economic Weakness As An Effects Of The Atlantic

Africa is one of the wealthiest continents in the world in terms of resources and people. Sadly this wealth is not reflected in the Afric? th?t is known today. In 2015 most of the poor lived in the Sub-Saharan Afric? with an average of 41% and of the world’s 28 poorest countries (Brookings 2018). The wealth on the other hand is been seen flourishing in the European region; a price th?t is paid by the Afric?n indigenous being forced across the oceans as slaves, and natural resources being ripped from Afric?n lands to satisfy the rich in a distant county like Belgium. The Afric?n continent is consequently exhausted by conquest after conquest and being extracted of resources to feed the ignorant lifestyles in the west. The Atlantic slave trade and coloni?lism is the biggest contributor to Afric?’s weak social economic status. This writing will focus on the external and internal factors th?t have played a vital role in Afric?’s current economic status analysing different systematic contributors and historic background.

The historic transatlantic slavery and coloni?lism had many external factors th?t contributed to Afric?’s slow to almost no development growth; these were the exploitation of its people, leading them to a dependency economy.

Even though the current rapid growth of human trafficking (also trafficking for the purpose of forced labour) has been associated with the end of the Cold War era, the Afric?n continent has a longer experience of forced labour and slavery. Colonial states organised and implemented various forms of compulsory or even forced labour on the ruled population th?t lasted decades. However, contemporary victims of forced labour in Afric? are mostly exploited in the private economy – often within the informal sector (Caritas 2016).

Mainly, Britain, America, Europe and Afric? profited from the slave trade. The trade also created, sustained and relied on a large support network of shipping services, ports, and finance and insurance companies, employing thousands of people. The processing of raw materials th?t were harvested or extracted by the slaves created new industries where plantation owners profited from the use of free labour.

The slave trade became a major enterprise in the 17th century, when King James I set up the first monopoly company to trade with Afric? in 1618. Britain acquired colonies in America and the Caribbean and demand for slaves to work the tobacco, rice, sugar and other crops on plantations grew. London was the centre of this early trade. In 1698 the monopoly on trade with Afric? was abolished, opening up the valuable opportunity to merchants from other ports such as Bristol and Liverpool. Wealth from the direct trade in slaves and from the plantations came back to Britain and was invested in buildings which stand today, a proof of continuous exploitation of Afric?n people and drawing out wealth from the continent (South Afric?n History 2019).

The Atlantic slave trade in its other external factors of influence has also made Afric? a dependency continent widely on specialisation and the un-coordinated transport system.

Coloni?lism not only exploited resources and people but also permanently specialised Afric? in

the primary production of raw materials. The “extraversion” and “monoculture” of Afric?n economies is widely lamented and condemned as a victory of colonial interests over Afric?n interests. The risks entailed in extreme specialisation, however, need to be set against the long-run income gain to be expected from the exploitation of comparative advantage (Journals 2010).

The last factor th?t made Afric? dependent on outside trade is the uncoordinated railways constructed during coloni?lism 1800s. Building railways is usually an economic advantage to allow a networking of trade between supplier and consumer in vast continents like Afric?. We would assume th?t Afric? would have benefited from this infrastructure but it did not. Colonial railroads are especially interesting because the colonisers did not necessarily place the railroad by selecting locations of intrinsically high economic potential; but rather the cheapest or shortest route. For example, the purpose of the Kenya-Uganda railroad, built in 1901, was to connect Uganda to the coast at the lowest possible cost. Kenya was merely a transit territory; the railroad bypassed highly populated areas en route to Lake Victoria, unlocking East Afric?. In Ghana, the purpose was to connect European owned mines and for military domination within West Afric?. Of course, the railroad itself provided an advantage to the locations it passed through. However, in the Afric?n context this advantage disappeared over time. Railroad systems collapsed after independence due to mismanagement, lack of maintenance and the adoption of new transportation technology – motor roads. In other words the railway network was so disjointed it would seem th?t its main purpose was to extract materials but not for development. Ultimately, the long-term benefit of the railroads depends on whether there are strong local increasing returns. These may come from the co-location of factors and industries. In approaching this research there is a coordination problem as it is not necessarily obvious which locations should have accumulated these factors. Railroads could have solved the coordination problem and defined the economic geography in this way (International growth centre 2019).

The second factor th?t has contributed to Afric?’s weak social economic is the internal factors like the loss of human dignity and the limited education.

The Afric?n continent has suffered decades of slavery and oppression since the 1400s, which naturally dehumanised the indigenous and created a culture of violence and corruption.

The dehumanisation of slaves th?t makes people like property have implicated traumatic experience and devalued the worth of the Afric?n people. The Congo for instance was a population considered to be heavily traumatised under the iron grip of King Leopold of Belgium; more so th?t the Congo was considered a personal property rather than a country. In the turn of events, a young Congolese army officer, Mobutu Sese Seko, soon ruled the country as a brutal dictator. Because Mobutu was staunchly anti-communist, the United States gave him over a billion dollars in civilian and military aid over the course of his 32 year reign. Like Leopold, Mobutu exploited the country for his personal gain and became one of the most infamous examples of kleptocracy, a habit of exploiting people for personal gain (Modern world history 2019).

The contemporary global society perceives Afric? as a violent and corrupt region because of continuous conflict, civil war and hostile environments. However it is not known th?t the contributors to the violence and corruption started during colonisation.

Violence became a norm because of historic practices during settlement, slavery and coloni?lism therefore preventing further development of any sort. The rule of colonial difference dictated and justified techniques of violence th?t were by the same token considered unacceptable in conflicts between so-called ‘civilized’ nations and, in many instances, slaughter was in fact the “ Way”; in theory and in practice(History from Oxford 2018).

Corruption was a practice th?t was also a norm because of oppressing colonisers and how they treated the indigenous unfairly. Hence the cycle continued on with every Afric?n leader imposing a rule th?t was not transparent and not accountable. Most well-intentioned corruption-busting remedies in Afric? fail because the root causes are often poorly understood. Post-independence Afric?n countries inherited deeply corrupt institutions, laws and values from colonial and apartheid governments. Instead of changing these for the better, Afric?n ruling parties and leaders entrenched these deeply compromised governance systems (IOL 2012, Afric?ns inherited corruption).

Ideologies in the modern era of 1940s also played a big part in destabilizing Afric?’s counties. The practice of ‘bad governance’ emphasised by corrupted leaders and dictatorial tendencies which are themselves colonialists and cold war super powers allowed to fester as rewards of ideological allegiance. The USA and USSR of capitalism and socialism campaigned in the Afric?n region by supporting states and war lords in the Cold War. Somehow a practice th?t is very familiar with its earlier colonisers (JSTOR 2019).

The last internal factor th?t contributes to Afric?’s slow development is the limited education. The economic status of Afric? is reflected in its leaders and people. Hence it is reflected th?t the region is in slow progress of development because of the limited education applied during coloni?lism. Education was not meant to equip the average Afric?n to retaliate for change but rather to be aware of the small tasks th?t is required for him, as a consequence, an entire population had limited knowledge than of their predecessors and had little to no motive of self determination (JSTOR 2019). Limited education is reflected on leadership. For instance a trend of leaders in Afric? post coloni?lism seemed to practice corruption as a norm. Hence we must explore the historic implications of coloni?lism and the limitation th?t was placed on education for the mass Afric?ns; a breed of leaders is birthed as an outcome of the limited knowledge of governing (JSTOR 2019).

Can Afric? ever come out of being colonised? Or will Afric? ever reap the fruit of her labour from their own backyard? The answer lies in reversing the bad practices in all aspects and make known th?t Afric? can support herself. If Afric?’s people were not exploited it would be full of self determined power houses fighting in the global arena for trade and equality. It would mean th?t Afric? would never have to depend on some foreign trade partner th?t is of the west but sustainably develop unity within sovereign states. If Afric? was decolonised in its own term the world would see institution th?t is so powerful it would relinquish any foreign oppressor th?t threatens her people. In the west on the hand we can contribute by advocating what the governments are doing, especially exposing what they are capable of. After-all history can repeat itself!