

**“NOT NATURAL BUT ARTIFICIAL COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE  
AFRICAN ELITES AND THE IMPERALISTS”: DEPENDENCY THEORY  
AND AFRICAN UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN PERSPECTIVE**

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**Abstract**

*Dependency theory as a social, economic and political concept to explain the perpetual perpetration of underdevelopment and why the gap between the rich and poor has not abated seems to gather momentum. The economic forces of production and consumption, and political forces which control global political economy, orchestrated by dependency theory towards the causes of underdevelopment in African states cannot be also overemphasized. Therefore, this paper focuses on “not natural but artificial collaboration between the African elites and the imperialists”: dependency theory and African underdevelopment in perspective. Applying secondary sources of data, this paper argues that underdevelopment of African states is not naturally instituted but structurally and artificially made, and further constructively re-enforced by the postulations of dependency theory and imperialist self-centeredness. However, the paper finds that the African elites of the satellite states provided close socio-economic and political ties to the metropolitan elites, thereby, playing a crucial role in retaining, maintaining and sustaining the conditions of economic dependency of African states. The paper concludes that dependency theory and underdevelopment of African states will continue to exist in a complex and multi-dimensional variable in as much as Africa remains economically undiversified, and the suppliers of raw materials in a world where the imperialist still controls the global economic system and factors production.*

**Keywords:** Dependency Theory, African Underdevelopment, African Elites Collaboration, Colonialism and Imperialism

**Introduction**

The International Political Economy (IPE) which deals with the relationships between politics and economics (that is, the study of political units and political relationships, and economic and economic relationships) are relevant for the

understanding world economic relations as it regards dependency theory and African underdevelopment. S. O. Ajayi indicates that, “the evolution of the International Political Economy presently in practice did not grow spontaneously, however, it dates back to the fifteenth century when independent sovereign states in the modern circumstances started to unite”.<sup>1</sup>

State as a prime actor in international system discerns its international political economic interest on the basis of a set ideas or beliefs on account of how the global political economy operates and what profits exist towards it.<sup>2</sup> This global political economic relation which state is an active player is divided into three subsystems namely; the Western system of interdependence, the North-South system of dependence and the East-West system of independence.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, this research considers the ongoing introduction, conceptual analysis of dependency theory and African underdevelopment, colonialism and imperialism as the root of underdevelopment in Africa, dependency theory and underdevelopment of Africa: a collaborative operation of the imperialists and African elites, dependency theory and underdevelopment of Africa in perspective and conclusion.

### **Conceptual Analysis of Dependency theory and African Underdevelopment**

Dependency theory is an economic system that seeks to explain why economically industrialized countries become wealthy and less economically industrialized countries become poor. E. Kalu, quoting Dos Santos describes dependency as:

*... condition which shapes a certain structure of the world economy such that it favours some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economics ..., a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which they are subjected to service.*<sup>4</sup>

Daniel A. Offiong argues that dependency theory has conditioned contemporary underdevelopment in Africa ... hence, Africa became oriented to the export of primary products, under the control of metropolitan capital and constituted as markets for imported manufactures from the same metropolitan countries.<sup>5</sup>

The central arguments of the dependency theory are that external conditions and exploitation of the less economically industrialized countries by the economically industrialized countries are responsible for the underdevelopment and persistent dependence of the former on the latter.<sup>6</sup> Supporters of dependency theory are: Raul Prebisch, Henrique Cardoso, Hans Singer, Andre Gunder Frank, Walter Rodney, Theotino Dos Santos, Daniel A. Offiong and others. Dependency theory has the postulation of the economically/advanced industrialized (core) country while Africa the Third-World South (Periphery) is the less economically industrialized countries. Therefore, dependence exists whereby colonized areas (African states) became independent, the core (Western countries) continued to exploit the periphery (Africa) through neo-imperialism, not just by outright occupation of the area but indirect domination via military interventions, control of international organizations, biased

Exploitation of Africa is exercised through indirect control and this is driven by highly industrialized countries needs for "cheap primary resources, external markets, profitable investment opportunities, and low-wage labour".<sup>8</sup> Africa produces low-cost, low-profit, primary products such as agricultural products and raw materials that subsisted the imperialist production of high-priced and high-profit manufactured goods in which majority of them are eventually sold to Africa.<sup>9</sup> Admittedly, it can be said that Western country's African economic relations which integrated Africa into their model of economic system, operating in disequilibrium, occasioned by advanced technological outfit, and quest for supply of raw materials clearly caused African underdevelopment within the concept of dependency theory.<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, underdevelopment is not the absence of development because from the societal point of view, every people have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent. However, underdevelopment makes sense only as a means of comparative analysis of societal development. This is very much tied to the fact that human social development has been uneven and from a strictly economic view-point, some human groups have advanced further by producing more and becoming wealthier. Underdevelopment is a term often used to refer to economic underdevelopment, symptoms of which include lack of access to job opportunities, health care, drinkable water, food, education and housing.<sup>11</sup> It takes place when resources are not used to their full socio-economic potential, resulting from the complex interplay of internal and external factors that allow less developed countries only a lop-sided development progression, hence underdeveloped nations are characterized by a wide disparity between their rich and poor populations, and an unhealthy balance of trade.<sup>12</sup>

Walter Rodney upholds that:

*one of the ideas behind underdevelopment is a comparative one as it is possible to compare the economic conditions at two different periods for the same country and determine whether or not it had developed. Again, a second and even more indispensable component of modern underdevelopment is that it expresses a particular relationship of exploitation: namely, the exploitation of one country by another. All of the countries named as "underdeveloped" in the world are exploited by others; and the underdevelopment with which the world is now preoccupied is a product of capitalist, imperialist, and colonialist exploitation.*<sup>13</sup>

The underdeveloped nations therefore have become and remain underdeveloped because they are economically dominated by developed capitalist nations that have continually been extracting wealth from them. In this view, the development of the rich nations and the underdevelopment of the poor nations are but two sides of the same coin, as underdevelopment of some nations have made development for other nations possible, and the development of other nations made the underdevelopment of other nations possible. The primary victims of this process are the vast majorities of the African states. While, the greatest benefits go to capitalists in the metropolitan countries, as well as to the agricultural and industrial African elites of the satellite countries who play a crucial role to sustain economic dependency<sup>14</sup>

more thoroughly in Theotonio Dos Santos expression as quoted by Chaliand Gerald when he said, three historical forms of dependency exist through which the underdeveloped nations like Africa passed:

*First of these he calls colonial dependency. Under this form of dependency, which began as early as the sixteenth century in some parts of the world, European capitalist powers colonized pre-capitalist regions and established a monopoly over land, mines, and labour. Surplus wealth was extracted from these regions by means of European control over trade relations. The economic character of these colonized regions was powerfully shaped by their subordination to European nations. A second is financial-industrial dependency. This form of dependence began in the late nineteenth century. It was characterized by the expansion of European industrial capital (as opposed to the earlier merchant capital) into the backward regions of the world. This form of dependency was part and parcel of the monopoly phase of capitalist development. Financial-industrial dependency involved heavy investment of big capitalists in the world's backward regions mainly for the purpose of producing raw materials to be exported back to the core nations.<sup>15</sup>*

Therefore, the operation of the imperialist system bears major responsibility for African economic retardation by draining African wealth and by making it impossible to develop more rapidly the resources of the continent. Secondly, one has to deal with those African elites who manipulate the system and act as agents or accomplices of the said system.

### **Colonialism and Imperialism as the root of Underdevelopment in Africa**

Colonialism and imperialism undoubtedly characterized the capitalist's policy to which the root cause of underdevelopment in Africa emerged were closely related parts of the phenomenon that heavily influenced the world in multivariate manners can be discussed, defended, denounced, and died for. Kaarbo and Lee Ray defined imperialism as the domination of a population and territory by another state, and by explorers, traders, and then colonizers who began the exploitation of the economic and human resource of the conquered areas.<sup>16</sup> Supporting Kaarbo and Lee Ray position, Palmer and Perkins put forward that imperialism means domination of non-European native races by totally dissimilar European nations, and they went further to argue that imperialism is the employment of the engine of government and diplomacy to acquire territories, protectorates, and sphere of influence occupied usually by other races or peoples, and to promote industrial, trade, and investment opportunities.<sup>17</sup>

Colonialism is the practice by which a powerful country directly controls less powerful countries and uses their resources to increase her own power and wealth. It refers to situation where by one country take full or partial political control of another country and occupy it with settlers for purposes of profiting from their resources and economy. Colonialism is a relationship between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives

of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule.<sup>18</sup>

It is argued that colonialism and imperialism that unfolded, over centuries, were crucial to the growth of capitalism in the West and underdevelopment in Africa. Underdevelopment of Africa was in fact the product of centuries of colonialism and imperialism in different guises. Turning Africa into a conveyor belt for raw materials and industrial goods established transportation and communication systems. Ironic but pacified minimally educated labour force and administrative apparatuses were instituted in place. Infrastructure such as roads were built not only to facilitate the movement of commodities and machinery, but also expulsion of the indigenous population from their land to the areas of forced cultivation of cash crops. Industrial development was thwarted in Africa herself because manufacturing and the processing of raw materials happened exclusively overseas.<sup>19</sup>

Europeans divide-and-conquer tactics won a tiny section of African rulers to back the annexation by one power versus another. One of the decisive features of the colonial system was the presence of African elites serving as economic, political or cultural agents of the European colonialists. With the roles of the African elites as they were “puppets” of “metropolitan” capitalism, the presence of a group of African sell-outs became part of the definition of underdevelopment. Colonialism and imperialism in Africa and other parts of the world formed an indispensable link in a chain of events which made possible the technological transformation of the European capitalism. Copper from the Congo, iron from West Africa, chrome from Rhodesia and South Africa, etc., took capitalist development to unprecedented heights of investible surpluses. African trade not only generated economic growth and profits but created capacity for future growth in the metropolises, which brought the global centers of political and economic power located in Europe at the detriment of Africans.<sup>20</sup>

Colonial policies and imperialistic tendencies heightened exploitation, such as those preventing Africans from growing cash crops drove workers into forced labour like the building of infrastructure to facilitate extraction. Thus, capital accumulation was derived at the expense of greatly-weakened African states and economies, effectively reversing previous development. These two processes were dialectically related. The wealth that was created by African labour and from African resources was grabbed by the capitalist countries of Europe; and in the second place, restrictions were placed upon African capacity to make the maximum use of its economic potential.<sup>21</sup>

As a result of colonialism and imperialism, the British employed indirect rule of administration whereby they operated through the already existing local power structure involving Kings, Chiefs and other elders in their colony. Given the kind of potentials found in Africa, occupation and invasion was almost inevitable as the Europeans enslaved and rubbed Africans their God gifted potentials. Europeans in their greed and selfishness took advantage of the African weakness, incomparable with their advanced technologies. The overwhelming economic benefits the Europeans envisaged brought along imperialism that kept Africa under bondage for centuries. Africans suffered from unfair taxation, cultural confusion, and expropriation of land, exploitation of labour and the loss of their mineral wealth to Europeans.<sup>23</sup>

Colonialism and imperialism intricacies, nonetheless, were seen in the types of disseminated information which psychologically justify their activities in Africa. Education was also used by the colonists and imperialists to exploit Africa. The European countries created curriculum that was informed by imperialistic tendencies rather than practical education. Hence, the imperialists through colonialism built a system of education that was not based on creativity, productivity and solution finding, but, one on paper works and theoretical explanations. While the Europeans were busy producing and innovating through practical education, Africans were subjected to cruel production of industrial goods. Few Africans who had the opportunity to work were placed as messengers, cleaners or at best, assistant clerks with little or no formal education.<sup>24</sup>

Cultural indoctrination is another way by which colonialism and imperialism staged underdevelopment in Africa. Through the use of the mass media, books, magazines and general technological contact with Africa, Europeans inculcated their cultural values which include; the mode of dressing, language, food, etc., into Africa. The adoption of western cultural ideals, new markets were established because of the induced demand in Africa where the people now want to appear like the Europeans. This accelerated European interest on blossoming textile raw material export and importation of already made European products in Africa, and many Africans preferred European made products over their local, but very good products. The same goes for food items, as people preferred European made food over the locally produced and more nutritious ones.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, it is from the above facts that it can be argued that colonialism and imperialism are root causes of underdevelopment in Africa.

### **Dependency Theory and Underdevelopment of Africa: A Collaborative Operation of the Imperialists and African Elites**

Dependency theory which saw the world's nations divided into core of wealthy nations which dominate the poor nations whose main function in the system is to provide cheap labour and raw materials to the core have been accused of some African elites' collaborations with the capitalists to perpetuated perpetration of underdevelopment in Africa.<sup>26</sup> Dependency theorist's explanation of the economic underdevelopment of a state in terms of the external influences (political, economic, and cultural) on national development policies over the underdeveloped condition of many nations, such as African states in the world, and in examining the patterns of interactions among nations which they argue that inequality among nations is an intrinsic part of the world, is disapproved as artificial creation, though, kept resounding because of the African elite's deceptive collaboration.

Against dependency theory, colonialism and imperialism phenomena as plan game for the underdevelopment of Africa, the reality of the matter is that the major culprits of the destruction of Africa are basically some African elites and Africans themselves. To wit: some of our corrupt leaders and their bands of sycophant, and President 'does-no-wrong' syndrome. Major corruption in African officialdom continues to cause degenerative underdevelopment on the continent of Africa. African countries have become the personal estates of official criminal gangs whose avowed aim is not the development of their countries, but rather the siphoning off of national resources into foreign bank.<sup>27</sup>

Africa's massive problems of underdevelopment happened to be attributed to what they call the "predatory" or "vampire" state characteristic of so many African societies where dishonesty, thievery, embezzlement, and the likes thrive. Hence African political leaders can be compared to gangsters and crooks who have acquired political powers merely to advance their own interests. In fact, sovereign states as they were usually thought of really do not exist in Africa. The political institutions that are crucial parts of states – for example, the military, police forces, the civil service, parliaments, and judiciaries have suffered a kind of debauchery. Parliaments either do not exist or are little but charades. Political dictators have staffed each of these institutions with their own tribesmen who will be completely at their beck and call. There is little or no professionalism and accountability in any of these institutions.<sup>28</sup>

In furtherance of the Africa's underdevelopment by some African elites and Africans themselves, scholars like Emmanuel Oladipo Ojo explains that the fundamental cause of Africa's underdevelopment is corruption, he argues that:

*Africa has suffered from governments that have looted the resources of the state; that could not or would not deliver services to their people; that in many cases were predatory, corruptly extracting their countries' resources, that maintain control through violence and bribery; and that have squandered and stolen aid [monies]. ... corruption and development are antitheses. Corruption depletes national resources and diverts desperately needed funds from education, healthcare and other social services, dislocates the economy and condemns the overwhelming majority of the people to illiteracy, hunger, poverty, misery, diseases and death. ... leader should normally be someone who rules, guides and inspires others, an overwhelming majority of those who go by that title in Africa are not leaders but litters and vampires who litter their respective states with hunger, illiteracy, diseases and death. Instead of building infrastructure, developing the economy, funding researches to power and fuel technology, innovation and modernization, most African leaders have turned themselves into thieves in government houses.<sup>29</sup>*

Closely related to the above is the 'sit-tight' syndrome in Africa: the refusal of African leaders to leave office at the end of their tenures even when they have become unpopular and unable to meet the socio-economic yearnings of their people contributed to the underdevelopment of Africa. This is because, instead of concentrating on governance and devising means and ways of improving the economy, building roads and schools, providing healthcare, power and potable water, the sit-tight leader, more often than not, is preoccupied with egocentric issues that would not add value to the life of the ordinary man. Also, the sit-tight syndrome has led to civil strives and military interventions in the democratic processes of many African countries, since those who make peaceful change impossible make violent change inevitable. Unfortunately, even the military, once seen as a sanitizing and corrective institution, goaded by the lure of personal gain, became a vanguard of unbridled self-aggrandizement and frenetic looting.<sup>30</sup>

The disposition of the ruling African elites signifies self-aggrandizement and self-perpetuation in power, and to achieve this, as Ayittey has rightly pointed out, African leaders “take over power, subvert every key institution of government to serve their needs, and not that of the people”.<sup>31</sup> They compromised the aid service support, judiciary, military, media and the banking sector, etc. Even though these have lofty ideals that are supposed to be non-partisan and neutral, they are taken over and debauched. Emmanuel Oladipo Ojo succinctly captures some of these African states sit-tight leaders:

*President Mobutu Sesé Seko foisted a corrupt and dictatorial regime on Zaire (Democratic Republic of Congo) for three decades (1965-1997); Daniel arap Moi, whose regime was characterized by massive corruption, held sway in Kenya for 24 years (1978-2002); Omar Bongo ruled Gabon for 41 years (from 1967) until his death in 2009. At the time of his death, Bongo was the longest-serving head of state in Africa and the longest-serving head of government in the world. Mathieu Kérékou held Benin captive for 19 years, from 1972 to 1991. Félix Houphouët-Boigny ruled Cote d'Ivoire for 33 years (1960-1993); Denis Sassou-Nguesso has ruled the Republic of Congo for about 40 years (1979-1992; and since 1997); Robert Mugabe has ruled Zimbabwe for about 35 years — since independence in 1980; Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso was forced to resign in October 2014 after 27 years in office; Muammar al-Qaddafi ruled Libya for 42 years, from 1969 until he was ousted by a revolt in August 2011; while José Eduardo dos Santos has ruled Angola since 1979.*<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, weak institutions in African countries are used in explaining causes of underdevelopment in Africa. This is also an endogenous factor in explaining the divergence in developed and the less developing and underdeveloped countries. Increasingly research has shown that weak, missing or perverse institutions are the roots of underdevelopment. Other explanations for development, such as technological innovation, investment, or years of schooling are not associated with higher rates of economic growth. The vast majority of Africans today live in countries that have failed to create or sustain strong institutions to foster exchange and protect persons and property.<sup>33</sup> Most of the African countries are suffering from these institutional problems but a point must be made that, there are some countries whose institutions are weaker than others (Sudan, Congo, Somalia, etc.). The state is either too weak to prevent theft of property by private actors, or so strong that the state itself threatens property rights and personal independence. Individuals and organizations face a high risk that they will not be able to realize a return if they invest in specific knowledge, skills, or physical assets, so they refrain from investment; production, innovation, and productivity are very low that the economy festered.<sup>34</sup>

Conclusively, the African elites/leader's connivance with the capitalists' bourgeoisie and their shortsightedness to use the available resources to transform their continent instead of corruption, mis-governance, sit-tightism, privatization of state power, internal colonialization and local imperialism, paucity of leadership, limited educational facilities, etc. have created underdevelopments syndrome on the Africa's

continent.

### **Dependency Theory and Underdevelopment of African States in Perspective**

Dependency theory has explained various dimensions of the causes of underdevelopment in African states, following the historical twine phenomena of colonialism and imperialism. The economic gap between the imperialists and African states indubitably produced skewed relationship. The capitalists with the help of the African elites extracted raw material resources from Africa, and established modern infrastructure, and accumulated capital to continue its economic development. Africa, on the other hand, was forcefully conditioned to remain agrarian; its economic and political structures became dominated and molded to serve the interests of the colonists.<sup>35</sup>

The structural nature of the world economic system which encouraged dependency contributed to the underdevelopment of Africa through the terms of trade on prices of exported goods relative to imported goods, involving the primary products such as copper, coffee, sugar, iron, etc. which African states were subjected to get manufactured goods in return kept growing in height and size. But, within the shortest time, the same raw materials fluctuated and deteriorated steadily, and African states that export these products began to suffer grievous balance-of-trade deficits in their highly vulnerable economies. Some of the implication of balance-of-trade deficit made African states to solicit for “overseas development assistance” in the imperialists organized financial design, aimed at economic development which serve the interest of the imperialists with the help of the African elites, whose interest were tied more closely to the elites of the advanced richer capitalist countries than to their own states.<sup>36</sup>

Access to imperialist financial aid or fund requires that certain obligations are fulfilled. One of such requirements demands that, African states follow recommendations for restructuring their economies laid down by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the International Bank for reconstruction and development (IBRD) before aid or more loan shall be granted. By implication, the recommendations and reform efforts advocated by IMF in particular, call for Africa states to abolish import control, devalue their exchanges rates, curb government expenditures, (often on social services or food subsidies for the poor), and control wage increase, and welcome foreign investment. This dependency liberal features of IMF have also had underdevelopment effects in Africa.<sup>37</sup>

Dependency theory has caused the underdevelopment of Africa in area of its unimaginable implications on the concept of territoriality and sovereignty. Territoriality simply means monopolistic maintenance and control of a territory. Sovereignty connotes the legal notion that state is the ultimate authority over its territory and no other actor or actors in the international system has the right to interfere in state's internal affairs. It also entails equality of states in international system. African states are sovereign and control a geographical territory, however, colonialism, imperialism and capitalism weakened the control African states had over their borders, inhabitants, and territory. Owing to the activities of the transnational actors as regard to the dominant role Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and the global capital markets, transnational bodies such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organizations (WTO), the United Nation (UN), the World Economic Forum (WEF), G8 etc. played in Africa, categorically, undermined the sacrosanct of territory and sovereignty of African states.<sup>38</sup>

Explaining the MNCs influences in violation of Africa States territory and sovereignty, Odigwe A, Nwaokocha asserts that:

*... mining interests were instrumental in convincing Capitalist powers that the late Congolese Prime Minister, Patrick Lumumba, stood against their business interests and was a communist, who should be done away with. ... this led to the killing of an elected leader of a sovereign country who was hunted down like a common criminal by some local partisans, led by a man who later flowered into a full-fledged dictator, the late Mobutu Sese Seko.*<sup>39</sup>

However, Pricewill Dimkpa gives an elaborate implications of dependency theory on underdevelopment of African states which include:

1. Scarcity of land and food: This is the repercussions of absolute domination of Europeans taking over most fertile land areas, cattle and trade. At this point since the agricultural sector of food production and even employment is in the control of the Europeans they manipulated food prices to be very high even as they regulate the exchange rate and purchasing power of every African in terms of employment. This was the situation of things that aggravated Fanon (1960) towards his advocacy for violence as he depicted how Europeans have made Africans “the wretched of the earth” and Rodney (1974) who showed how “Europeans underdeveloped Africa”.
2. High taxes: Africans were mandated to pay very high taxes as demonstrated by the “Zulus and Matabele Warrior Nations”, ... how the European government placed taxes on almost everything they could possibly find including owning dogs. Africans own practically nothing as almost everything they worked for went back in taxes because they were forced to contribute more money. More recently, in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa ... the exorbitant taxes that extended to being taxed for marrying more than one wife.
3. Civil War in Africa: Africa has suffered and still suffering violence and unending civil wars of which most are related to border, ethnic and political disputes after independence. During the artificial border design, the Europeans failed to acknowledge Africa's local political, geographic, ethnic and multicultural diversities. This brought about great confusion in Africa fostering political violence, rebel groups and militias, change of territorial control and violence against civilians. For example, border conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Nigeria and Cameroon regarding the Bakassi Peninsula, etc. All these cases were border dispute which can be traced to the biased border design by colonialist - total ethnic and cultural negligence of African differences by Europeans during the border partition.
4. Apartheid: The segregated condition whereby the white race was made to feel and be superior to the black race was inevitable after the European invasion of Africa. Of course, with their artilleries, soldiers and technologies, they were able to subject Africans derogatorily to servants with virtually no rights, labourers and eventual slaves. South Africa is a relative example of a country where white supremacy abounds even after Britain handed over power in South Africa in 1947, the possibility of the blacks leading the white people in South Africa was a huge

struggle.

5. **Corruption:** Corruption among African leaders is indeed a menace in most African countries today, is the biggest cause of underdevelopment. Corruption is defined as the misuse of trusted power for private gain. Many African leader over many years from politicians to presidents abscond with unspeakable financial resources to foreign banks for their own private businesses without prosecution or jail term. Corruption in African countries today has far eaten deep into people that it has almost become a cultural phenomenon.
6. **Foreign Aids:** Charity they say begins at home which is a popular cliché argues that good leadership and development must be self-implemented first from home before going abroad. The reason for Africa's abject poverty and underdevelopment is not farfetched, given the sad fact that the record of Western aid to Africa escalates on daily bases. This anchored on corruption in government of African elites/leaders and politicians which has eventually stagnated development in the continent. It was almost unbelievable until the Paris Daily wrote, LeMonde in March 1990, "Every franc we give impoverished Africa comes back to France or is smuggled into Switzerland and even Japan". Therefore, until African elites/leaders, politician and business tycoons decide to bring these funds and reinvest it back home, Africa will still be synonymous with underdevelopment.<sup>40</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Dependency theory which colonialism, imperialism and capitalism re-enforced, characterized the domination, control and exploitation of the less developed countries, such as African states, by the economically developed countries (capitalist western countries) as a result of the need for cheap primary resources, external market, profitable investment opportunities, low-wage labours, and many more contributed to the underdevelopment of African states. It dealt with Africans mental psychic and cognitive reasoning thus affecting development. Unfavourable terms of trade, high tariff barriers and quotas established by the imperialist which subjugated African states to international power structure, undoubtedly, stagnated economic, social and political growth in Africa. Corruption, leadership ineptitude, comprador African elites, civil wars, ethnicity, anti-democratic system, authoritarianism, social vices, to mention but few associated with colonialism and imperialism further accelerated underdevelopment in Africa.

We conclude with Walter Rodney who unarguably submitted that:

*what is responsible for underdevelopment in Africa have its answers on the operation of the imperialist system which bear major responsibility for African states economic retardation by draining African wealth and by making it impossible to develop more rapidly the resources of the continent ..., those who manipulate the system and those who are either agents or unwitting accomplices of the said system are responsible for Africa underdevelopment.*<sup>41</sup>

Thus, the historical concept of dependency theory and debates of underdevelopment of African states will continue unabated in as much as African continent remains economically undiversified, and the suppliers of raw materials in a world where the imperialist dominates and controls the global economic system and factors of production.

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