

# **Blood Metaphor and Blood Guilt in Political Transitions**

*(A West African Transitional Justice Dialectic)*

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## **Abstract**

Bloodletting is intricately interwoven with the politics of West Africa, whether in ethnic conflict, war or in rituals involving the shedding of human blood. Yet, this phenomenon takes a new dimension during the colonial and slavery periods. This essay explores three bloody but epochal phases in West Africa's political transitions with the objective to reconcile and heal a terribly fractured past and to determine why the Euro-American transitional justice model has failed in the region. *Epoch I* represents the golden age of major breakthroughs in moral suasion, medicine and metallurgy. *Epoch II* corresponds to the period of power politics in Euro-empire foreign policy, while *Epoch III* marks the decisive decades of Pan-Africanism and freedom. Blood symbolism in the three transitional phases represents a stain of guilt in West Africa's political transitions. This West African transitional justice viewpoint, looks to the future with the hope of building a more just society founded on truth, natural justice and communitarian values. (peer-reviewed)

*Key Words: Bloodguilt, Human Rights, Reparation, Realism, Transitional Justice*

## **Introduction**

Transitional politics, at its best, can recreate a just and virtuous society. It can preserve the peace, protect human rights, and promote economic abundance and justice. At its worst, power politics, however, makes for war, tyranny, economic ruin and the spilling of innocent blood.<sup>1</sup> The term *dialectic* as used in the subtitle, means the pursuit of truth in political philosophy.<sup>2</sup> Nobody denies the truth that the bloody political culture of the West African region casts a shadow over the conscience of the world. As a society in long democratic transitions, what are the dynamics of transitional justice in regional recovery? What is the history of human rights violations in the region? What are the roles of religion and truth commissions in post-conflict reconciliation and healing? And, what is the future of transitional justice in West Africa?

Transitional justice is not new to the region. It is interwoven with West Africa's oral narratives. An Igbo fable recalls the emergency meeting summoned in the animal kingdom in which the chicken was conspicuously absent. The animal community resolved to hand over the absentee chicken to their human enemies in atonement; hence, the chicken is considered the most abused animal in the human society. Lesson: the deviant pays the penalty imposed by the moral majority. Similarly, when there is a criminal

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<sup>1</sup> Riemer, Neal, Douglas W. Simon, and Joseph Romance. *The Challenge of Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ, 2003. p. 9, Print.

<sup>2</sup> *Webster's Dictionary Thesaurus & Atlas*. New Lanark, Scotland: Geddes & Grosset, 2009. Print

case in the African village, elders would gather as judges to put the perpetrator on trial. From generation to generation, West Africans are aware that anybody who sheds human blood has committed an abominable crime against Chiukwu,<sup>3</sup> mother-Earth and the ancestors. Contradiction, however, arises when certain societies are excluded, despite the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which affirms that all human beings are born with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms.<sup>4</sup> The question, therefore, is whether or not the Nuremberg precedent<sup>5</sup> is merely a victor's justice against the vanquished. Or, does retrospective justice still have any universal application?

On October 1, 1946, the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg sentenced twenty-two Nazi soldiers to death by hanging while seven were imprisoned and three acquitted. The defendants were found guilty of committing crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity.<sup>6</sup> Since then, the Nuremberg precedent has become the western world's cornerstone in transitional justice theory and practice. Learning more about transitional justice, therefore, will likely help to prepare its disciples and detractors in further understanding the new threats posed to humanity by unresolved injustices in the twenty-first century. While many transitional justice scholars consider the Nuremberg Trials as victors' justice, others see it as a regional collective action which complements the United Nations' Charter in dealing with the wrongdoings of the past. No doubt, the primary goal of the victor nations - United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Russia, China and France was to make the planning and waging of aggressive war a crime against humanity such that nation-states which violate this law could be prosecuted and punished under international law. However, human rights activists wonder whether this legal precedent is just another victor's conspiracy theory. If not, is the planning and waging of slavery and colonialism not considered crimes against humanity and against peace like the Nuremberg example?

Africans argue that European slavery and colonial dispossession of West Africa constitute crimes against humanity and against peace which raise a plethora of unresolved legal and ethical questions. Why has western transitional justice not dispensed justice to West African victims of human rights abuses under the three central Nuremberg counts: (1.) Conspiracy and waging of aggressive war of slavery, (2.) War crimes and atrocities during colonization, (3.) Dispossession and genocide? Nobody will deny that the massive killings of captive and powerless Africans during the slave voyages amounted to genocide, and that the execution of stubborn slaves in the Americas and Europe was the result of a planned state policy. Human rights activists argue that the massacre of women, men and children during colonization constitutes another un-expiated bloodguilt. Until now, it seemed the perpetrators of these historical injustices had been exonerated from accountability for their criminal past. If Adolf Hitler's men were arrested and brought to face a newly enacted international law after the crime at Nuremberg, why is justice denied to the West African region? Within the region, there is a growing anger for vengeance, but vengeance is seldom justice. West African colonization and slavery constitute unprovoked acts of aggression. It is an offense so deep and heinous that we cannot endure its repetition, warns Henry L. Stimson.<sup>7</sup>

The term *region* as used in this essay refers to a vast, geopolitical area that covers a great range of climatic conditions, peoples and cultures in the western part of Africa. Africa is important because

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<sup>3</sup> Chiukwu is the Igbo name for the Great God also known as Chukwu, Obasi, Okpuluwa, Chineke or simply as Chi.

<sup>4</sup> *Universal Declaration of Human Rights 40th Anniversary*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau, 1988. Print

<sup>5</sup> Baird, Jay W. *From Nuremberg to My Lai*. Lexington, MA: Heath, 1972, p. xix

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid* p.3

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid* p. xix

archeologists and historians have confirmed that the continent is humanity's original home. Furthermore, lawyers and political scientists are polarized in their classification of the transitional justice discipline. While the former defines transitional justice from a legal perspective, the latter regards it as a sub-theme in both comparative politics and international relations. The dilemma becomes even more polarizing between the African and western transitional justice theorists. Neil Kritz<sup>8</sup> of the U.S. Institute of Peace defines transitional justice as how emerging democracies reckon with former regimes, while the International Center for Transitional Justice, ICTJ, sees it as a set of judicial and non-judicial measures that have been implemented by different countries in order to redress the legacies of massive human rights abuses. While Kritz and ICTJs' versions have become the acceptable definitions, I will contend that both are quite peripheral and do not address the injustices of slavery and colonialism. Both are incapable of speaking to the just society perspective of the West African region. Consequently, I will define transitional justice as how governments, societies, victims and individuals deal with past and present injustices. My definition is not only more forward-looking but also seeks to resolve current wrongdoings. The western transitional justice model seems only concerned with justice or takes up an orientation towards human rights abuses while the African indigenous models of Gacaca, Kamenu, Oriente and Ubuntu shift emphases from prosaic concerns towards the creating of a more just future and community-building concerns such as the following:

- a democratic ethos of liberation
- an ethic of natural justice
- a communal worldview and
- a virtuous political culture

I would insist that these sensibilities are not only essentially African but evidence a paradigmatic shift from the western transitional justice model. Such a shift requires the utilization of resources not typically available through the Eurocentric transitional justice model. For example, the crime of murder violates the sanctity of the human society and offends God. In dealing with West Africa's unhealed past, therefore, the objective of the indigenous model is to create and maintain a more just and virtuous society in harmony with the unwritten laws of Kamenu.<sup>9</sup> Despite its detractors, Kamenu (karma) is respected in West Africa because of its long-tested veracity in community conflict resolution, land dispute and bloodguilt.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines bloodguilt as, guilt resulting from bloodshed.<sup>10</sup> Africa's mythology makes a great use of blood metaphor and symbolism. One of the most recent is the infamous "blood diamond" campaign. In West Africa, the imagery of blood represents death, murder and guilt. Historically, West Africa is a complex society, yet it remains one of the most endowed sub-regions of the world with vibrant population scattered all over the world, rich in human and natural resources including oil, gold, diamonds, silver, zinc, and iron ore. The region is made up of vast ethnic nations now squeezed into sixteen postcolonial countries. Ironically, the region's abundant natural resources have seemingly become a curse as "blood diamond" exemplifies. The diamond, apparently the most precious symbol of

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<sup>8</sup> Kritz, Neil J. *Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995. Volume 1 General Consideration Print.

<sup>9</sup> Kamenu is an ethical philosophy founded on *truth-telling*, *honesty* and *natural justice*. This ancient Ezza social teaching is also known as *karma* in both the Oriental and Western worlds. Nhamuha means honesty. Kamenu le Nhamuha (truth-telling and honesty).

<sup>10</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bloodguilt>

love universally, has become a symbol of hatred and bloodshed in Angola, Congo, and West Africa. The international community frequently misunderstands the complex realities of the region. Little is known, for example, about West Africa's lost civilizations and the golden age of the empire-kingdom period. Surprisingly, the Christian- Judeo Bible supports the West African spiritual belief in the karmic punishment attached to bloodguilt which cannot be expiated by any government or society. In the biblical concept of bloodguilt, it is believed that actions have consequences as:

blood (dam naki (naqi); Jonah 1:14) cries out for vengeance (Gen. 4:10), is rejected by the earth (Isa. 26:21; Ezek. 24:7), and pollutes it (Num. 35:33–34). Bloodguilt attaches to the slayer and his family (II Sam. 3:28ff.) for generations (II Kings 9:26), and even to his city (Jer. 26:5), nation (Deut. 21:8), and land (Deut. 24:4).<sup>11</sup>

Despite the harmony between the indigenous Kamenu doctrine and the Christian-Judeo belief in the law of karma (that one reaps what one sows in life), many western transitional justice theorists would consider karma as an unprovable and speculative proposition. There is also another clear distinction between the dominant concept of transitional justice and the African model. While the former seeks to deter, punish or pardon criminals, the latter is more concerned with recreating a more just and virtuous society in order to avoid the wrath of Chineke,<sup>12</sup> the Creation God. Furthermore, while western transitional justice narrowly focuses on past human rights violations, it ignores and recuses itself from resolving the historical injustices of slavery and colonization of which the West is accountable as perpetrator. Transitional justice, therefore, is not only a Judeo-Christian culture. Every society has its own variant model founded and shaped by the society's belief systems, history and culture. Rather, due to technology, advanced media, education and language, western transitional justice has seemingly become a universal prescription for resolving post-conflict injustices, hence, the ineffectiveness of most of the truth commissions and criminal tribunals so far imposed on non-western societies such as the Nigerian, Liberian and Sierra Leonean truth commissions. In examining the three phases of political transitions, my objective is to evaluate the role of transitional justice in reconciliation and national recovery in West Africa.

### **Epoch I: West Africa Before 1850: The Golden Age-Empire-Kingdom Period**

This period represents the golden age of West African civilization, marked by major breakthroughs in agriculture, astronomy, politics, moral suasion, medicine and metallurgy. In reality, another free and democratic West Africa existed before the transatlantic slave trade and colonization. Besides Europe's classical political thinkers like Confucius, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, there lived notable West African sages unknown to the western world, such as Adakogu<sup>9</sup> and Ezekuna<sup>13</sup> among others. In Ezekuna's doctrinal teachings, everything in the physical universe is in transition - life, children, people, jobs, status, money, friends, and government. The only thing that lasts is the spiritual reality and not the mundane world of karma and illusion. The purpose of life, therefore, is spiritual and not wealth or capital accumulation. Kamenu (which the Orientals call *karma*) is the law of cause-and-effect which helps us understand that for every action there is an equal reaction. Most times, we may not experience the consequences of our actions immediately. In dealing with the past, Adakaogu, the Ezza philosopher-

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<sup>11</sup> Jewish Virtual Library [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0003\\_0\\_03145.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0003_0_03145.html)

<sup>12</sup> Chineke is the creation God according to Igbo people of West Africa.

<sup>13</sup> Ezekuna, the founding father of the Ezza ethnic nation, introduced morality into the politics and lives of his nation.

warrior, emphasized the natural law of ometaru vuru – a personal karmic burden which cannot be forgiven by any government or society. Kamenuists would conclude that Epoch 1 was a karmic period of economic abundance and war in West Africa:

Between about AD 800 and 1600, or thereabouts, West African communities grew more numerous, developed new and more effective ways of enforcing law and order, and evolved new ways of self-government. Emerging cities grew in size and number, and in the wealth they could use and command.<sup>14</sup>

Those who live in this region today are the descendants of the original peoples of ancient Africa. Although they were different in their beliefs, language, climate, and culture, they shared a common history, common waterway - River Niger and a common geographical area. The names of these original ethnic peoples still exist today in West Africa such as, the warrior Igbo, the traditional Yoruba, the coastal Wolof, the lordly Soninke, the ingenious Malinke, the independent Dogon and the powerful Akan. After AD 1500, the trade contact between the Portuguese and the ethnic peoples began to reveal the perils and brutalities of an entirely new Atlantic trade in the export of West African captives forced to serve as slaves in Europe and in the Americas.<sup>15</sup>

During this period, specialized skills developed and expanded with new craftsmen and women, politicians, religious leaders and great men of learning. With their export and import trade and diplomacy they serviced faraway cities and grew into an important network of economic ventures that spread across western Africa, the Mediterranean and southern Europe. The world began to know more about West Africa and its peoples. Therefore, the idea that Europe came into West Africa to colonize, to Christianize and to civilize the indigenous people is a fallacy. As evidenced above, the original peoples of West Africa were far advanced in democratic political culture, technology, medicine, learning and morality before the Europeans invaded the continent. The period of epic Kamenu diplomacy and civilization also witnessed an interregnum when Africa was plunged into a climatic disaster – the rains failed; the rivers dried up; the pastures turned to sand and stone.<sup>16</sup> During this era, the vast area now known as Sahara Desert was plunged into irreversible dryness. In an age when actions were categorized as either good or evil, how did ancient empires and kings deal with unforeseen climatic change and disaster? The tragedy was simply regarded as an Act-of-God intended to punish an unjust and corrupt society. Comparatively, the western world does not recognize an Act-of-God (karma) as an element of transitional justice. Somehow, West Africa survived the disaster and entered an exciting transition into the Farming and Iron Age. Improvement in technology (smelting metals) and the use of farming equipment accelerated a massive production of food and a population explosion. Even, long before Europe's Industrial Revolution, the West African Iron Age had created a new military power and bloody culture. Societies that first learned how to use iron tools and weapons had an overwhelming power advantage over their weaker neighbors. There was need to maintain law and order in the vastly growing society created by the Iron Age and the prosperity that followed. Gradually, the people began to see the need to establish an organized government in order to minimize conflicts and bloody wars. These events occurred during the period beginning from about 600 BC before the modern era. It is difficult,

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<sup>14</sup> Davidson, Basil. *West Africa before the Colonial Era: A History to 1850*. London: Longman, 1998. P. 17

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid* p. 18

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*

therefore, to prescribe a one-size-fits-all transitional justice treatment for the post-traumatic, so-called, Third World society without understanding the human rights history and culture of the people.

West Africans are seen to have been living from some 2000 – 3000 years before the present, in recognizably distinct cultural groupings. They evolved forms and ideas of self-government that are clearly ancestral to those of later historical times, and even to those of today.<sup>17</sup>

This rich but complex West African region is the original home of over two-thirds of the transatlantic slaves kidnapped and sold by Europe and the Americas. From scientific evidence, therefore, Africa is not only the oldest continent but also humanity's original home. For a very long period, the rest of the world knew little about the continent. From early European missionary misinformation, it was believed that Africa had no history and consequently, African people were inferior to other homo sapiens especially Europeans. This palpable ignorance is evident in Hugh Trevor-Roper's laughable lecture:

Undergraduates, seduced, as always, by the changing breath of journalistic fashion, demand that they should be taught the history of black Africa. Perhaps, in the future, there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none, or very little: there is only the history of the Europeans in Africa. The rest is largely darkness, like the history of pre-European, pre-Columbian America. And darkness is not a subject for history.<sup>18</sup>

This ignorant belief that Africa has no history is used as justification for European slavery and colonization of the African people in the nineteenth century. West African ethnic nations have gone through political transitions arising from the desire to reclaim their long-lost freedom, dignity and human rights.

*The Ancient Ghana Empire:* This Land of Gold (as ancient Ghana was known) was ruled by kings whose diplomatic trade missions extended to the Arab world where they got in contact with the Muslim religion.

After about 1050, Ghana was invaded by Berber warriors from the north-west, from the Mauritanian Sahara. These Berbers were driven by troubles of their own, mainly poverty, into striving for a share in the wealth of more prosperous neighbours. Soon after AD 1000 they began to look for a new means of livelihood.<sup>19</sup>

The spread of metal-work and of trade, the growth of the ideas of kingship and of strong central government, the pressures of wealth and trading rivalry – all these and similar influences stirred many peoples.<sup>20</sup> *The Mali Empire:* Mali remained powerful until about 1400 under the great leader, Mansa Kankan Musa. Under him, Mali opened its ethnic embassies in Egypt, Morocco and other nations. Timbuktu University acclaimed as the first ancient university in the world was established as recorded by Muslim scholars. *The Songhay Empire:* This Empire was ruled by many kings including Sunni Ali, Askia the great and Muhammad Bani. Under Askia, the nation of Morocco invaded Songhay Empire with massive firearms. It was a period of bloodshed as the arch rival, the Mossi nation, waged another war against the Songhay Empire. *The Kanem-Bornu Nation:* The human rights history of this empire is vital in understanding the danger of ignoring past

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid p. 14

<sup>18</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper delivered a series of lectures at the University of Sussex in October 1963 which were broadcast televised?), and reprinted first in *The Listener* in November and December and then, with changes, not necessarily in the passage I am quoting, as *The Rise of Christian Europe*, Thames and Hudson, 1965. This is from the first lecture as reprinted in the book.

<sup>19</sup> Davidson *ibid* p.32

<sup>20</sup> *ibid* p.44

injustices since the current Boko Haram jihadists are the direct descendants of the Mallams of the empire period. While other West African empires fought against one another, the Kanem-Bornu and Hausa nations lived much secured in their villages, content with what they had, and hoping, as we can imagine, that nobody would come and bother them.<sup>21</sup> However, the ancient Kanem-Bornu nation had powerful military regimes which positioned their rulers as defenders of the ancient Sudan region like Ghana and Mali in the western region. The king of Kano, Abdullahi Burja, a subordinate ruler under the king of Kanem-Bornu Empire sent soldiers to neighboring towns to capture slaves. These raids brought in an average of 1000 slaves monthly. During the eleventh century, Islam spread throughout West Africa through Muslim trader-diplomats and missionaries. Under Mai Ali Gaji (1472-1504), the empire conquered many societies westwards against Hausa nations including Kano in Nigeria today. The descendants of these early warriors are known as the Kanuri in today's Bornu State, Nigeria and the home of the 279 Chibok Girls who were kidnapped by Boko Haram on April 14, 2014. There is danger in ignoring past human rights abuses in any society as the case of the Chibok girls shows. *The Hausa Empire*: Early Hausa nation formation began from the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD and was basically focused on security and trade. By 1350 they had a strong military system in self-defense against invaders and raiders. In exchange for this protection, they paid taxes to men who ruled the city, who in turn paid the soldiers and kept law and order. Their ruler was known as the Sarki or the king. They were deeply influenced by Muslim methods of government as practiced in the neighboring empires of Songhay and Kanem-Bornu. These methods strengthened the power of the kings at the cost of the ordinary folk. Taxes and tolls grew heavier. The needs of courts and armies weighed down on tax-paying citizens and the farmers of the countryside. Armories glinted with the metal of expensive coats of chain-mail and fine helmets.<sup>22</sup>

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Hausaland was highly developed with numerous craftsmen, weavers, shoemakers, and other commodities for external trade. In Guanggara, later absorbed into present day Katsina State, Nigeria, the Hausa soldiers numbered up to 7000 infantry soldiers armed with bows and arrows. In order to understand the root causes of Boko Haram's current guerrilla warfare against the Nigerian Federation, it is vital to reflect on the political history of the region. How did the past military raids ordered by Hausa kings affect the human rights of the ordinary, powerless Hausa-Kanem-Bornu peoples?

- The Majority of the people suffered.
- Raids were bloody.
- Wars caused harsh conditions.
- Soldiers then committed rape and sex-slavery against captured women just like the Chibok girls.

Therefore, power politics, injustices, conflicts and blood-guilt are interwoven with the early history of West Africa. During the transitions, there had been appalling abuses of human rights in ancient Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Kanem-Bornu, Hausa and Fulani empires. The need to deal with the past is indeed a universal quest and not necessarily only a reflection of western ethnocentrism. Despite the golden period of prosperity, the citizens of the region suffered economic injustice and abuse of dignity regardless of the constant diplomacy to settle community conflicts and wars. Diplomatic soldering and politics of human rights were central to the development of West African foreign policy during the early years of nation formation. *Senegambia Empire*: This group of small empires include Gambia, Senegal, Wolof, Sierra Leone and Futa Jallon. In trade, diplomacy and military buildups, this group was similar to other empires already discussed. *Delta-Niger Empires*: This indigenous group is made up of Benin, Igbo, and Yoruba. While the

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<sup>21</sup> ibid p. 65

<sup>22</sup> ibid p.73

Benin and Yoruba empires were famous for their ancient arts and culture, Igbo civilization was founded on the principle of Igbo enweze - government without kings.<sup>23</sup> Igbo ultra-democratic culture sets it apart from the empire nations and kingdoms. In re-examining the political history of West Africa before the threshold of modern times, we have observed that the Golden Age period could be regarded as the spiritual childhood of West Africa, marked by reverence to Chiukwu – the Igbo great God. Ironically, too, it was a period of political realism, empire rivalry, human rights abuses and rampant blood-letting. Furthermore, indigenous independent nations existed with great men of wisdom before colonial invasion and slavery. Kamenu is an Igbo transitional justice model used in resolving human rights abuses and bloodguilt disputes. Orinte<sup>24</sup> is another indigenous conflict resolution model also used today in Igbo nations. While the national interests of most western countries focused on security, economic and ideological interests, the national interests of the West African nations was founded on building a just and virtuous society. The Golden Age epoch was not a period of integration; rather it was marked by the foreign policy of interdependence, trade and functionalism.<sup>25</sup> The root cause of ethnic conflicts then was the clash between power and powerlessness. Despite the traumatic past, West Africa remains vulnerable to power politics and exploitation within the international system. Within this period, western transitional justice did not exist in West Africa but indigenous African truth and natural justice practices were used in resolving conflicts.

#### **Epoch II: (West Africa 1850-1956) Age of Realism, Realpolitik (Power Politics)**

In post-conflict reconciliation and national recovery, western post-colonial political culture was ignored. This period corresponds to the European balkanization of the African continent by adopting a realpolitik foreign policy perspective founded on the use-of-force to divide, partition and own the continent. Realpolitik or *realist* theory matters in understanding the concept of balkanization and the role of transitional justice in West Africa's political transitions. Beginning from the 1940s through the 1960s, Euro-American realism as a political theory dominated the study of international politics. The realists assume that within the international system there is no harmony of interests among nation-states and that competing national interests often lead to rivalry and sometimes war. Central to the theory of realism is *power* and *national interest*. Power has both military and non-military components, but, both are classified as elements of national power among others. From a western viewpoint, the basic assumption of the realist thought is that the international system is an anarchic jungle. In this jungle, lawlessness prevails since there is no government and no law enforcement authority to maintain peace and security. As a result, the name of the game is survival of the fittest, where the Peloponnesian dictum governs state behavior, "The strong do what they have the power to do while the weak endure what they have to endure," according to Thucydides.<sup>26</sup> By using power as a determinant in international behavior, western realists such as Niccolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, G.W. F. Hegel, Hans Morgenthau, Reinhold Niebuhr, George F. Kennan, Henry Kissinger and Arnold Wolfers argue that universal moral principles cannot be applied to the state actor; that statesmen should act basically in terms of national interest, defined as power. Leaders must act always in promotion of national self-preservation and national self-extension, and be aware that the primary purpose of government is not to preserve peace. With the realpolitik or power politics theory in mind, we can now

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<sup>23</sup> *Delta-Niger ibid p. 107*

<sup>24</sup> Orinte is a spiritual contract between the accused and the accuser in dispute. Ezza people in Igbo nation determine the guilty party by asking the disputants to take an oath. Within a period of one year, one of the people is expected to die or sustain serious injury. Under natural law, the one who survives, wins the case.

<sup>25</sup> On integration and functionalism, see David Mitrany and Ernst Haas as chief proponents of these theories.



understand how Europe viewed the West African region, definitely not from an ethical worldview but from the commodification of the African continent for economic purposes. This is the reasoning behind the Scramble for Africa,<sup>27</sup> which occurred in 1884 when warring European countries met in Berlin to divide and own the African continent as colonial territories. According to Ehiedu Iweriebor, between the 1870s and 1900s, Africa faced European imperialist aggression, diplomatic pressure, military invasion, and eventual conquest and colonization.

At the same time, African societies put up various forms of resistance against the attempt to colonize their countries and impose foreign domination. By the early twentieth century, however, much of Africa, except Ethiopia and Liberia, had been colonized by European powers.<sup>28</sup>

European dispossession of Africa was motivated by three main factors: economic, political, and social. The idea of colonization developed in the nineteenth century following the collapse of the profitability of the slave trade, its abolition and suppression, as well as the expansion of the European capitalist Industrial Revolution. The imperatives of capitalist industrialization - including the demand for assured sources of raw materials, the search for guaranteed markets and profitable investment outlets - spurred the European scramble and the partition and eventual conquest of Africa. Thus the primary motivation for European intrusion was economic.<sup>29</sup> Iweriebor further observes that other factors played important roles during the scramble for Africa. The political impetus derived from the impact of inter-European power struggles and competition for preeminence. Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, and Spain were competing for power within European power politics. One way to demonstrate national preeminence was through the acquisition of territories around the world, including Africa. Eventually the overriding economic factors led to the colonization of other parts of Africa, Iweriebor concludes. Obviously, many human rights advocates consider European realist foreign policy<sup>30</sup> towards Africa as a criminal aggression which destroyed the golden age of West African civilization. As historical records reveal, Epoch II corresponds to the period of slavery and colonization. This period is also considered as West Africa's adolescence, age of maturity and violence. Machiavelli, who is considered the European father of power politics argues that the end justifies the means. According to this controversial theorist, the prince (ruler) must know when to become as cunning as a fox and as brave as a lion. It does not matter how political power is acquired. What matters is to win. After all, the end justifies the means. Machiavelli's realpolitik theory which Europe uses to justify slavery and colonial invasion of Africa is diametrically opposed to West Africa's just society theory discussed earlier. However, as Eurocentric realists explain, the primary purpose of politics is not necessarily to preserve peace in the society but to secure the economic interest of the state. West Africa is diametrically opposed to this exploitative and regressive political theory. Transitional justice failed in West Africa because the Eurocentric-American model ignored the institutionalized post-colonial behavior of political actors which portray the culture of corruption, greed, exploitation and violence. Truth commissions and criminal tribunals were set up, but the culture that uses national resources and institutions including the army and police to sustain itself in power was also ignored.

### **Epoch III: (West Africa 1939 - 1960) Decisive Decades of Pan-Africanism and Freedom**

Between 1939 and 1960, many unexpected changes overtook the West African region. Politically, the colonists did not anticipate that within the next two decades they would have to leave West Africa. Their

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<sup>28</sup> ibid

<sup>29</sup> Iweriebor ibid

<sup>30</sup> ibid

prognostication was that they would have enough time to train West Africans for self-government. But, the political transition within the Indian sub-continent, the outcome of the Second World War and the logic of Pan-Africanism combined and changed things.<sup>31</sup> After WWII, there was noticeable growth in black political movements in the Caribbean, United States and Europe such as the Black Zionism, Garveyism and Pan-Africanism. The chief proponents of the Pan-Africanist movement were Edward Wilmot Blyden, Joseph Casely Harford, Henry Sylvester Williams, Marcus Garvey, WEB DuBois, George Padmore (whose real name is Malcolm Nurse), Nnamdi Azikiwe, C.L.R. James, Kwame Nkrumah, Wallace Johnson, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere and Franz Fanon. Pan-Africanism is an ideology of freedom and self-determination which recognizes the need for a united front in the African world's struggle for freedom and colonization. The movement drew inspiration from the Gandhian philosophy of Ahimsa and Satyagraha (non-violence) as a means of fighting for self-determination and racial equality. The pan-Africanist agenda promoted universal brotherhood, peace and social justice for all peoples worldwide. Pan-Africanism's primary objective was the attainment of the government of Africans by Africans for Africans. It also campaigned for liberty for the subject [people] within the law and endorsed the Fundamental Declaration of Human Rights with emphasis on the four freedoms. However, P. Olanweche defines Pan-Africanism as a political and cultural phenomenon that regards Africa, Africans, and African descendants as a unit.<sup>32</sup> It seeks to unify Africa and promote a feeling of oneness among the people. This ideology also glorifies the African past and pride in African values.<sup>33</sup>

Pan-Africanism's emancipatory mission to liberate the colonized peoples was triumphant, having fulfilled its objective to obtain independence for all African nations as a prerequisite for building a regional federation, leading ultimately to the creation of the United States of Africa.<sup>34</sup> Then, there was a general feeling among African nationalists that their destiny was one. The Western world feared that Pan-Africanism had adopted a communist ideology. On the contrary, Pan-Africanists saw communism as an ideology which preyed on African poverty and misery to its own advantage. Therefore, neither capitalism which exploited slave labor nor communism was acceptable to Africa. Rather, Africa subscribed to the Non-Aligned Movement which believed in justice, human rights, peace, and equitable world order. These ideas were formulated and nurtured through the several pan-African Congresses held in Paris, Manchester, Liverpool, USA and Africa. The most important was the fifth pan-African Congress held in 1945 at Manchester, England. It was in this Congress that African members were mandated to take the fight for freedom back home to the African continent against the European empires. This Pan-African diplomatic soldiering yielded an initial result when Ghana regained its independence from the British Empire in 1957. Through the 1960s, other African nations followed Ghana's example and obtained independence. Ralph Bunche played a pivotal role in the liberation struggle by authoring Articles 11, 12, and 13 of the United Nations Charter which clipped the expansionist wings of the European colonial powers and granted the colonized people the right to self-determination under international law. Although pan-Africanists and

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<sup>31</sup> *West Africa over 75 Years: Selections from the Raw Material of History*. London: West Africa Pub., 1992. p.47

<sup>32</sup> Esedibe, P. Olanweche. *Pan-Africanism: The Idea and Movement*. 1776 – 1991. Washington D.C. Howard University Press, 1980. P.5

<sup>33</sup> Esedibe *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> To read more on this theme, read: Padmore, George. *Pan-Africanism or Communism*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971.

Ralph Bunche played important roles in the liberation struggle, one unforgettable actor is the flamboyant and indefatigable Marcus Garvey.

While Marcus Garvey's Pan-Africanism promoted economic diplomacy and empowerment of the Africans in order to produce the Rockefellers and Fords of the world, WEB DuBois, a black intellectual accused Garvey of bankruptcy of ideas and buffoonery. DuBois' Pan-Africanism, on the contrary, had a single purpose – self-government for the African world. Within the same period, the leader of Congo, Patrice Lumumba was murdered. President Moise Tshombe and other Katangan leaders in all probability witnessed the murder of Lumumba according to the report of the United Nations commission of inquiry into the deaths of Lumumba and his two colleagues, Okito and Mpolo. The report concluded that the weight of evidence is against an official version of the Government of Katanga province that they were killed by certain tribesmen on February 12, 1961.<sup>35</sup> The commission accepts as substantially true the evidence indicating that the prisoners were killed on January 17, after their arrival in a villa not far from Elisabethville and in all probability in the presence of his officials of the Government of Katanga province, namely; M. Tshombe, M. Munongo, Minister of the Interior and M. Kibwe. The escape story was staged:

A great deal of suspicion is placed upon a certain Colonel Huyghe, a Belgian mercenary, as being the perpetrator of Lumumba's murder which was committed in accordance with a pre-arranged plan, and that a certain Captain Gat, also a Belgian mercenary, was at all-time an accessory to the crime. The commission, which consisted of a Burmese judge and three colleagues from Ethiopia, Mexico and Togo adds:

President Kasavubu and his aides on the one hand, and the provincial Government of Katanga headed by M. Tshombe on the other, should not escape responsibility for the deaths. For M. Kasavubu and his aides had handed over Lumumba and his colleagues to the Katangan authorities knowing full well, in doing so, that they were throwing them into the hands of their bitterest political enemies.

Nevertheless, the commission hopes that the results that it has managed to obtain can to some extent, serve as a basis for a further investigation in the Congo, and also in judicial proceedings which, in its view, should be instituted as soon as possible.<sup>36</sup> There is a tragic link between the past and the future as represented by Congo and Algeria of which Belgium and France are culpable for torture and summary executions of native peoples. Let Belgium, France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain apologize and compensate; then West Africa and Europe will reconcile and heal from a long-damaged past. West Africans believe that unexpiated bloodguilt cries out for justice. Karma is real.

With independence, African countries became dangerously polarized following the Congo Crisis which led to the ideologically antagonistic groups known as, Casablanca, Monrovia and Brazzaville Blocs.<sup>37</sup> The group's rivalry for power and influence culminated into the establishment of a continental movement, known as the Organization of African Unity, OAU. It became obvious that regional integration was a pragmatic solution for African unity. The *Monrovia Bloc* consisted of a group of newly independent West

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<sup>35</sup> *West Africa over 75 Years: Selections from the Raw Material of History*. London: West Africa Pub., 1992. p. 91

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *ibid* pp. 102 - 106

African countries which believed that the future of Africa would be better served through the political ideology of Pan-Africanism during the early 1960s. Members believed in regional functionalism among Africa's independent nation-states, but totally rejected the idea of political integration as proposed by the more radical *Casablanca Bloc*. The first conference of the Monrovia Bloc convened from May 8–12, 1961 in Monrovia. Member States of this group included Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Cameroon. Their approach was more of gradualism and less radical than the Casablanca Bloc. The leaders of the Monrovia Bloc, stressed the importance of Africa's newly independent states retaining their autonomy and strengthening their own bureaucracies, militaries and economies.<sup>38</sup> This group promoted the idea that each African country should retain its sovereignty over Pan-Africanism, the idea of continental integration. The Monrovia Bloc's ideology ultimately prevailed. In 1963, all the member states in both blocs joined together to establish the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Its new Charter emphasized statehood, non-interference and national sovereignty, such that the OAU's pursuit of integration was minimal. Like its successor, the African Union (AU), the OAU was a reflection of the nationalist ideology of the Monrovia Bloc while repudiating the all-Africa ideas of the Casablanca Bloc. Having played a triumphant role in its emancipatory agenda, a weakened OAU collapsed and was replaced by the African Union.

The AU<sup>39</sup> is a continental union consisting of 54 countries. The only African state that is not a member is Morocco, due to the status of the Western Sahara, although Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic have had their memberships suspended due to a coup d'état and ongoing civil war, respectively. The AU was established on May 26, 2001 in Addis Ababa and launched on July 9, 2002 in South Africa,<sup>40</sup> with the aim of replacing the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The AU's secretariat is based in Addis Ababa.<sup>41</sup> The OAU and AU are not the only regional integration efforts within West Africa. The Mano River Union is another regional intergovernmental institution comprising of Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire. The Organization aimed to strengthen the capacity of Member States to integrate their economies and coordinate development programs in the areas of peace building, as a prerequisite to any development of the Member States. Subsequently, the need for greater unity and peaceful co-existence was linked with the establishment of the West African Insurance Companies Association (WAICA), the sub-regional Association of Insurance Companies in Anglophone West Africa. The Association, which was founded in 1973, is committed to the development of insurance law and practice in the region. In order to achieve this objective, the Founding Fathers considered the training of manpower as a vital prerequisite for peace and economic development. This ultimately led to the signing of an Agreement in Monrovia on August 2, 1978 between UNCTAD and the governments of five (5) Anglophone West African countries of Nigeria, Ghana, The Gambia, Liberia and Sierra Leone.<sup>42</sup>

By 1975, emphasis on regional unity was becoming stronger. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had become Africa's newest voice in economic integration. In an editorial commentary, the *West Africa* magazine writes,

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<sup>38</sup> *ibid*

<sup>39</sup> Visit the African Union website to know more about this organization at: <http://www.au.int/>

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> Visit OAU website for more details at: <http://www.un.org/popin/oau/oauhome.htm>

<sup>42</sup> The author Ewa Unoke is a pioneer graduate of the West African Insurance Institute 1980 in Monrovia Liberia for middle managers.

At least one hundred and twenty million people, in fifteen countries spread over six million square kilometers, are now grouped in an economic community which for them may prove to be no less significant than will the European Economic Community for the peoples of Western Europe.<sup>43</sup>

Next, is the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) - the military arm of ECOWAS. ECOMOG was a regional armed forces from member countries fighting together to restore the sovereignty of Liberia and Sierra Leone after rebel militants overthrew the legitimate governments of the two countries. It was largely supported by personnel and resources of the Nigerian Armed Forces, with sub-battalion strength units contributed by other ECOWAS members — Guinea, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. On July 30, 1949, a prophetic article simply captioned, *Nigerian Pakistan?* was published by an anonymous author who preferred to use the pseudonym, *Dinadin*. The article vividly captures the trouble with the Nigerian federation which the colonial British Empire created and probably the root cause of the Boko Haram military insurgency.<sup>44</sup>

North of the Niger and the Benue rivers lies another Nigeria, so different from its Southern counterpart that the temptation is to ask whether there is any value in regarding or administering them as one country. In cultural pattern, in history, religion and climate here are two sharply contrasted regions (perhaps more than two), and there might seem something quite arbitrary about having combined them into one colony in 1914.

My prediction is that Nigeria will eventually dissolve into its ethnic constituent nations like India and Pakistan. My purpose here is not to incriminate all British peoples for using brutal force to create a monstrous political creature that survives by sucking the blood of the weak and powerless humanity. However, colonialism was an aggressive war which did not just happen by chance. It was planned with Machiavellian skill by the colonial European rulers. Like Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler, Europe's invasion, seizure and total subjugation of the African people, European terrorism, planning and waging of unprovoked war – all these were acts ruthlessly planned in Berlin between 1884-1885. The goal of this European conspiracy was to maximize their own happiness through economic exploitation of Africa. Colonial boundaries which split ethnic nations and merged them with culturally opposing groups is partly responsible for Boko Haram's revenge war against the western world today. As we have seen, northern Nigeria – Kano, Kaduna, Katsina and Maiduguri (home of the kidnapped Chibok girls) draws its Islamic culture from the Middle East while southern Nigeria draws its indigenous-Judeo-Christian culture from ancient Africa and Europe. In Nigeria, therefore, Islamism and Christianity cannot co-exist in harmony. In the northern region, Christian missionaries were restricted to evangelize and live strictly in non-Muslim areas. Since the 1820s, the Fulani emirate (caliphate) had established its religion throughout the northern region but was cut off from the impenetrable Southern region due to the obstacles posed by massive tropical forests. It wasn't until 1914 when Lord Lugard (the British colonial governor) used coercion in the amalgamation of the northern and southern *protectorates*. While Lugard allowed the Muslim north to remain authoritarian and traditionalist through indirect rule, the Christian South was denied such privileges.<sup>45</sup> The Muslim was such a charming fellow. His elaborate courtesies, such as ceremonial

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<sup>43</sup> *West Africa over 75 Years: Selections from the Raw Material of History*. London: West Africa Pub., 1992. p. 190

<sup>44</sup> *ibid* p. 59: *Nigerian Pakistan?* By "Dinadin"

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*

prostration on greeting, went with a keen sense of humor and a rather hearty self-confidence. The Northerner was a horseman (and therefore a sportsman); used to authority, he was no trouble-maker.<sup>46</sup>

However, things began to fall apart with the *invasion* of the colonial railway system from the South, creeping up to Kano, and hence it was considered an affront by the conservative Islamic north. Additionally, with the colonial railway, the great import-export firms, English, French and Levantine also “crept” into the Muslim heartlands. The colonial railway also brought a large number of Southerners who began to build their own Sabon Gari (new towns) on a designated territory outside the walls of the old Islamic cities. The new arrivals included Christian Ibos, Yorubas and Binis. The North considered southern citizens radical and far more Europeanized than the conservative Muslims. Paradoxically, it was precisely the peoples of the forest belt (who had been most retarded culturally when the British came) who now showed the greatest assimilative capacity. Why does Boko Haram (western education is evil) hate the Western world? Dinadin explains:

Into the administration itself since the North had initially clung to Arabic rather than to English as the language of education, came the aspiring Southern clerk. And traveling in the opposite direction from the immigrants, the cash-crops of Muslim peasants (hitherto largely subsistence farmers), groundnuts and cotton, found their way into the export markets.<sup>47</sup>

Dinadin concludes that:

It is easy to see then why this medievalist Utopia [of one Nigeria] is breaking up. Whether we have a league of sovereign nations like the United Nations, or a World State, there cannot be an end of war if any important people refuse to accept freely the principle of abiding by the law, or if truly impartial tribunals are not established.<sup>48</sup>

The central issue in West African political transitions is whether or not the colonial governments of Great Britain, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain committed criminal acts of aggression against West Africa according to international law? Have there been acts of human rights violations or not? The period covering from 1966-1975 was characterized as the years of the soldiers. The colonial military virus spread from Nigeria to Sierra Leone, Ghana, Dahomey, Chad, Liberia, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Central African Republic, and Congo. West Africa is indeed a region in recovery from its traumatic history of colonial dispossession, transatlantic slavery and military authoritarianism. Unlike the U.S. after the Civil War, the region has not made its transitional experiences a permanent part of its constitution and political identity. West Africa still has an unrecorded memory of its unacceptable past.

As far back as 1949, the warning signs of long-marginalized Muslim masses in Nigeria were ignored by the British imperial masters. At the same time, older generation of Muslim leaders also complained about the religious indifferences of the younger Muslims.

### ***Nigeria's Truth Commission (The Oputa Panel)***<sup>49</sup>

The Oputa Panel's failure is another example of the institutional behavior of political actors using the military and police to suppress the findings of the truth commission. The Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission was created to establish the causes, nature, and extent of human rights violations

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<sup>46</sup> *ibid*

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*

<sup>49</sup> Courtesy and permission from the United States Institute of Peace, USIP Washington D.C. See USIP website for full summary of the Oputa Panel's Report. Also, read: Kukah, M. H. *Witness to Justice* for An Insider's Account of the Nigerian Truth Commission.

- in particular the assassinations and attempted killings - between January 15, 1966 and May 28, 1999, to identify perpetrators (individuals or institutions), to determine the role of the state in the violations, and to recommend means to pursue justice and prevent future abuses. The commission was initially asked to investigate the period from 1984 to May 1999, covering four military governments, but this period was later extended back to 1966, the year of Nigeria's first military coup following independence. The Nigerian military was responsible for gross human rights violations. Apart from the military elite, the commission mentioned the collaboration of powerful and rich civilians in preparation for numerous coups. The commission recommended combating corruption, a drastic reduction of the armed forces, a review of security forces' internal disciplinary procedures, and reform of the military intelligence, police and academic institutions. Victims of human rights abuses were recommended to receive compensation. Although not directly linked to the work of the Oputa Panel, President Obasanjo in 1999 authorized the release of the bodies of Ogoni minority rights activist Ken Saro Wiwa and eight others hanged following a flawed judicial process and buried in secret graves.

The Oputa Panel failed to resolve the issue of whether or not the Republic of Biafra has the right to self-determination under international law. Secondly, the Oputa panel also failed to resolve whether or not other nationalist movements have the right to seek independence from Nigeria. Why did the Obasanjo government refuse to release the Oputa Panel's Report to the public? The Liberian Truth and Reconciliation suffered similar fate.

**Truth Commission: Liberia**<sup>50</sup>. Like the Nigerian Oputa Panel, the Liberian Truth also was suppressed by the President who was indicted. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act tasks the TRC to promote national peace, security, unity and reconciliation by investigating gross human rights violations and violations of humanitarian law, sexual violations, and economic crimes that occurred between January 1979 and October 2003. The major root causes of the conflict were attributable to poverty, greed, corruption, limited access to education, economic, social, civil and political inequalities; identity conflict; land tenure and distribution; the lack of reliable and appropriate mechanisms for the settlement of disputes; as well as the "duality of the Liberian political, social and legal systems which polarized and widened the disparities between the Liberian peoples – a chasm between settler Liberia and indigenous Liberia (Consolidated Final Report, Vol. II, p. 16). All factions to the Liberian conflict were responsible for abuses, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. All factions committed gender based violence against women and recruited children to participate in acts of violence. "External state actors in Africa, North America and Europe participated, supported, aided, abetted, conspired and instigated violence, war and regime change for political, economic and foreign policy advantages and gains (Consolidated Final Report, Vol. II, p. 18)." The commission also included a list of individuals recommended to be barred from holding public office for thirty years (including President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf). The TRC's report called for the establishment of a National Palaver Hut Forum as a complementary tool for justice and national reconciliation. The commission recommended a reparation program of approximately US\$500m over 30 years. Charles Taylor has since been convicted and jailed by the International Criminal Court at The Hague.

**The Truth Commission of Sierra Leone:**<sup>51</sup> The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was to produce a report on human rights violations beginning in 1991, provide a forum for both victims and perpetrators and recommend policies to facilitate reconciliation and prevent future violations. The commission found that

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<sup>50</sup> See USIP for summary Report

<sup>51</sup> Visit USIP for full summary Report

the central cause of the war in Sierra Leone was corruption and an overwhelming control of the executive. Colonialism and the subversion of traditional systems also had an effect. While the majority of victims were adult males, perpetrators also singled out women and children. Forced displacements, abductions, arbitrary detentions and killings, plundering, and looting were the most common violations. The leadership of the RUF, the AFRC, the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and the Civil Defense Force (CDF) was responsible for human rights violations against civilians. The leaders of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the RUF, Charles Taylor and Foday Sankoh played pivotal roles in the conflict. The RUF was responsible for the highest count of human rights violations in the conflict, followed by the AFRC, the SLA, and the CDF. Successive governments abused the death penalty and misused emergency powers against dissidents. The commission's main recommendations concerned the fight against corruption, the creation of a new Bill of Rights developed in a participatory constitutional process and the inclusion of youth and women in political decision-making. The commission recommended the establishment of a reparations program and an implementing agency, as it was already suggested in the Lomé Agreement. *Reparations:* The commission received \$3 million USD from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund. A total of 29,733 victims have been registered. As of early 2010, amputees, war wounded and victims of sexual violence received a \$100USD interim payment. The NACSA has partly started to implement other reparative measures such as educational support and health care, and the government in 2009 launched the Victims' Trust Fund provided for in the Lomé Peace Agreement of 1999 and the TRC Act of 2000. In comparison with the Nigerian and Liberian truth commissions, the Sierra Leonean TRC was partially successful because of its high-breed nature.

## **Conclusion**

There is need for victims to tell their stories of colonial injustice. And, let colonial governments do justice, then, societies will heal and reconcile. The West African post-colonial state is an orphanchild of democracy. Western transitional justice failed in West Africa because it did not understand the existential factors and implications of postcolonial policies on the postcolonial citizens and their society. What is common to the three epochal phases is the role of power politics as the root cause of bloodguilt, human rights violation and destruction of the rule of law in West Africa. Unlike the Nuremberg precedent, colonial perpetrators refused to pay reparation to Africa. However, while seeking reparative justice, West Africa should first apologize, especially, to the African Diaspora for its culpability in the transatlantic slave trade. In the twenty-first century, any country or region which ignores its marginalized constituency has a karmic burden around its neck. African people believe that Kamenu, the law of cause-and-effect, is an inescapable natural law which rewards the just and punishes criminals. A region with a bloody history like West Africa should strategically sign a collective security treaty making ECOMOG a permanent, regional defense force, such that an attack on one member is an attack on all West African States. As this study shows, the dominant Eurocentric transitional justice model (though with good intentions) failed in West Africa because it did not take the indigenous cultures into account. While its mission was to punish and deter, the indigenous model's goal is to build a more just society. Atonement for slavery, colonial injustice, human rights abuses, kidnappings and disappearances in West Africa is an unfinished business with dire consequences for the future.



## References

<sup>1</sup> Riemer, Neal, Douglas W. Simon, and Joseph Romance. *The Challenge of Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ, 2003. p. 9, Print.

<sup>2</sup> *Webster's Dictionary Thesaurus & Atlas*. New Lanark, Scotland: Geddes & Grosset, 2009. Print

<sup>3</sup> Chiukwu is the Igbo name for the Great God

<sup>4</sup> *Universal Declaration of Human Rights 40th Anniversary*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau, 1988. Print

<sup>5</sup> Baird, Jay W. *From Nuremberg to My Lai*. Lexington, MA: Heath, 1972, p. xix

<sup>6</sup> Ibid p.3

<sup>7</sup> Ibid p. xix

<sup>8</sup> Kritz, Neil J. *Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995. Volume 1 General Consideration Print.

<sup>9</sup> Kamenu is a simple but complex ethical philosophy is founded on *truthtelling, honesty and natural justice*. This ancient and original West-African social teaching, Kamenu, is also known as *karma* in both the Oriental and Western worlds. Nhamuha means honesty. Kamenu le Nhamuha (truthtelling and honesty).

<sup>10</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bloodguilt>

<sup>11</sup> Jewish Virtual Library [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0003\\_0\\_03145.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0003_0_03145.html))

<sup>12</sup> Chineke is the creation God according to Igbo people of West Africa.

<sup>13</sup> Ezekuna, the founding father of the Ezza ethnic nation, introduced morality into the politics and lives of his nation.

<sup>14</sup> Davidson, Basil. *West Africa before the Colonial Era: A History to 1850*. London: Longman, 1998. P

<sup>15</sup> Ibid p. 18

<sup>16</sup> ibid

<sup>17</sup> Ibid p. 14

<sup>18</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper delivered a series of lectures at the University of Sussex in October 1963 which were broadcast (televised?), and reprinted first in *The Listener* in November and December and then, with changes, not necessarily in the passage I am quoting, as *The Rise of Christian Europe*, Thames and Hudson, 1965. This is from the first lecture as reprinted in the book. He is straying, a word to which he would probably have objected, outside his main area, seventeenth-century European history and thought.

<sup>19</sup> Davidson ibid p.32

<sup>20</sup> ibid p.44

<sup>21</sup> ibid p. 65

<sup>22</sup> ibid p.73

<sup>23</sup> *Delta-Niger ibid p. 107*

<sup>24</sup> Orinte is a spiritual contract between the accused and the accuser in dispute. Ezza people in Igbo land determined the quality party by asking the disputants to take an oath. Within a period of one year one of the people is expected to die or sustain serious injury. The one without injury wins the case.

<sup>25</sup> To read more about integration and functionalism see David Mitrany and Ernst Haas as chief proponents of this theory.

- <sup>26</sup> Warner, Rex, and Thucydides. *Thucydides: History of the Peloponnesian War*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1954. Print.
- <sup>27</sup> Ehiedu E. G. Iweriebor, The Colonization of Africa <http://exhibitions.nypl.org/africanages/essay-colonization-of-africa.html>.
- <sup>28</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>29</sup> Iweriebor *ibid*
- <sup>30</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>31</sup> *West Africa over 75 Years: Selections from the Raw Material of History*. London: West Africa Pub., 1992. p.47
- <sup>32</sup> Esedebe, P. Olisanweuche. *Pan-Africanism: The Idea and Movement. 1776 – 1991*. Washington D.C. Howard University Press, 1980. P.5
- <sup>33</sup> Esedebe *ibid*.
- <sup>34</sup> To read more on this theme, read: Padmore, George. *Pan-Africanism or Communism*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971.
- <sup>35</sup> *West Africa over 75 Years: Selections from the Raw Material of History*. London: West Africa Pub., 1992. p. 91
- <sup>36</sup> *ibid*.
- <sup>37</sup> *ibid* pp. 102 - 106
- <sup>38</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>39</sup> Visit the African Union website to know more about this organization at: <http://www.au.int/>
- <sup>40</sup> *ibid*.
- <sup>41</sup> Visit OAU website for more details at: <http://www.un.org/popin/oau/oauhome.htm>
- <sup>42</sup> The author Ewa Unoke is a pioneer graduate of the West African Insurance Institute 1980 in Monrovia Liberia for middle managers.
- <sup>43</sup> *West Africa over 75 Years: Selections from the Raw Material of History*. London: West Africa Pub., 1992. p. 190
- <sup>44</sup> *ibid* p. 59: Nigerian Pakistan? By “Dinadin”
- <sup>45</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>46</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>47</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>48</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>49</sup> Courtesy and permission from the United States Institute of Peace, USIP Washington D.C. See USIP website for full summary of the Oputa Panel’s Report.
- <sup>50</sup> See USIP for summary Report
- <sup>51</sup> Visit USIP for full summary Report



The Blood Relations Community Note includes chapter-by-chapter summary and analysis, character list, theme list, historical context, author biography and quizzes written by community members like you. Blood Relations seems to imply that Lizzie had reason for the murders of her family. These reasons were based upon her father's killing of the birds, as well as his fear of his daughter. political body metaphor in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the image subsequently "lost most of its validity" and its later uses "were brief, unoriginal, and void of any implications,"<sup>14</sup> and that it had become a "dead metaphor" or at least one whose "prize (Galileo, Bacon) and the rise of a mechanistic views of blood-circulation and the senso-motoric system (Harvey, Descartes) shattered the humoral theory. These changing (proto-)scientific source-concepts of body, health and illness thus affected the "Metaphors of SCIENCE in political discourses across the Iron Curtain: A case study of Harold Wilson's and Edward Gierek's speeches". Chapter. Full-text available. in cold blood. warm heart. give somebody a cold shoulder. A special group of metaphors comprises transition of proper names into common ones. This process is called antonomasia. e.g. an Adonis - a very handsome young man a Cicero - a gifted orator an Einstein - a man of genius. a Vandal "a person who intentionally destroys or damages public property.