UNIT EIGHT: AFRICAN REACTION TO COLONIALISM (MT8)

8.1. Resistance and Revolts

- African peoples were **never willing to lose** their sovereignty and independence to the colonial powers.
- They **did their best** to repulse European colonizers back.
- Their reaction to colonialism had passed through **three major stages**.

Early Resistance:

- It began early in the course of European colonial expansion.
- It existed between the 1870s and 1914.
- In **Uganda**, the masses were rebelling against their ***Kabaka*** and Christian missionaries.
- They were checked by the British who declared **protectorate** in 1900. >>>>>>>>>>

- In 1882, Col. **Urabi Pasha's** Egyptian army was crushed at **Tel el-Kabir**. >>>>>>>>
- In 1898 ***Khalifa*** **Abdullahi**, successor of Mahdi, was defeated at the Battle of **Omdurman** and the Sudan fell under Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule.
- However, the real master of Sudan was Britain. >>>>>>>
- In 1898, French forces crushed **Samori Toure'**s Mandinka army.
- Thereby, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Mali and part of Guinea became the French.
- In 1900, the **Ashanti leader Prempeh** was defeated and the British Gold Coast Colony was declared. >>>>>>
- In 1889, **Bushir Ibn Salim** was defeated and German took control of **Zanzibar**.

- Germans also captured **Tanganyika** mainland.
- They forced Tanganyika to grow cotton, a cash crop for export rather than their own food crops.
- This led to the **“Maji Maji rebellion” (1905-1907)**.
- The rebellion was brutally suppressed in 1907. >>>>>
- Germans advanced to Southwest Africa.
- At a time the **Herero** men deliberately worked as voluntary soldiers.
- In 1904, the volunteers took sudden attacks over Germans.
- Thus, the “**Herero Uprisings**” and it spread to Namibia. >>>
- Since 1899 **Sayyid Muhammad Abdile Hasen** was confronting Italians and British in **Somaliland**.
- He got moral support from *Abeto* Iyasu of Ethiopia.

- But he was finally defeated by the British in 1920.

Anti-Apartheid Movement-AAM (1894-1915).

- The seeds of AAM in South Africa was sown by **Gandhi**.
- Gandhi struggled new laws that discriminated men of the Indian origin and native south Africans.
- In sum, **the early anti-colonial resistance was successfully subdued by imperialists.**

Anti-Colonial Struggle in the Interwar Period:

- **The this time struggles had regional variations.**
- Some colonies were organized into self-welfare associations.
- Some others formed political parties.
- Still some others went to armed struggle with no established political party.

The Kikuyu Association in Kenya

- It was formed in June 1921.
- **Hary Thuku** was the leading founding figure.
- It demanded the return of lands expropriated by white settlers.
- It even objected British colonial rule.
- The British took repressive measures on it. >>>>

•There was very limited success during this time.

•Only Egypt (1922) won political independence.

The Bataka Association in Uganda

✓ It was formed by a group of young and Western-educated **Bugandans** in 1919.

- ✓ It opposed arbitrary arrest and trade restriction.
- ✓ It also called for improvement in the modern education. >>>>

The African National Congress (ANC)

- ➢ It was established in 1912.
- ➢ It struggled against racial discrimination, white minority rule and economic oppression. >>>>>>>

National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA)

- ➢ A Gold Coast Lawyer J. E. Casely Hayford founded it in 1918.
- ➢ The **Nigerians**, other British colonists, established the National Democratic Party in 1922. >>>>>>

Wafdist Pary (Wafd means delegation)

Saad Zhaglul Pasha was one of its vital leaders. It induced the British to recognize Egyptian independence in 1922.

- **<u>Egypt became the only state to get independence in the interwar period.</u>**
- Nevertheless, its independence was **not complete** for some facts.
- Foreign affairs and defense remained under the excessive control of a British high commissioner.
- British also continued to station their troops in Egypt under the pretext of her interest on the Suez Canal.
- It continued to struggle until Egypt got full independence in 1956. >>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Dastour Party (the party of constitution)

- It was formed in 1920 and newly formed founded as the **Neo-Dastour Party** in 1934.

- It was led by **Habib Bourgiba** who managed Tunisian independence. >>>>>>>>>
- **The anti-colonial struggle in the Riff Communities of Morocco was an exceptional.**
- **It was an armed struggle carried out without p. party.**
- In 1921, **Abd el-Kerim** fought and defeated the **Spanish** colonial forces.
- He then declared an independent **Riff Republic in Morocco**.
- He also attempted to do the same thing on the **French**.
- But the combined **Franco-Spanish forces** destroyed his republic which lasted only for about half a decade.
- Abd el-Kerim was deported to **Reunion**, island in Indian Ocean east of Madagascar. >>>>>

Why the Pre-1945 African Anti-colonial Movement Failed to Succeed?

- ✓ Africans were not united to challenge the European conquests.
- ✓ The Europeans had the advantage of modern fire arms.
- ✓ Their troops were disciplined, experienced and well trained.

8.2 Liberation Struggles and Decolonization

- **The end of WWII (1945) was a turning point in the anti-colonial struggle of Africa.**
- The former colonial powers were exhausted by the Great War.
- They concentrated more on their own recovery at home.
- The efforts to put down anti-colonial movements became difficult.

In addition, other factors further facilitated the independence movement in Africa.

- Thousands of Africans were recruited as fighting forces by their colonial masters in the WWII.
- By then, they were able to observe Europeans and others sacrificing everything they had to defend their sovereignty.
- They returned home with renewed spirit of nationalism and freedom.

- Positive examples set by those Asian states such as India and Pakistan to win their independence stimulated the anti-colonial struggle in Africa.
- Foreign educated Africans provided necessary leadership for the independence movements.
- They were filled with the ideas of freedom, nationalism, and democracy.
- They had evaluated the contradiction b/n the democracy of colonial powers in Europe and the realities in colonial Africa.
- Coming back to Africa, these intellectuals organized peoples to fight against colonialism.
- The political changes and the spread of liberal thinking also forced Europeans to have some degree of willingness to grant independence.

- The anti-colonial struggle of Africa had different natures.
- It took a short period to win independence for some regions and longer for some others.
- The strength of liberation organizations and leadership qualities also varied.
- The colonial powers were not very ready to give independence for Africans.
- They used both diplomatic and military means to weaken liberation movements.
- However, lastly Africans won independence through struggle.
- A brief and general survey of the liberation struggle is as follows.

Italian Colonies

- The United Kingdom of **Libya** was proclaimed on 1 January **1952** with **Sayyid Idris** its king.
- In 1960 the nationalists of both British and Italian Somaliland agreed to form a joint state.

French Colonies

- Led by Ahmad Ben Bella, the National Liberation Front of **Algeria** (**FNLA**) began guerrilla fighting.
- The war lasted from 1954-1962.
- FNLA scored progressive victories over the French.
- It forced the French arrange referendum. >>>>>>
- In the postwar period, **Sultan Muhammad V** defected to nationalists.

- He led the Moroccan National Front.
- After negotiation, the French conceded to grant independence to her larger portion of **Morocco**.
- Spain soon agreed to recognize freedom to her remaining part of Morocco.
- Both French and Spanish Morocco were merged and proclaimed independent in March 1956.
- France was convinced to negotiate with the liberation groups.
- **Tunisia** was proclaimed independent in March 1956 with Habib Bou rgiba its first leader.
- France had formed colonies in West and Equatorial Africa.
- The French gave choice "**Yes**" to become autonomous republic within the French Union, or "**No**" to break all links with France and become completely independent.

- Surprisingly, **only Guinea-Conakry** voted “Yes”.
- It became independent in 1958 with its leader Ahmed Sekou Toure.
- Others French West and Equatorial Africans feared the risk of losing French economic and technical assistance.
- They remained to be semi-independent regions, but practically under colonial rule, until the Year of African Independence-1960.
- The French had also colonies in East Africa. **Madagascar** (now Malagasy Republic) achieved independence in 1960.
- The **Comoros** Island won independence in 1975.
- The French Somaliland became independent in 1977 and renamed Territory of Afar and Issa.
- This is now known as Djibouti.

British Colonies

- The United Gold Coast Convention (**UGCC**) and the Convention People's Party (**CPP**) played a vital role to the liberation of **Gold Coast**.
- The Gold Coast got independence in March **1957** and adopted the historic name of **Ghana**.
- **Nkrumah** became its first president. >>>>>
- **Nigeria is a multinational colony.**
- It proved difficult for the decolonization.
- A number of ethnic based parties were formed.
- Independence was delayed as those parties could not agree upon a suitable form of government.
- Eventually, a federal solution, which gave considerable power to regions, was chosen.
- Nigeria became independent in October 1960.
- Sierra Leone and Gambia won independence in 1961 and 1965 respectively.

- Anglo-Egyptian Agreement was signed on 12 February 1953. By the agreement, Egypt gave up its authority in Sudan.
- Britain then negotiated an independence constitution for Sudan.
- Thereby, Anglo-Egyptian (Condominium) rule ended.
- Finally, Sudan became independent in 1956.
- Kenyans organized a nationalist movement known as **the Mau Mau.**
- The Mau Mau struggle began in the early 1940s with a violent rural action.
- It harassed white settlers on the highlands.
- The violence reached its peak in 1952.
- The British were forced to declare the state of emergency.

- Thus, the mob was suppressed and thousands of Africans were imprisoned.
- The turmoil was checked by the end of 1955.
- The state of emergency was then lifted in 1959.
- In 1960 the Kenya African National Union (KANU) was formed.
- After a year, Kenyatta emerged to be the leader of KANU.
- He continued to demand freedom and struggle for independence.
- After further negotiations, Kenya won independence in December 1963.
- Julius Nyerere led Tanganyika nationalists in forming the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) in 1954.

- **Tanganyika** achieved its independence in 1961.
- The British conceded independence to **Zanzibar** in Dec. 1963.
- In April 1964, these two states were amalgamated and declared Republic of **Tanzania**.
- The Nyasaland African Congress was formed in 1944 and Northern Rhodesian African National Congress in 1948.
- These parties conducted series of strikes and demonstrations.
- The nationalists sought new names for their future independent states.
- Zambia, Malawi, and Zimbabwe were adopted as the African names for North Rhodesia, Nyasaland and South Rhodesia respectively.
- North Rhodesian Africans had founded United National Independence Party (**UNIP**) and realized independent **Zambia** in 1964.

- The Malawi Congress Party (**MCP**) struggled for the independence of **Nyasaland**.
- Nyasaland became independent in 1964 as Malawi.
- In 1966 **Bechuanaland** (now Botswana) and **Basutoland** (Lesotho) gained independence.
- The island colonies of Mauritius and Seychelles became independent in 1968 and 1976 respectively.
- In South Rhodesia, Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (**ZAPU**) and Zimbabwe African National Union (**ZANU**) waged guerrilla fighting until 1980.
- By the late 1979, ZAPU and ZANU controlled majority of the countryside.
- The two parties also agreed to stop fighting each other.

- Because of international pressures as well, free elections were held in February 1980.
- ZANU emerged victorious.
- In April 1980, South Rhodesia was declared **Zimbabwe**.

•Robert **Mugabe** became its first prime minister.

•The white minority rule ended.

Belgian Colonies

•The Congolese National Movement (**CNM**) was dedicated to achieve independence for Belgian Congo.

•The party was led by Lumumba.

•Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was proclaimed in 1960.

•The Congo was headed by Joseph Kasavubu as president and Lumumba as prime minister.

- In 1962, the UN General Assembly voted **Rwanda** and **Burundi** to be independent states.
- Rwanda was proclaimed a republic, while Burundi was made a kingdom until it became a republic as of November 1966.

Portuguese Colonies

- Guineans had formed parties in the 1960s and were struggling for freedom.
- In 1974, Caetano’s government was overthrown by a coup led by General Antonio de Spinola.
- Meanwhile, there was a growing opposition in Portugal to the colonial war.
- The army in the battle also voiced an end to colonial war.

- Quelling guerilla fighters in Africa and at-home proved to be costly to the Spinola regime.
- As a result, Portugal decided to give up colonial rule in Africa.
- With such a favorable condition Angola, Mozambique, and Guineas-Bissau emerged independent in 1975.
- The islands colonies of Cape Verde, and Sao Tome and Principe also won independence in the same year.

Spanish Colonies

- The Spanish colony in the Guinea region was established in the late 1870s.
- The independence of Spanish Guinea was conceded by Spain in 1968 and the Republic of **Equatorial Guinea** came into being.

South African-Controlled South West Africa

- UN Trust territory under the Union of South Africa.
- However, the South African government refused to prepare the region for independence.
- Thus, South West Africans determined to fight for freedom and independence.
- In 1960, South West African People's Organization (**SWAPO**) began its long and bitter campaign of guerrilla warfare against.
- For years, the South African forces had fought SWAPO.
- However, by the mid-1988, with the US mediation, South Africa agreed to end its occupation of South West Africa.
- In 1989, free elections were held where SWAPO became victorious.
- Finally, South West Africa was officially declared independent in 1990. It was renamed **Namibia**.

8.3 Pan Africanism and OAU

Pan-Africanism: had its root in the slave trade and slavery.

- Black Africans were transported to Americas as slaves.
- These peoples lost their language and culture during the time of slavery.
- After being liberated from slavery, they remained victims of racism.
- In the early 19th century some of freed Americas came to think the need to return back to Africa where they could be free and equal.
- This led to the development of a “Back to Africa” movement.

♦In the 19th century, black people came to believe that they could not be free and equal if they continued to live in America.

♦They resorted to the idea returning back to Africa where they could become free and equal.

♦As a result, the idea led to “Back to Africa” movement.

♦In its first form, Pan-Africanism was Pan-Black or Pan-Negro which took shape outside Africa.

♦It was a movement intended to bring blacks of North America and the Caribbean Islands to the position of equality.

♦It was aimed at ending racism and ensuring black dignity.

♦Pan-Africanism also stood for the defense of Africans in Africa.

♦The First Pan-African Congress was held in London in 1900.

•It was organized by a Trinidad lawyer Henry Sylvester Williams.

- Pan-Africanism then found its way into Africa.
- Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912), William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1869-1963), Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) and others propagated the idea of Pan-Africanism to the continent.
- The second congress was held in Paris in 1919 and the third in London and Brussels in 1921.
- The fourth was in London and Lisbon in 1923 and the fifth in New York in 1927.
- The sixth Pan-African Congress (1945) was organized in Manchester. Du Bois (Africa-American scholar) arranged it.

- The prominent figures at the conference were Peter Abraham (well-known South African writer), Nkrumah of Ghana, Kenyatta of Kenya, and Azikwe of Nigeria.
- This historic congress adopted a radical resolution demanding freedom for Africans and an end to colonialism.
- It was after 1945 that mass political parties were organized and the struggle for independence was effectively mobilized.

The Founding of the OAU

- Nkrumah hoisted the first conference of independent African states in 1958 in Accra.
- Ethiopia, Liberia, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Guinea, and Ghana attended the conference.
- Leaders of liberation parties from 28 colonies also attended it as observers.
- The conference called for the decolonization of Africa.
- In the meantime, however, regional groupings began to emerge in Africa.
- One such group composed of ex-French colonies became to be known as the **Brazzaville Group**.
- This group was originally organized by France in 1944.

- It was further strengthened since 1958.
- The members advocated closer connection with France.
- Other independent states began to devise their own policies. They proposed the “United States of Africa”.
- It was indeed, radical political policy put forward by Nkrumah.
- With this common ground and vision Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Egypt, and Morocco held a conference of their own in the Moroccan town of Casablanca in 1961.
- **They, proposed the creation of larger union of states that would gradually evolve to a continental union called “United States of Africa.”**
- The group came to be known as the **Casablanca Group**.

- The third group was known as **Monrovia Group** (from Liberian capital).
- The group consisted several independent African states including Liberia, Ethiopia, and Nigeria.
- It favored economic and social cooperation but rejected the idea of United States of Africa.
- In spite of these groupings, African states eventually came to common understanding.
- Most African states wanted “functional cooperation” rather than integration.
- Later, an agreement was reached, to postpone the final goal of forming a United States of Africa and form the organization of African Unity (OAU).

•In May 1963, the heads of independent African states met in Addis Ababa and established the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

- The major aim of OAU was promoting political, social, and economic cooperation among African states.
- It was equally committed to help speed up the decolonization of the rest of Africa.
- Indeed, the long years of Pan-African movement led to the establishment of a common continental platform-the OAU.
- The charter of the OAU was signed by 31 independent states.
- Newly emerging independent African states later joined the organization.
- Addis Ababa became headquarter of the OAU.

- The member states of OAU agreed on three important principles.
  - Recognize international boundaries as existing at independence.
  - Not to interfere in the internal conflicts.
  - Retain neutrality in the Cold War.

The principal organs of the OAU

- The Assembly of Heads of States and Governments: It is a supreme organ and meets once a year.
- The Council of Ministers: meets twice a year or when required.
- The General Secretariat: It is seated in Addis Ababa. It is run by secretary general appointed by the assembly.
- The Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, and other specialized commissions.

Problems Of Independent African States And The OAU

•Some of the problems of African states and the OAU are legacies of colonial rule. Others had been of Africa's own makings.

- Africa has experienced frequent border conflicts.
- Ethnic oppression and consequent conflicts and civil wars.
- Africa witnessed frequent military coups.
- Single party system has also been another feature of most African states.
- Most African countries had underdeveloped economy. They remained easy prey to the western aid.
- Social services such as health, school, transport, water, and electric power are extremely limited.

- Africa continued to feel strokes drought, famine, foreign debt, rapid population growth, unemployment, and excessive brain drain.

- Former colonial powers still maintained great influence on African affairs.

- The weakness of the OAU originated from several factors.

- It had no political and military power to enforce its resolutions.

Successes of the OAU

- OAU made the decolonization of Africa possible. To complete the decolonization of the continent, OAU Liberation Committee was set up.

- OAU had also intervened in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.
- OAU had formed regional organizations to ensure economic cooperation. Exa. ECOWAS.

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