

Neocolonialism
By Elizabeth Phillips

What is Neocolonialism?

Neocolonialism exists within our interpretation and perspective on Africa

- For example, calling it a “third world country”

Neocolonialism: is the indirect economic and political policies by which a great power indirectly maintains or extends its influence over other areas or people.

- Debt trap diplomacy as it is called, is a means of exerting dependence

- European market demands on Africa agriculturally

- Distorted development/ stunted growth

- Economic dependence, national debt

- Neoliberalism

- Lack of GDP growth/ Capitalism

Background|How did this Begin?

Africa was seen for many generations within ancient history as a place of prosperity

- Rich material exports such as spices to Europe, full of land resources

With the introduction of human slavery in Africa, trade relations with the continent and Europe, as well as the Americas began to shift with an ideological emphasis.

Africa was embarking on an international scale trading market, as it had never seen before.

- The underdevelopment of Africa was already underway

- laborers were gone, and with the advent of a “real economy”, many African countries were left with no economic basis.

- Africa after slavery had massive European occupation, colonization

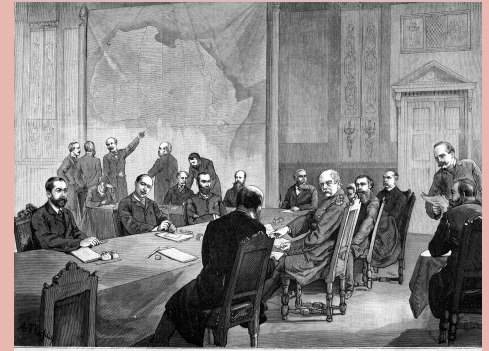
Active Colonization

Slavery wasn't as profitable any longer, so Europeans had to think of other ways to generate wealth. Independence movements and liberation ideology aided European expansion into Africa in a sense, as they thought of new ways to extract resources from them.

-In the mid 1860's colonization was underway, this is referencing the “Scramble for Africa” beginning with King Leopold II of Belgium.

-The Scramble for Africa refers to European powers grasping at control over vulnerable African states.

-The Berlin West Africa Conference 1884-1885



Apartheid

It is the period of 1948-1990's of direct European occupation of many of Africa's territories, correlating along with the civil rights movement in the US.

- It included segregationist laws

- upheld much of the colonial system

- directly related to the 1913 Land act- –"Indeed, two decades after the black majority wrested control from whites, land reform and redistribution remains a volatile political issue, particularly among people in the countryside. Whites, who number about 70,000 in this nation of 12.5 million people, are estimated to control more than half of the country's most fertile land, while most blacks are crowded onto land with little or no agricultural value."

- "Wage Slavery"

Apartheid ended in the 90's and gave way to what we now understand as being the market we know now.

Growth among classes During Apartheid

Table 1: Annual Growth in Real GDP, South Africa and the rest of the world (%)

<i>Year</i>	<i>1950-1960</i>	<i>1960-1965</i>	<i>1965-1970</i>	<i>1970-1975</i>	<i>1975-1980</i>	<i>1980-1985</i>	<i>1985-1990</i>	<i>1990</i>
Low income	3.8	4.1	4.7	3.8	4.3	5.8	5.9	
Middle income	4.8	5.3	6.3	6.0	4.8	1.6	2.0	
High income (OECD)	4.2	5.3	4.8	3.2	3.3	2.4	3.4	
Sub-Saharan Africa	3.5	5.2	4.8	4.4	3.2	1.1	2.5	
World	-	-	5.3	3.6	3.6	2.4	3.4	
South Africa	4.5	6.5	5.8	4.1	2.9	1.1	1.8	

Sources: World Bank (1998) and Reserve Bank of South Africa. South Africa also is included in the middle-income group.

Founders of neocolonialism awareness

Black Consciousness and Liberation theory as produced by the following writers aided in a societal awareness of critiquing capitalism and the global capital market.

- Frantz Fanon: Wrote *wretched of the earth and Black skin, white masks*, drawing upon his clinical research and personal lived experience as a Black man to analyze imperialism.
- Léopold Sédar Senghor: Part of the negritude movement, ideologically a socialist.
- Aime Césaire- poet a part of the negritude movement as well, believed in black consciousness.
- Walter Rodney-How Europe underdeveloped Africa
- Steve Biko-African nationalist, formed SASO, south african student organization
- Marcus Garvey-in the US, believed in returning to black identity
- Nelson Mandela-equality, independence from apartheid, first Black president of south africa



Many of the issues present in Africa today stem from slavery and colonization, so how do modern day organizations perpetuate this hierarchy?

Capitalism and Neoliberalism

-Why do we have such a scientific view of labor, if by definition capitalism is the surplus of labor to have the ability of profit, it is essentially exploitation. The labor theory of value demonstrates “the value of a commodity can be objectively measured by the average number of labor hours required to produce that commodity.” Which is false, the means of producing more for less value as we see has given rise to inequality, how else would we profit? South African labor is cheap as we have seen low wages in accordance to their countries, so they are unable to rise out of poverty.

-Globalization

-The IMF and World Bank

In the IMF, the US alone controls 20% of board votes. LDC's have very limited power in decision making. -

-after the 1980's, ideology surrounding Neoliberalism were foundations for IMF and world bank, promoting free markets and privatization, deregulation

-IMF promote lending in return for policy liberalization

-SAPs: Structural adjustment policies

-Media: Demonizes Africans and reinforces stereotypes of poverty and hunger.

Next, I wish to address how agriculture and market power are examples of Neocolonialism today.

Environmentalism and Neocolonialism

Environmental destruction in Africa is a symptom of colonization. The complete extraction of resources from the land has led to depleted agriculture.

- Monoculture is a subset of Westernized farming

- “Imports of agricultural products from Africa make up nearly 15% of EU total trade and increased by over 7%, while exports amounted to 9.7% and decreased by 8% in 2016. For the time period 2013-2016, imports of agricultural products have been steadily increasing, whilst exports to Africa evolved differently and have been declining from 2015 onwards.”

- During colonialism, settlers created “high value” cash crop farms such as coffee and tea.

- Wages kept artificially low, suggesting a monopolization.

- The World Bank suggested and implemented price incentives for agricultural exports, rather than strengthening food coming in.

- Historically discouraged skilled labor, preyed on Africans to move rurally where unskilled labor was.

Neocolonialism within Africa

Today, the capitalist system is utilized within Africa as a means of oppression.

I mentioned previous liberation movement scholars who paved a way towards more modern thought based out of a unification system of Africa. Some ideas to be born out of this include but not limited to:

- More self sufficiency

- A unified central currency

- More centralized government

- Common language

- Reparations/ Land Back-Zimbabwe Fast track policies allocating White owned land to small scale farmers. Whites who number 70,000 in the nation of 12.5 million people control half the country's most fertile land.

Examples of Anti Neo-colonial movements

-Global consciousness on what 'colonization' means within the confines of their own culture, realizing Africa's 'settler economy'.

How does capitalism conflict with tribalism? How about the cultural significance? Or can they be separated?

Indigenous land stewardship and technology has been corrupted as a means of dividing Africans into classes, utilizing them as working poor. Reclaiming these practices is happening all throughout Africa.

-Militant occupations throughout Zimbabwe have called for a land policy reform.

Neocolonialism is in essence, the last stage of imperialism, we must break off the global market.

Quotes

“The peasants and workers of Europe (and eventually the inhabitants of the whole world) paid a huge price so that the capitalists could make their profits from the human labor that always lies behind the machines. That contradicts other facets of development, especially viewed from the standpoint of those who suffered and still suffer to make capitalist achievements possible. This latter group are the majority of mankind. To advance, they must overthrow capitalism; and that is why at the moment capitalism stands in the path of further human social development. To put it another way, the social (class) relations of capitalism are now outmoded, just as slave and feudal relations became outmoded in their time.”

— **Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa**

“In a way, underdevelopment is a paradox. Many parts of the world that are naturally rich are actually poor and parts that are not so well off in wealth of soil and sun-soil are enjoying the highest standards of living. When the capitalists from the developed parts of the world try to explain this paradox, they often make it sound as though there is something “God-given” about the situation. One bourgeois economist, in a book on development, accepted that the comparative statistics of the world today show a gap that is much larger than it was before. By his own admission, the gap between the developed and underdeveloped countries has increased by at least 15 to 20 times over the last 150 years. However, the bourgeois economist in question does not give a historical explanation, nor does he consider that there is a relationship of exploitation which allowed capitalist parasites to grow fat and impoverished the dependencies. Instead he puts forward a biblical explanation! Pg. 21”

— **Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa**

“They realize at last that change does not mean reform, that change does not mean improvement.”

— **Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth**

Citations

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