

Chapter 7: Colonial Administration of West Africa

7.1 THE BRITISH COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

The British came into possession of four West African countries in the 19th century and ruled these countries for about one century before granting them independence. These countries are Nigeria which gained her independence in 1960; Ghana (former Gold Coast) which obtained independence in 1957; Sierra Leone, which became independent in 1961; and the Gambia, which gained independence in 1965.

The colonial experience was painful and bitter. The independence was granted as a result of aggressive struggles by the nationalists.

7.2 TYPES OF BRITISH TERRITORIES

The British territories in West Africa during the early period of colonialism were broadly classified into crown *Colony*, *Protectorate* and *Trust Territory*.

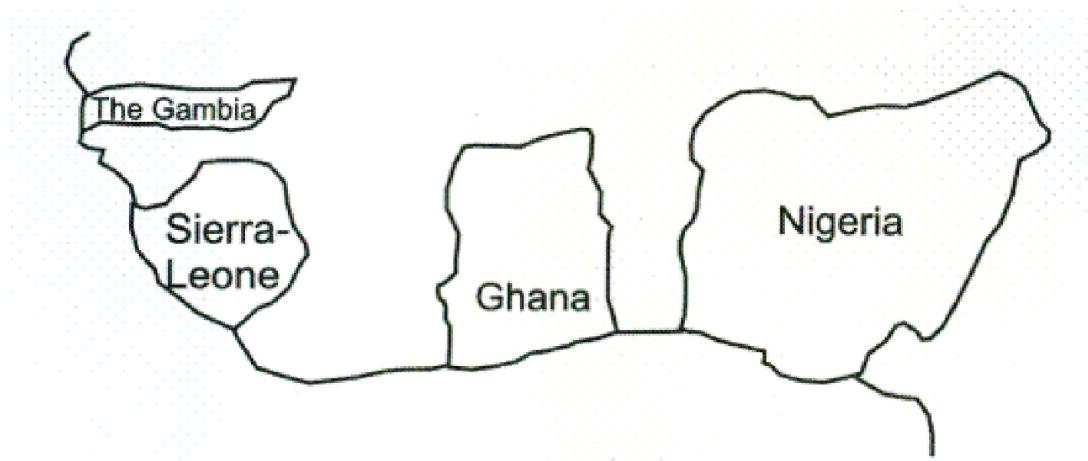


Fig 7.1: Map of West Africa showing Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and The Gambia

Crown Colony

A Crown Colony can be defined as a territory which was forcibly acquired by the British Crown and owned as a property. As a Crown property, it was directly governed by the British Crown. A Crown Colony was generally established through military conquest. An example of a Crown Colony was the Colony of Lagos. Under the Crown Colony principle, the people within the colony were regarded as British Subjects. British laws were applied in all British Crown Colonies. As the colony was owned by the Crown, the Crown, in consequence, owned all the lands, materials and natural resources within the colony. The administration of Crown Colony was governed by the colonial principle of direct rule. This only occurred during the early period of the colonial administration.

Protectorate

When the British first came to West Africa, they acquired trading settlements which were mainly on the coasts. These were called Crown Colonies. Gradually, the British appetite for territorial domination increased. Consequently, they gradually extended their imperial influence over the hinterlands. However, while the British acquired the power to govern these areas, they did not claim ownership of them. They were British protectorate in the sense that they were under the protection of the British Government. A protectorate was therefore, a territory which was established by the British for her protection and exploitation. The British government ensured law and order within the Protectorate. The traditional rulers in the Protectorate governed the people with their traditional political institutions and culture. However, the British officials supervised, guided and controlled the traditional rulers. The people of the Protectorate were British protected people rather than British subjects. Examples of Protectorates were

Southern Protectorate and Northern Protectorate. The colonial principle of indirect rule governed the administration of the protectorates.

Trust Territories

Before the First World War (1914-1918) Germany like other imperial powers had colonial possessions in Africa. Among these colonies were Tanganyika (now Tanzania), South West Africa (Namibia), and Cameroon. When Germany was defeated during the First World War, the League of Nations took over the German territories and distributed them among other imperial powers. Under the trusteeship agreement the imperial powers were to administer the trust territories until the people were matured politically to govern themselves. When the United Nations organization was established in 1945 after the Second World War as a result of the demise of the League of Nations, the trust territories became the property of the U.N.O. Britain administered Northern and Western Cameroon as trust territories. The administration of trust territories was governed by mandate principle.

7.3 THE PRINCIPLES OF BRITISH COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

There were certain principles which governed the British colonial administration in Nigeria either during the entire colonial period or at one stage or another. These principles are political tutelage, imperial domination, devolution of powers, empiricism, law and order and indirect rule. We shall now examine these principles.

Imperial Domination

The British imposed their rule on Nigeria. Nigerians never invited the British to rule them. In fact, Nigerians resisted British rule. Imperial domination connotes the idea that the Africans were an inferior type of human beings to the white. Consequently, they should be subordinated to the British and they should not enjoy equal rights with their British masters. This principle implied that Nigerians should be governed with different set of laws. They were regarded as subjects and not citizens. The British believed that no matter how educated an African is, he could never be equal to a British. This was the reason why they discriminated against educated Africans. Contrary to the French policy of assimilation, the British had the policy of segregation. It would be an abomination for an educated African to sit in the British Parliament as a member. In colonial Nigeria, educated Nigerians were not given employment in the public service. Those few Nigerians who were employed were subjected to lower salaries and conditions of service than their white counterparts. Moreover the British believed that they were in a position to think about and dictate what was best for Nigerians.

Political Tutelage

The British had the notions that her colonial possessions to which Nigeria belonged were inhabited by backward peoples who were incapable of governing themselves. Consequently they believed that it was their moral responsibility to educate these backward people on how to govern themselves in a civilized manner. The British had the belief that the period of political tutelage should be quite long if not indefinite. Consequently Britain originally had no intention of granting independence to Nigeria. This was shown by the fact that when Britain colonized Nigerians in the art of government to enable them govern themselves in the future. Political tutelage implies the exportation of British model of political institutions and culture e.g. British parliamentary system and British legal system etc.

Devolution of Powers

The British Government gave adequate powers to British officials in each colonial territory to administer the people of the area in the manner they deemed fit taking full account of the circumstances of the area. The British neither ruled her colonies directly from Westminster and Whitehall in London, nor administered them as federation just like France did to her possessions in West Africa. Each of the governors of the territories had full control of his territory and reported directly to the British Government to which he was responsible and accountable.

Empiricism

The empirical principle implies that the British had no ready-made policy which guided her administration of her colonies. Her colonial policies were generally developed piecemeal, based on observable situational factors. In other words, the prevailing circumstances at a particular time and place dictated what should be done at that time and place to deal with the existing situation. Consequently, a corollary to the principle of empiricism is flexibility in policy. The British colonial policies were not rigid. The British changed its policies with time and place to suit prevailing circumstances. For instance, virtually all the various reforms which the British made in Nigeria from 1914 to October 1960 were necessitated by the activities of the nationalist movements. The gradual process of handing over power to Nigerians was not originally made as a policy. The principle of gradual handing over of power emerged as a product of circumstance. However, when the nationalists intensified their activities, the British conceived the idea of gradual process of Africanizing the Nigerian Colonial administration. As the nationalists became more aggressive, the British conceived the idea of ultimate self-government. Finally, they conceived the idea of independence within the Commonwealth when it became clear to them that they could not prevent independence due to the aggressive activities of the nationalists.

Law and Order

The fundamental principle of the colonial administration was the maintenance of law and order. Consequently, the government was popularly regarded as a law-and-order government. The British were not interested in economic and social development. Law and order was maintained to allow the British business entrepreneurs to exploit the Nigerian economic resources. However, the missions and voluntary agencies provided education to the people and enjoyed relative freedom in providing this service. But the education which they provided was tailored to serve the needs of the white colonists.

Indirect Rule

Indirect rule was the fundamental principle of British colonial administration. It is a system of administration in which the British colonial rulers governed the colonised people in accordance with such people's traditional norms and practices which did not conflict with the British law. However, the British government officials guided and controlled the traditional rulers, who formed a very crucial part of the indirect rule system. The theory of indirect rule was first propounded by Lord Frederick Lugard who first introduced it in Nigeria. Lugard first experimented it in Northern Nigeria between 1900 and 1906 when he was the High Commissioner of the Northern Protectorate. A detailed discussion of indirect rule will be made later in this chapter.

7.4 POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS OF COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

The supreme governing authority of the Nigerian colonial territory was the Queen-in-Parliament. However, the British Cabinet was responsible for the initiation and execution of colonial policies. There was a Minister of Cabinet rank called the Secretary of State for the Colonies who was directly responsible for the initiation and execution of colonial policies on behalf of the British government. Within the Nigerian, colonial territory was the Governor-General or Governor who stood for the British 'government' on the spot. The Governor-General/Governor had a legislative council and an Executive Council which advised him on the administration of the territory. Below the Governor-General/Governor were the Lt. Governors/High Commissioners, Resident and District Officers who were field officials responsible and accountable to the Governor-General/Governor. We shall now discuss the status, functions and powers of the principal political institutions.

The Secretary of States for the Colonies

The Secretary of State for the Colonies otherwise known as the Colonial Secretary was the most central figure in the British colonial administration. He was the link between the British Government and the administration in the colonial territory. The Colonial Secretary was a Minister of Cabinet rank and a member of the British Parliament. He represented the interests of the Nigerian Colony in the British Cabinets as well as in the British Parliament. He was the politician in the British Parliament who was

responsible for answering all questions relating to the colonies that arose in Parliament. He initiated and executed colonial policies and ensured that they were effectively implemented in the territory. He was responsible for the appointment, transfer, redeployment and removal of Governors of British territories. All colonial ordinances must be approved by him before they could come into force in the territory. He supervised, controlled and co-ordinated the activities of the Colonial Governors. The Colonial Secretary issued regular directives and instructions to Colonial Governors on the administration of their territories. The Colonial Secretary possessed the right to be informed regularly by the Colonial Governor on the state of the colony. Based on this information, he advised the British Government on the future of the British colonies. All the petitions and protests from the nationalists of the colonial territories to the British Government were treated by him. To an extent, he dictated the peace of political and constitutional development of the colonial territories. He often chaired constitutional conferences. For instance, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Lyttleton organized and presided over the 1953 London Constitutional Conference for Nigeria.

The Governor-General/Governor

The Nigerian colonial territory was headed by a Governor-General at certain periods, and Governor at other periods. Between 1914 and 1919, Nigeria had a Governor-General in the person of Sir Frederick Lugard. He was the first Governor-General of Nigeria. Between 1919 and 1954, the Nigerian colonial administration was headed at various periods by various Governors; (1919-1925) the Governor was Sir Hugh Clifford; 1925-1931: it was the turn of Sir Graeme Thompson; 1931-1935; it was Donald Cameron; 1935-1943: it was Sir Bernard Bourdillon; 1943-1948: it was Sir Arthur Richards; 1948-1954: it was Sir John Macpherson). In 1954, Nigeria reverted to Governor-General and John Macpherson was the Governor-General in 1954 before he was transferred from Nigeria. He was succeeded by Sir James Robertson who was Governor-General from 1954 to 1960 Sir James Robertson was the last Colonial Governor-General for Nigeria.

The Governor/Governor-General was the British 'government' on the spot. He was appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He exercised all the powers of government in the territory on behalf of the Crown. The Governor-General/Governor was responsible and accountable to the Crown through the Colonial Secretary. He was the chief executive of the colony, the commander of the army, the chief legislator, and the head of the judiciary. He made policies for the colony and ensured that they were faithfully executed. He appointed top colonial officials in the territory including heads of departments, residents and district officers. He was vested with the power to discipline all public officers within the territory. He was the chairman of the executive council which advised him in his executive duties. The Governor/ Governor-General appointed and deposed chiefs. He was the chairman of the legislative council which assisted him in his legislative functions.

He possessed the power of veto of legislation made by the Legislative Council. Between 1922 and 1946, the Governor alone legislated for Northern Protectorate through proclamation. He performed judicial functions, appointed judges, and also had the power to remove or discipline them. He had the power to review any judicial decision. He had powers of giving prerogative of mercy.



Lord Frederick Lugard

Fig. 7.2: The first Governor-General

The Governor was virtually an absolute ruler and a dictator as he combined legislative, executive and judicial functions. However, he was limited in the exercise of his power by the Secretary of State for the colonies. The Colonial Secretary could discipline him. He could also transfer or redeploy the Governor/Governor-General.

Nigerian Council •

When the Southern and Northern Protectorates of Nigeria were amalgamated in 1914 by Lord Lugard, a need for a large legislative body to advise the Governor-General on legislative matters was felt. Consequently, Lugard established the Nigerian Council in 1914. Prior to 1914, there was a small body of Legislative Council established for the Crown Colony of Lagos in 1861 to assist the Governor in the business of legislation. The Nigerian Council had a total number of six members with the Governor-General as its chairman. Other members of the Nigerian Council were all the members of the Executive Councils, First Class Residents, Political Secretaries of Northern and Southern Provinces, six Nigerians nominated by the Governor, and seven Europeans representing various interests. The six Nigerians in the Council were traditional rulers. They were two Emirs from the North, the Alaafin of Oyo from the West, and one member each from Lagos, Benin-Warri area, and Calabar. The seven Europeans represented the interest of Chambers, Shipping, Banking and Mining business.

The function of the Nigerian Council was to discuss the issues brought before it with the Governor-General and take appropriate decisions. The decisions were in the form of advice to the Governor-General, and had no force of law. The Governor-General was not bound to accept its advice; he had the power to reject the majority decision of the Council. It was remarkable that the attendance of the Council was poor. The six nominated Nigerians who were meant to represent the interests of the Nigerian masses did not show interest in the Council. The meetings of the Council were always dull. Sir Hugh Clifford described the Nigerian Council as "a debating society in which no one would enter into a debate". He described its meetings as meaningless, feeble, faint, and colourless. The Nigerian Council existed up till 1922 when it was replaced by the Legislative Council as a result of the 1922 Constitution.

The Legislative Council

The nationalists, particularly the members of the National Congress of British West Africa, launched serious attacks on the Nigerian Council for its weakness. Consequently, Sir Hugh Clifford established the 1922 Constitution which replaced the Nigerian Council with Legislative Council.

The Legislative Council was established by an Order in Council. As provided by the 1922 Constitution, it consisted of 46 members. Of the 46 members, 27, including the Governor were officials and 19 were non-officials. Among the 19 non-official members, 15 were nominated members while 4 were elected. The nominated members were nominated by the Governor to represent various interests, including business and commerce. They also included members nominated to represent the colony from Egba, Rivers, Warri-Benin, Igbo and Oyo Divisions. Members were not nominated to represent divisions in the Northern Protectorate. Among the nominated members, only 6 were Nigerians while 9 were whites. The four elected members were for only Lagos and Calabar while one was elected from Calabar. For the election, only adult males who had a residence qualification of twelve months and a gross income of £100 (N700) per annum and who were British subjects or natives of the Protectorate were qualified to vote. Anyone who was a registered voter was qualified to stand for election. The tenure of office for elected and nominated members was five years. The elected members were eligible for re-election while the nominated members were subject to re-nomination.

The Council during the period, from 1922 to 1946, remained substantially the same. The 1946 Constitution reduced the membership of the Legislative Council from 46 to 44 members. Out of the 44 members, 16 were official members while 28 were non-official members. Of the non-official members, 4 were elected members-3 for Lagos, 1 for Calabar; while 24 were nominated non-official members. For the 24 nominated members, 9 were nominated from the North, 6 from the West, 5 from the East, 1 from the colony while 3 were to represent interests not adequately represented.

The president of the Council was the Governor who had both original and casting votes. Under the 1922 Constitution, the Legislative Council was given power to legislate for the peace, order and good government of the Colony and the Southern Protectorate. It did not legislate for Northern Nigeria. Legislation for Northern Nigeria was done directly by the Governor by proclamation. However, the Council had legislative jurisdiction over the Northern Protectorate's budget as the North and South had a common annual budget. But under the 1946 Constitution, the Legislative Council legislated for the whole Nigeria. The Council had no power to legislate on certain subjects e.g. matters that affected treaty rights. There were certain ordinances which must not be promulgated without clearance from the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Furthermore, the financial powers of the Council were very much limited by colonial regulations. The annual budget must first be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for approval before its introduction into the Legislative Council. Bills concerning loans must also receive his assent.

The Governor had powers to set aside the decisions of the Legislative Council. However, whenever the Governor voted a bill passed by the Legislative Council, he must inform the office of the Colonial Secretary in London. The Legislative Council existed up till 1951 when it was replaced by the House of Representatives.

The Executive Council

The Executive Council was the executive organ of the colonial government. It had its chairman as the Governor. The Executive Council's composition was regulated by Royal Instructions. The Royal Instruction of 1922 provided that certain principal officials of the colonial government should be members of the council. These officials were the Chief Secretary, the two Lt-Governors for the Protectorates, the Administrator of the colony, the Attorney-General, the Treasurer, the Commandant of the Nigerian Regiment, Director of Medical Services, Director of Education, Director of Marine, the Secretary of Native Affairs and the Controller of Customs. The Governor was empowered by the Royal Instructions to nominate other officials as members with the approval of the Colonial Secretary. He was also empowered to appoint other extraordinary members on certain occasions for the purpose of obtaining specialized advice.

The membership of the Executive Council consisted of only whites, from 1914 to 1943. It was only in 1943 that two Nigerians were for the first time appointed to the Executive Council. One other European was also appointed as an unofficial member. These three unofficial members (two Nigerians and one European) had no departmental responsibilities, while the rest of the official members had. Under the 1946 Constitution, the membership remained unchanged.

The Executive Council was an advisory body to the Governor. All the members of the Executive Council were members of the Legislative Council. The Council formulated policies and implanted them. It was responsible for the coordination of the activities of various departments of the colonial government. It controlled and supervised the administration. It also advised the Governor on all political, economic, social and security matters. The council's decision or advice could be rejected by the Governor. The Executive Council was responsible to the Governor.

7.5 INDIRECT RULE

Features

Under the principles of British colonial rule which has been discussed earlier in this chapter, it was pointed out that indirect rule was the fundamental principle of British colonial administration. The Indirect Rule system was the hub around which the British administration revolved from the inception of the formal British control of Northern Nigeria in 1900 until 1950. Under Indirect Rule, the Emirs of the North, the Obas of the West and the Warrant Chiefs of the East were given a large degree of autonomy in the administration of their respective areas within the limits of native tradition. However, they were not allowed to exercise their power in a manner that was contrary to British laws. The residents and district officers were central in the operation of Indirect Rule. They were the British Administrative officers at the local level who were responsible for the supervision and guidance of the traditional rulers in the administration of their people. The residents and district officers were not to exercise executive functions. Directives and orders from the colonial administrators were passed to the people through their traditional rulers. In most places, the Emirs, Obas and Warrant Chiefs each exercised the powers of the Native Authority of his area. The primary function of the Native Authority was to maintain peace, order and good environment and to prevent crimes in its area. To this end, the Native Authorities were empowered to issue regulations on a wide range of matters. The traditional rulers presided over Native Authority courts and adjudicated cases. Under Indirect Rule, the traditional rulers exercised absolute and dictatorial powers in their respective areas of jurisdiction. The system succeeded in the North but failed in the East and West.

Why Indirect Rule was Introduced

Indirect rule was introduced in Nigeria as a system of administration precisely for political and administrative expediency. We can now examine the reasons in detail.

(a) Resistance by the Africans: Nigerians resisted British domination. They fiercely resisted the British penetration and the establishment of colonial rule. Fierce battles were fought before the British ultimately established its rule. As Nigerians did not accept British rule, the indirect rule was considered as a compromise as the people would think that they were still ruling.

(b) Inadequate Troops: In view of the resistance to British rule by the people, to maintain direct rule would require large troops and military equipment. The country would have been permanently garrisoned with adequate armed forces in order to intimidate the people and prevent possible revolt. But the British government had no adequate military personnel and equipment for direct rule.

(c) Inadequate Personnel: Direct administration by the British would also require a large body of well-qualified administrative, professional and technical personnel. These personnel would have manned both central and local administrations, but the British government lacked adequate personnel. Consequently, during the indirect rule, the indigenous leaders were utilized at the local level without much costs.

(d) Inadequate Finance: Direct rule required a lot of public funds on the part of Britain. The funds would be utilized in paying British officials who would be deployed to work in Nigeria at both central and local levels. Britain, at the time, had insufficient funds required for this purpose. She adopted the indirect rule which was an economical administrative system.

(e) Preservation of Traditional Institutions: It was argued by some people that one of the reasons why the British introduced indirect rule in Nigeria was in order to preserve Nigeria's rich traditional institutions. It was said that when Lord Lugard came to Northern Nigeria, he discovered that the people had well organized, effective and respectable traditional political institutions. These were very much valued by the people. He therefore decided to preserve these rich cultures of the people by adopting these institutions as means of ruling the people.

(f) Poor Communication: At the time when Lugard introduced indirect rule, the communication system in Nigeria and in other British territories was poor. There were no good roads, no railways and no airways in the vast protectorates. There were also no system of posts and telegrams. Animals were the only means of transport in the Northern Protectorate. In the Southern Protectorate, able-bodied young men carried the ' white officials from their headquarters to the local areas. Poor communication system would have hindered effective direct rule.

Why Indirect Rule Succeeded in the Northern Province

Indirect rule succeeded in northern Nigeria because the system agreed with the traditional, political and social organization and the political culture of the people of northern Nigeria. This can be elaborated as follows:

(a) Existence of Highly Centralized and Authoritarian System: The Hausa/Fulani traditional political system was highly centralized, hierarchical and authoritarian. This facilitated the operation of Indirect Rule.

(b) Existence of a System of Taxation: The Hausa/Fulani traditional political system had developed a tax system. This had existed in the northern region before the advent of the British colonial administration. The Emirate system had its own system of tax assessment, tax collection and public treasury. The public revenue helped in financing the cost of administration.

(c) Existence of a Highly Organized Administration: The Emirate system had a highly organized administrative structure with public paid officials. The public paid officials helped the Emir in the process of government.

(d) Existence of Well-Organized Standing Army: The traditional political system had a well-organized strong standing army. The army maintained internal and external security.

(e) Preservation of Moslem Religion: The indirect rule system preserved the Moslem religion. It also preserved the people's cherished customs and tradition. Consequently, the Emirs embraced the system as it retained their traditional powers and functions. Above all, the system was not against their religion, custom and tradition.

(f) Absence of Radical and Articulate Educated Elites: In the Northern Protectorate, there was an absence of a body of radical and articulate educated elites at the earlier part of the colonial administration. Above all, the Hausa/Fulani traditional political system socialized the Northerners with the norms and values of absolute loyalty to their rulers. As a result, there was not much agitation and opposition against the Indirect Rule system in the North.

Why Indirect Rule Failed in Southern Nigeria

After the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914, Lord Lugard, who was formerly the High Commissioner for the Northern Protectorate, became the Governor-General of Nigeria. Lord Lugard then decided to extend to the Southern Protectorate the indirect rule which he had earlier introduced in the North in 1900. Accordingly, indirect rule was applied to all parts of Nigeria following

the Native Authority Ordinance of 1916. The indirect rule system received stiff opposition in the South. It was opposed because it was in direct conflict with the traditional political institutions and culture of the people. It suffered normal failure in the Western provinces, while in the Eastern provinces, its failure was colossal. The reasons for its failure in Southern Nigeria are follows:

(a) Absolute Rule by the Chiefs: The absolute rule brought about by Indirect Rule was alien to the people of the South. Under Indirect Rule, the Obas in the west and the warrant chiefs in the East combined the legislative, the executive and judicial powers of government. They exercised these powers arbitrarily. This was repulsive to the people as it did not conform to their traditional political culture. The people of the Eastern provinces, particularly the Igbos, were republicans. As a result, they rejected the absolute authority which was exercised by the warrant chiefs. On the other hand, the Oba in the West ruled his people through his chiefs. The system was a constitutional monarchy, not an absolute monarchy. The chiefs, under the traditional system, had the power to remove the Oba if he attempted to be autocratic. Consequently, indirect rule was completely inconsistent with the traditional political system of the people of Southern Nigeria.

(b) Absence of Traditional Taxation: Indirect rule vested governmental powers in the Native Authority. The Native Authority required funds to enable it operate. In the North, the Emirate system had a system of taxation which was inherited by Indirect Rule. The traditional political systems in the South had no such system of taxation. This state of affairs created a lot of problems when indirect rule was introduced. The introduction of taxation in the South to enable indirect rule function met with fierce resistance. Thus, the Aba Women Riot of 1929 was a protest against the introduction of taxation and Indirect Rule system.

(c) Complete Exclusion of Educated Elites: The Nigerian educated elites were not given any role to play under Indirect Rule. They were completely excluded in the process of government of their fatherland in spite of their education. This state of affairs made the educated elites fight against Indirect Rule.

(d) Dictatorship, Oppression and Corruption of Warrant Chiefs: The Warrant Chiefs in the East were accused of highhandedness and dictatorship which were alien to the people. They were corrupt and oppressive. Moreover, as they were not used to exercising the wide powers vested in them, they became inefficient and ineffective.

(e) Absence of Organized Body of Public Officers in the Traditional System: There was no organized body of public officers in the traditional system, particularly in the East, who would execute and enforce in a continuing basis the laws and policies of government. This resulted from the fact that in the traditional political system, there were no organised officials of government. Governmental functions were performed intermittently and on ad hoc basis. , :-•

(f) Rapid Growth of Nationalist Activities: The rapid growth of nationalist activities in the South was a very important factor. The educated elites in the South were politically conscious. Consequently, they educated and mobilized the people. This resulted in radicalism, protests and riots in demonstration against Indirect Rule. Some of the riots against the Indirect Rule were the *Iseyin Riot of 1918* and the *Aba Riot of 1929*. The

imposition of taxation and autocracy of the Oba was protested against in Yoruba land during the Iseyin Riot. The Aba Women Riot of 1929 was the occasion when the people in the East revolted against the imposition of taxation, and the corruption and autocracy of the Warrant Chiefs.

The Merits of Indirect Rule System

The Indirect Rule system is associated with certain merits in spite of its failure in Southern Nigeria. These are as follows:

(i) Economy: The system was economical. It utilized the traditional political institutions with minimum cost. Direct Rule would have required new political institutions with the resultant increased British public officials. This would have involved heavy administrative costs.

(ii) Preservation of Traditional Culture: It was argued that indirect rule preserved traditional political institutions and culture. Direct rule would have resulted in total neglect of the tradition, customs and culture of the Nigerian people. But indirect rule preserved them.

(iii) Maintenance of Law and Order: Indirect rule was law and order oriented. The primary task of the traditional rulers, district officers and residents was to maintain law and order in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

(iv) Modernization of Traditional Political Institutions: The

Indirect Rule system tried to modernize the traditional political institutions in Nigeria. Native laws and customs were modernized to the extent that they became less inhuman.

(v) The Exclusion of the Educated Elites as a Blessing: One of the weaknesses of indirect rule was the exclusion of the educated elites from the government of their fatherland. It was, however, discovered that this exclusion was a blessing in disguise as it served as a catalyst for nationalist activities. As a result of the exclusion of the nationalists from government, they intensified their nationalist activities against colonialism.

(vi) Development of Local Administration: The Native Authority gradually developed into a form of modern local administration. The system gave the traditional rulers a measure of autonomy as they ruled their people in accordance with their own customary laws. They had minimum control from British officials. Through the British guidance and supervision of the administration of the traditional rulers, the indirect rule was gradually modernized into modern local administration.

(vii) Bringing Government Nearer to the People: The Native Authority served as an instrument of bringing government nearer to the people. The Native Authorities were built around the traditional rulers: Obas, Emirs, Warrant Chiefs. These were very close to the people

Demerits (Criticisms) of Indirect Rule

Indirect rule had a lot of weaknesses. These are as follows:

(a) The Exclusion of Educated Elites: The most serious criticism against indirect rule is that, the system excluded educated elites from the government of their fatherland.

(b) Undemocratic: The Emirs, Obas and Warrant Chiefs who were rulers under indirect rule system were not elected. They were not responsible or accountable to the people. They were responsible only to the British officials who appointed them.

(c) Exercise of Autocratic Powers: The Warrant Chiefs and Obas exercised absolute powers which were alien to their people's culture and tradition. They were autocratic and as a result, the people resented their powers.

(d) Corrupt and Oppressive Rulers: The Warrant Chiefs were arrogant, oppressive and exploitative. They were also corrupt and ineffective. Their rule, in consequence, brought about riots and revolts.

(e) Misunderstanding between Traditional Rulers and Educated Elites: Indirect rule bred misunderstanding, conflict and tension between educated elites and the traditional rulers. The educated elites regarded the traditional rulers as reactionaries, conservatives and agents of British imperialism. On the other hand, the traditional rulers viewed the educated elites as radicals about conflicts and tensions.

(f) Absence of development: Indirect rule was law and order oriented. It was not development oriented. Its primary objectives were to maintain peace and order in the Protectorates. No efforts were made to promote social and economic development. Moreover, the system never promoted national integration. The system contributed to educated imbalance between Southern and Northern Nigeria.

(g) The Policy of 'Divide and Rule': The system brought about the policy of 'divide and rule'. This was a political device which was used by colonial imperialists to create divisions, misunderstandings and conflicts among the colonized people. It was a political device in which the imperialists in an effort to achieve their economic and political interests, created divisions between various groups in the colony. Such divisions were created between Northerners and Southerners, educated elites and traditional rulers, and between ethnic groups. The policy of 'divide' and rule bred hatred, disunity and lack of trust among the colonized people.

(h) The Oppression by the Native Courts: Native Courts which were presided over by traditional rulers were instruments of oppression and victimization. There were miscarriages of justice in these courts. The chief clerks of these courts were notoriously corrupt, and exercised excessive powers. The officials of these courts were incompetent illiterates.

(i) The Destruction of African Culture: The British destroyed the African culture. For instance, they deposed traditional rulers who failed to carry out their wishes. The British did not make use of such traditional institutions as age grades, council of elders, association of title holders, and others.

(j) Non-agreement with Traditional Political Institutions: Indirect Rule system was not in agreement with the traditional political systems of the Southern Nigeria, particularly the Igbos. The British determination to force Indirect Rule on Igbos by appointing Warrant Chiefs met with total failure.'

7.6 THE FRENCH COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

France colonized many territories in West Africa after fierce battles with African leaders. Among those African leaders were Alhaji Uma and Toure. These French territories were Senegal, Ivory Coast, Dahomey (Benin), Mali, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Chad, Guinea, Niger, Cameroon and Togo. Togo and French Cameroon came under French rule as mandated territories following the defeat of Germany in the First World War.

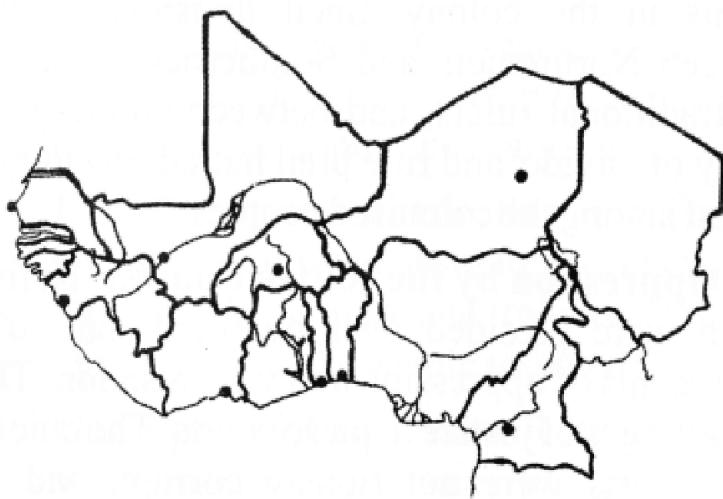


Fig. 7.3: Map of West Africa showing Senegal, Chad, Guinea, Niger, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Mali, Upper Volta, Cameroon, Togo

Principles of French Colonial Administration

The French government, unlike the British, adopted direct rule. This was dictated by the basic principles of the French colonial administration. These principles were *Assimilation and Association*. We shall now examine these principles in detail.

(i) **Assimilation:** The principle of assimilation was influenced by the French Revolution, and the Rights of Man which were declared during the French Revolution. The French were by nature egalitarian and thus, they felt that the rights of man were applicable to their colonized people. The principle of assimilation was based on the principle of social and political equality. It is a principle which sought to change Africans into French people through the process of education. The principle of assimilation regarded the French colonial territories as integral parts of France. It involved direct centralized administration. Assimilation was established on the idea that, France had the most superior culture and civilization in the world and that it was her responsibility to extend her noble culture and civilization to colonial subjects. The principle of assimilation regarded the African culture as primitive. Under the principle, traditional rulers (chiefs) were utilized in local administration as a result of inadequacy of French officials. But they exercised powers not as traditional rulers but as French officials. They were paid salaries and subordinated to French officials.

Assimilation was aimed at Frenchifying Africans. Under the policy, assimilated Africans should enjoy equal rights with French people when they were assimilated. An assimilated subject was called *evolve*. A subject was assimilated when he had been completely civilized with French "noble" culture. This was achieved through education of the Africans. Assimilated Africans were French citizens and enjoyed all the rights and privileges of French citizenship. Consequently, assimilated Africans could be elected into the French Legislature as Deputies or Senators. They were also qualified to be civil servants or serve as ministers in France. As a result of the principle of assimilation, there were two classes of people in the French colonial territories: *citizens* and *subjects*. Citizens were assimilated subjects, and all people living in the four communes of Senegal namely, Dakar, St. Louis, Corea and Rufisque were all citizens. In these four communes which were classified as 'colonies', Africans were automatically born as French citizens. But *subjects* were Africans outside the four communes who had not been assimilated. The territories outside the communes were classified as protectorate.

(ii) **Association:** The French adopted the principle of *assimilation* during the earlier part of her colonial administration. But after the Second World War, the French government abandoned the policy because it involved high administrative costs. Moreover, it was discovered that it was an unrealizable policy as it was not easy to assimilate Africans who had been under their own culture for centuries. Consequently, the French changed to the principle of *association*. Nevertheless, the policy of assimilation, even though it was dropped as an official policy, continued to influence French colonial policies.

The principle of association was designed to replace assimilation when the principle of assimilation failed to achieve its intended effect. The principle of association sought to create social and political process and condition for mutual co-operation between France and her colonial territories with their own respective identities. Under the principle of association, French recognized the African culture and African identity and allowed Africans to flourish under their culture and tradition. Consequently, the traditional rulers were allowed, unlike under the principle of assimilation, to exercise limited political authority in consonance with their tradition. However, they were supervised and controlled by the French colonial officials.

Under the principle of association, the people were granted more participation in the management of their own affairs. The main features of the principle of association included African identity, recognition of Africans' right to participate in the management of their own affairs, local administration by traditional rulers, decentralization and greater territorial autonomy. The principles recognize the variations in various colonial territories and allow each territory to develop at its own pace.

The Influences of the Principles of Assimilation and Association on Constitutional and Political Development of West Africa

The principles of assimilation and association exerted great influence on the constitutional and political development of West Africa. The most important of these included the following:

(i) **Retardation of Pace toward Independence:** Under the principle of assimilation, the French regarded West African colonies as integral parts of France and had no plans for their independence. On

the other hand, as the educated elites were regarded as French citizens enjoying equal rights with the French people, they did not care to fight for their freedom. They cooperated with the French. Consequently, nationalist struggle started very late in French territories. This retarded progress in constitutional and political development.

(ii) **Federation of West African Territories:** As a result of the principle of assimilation, all the French possessions in West Africa were organized into a federation with Dakar as the headquarters. National political institutions were not created in each territory as each colony was not an autonomous unit. For instance, the political institution like the legislature did not start early to develop in each territory so that the people would gain adequate experience in political process. As a result of the federal system of the territories, the people did not show strong feeling of patriotism, loyalty and identity with their respective territories which created the problem of national identity and commitment.

(iii) **Late Development of Political Parties:** In British territories, political parties evolved out of nationalist movements. In the French colonies, nationalist movement developed very late. Accordingly, political parties developed also very late. On the other hand, political parties followed the federal arrangement of the colonies. For instance, the *Rassemblement Democratique Africain* (H.D.A) was a political party for the whole of French West African colonial territories.

(iv) **Late Development of Local Government System:** In the British territories, the local government system was developed around Indirect Rule system. But the French colonial administration under the principle of assimilation operated direct administration. Canton and village chiefs were used as officials of colonial administration at the local level. They served as agents of the *commandant de cercle* and *de subdivision* in maintaining law and order and in the collection of taxes. No attempts were made to groom the Africans in the art of local administration.

(v) **Acceleration of Pace toward Independence by Association Principle:** After the Second World War, the French introduced the principle of association. This principle accelerated the pace of political and constitutional development of French territories. Under the policy, France started, for the first time, to plan for the ultimate independence of her territories. There was then increased political participation of the people in the process of government.

(vi) **The Establishment of a Loi Cadre:** The principle of association gave effect to a *Loi Cadre* (the outline Law) of 1956. This policy set the French colonies in West Africa on the path to self-government. The *Loi Cadre* recognized the separate identity and existence of each territory in West Africa. It created separate Legislative Assembly and separate Executive Council for each colony. It also granted Universal Adult Suffrage to all her colonies.

(vii) **The Establishment of French Community:** General Charles De Gaulle, guided by the principle of assimilation and association, established in 1958 the French Community in which France and all her territories were members. The primary purpose of the community was cooperation and sustenance of French colonial domination. It is important to note that Guinea led by Sekou Toure refused to be in the French Community and she was granted independence.

(viii) **Independence and Close Ties:** The French, guided by the principle of association, granted independence to all the West African colonies in 1960 (apart from Guinea which was granted earlier in 1958). This was under General Charles De Gaulle. As a result of the principle of assimilation and association, France has, today, very strong and close ties with her former colonies.

Administration of French in West Africa

The French government organized a direct centralized administration for its colonies in West Africa. The colonies were organized into federation of territories. Its capital territory was Dakar, Senegal. The French Federation of West African Colonies was under a Governor-General.

The Governor-General was appointed by the French Minister for colonies. The French Minister for colonies had the powers to redeploy, transfer or dismiss the Governor-General. The French government

made all decrees (laws) governing the colonial territories. It was the responsibility of the Governor-General to enforce and implement these decrees in all the territories of French West Africa. The Governor-General sent regular reports to the Minister for colonies in France on the progress and problems of his administration. The Governor-General had a large body of officials at Dakar that constituted his administration.

The Governor-General was assisted by an Advisory Council which comprised the Governor-General, the Governors of each of the territories, the Commissioner for Togo, the Deputy for Senegal, 7 others officials, 4 members of the Supreme Council of Overseas France, 4 elected members by the Chambers of Commerce and 4 non-citizens from the federation. The Advisory Council met once a year. Its primary function was to consider the annual budget both for the federation and each of the territories. However, its role was merely advisory. The Governor-General had the power to reject its decisions.

The federation comprised territories, each of which was under the control of a *Governor*. The Governor, who was the Chief Executive of the territories, was responsible to the Governor-General in the administration of his territory. The Governor-General supervised and controlled the Governors. The Governor had an administration composed of a body of officials. He also had an Advisory Council.

The territories in French West Africa were classified into *Colony and protectorate*. The colony consisted of the four communes of Senegal. These communes were Dakar, Saint Louis, Rufisque and Goree. These four communes were the towns where the French made their base when they first arrived, from where they penetrated into the hinterland.

The colony (communes) was directly ruled from France as it was considered as integral part of France. The citizens of the colony were regarded as French citizens and enjoyed French citizenship rights. Each of the communes of the colony had a Municipal Council which had all the powers and functions of French communes in France. The colonies elected their representatives to the French National Assembly in France.

The protectorate was the second class of French territories. It was considered inferior in status to the colony. While the inhabitants of the colony were French citizens; the inhabitants of the protectorates were 'subjects'. The French subjects could attain the status of citizenship through the process of assimilation. Assimilation was accomplished through education. Apart from the four communes that comprised the colony, the rest of the French territories in West Africa constituted the protectorate.

Each territory was divided into *cercles* (Province) as opposed to municipalities in the colony. Each *cercle* was under the control of *Commandant de cercle* (equivalent of Resident). A *cercle* was divided into cantons (districts). Each canton was administered by the *Chief de sub-division* (equivalent of District Officer). The *Commandant de cercle* and the *Chief de sub-division* administered their area with the 'indigenat'. The 'indigenat' was a legal system by which the 'subjects' were summarily tried and sentenced on the spot by French officials. 'Indigenat' gave the French administrators powers to impose penalties without trial for minor offences. It virtually removed from the 'subjects' their liberties of criticism, association and movement. The *commandant de cercle* and *chief de sub-division* were aided by the *canton* and village chiefs. These chiefs were not, in fact, traditional rulers but were regarded as civil servants. They merely carried out the orders and instructions of the French administrators. They recruited soldiers and labourers for the French colonial administrators. They also collected taxes and settled minor cases.

The French colonial administration in West Africa can be illustrated with the diagram below:

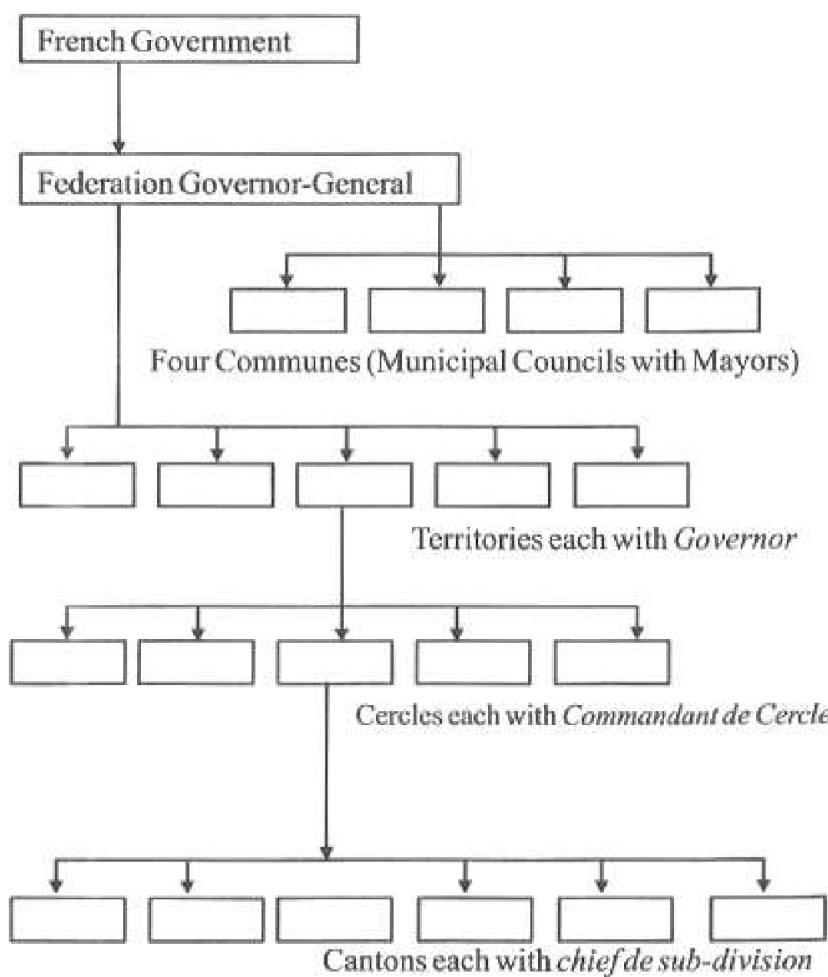


Fig. 7.4: Illustration of the French Colonial Administration

7.7 THE EFFECTS OF BRITISH AND FRENCH COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIONS ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF WEST AFRICA

The impact or effects of colonial administration on economic, social and political development of West Africa will be discussed here under the advantages and disadvantages of colonial administration in West Africa. **Advantages of British Colonial Rule in West Africa**

The colonial administration had the following advantages:

- (i) **Exposure to Western Education:** The British and the French built schools and colleges that enabled most Africans to acquire Western education. The knowledge of English and French languages helped Africans to communicate easily with people of outside world.
- (ii) **Improvements on African Legal System:** The French and British introduced their legal systems in their territories. The British and the French were improvements on the African traditional legal systems. The British and French stopped such punishments as ritual killings, human sacrifice, torture, banishment, selling individuals away into slavery, etc.
- (iii) **The Influence of the Christian Religion:** The British and the French came with missionaries who introduced Christianity. Christianity fought against evil traditional practices and inhuman behaviours. The activities of the missionaries accelerated the pace of social development in West Africa. They built schools, colleges, hospitals and maternity centres and accelerated the pace of social development.
- (iv) **Establishment of Trade Relations:** West African countries established trade relations with Britain and France. Today, Britain is the major trading partner of her former colonies in West Africa while French is the major trading partner of her former colonies. On the other hand, the former French territories in West Africa except Guinea have a common Central Bank issuing a common currency. This facilitates inter-state trade among the countries.

(v) **Technical and Financial Aid:** France gives technical and financial aids to her former colonies in West Africa. These aids help these nations in their national, social, economic and technological development programmes.

(vi) **Creation of Large Political Units:** Politically, colonialism resulted in the creation of larger political units. For instance, before the advent of colonial rule in Nigeria, there was nothing like Nigeria. Hausa/Fulani Emirates, Yorubas Kingdoms, Igbo Autonomous Communities, and other minority ethnic groups were all independent and sovereign states. It was colonialism that brought them together into one big state.

(vii) **Improvement of Communication Systems:** Colonial administrators in British and French West Africa improved the communication system in various countries of West Africa. They built roads, railways, airways, water ways and provided posts and telecommunication facilities.

(viii) **Introduction of Liberal Democracy and the Civil Liberties:** The British and French introduced the political culture of liberal democracy in their territories. They also introduced the principle of civil liberties and the rule of law.

Disadvantages of British and French Colonial Rule in West Africa

The British and French colonial rule had the following disadvantages:

(i) **Cultural Imperialism:** The most important disadvantage of colonial rule in West Africa is cultural imperialism. The British and French imposed their culture on the people of West Africa. The African Culture was abandoned and neglected. They introduced European languages, English and European dresses, European music and sports, etc. which replaced African ones.

(ii) **Retardation of National Development by Colonial Form of Education:** The colonial form of education retarded the rate of our economic, social, political and technological development. Colonial education centred on writing and reading of English Language (in former British territories) and French language (in former French territories), religion, drawing and arithmetic. Technical, vocational and science education were neglected. Thus, the educational system produced persons who were qualified only for white-collar jobs.

(iii) **Control of the Economies of African States by the Western Powers:** As a result of colonial rule, Britain and France had complete control of the economies of their former territories in West Africa. They carried the wealth of West African countries to their home countries and thus impoverished West African countries. They dictated what were produced and exported in these countries, where they were exported to, how much they were sold, what were imported, from where they were imported, and for how much they were bought. Consequently, they grossly exploited West African nations which today are economically dependent on European nations.

(iv) **Transplanting of Western Political System and Values to Africa:** Britain and France transplanted their political systems to their former territories in West Africa. But they did not transplant to these nations British/French attitudes, values, and norms. Consequently, the British/French political systems were operating with African attitudes, values, norms, and cultures. Thus, there was no agreement between the political institution and the African attitudes. This resulted in conflicts in these countries. These are the root causes of political instability in African countries.

(v) **Introduction of Capitalist Ideology:** The British and French colonial administrations introduced capitalist ideology to West African countries. They introduced a system in which few citizens monopolized the wealth of the nation for their own interest. They introduced economic exploitation and oppression. The capitalist economic system gave effect in these countries to corruption, bribery, abuse of public office, smuggling, economic sabotage, robbery, and other social evils.

(vi) **Dependence on Western Power:** The influence of the policy of assimilation put the former French territories in West Africa, except Guinea, under close ties with France and kept these countries dependent

on France. As a result of these close ties between them, France exercised serious remote political control over its former colonies, in the guise of military aid, to maintain the interest of France and ensure continued French control. This has been a source of internal and inter-state conflicts in Africa e.g. Chadian crises.

(vii) Divisions among African States: Colonial rule had divided the countries in West African into two major groups-English speaking and French speaking countries. These groups have links with their respective colonial masters. This is one of the major problems facing ECOWAS today. Colonial rule was responsible for lack of social cohesion in West African states. Colonial administrators created permanent divisions in the territories which they ruled through their policy of 'divide and rule'. For instance, the initial separate administrations for Northern and Southern Provinces,

the practice of indirect rule, and regionalism in Nigeria, created serious problems of national integration in Nigeria. These colonial policies made integration of Northern and Southern Nigeria extremely difficult. Colonial policies, instead of reducing the problem of tribalism, promoted it.

(viii) Creation of Artificial Nations: Colonial rule brought together many nationalists with diverse and complex cultural patterns to form one nation. These nationalities had not in the past shared common experiences. This created very serious problem of national integration and nation building. It is one of the major factors responsible for widespread of political instability in African States.

7.8 COMPARISON OF FRENCH AND BRITISH COLONIAL SYSTEMS

(A) SIMILARITIES

S/NO	CRITERIA	BRITISH	FRENCH
1.	Nature of Acquisition	The British territories in West Africa were acquired through force of arms, conquest and treaties after resistance by the African inhabitants.	The French territories in West Africa were also acquired by force of arms, conquests and treaties.
2.	Principle of Indirect Rule and Association	The British adopted the principle of Indirect Rule. British ruled the people through their traditional political Institutions.	The French, at the later stage of her colonial administration, adopted the principle of association which sought for cooperation between France and her colonies. The policy recognized the African traditions and the need to rule Africans through their traditional rulers.
3.	Aim of Colonialism	The primary objective of British colonialism was to acquire greater political power and satisfy economic Interests.	The French also colonized West Africa in order to wield more political power and achieve economic Interests.
4.	Form of Government	The British colonial Administration was imperialist. It was exploitative and oppressive. It was a dictatorship. The	The French colonial administration was also imperialist. It was also exploitative and oppressive. It was a dictatorship. The

		colonies were also dependent on Britain.	colonies were dependent on France.
5.	Destruction of African Culture	In spite of the fact that through Indirect Rule the British preserved the traditions and culture of the people, yet the British system suppressed African tradition and culture and promoted the British tradition and culture.	The French system, through its principle of assimilation destroyed the African tradition and culture and planted the French tradition and culture in West Africa.
6.	Mode of Granting Independence.	<p>The process of granting independence was gradual.</p> <p>The process of constitutional development was progressively phased, its rate dictated by the activities of the nationalists.</p>	<p>The process of granting independence was equally gradual and phased.</p> <p>Ultimate independence for various territories was granted around the same period when Britain granted independence to Her territories.</p>

(B) DIFFERENCES

ITEMS OF DIFFERENCES	BRITISH	FRENCH
1. Principles of Colonial Rule	<p>The basic principle of British colonial administration was Indirect Rule in which the British had no policy of changing Africans into British through cultural Imposition.</p>	<p>The main principle of French colonial administration was Assimilation. Assimilation was a policy through which the British sought to Frenchify Africans Through the process of imposing French culture and civilization on Africans.</p>
2. Direct vs. indirect	<p>The British ruled their colonies in West Africa through the traditional rulers. Emirs and Chiefs were given powers by the colonial administrators to rule their people according to their traditions subject to directions by the British officials. Laws were made by the colonies' Legislative Councils.</p>	<p>The French ruled by their colonies directly from Paris. They did not use the traditional ruler as the rulers of their people. But rather they used the traditional rulers as their agents and as paid officers. Laws were made in Paris and sent to the colonies for implementation.</p>
3. Centralization vs. Decentralization	<p>The British colonial administration was decentralized. Each of the colonies was independent from the others with its own Legislative Council and Governor having direct</p>	<p>The French colonial administration was centralized. The French organized their colonies in form of a federation with a Governor-General at Dakar who controlled all the colonies. Each colony was</p>

	dealing with the British Crown.	under a Governor who was responsible to the Governor-General.
4. Local Government	The British system encouraged the development of local government. This was built around the Native Administration.	The French system did not encourage the development of local government. Chiefs were agents of the French officials. They acted just as civil servants working at the local level.
5. Plan for the Colony's Future	The British had no plans of ruling the colonies indefinitely. On the contrary, it was their plan to prepare them for ultimate independence.	As a result of her policy of assimilation, France originally had no plans for her colonies as she considered her colonies as integral parts of France.
6. Attitude to the Educated s Elite	The British discriminated against the educated elites in the civil service and in political spheres. They were not utilized in government. This generated bitterness and intense nationalist activities.	The French assimilated the educated elites in the French colonies who were utilized in government. As assimilated Africans, they enjoyed equals rights with French citizens. This promoted cordial relations and cooperation.
7. Citizenship	The inhabitants of the British territories were British subjects. There were no two types of citizenship as in French territories. Indigenes of the colonies did not enjoy equal rights with British citizens. There was nothing like <i>indigenat</i> . Everyone was subject to British law. However, the British recognized customary laws which were not repugnant to British Law.	There were two types of citizenship. Inhabitants of the colonies and the assimilated indigenes of the Protectorates were regarded as French citizens and enjoyed all the rights of <i>French citizenship</i> . But non-assimilated indigenes of the Protectorate were regarded as <i>French subjects</i> who were denied rights of French citizens. The subjects were governed by <i>indigenat</i> while citizens were not.
8. Education	The British made conscious efforts to provide education for the masses. Though the emphasis on education was on how to read and speak English, and on religious knowledge, the primary purpose of education was to wipe away illiteracy and make the people religious to obey colonial government. It was therefore mass education.	The French provided education for few Africans who were educated on the French model to enable them be assimilated into the French culture. Thus, education was primarily aimed towards assimilation of Africans.

9. African Culture

The British system preserved the African culture to a certain extent. The African political institutions were preserved and utilized in Native Administration.

The French system promoted the French culture by Frenchifying Africans. Africans were forced to imbibe the French culture, while the African culture was totally neglected.

KEY POINTS

Types of British Territories

(i) Crown Colony was forcibly acquired and owned by the British Crown as property,

(ii) Protectorate was established by the British for protection and exploitation,

(iii) Trust Territory was administered by the British on behalf of the League of Nations.

Principles of British Colonial Administration

(i) Imperial Domination: This involved British imposition of her sovereignty on Africans,

(ii) Political Tutelage: This involved training Africans on British political culture,

(iii) Devolution of Powers: Each territory was given adequate powers to operate as a government.

(iv) Empiricism: This implied administrative and political actions and policies based on observable situation.

(v) Law and order: The government was law and order type.

(vi) Indirect Rule: This was the British rule through the people's political institutions and culture.

Political Institutions of Colonial Administration

(i) The Secretary of the State for the colonies made colonial policies, supervised, controlled and coordinated colonial governments.

(ii) The Governor-General/Governor was the Chief Executive of the colonial administration in the territory.

(iii) The Nigerian Council was a legislative body in Nigeria which existed from 1914 to 1922.

(iv) The Legislative Council was the legislative body in Nigeria which existed from 1922 to 1951.

(v) The Executive Council: This was the executive body and was exclusively composed of British officials from 1914 to 1943 when two Nigerians were made members.

Indirect Rule

(i) Features

The British governed Africans through their traditional political institutions. The British supervised, directed and controlled the traditional rulers.

(ii) Why Indirect Rule was introduced

(a) There was serious resistance of colonial administration.

(b) There was the problem of inadequate British troops.

(c) There was the problem of inadequate British personnel.

(d) Funds were inadequate.

(e) Indirect rule was to preserve traditional institutions.

(f) There was poor communication.

(iii) Why Indirect Rule Succeeded in the North

- (a) There existed a traditional system of highly centralized and authoritarian government.
- (b) There existed a system of taxation.
- (c) There existed a strong standing army.
- (d) There existed a well organized administration.
- (e) Indirect Rule preserved Moslem religion.
- (f) There was absence of radical educated elites in the North.

(iv) Why Indirect Rule Failed in the South

- (a) Absolute rule by the Chief was contrary to traditional system.
- (b) Absence of a system of taxation in the traditional system.
- (c) Educated elites were completely excluded from participating in the government.
- (d) The Warrant Chiefs were dictatorial, oppressive and corrupt.
- (e) Absence of an organized body of public officers.
- (f) Rapid growth of nationalist activities in the South.

(v) Merits of Indirect Rule

- (a) It was economical.

(b) It preserved the people's tradition and culture

(c) It maintained law and order.

(d) Modernization of traditional political institutions.

(e) The exclusion of the educated elites was a blessing in disguise, as it made them fight in order to regain freedom.

(f) It brought government nearer to the people.

(vi) Demerits of Indirect Rule

(a) There was the exclusion of the educated elites in government.

(b) The Warrant Chiefs and the Obas were oppressive and corrupt.

(c) The system was undemocratic as the Native Authorities were not elected.

(d) It created misunderstanding between the traditional rulers and the educated elites.

(e) It was not development oriented.

(f) It fostered the policy of divide and rule.

(g) It destroyed the African Culture.

(h) The Native Courts were instruments of oppression.

The French Colonial Administration

(i) The Principles

(a) Assimilation was aimed towards Frenchifying Africans.

(b) Association sought to create conditions of mutual cooperation between the French and the Africans.

(ii) Influences of the Principles of Assimilation and Association on Political and Constitutional Development of French West Africa

(a) Assimilation retarded the activities of nationalists.

(b) Assimilation resulted in the organization of the colonial territories in a form of federation.

(c) Late development of political parties.

(d) Late development of local government system.

(e) The Principle of Association accelerated the pace towards independence.

(f) The Principle of Association resulted in the establishment of a Loi Cadre.

(g) Association and Assimilation gave effect to the establishment of a French Community.

Administration of French Territories

(i) At the apex was the French government.

(ii) The territories in West Africa were organized into a federation with Dakar as capital, (iii) The federation was under a Governor-General.

(iv) Each territory was under a Governor who was responsible to the Governor-General,

(v) The territory was divided into cercles which were under the control of Commandant de Cercle.

(vi) Each cercle was divided into cantons which were under the control of Chief de Sub-division,

(vii) The Commandant de Cereles and Chief de Sub-division administered their area of jurisdiction with canton and village chiefs who functioned as civil servants and not astraditional rulers, (viii) The four communes (colonies) were directly administered from France.

Advantages of British and French Rule in Wst Africa

- (i) Colonial rule exposed Africans to Western culture.
 - (ii) It improved the African legal system.
 - (iii) The colonists came with the Christian missions who built schools and hospitals for the Africans.
 - (iv) British and French colonial rule established trade relation between African territories and Western Europe.
 - (v) Colonial administration created larger political units in West Africa.
 - (vi) Colonial administration improved African communication system.
 - (vii) Colonial rule introduced liberal democracy in West Africa.
- Disadvantages of British Colonial Rule in West Africa
- (i) Colonial rule resulted in cultural imperialism.
 - (ii) It retarded national development.
 - (iii) The economies of African States were controlled by the Western Powers,
 - (iv) It transplanted the Western European political system to Africa.
 - (v) It introduced capitalism in African States
 - (vi) It resulted in economic dependency of the former French Colonies on France.

(vii) Colonial rule created divisions among African States

(viii) It brought together into a 'nation' nationalities with diverse and complex cultural patterns.

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the composition, functions, powers and limitations of the Legislative Council of Nigeria between 1919 and 1945.
2. Discuss the status, functions, powers and limitations of the Secretary of State for the British Colonies.
3. What were the features of the Indirect Rule? Why did it fail in Southern Nigeria
4. Discuss the influences of the Principles of Assimilation and Association on the constitutional and political development of the French colonial systems?
5. Compare the French and British colonial system.

Objective Questions

1. The author of Indirect Rule was

A. Sir Bernard Bourdillon.

B. Sir Hugh Clifford.

C. Sir Frederick Lugard.

D. Sir Arthur Richards.

E. Sir Donald Cameron.

2. A French colonial policy introduced at the earlier part of her colonial administration was

A. Indirect Rule.

B. Association.

C. Empiricism.

D. Assimilation.

E. AloïCadre.

3. Which of the following was associated with the French Communes?

A. French subjects

B. French citizens

C. "Indigenat"

D. Association

E. Protectorate

4. The colonial political institution in Nigeria which was African majority in composition between 1946 and 1951 was

A. the Executive Council.

B. the Nigerian Council.

C. the Top Civil Service.

D. the House of Representatives.

E. the Legislative Council.

5. One of the merits of Indirect Rule is that

A. it was economical.

B. it used the educated elites.

C. it made no use of taxation from Nigerians.

D. it was development-oriented.

E. it promoted political stability and national integration.

6. Which of the following was not a member of the French Community when it was established by De Gaulle in 1958?

A. Chad

B. Senegal

C. Guinea

D. Mali

E. Togo

Answers

2. D

3. B

4. E

5. A

6. C